

**EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION AND LANGUAGE:
A NEUROPSYCHOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE**

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Abstract: This paper explores the intersection of emotional expression and language from a neuropsycholinguistic perspective, focusing on how language facilitates the conceptualization and expression of emotions. The paper examines the distinction between emotional expression, conveyed through interjections and exclamations, and emotional conceptualization, achieved through more abstract linguistic structures. It highlights how various linguistic elements, including syntax and emotional morphology, contribute to expressing emotions. Additionally, the role of cultural and societal influences on emotional expression through language is discussed, alongside the impact of technology and digital communication platforms in shaping modern emotional expression.

Keywords: emotional expression, psycholinguistics, linguistic personality, emotional lexicon, emotion words, emotional conceptualization, cultural influences.

**ЭМОЦИОНАЛЬНОЕ САМОВЫРАЖЕНИЕ И ЯЗЫК:
НЕЙРОПСИХОЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКАЯ ПЕРСПЕКТИВА**

Аннотация. Данная работа исследует пересечение эмоционального самовыражения и языка с психолингвистической точки зрения, с фокусом на том, как язык способствует концептуализации и выражению эмоций. В работе рассматривается различие между эмоциональным самовыражением, которое передается через междометия и восклицания, и эмоциональной концептуализацией, достигаемой с помощью более абстрактных лингвистических структур. Подчеркивается, как различные лингвистические элементы, включая синтаксис и эмоциональную морфологию, способствуют выражению эмоций. Также обсуждается роль культурных и социальных факторов, влияющих на эмоциональное самовыражение через язык, наряду с воздействием технологий и цифровых платформ на формирование современного эмоционального самовыражения.

Ключевые слова: эмоциональное самовыражение, психолингвистика, лингвистическая личность, эмоциональный лексикон, слова эмоций, эмоциональная концептуализация, культурные влияния.

INTRODUCTION. Emotional expression, a fundamental aspect of human communication, is intricately linked with language. The ways in which emotions are conveyed through language are both complex and culturally varied, revealing much about the emotional and psychological experiences of individuals. From a psycholinguistic perspective, emotional expression is not only a matter of conveying feelings but also involves cognitive processes that influence how emotions are perceived, understood, and communicated. Emotions are deeply embedded in language, and

they significantly shape how we use words and phrases to express our emotional states. Neuropsycholinguistics, the study of the relationship between language and the human mind, sheds light on how language helps people conceptualize and express their emotions. When people use language to describe their emotions, they are not only labeling their feelings but also engaging in a process of emotional processing. Language provides a structured way to organize and communicate emotions, which, in turn, affects how individuals experience and make sense of their emotional worlds.

METHODS. Recent neuropsycholinguistic research has proposed that emotion words should be considered a separate class in the mental lexicon. These words are processed differently from other types of words, such as abstract or concrete terms, due to their unique emotional content. This distinction is important because emotional words often trigger faster cognitive responses, particularly when they are high in emotional arousal and valence. For example, words with positive valence, such as “joy” or “love,” are processed more quickly than negative emotion words like “anger” or “fear,” a phenomenon known as **positive valence bias**. This suggests that the emotional impact of a word affects how quickly the brain processes it.

The distinction between the expression and conceptualization of emotions is an important aspect of how emotions are represented in language. **Emotional expression** refers to the outward display of emotions, often conveyed through interjections, exclamations, or emotionally charged words. For example, the exclamation “Wow!” expresses surprise or admiration, while “Yuk!” conveys disgust. On the other hand, **emotional conceptualization** involves the more complex mental processes that underlie how emotions are thought about or understood. This is often achieved through sentence structures that describe emotions in more abstract terms, such as “I find that food disgusting” or “I love this song.”

Linguists like Foolen, Dietrich, and Costa have explored how different linguistic elements contribute to both the expression and conceptualization of emotions. For instance, prepositions can play a role in emotional conceptualization, as seen in phrases like “love for something,” which connects the emotion to an object or concept. Additionally, **emotional morphology**-such as Italian pejoratives like *cagnaccio* (“bad dog”)-illustrates how the morphology of a word can intensify or alter its emotional meaning. Syntax also plays a key role in emotional expression, with certain sentence structures, such as exclamative phrases like “a bear of a man,” serving to emphasize emotional intensity.

RESULTS. A key concept in neuropsycholinguistics is the **linguistic personality**, which refers to how language reflects an individual’s emotional and cognitive makeup. The **linguistic consciousness** of a person shapes how emotions are understood and expressed in language. This consciousness, in turn, is influenced by cultural and societal norms, making emotional expression through language not only a psychological phenomenon but also a cultural one. For example, in different languages and cultures, certain emotional expressions may be more acceptable or more frequent, revealing cultural attitudes toward the display of emotions.

In the digital age, technology has increasingly become a vital tool for exploring and expressing emotions. Digital resources and natural language processing (NLP) technologies allow researchers to analyze vast amounts of language data, providing insights into how emotions are expressed in online interactions, such as social media posts, chats, and forums. Digital platforms offer new ways for individuals to articulate their feelings, often through emojis, gifs, and other visual representations of emotion. This opens up new avenues for neuropsycholinguistic research to explore how language and technology interact to shape emotional expression.

Just as developmental psychology has moved away from a rigid view of nature and nurture as mutually exclusive alternatives, and now recognizes-indeed celebrates-how these two powerful forces interact in every aspect of human behavior and development, we have come to realize that

extreme views on the question of modularity, whether complete separation or the postulation of a single mechanism for all mental functions, are equally unhelpful. The mind is more credibly seen as a collection of semi-autonomous “organs,” each with its own purpose and mechanism of operation, but functioning within a mutually interacting network. Within this framework, language and the emotional system are particularly interesting. Both have a central, ubiquitous importance for human life, in part because each serves both interpersonal (communicative) and intrapersonal (self-regulatory) functions. Furthermore, there are substantial individual differences in both domains.

ANALYSIS. Over the last few decades, emotions have become the subject of study in scientific disciplines such as psychology, neurology, anthropology, economics, and linguistics. The interest in the human emotional sphere by researchers is quite justified, as this sphere permeates all aspects of our existence. In general, people’s ideas about emotions reflect general (universal) tendencies in their attitudes toward the world around them, suggesting that these tendencies can be revealed through the analysis of words as a means of access to the individual’s worldview. Nevertheless, it is very difficult to give a precise definition of the concept of emotion, and the numerous existing descriptions and classifications of the so-called emotional vocabulary can hardly be called exhaustive.

Modern psychology has identified common factors that reveal the essence of emotions: emotions are processes associated with instincts and motives, reflecting the personal significance and assessment of external and internal situations for human life in the form of experiences. Emotions accompany almost any manifestation of subjective activity, serving as one of the main mechanisms of internal regulation of mental activity and behavior, aimed at satisfying actual needs. The methodology of the psycholinguistic approach helps expand our understanding of the emotional sphere of the personality and allows us to study emotional processes in unity with language as a mental phenomenon. The neuropsycholinguistic approach to the study of the emotional sphere of personality is based on the concept of the “linguistic personality.” The paradigm of modern neuropsycholinguistics is focused on understanding how a personality uses language as a communication tool, how linguistic units reflect the personality itself in all its manifestations, and how the cultural and linguistic picture of the world, which shapes both the linguistic consciousness of the personality and its cultural and ethnic self-awareness, influences the worldview and linguistic personality. Linguistic consciousness acts as the main mechanism for reflecting all aspects of the personality, including the emotional sphere.

DISCUSSION. Recent neuropsycholinguistic studies on emotion words show that emotion words should be considered a separate class of words in the mental lexicon, represented and processed differently from abstract and concrete words. Moreover, positive words have a processing speed advantage over negative ones when dealing with emotion words that have high arousal and either high (positive) or low (negative) valence. Specifically, participants were able to respond faster to positive words compared to their negative counterparts, a phenomenon referred to as positive valence bias.

Research by modern scholars such as Foolen, Dietrich, and Costa distinguishes between linguistic items and processes used for the expression versus the conceptualization of emotions. According to Foolen, the conceptualization of emotions is illustrated by a sentence such as “I find that food disgusting,” while the expression of emotions is illustrated by the interjection “yuk!” The conceptualization of emotions would mainly be achieved via nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Dirven claimed that even prepositions sometimes contribute to the conceptualization of emotions by establishing relational aspects, e.g., “love for something.” The expression of emotions is also achieved through various linguistic elements and procedures: interjections such as “yuk” and “wow”; intensifiers such as “horribly” and “terribly.” Costa states that, in addition to the use of

emotional, emotion-laden, and emotion-related words, emotional morphology (such as Italian pejoratives like *cane* 'dog' vs. *cagnaccio* 'bad dog') also contributes to the expression of emotions. Furthermore, going beyond the lexical level, Foolen suggests that specific syntactic constructions, such as “a N of a N” exclamative sentences (e.g., “a bear of a man”), contribute to the expression of emotions.

CONCLUSION. The neuropsycholinguistic study of emotional expression and language provides valuable insights into how emotions are processed, conceptualized, and communicated through language. Understanding the relationship between emotion and language can deepen our understanding of human cognition and emotional experience. As new technologies emerge, they further complicate and expand the ways in which emotions are expressed, offering new opportunities for research and exploration in the field of psycholinguistics.

The study of emotions from a neuropsycholinguistic perspective offers valuable insights into the intricate relationship between language and emotional expression. By examining how emotions are conceptualized and expressed through words, we gain a deeper understanding of the role emotions play in shaping human behavior and communication. The neuropsycholinguistic approach not only highlights the complexity of the emotional vocabulary but also reveals how language reflects both individual and cultural perceptions of emotions. The recognition that emotion words are processed differently from other types of words emphasizes the significance of emotional expression in human cognition. Furthermore, ongoing research into the linguistic mechanisms involved in the conceptualization and expression of emotions continues to expand our understanding of the ways in which language influences emotional experiences. Ultimately, this field of study underscores the central role emotions play in our lives, both as communicative tools and as self-regulatory processes, reflecting the dynamic interaction between language, culture, and the emotional landscape of the individual.

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