

THE STATE OF RESEARCH ON EMOTIONAL-EVALUATIVE UNITS IN ENGLISH
AND UZBEK LINGUISTICS

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Abstract

This article examines the level of research devoted to emotional-evaluative units in English and Uzbek linguistics. The paper discusses the development of the major theoretical notions used in this field, including *evaluation*, *appraisal*, *affect*, *stance*, and *attitude*, and explains their relation to emotionality, expressiveness, and axiological meaning. Particular attention is paid to the contribution of S. Hunston, G. Thompson, J. R. Martin, P. R. R. White, J. Read, J. Carroll, A. Partington, and A. Wierzbicka. The article argues that emotional-evaluative units should not be treated only as isolated lexical items, since they function at semantic, pragmatic, stylistic, and discourse levels simultaneously. It is also shown that recent corpus-based and translation-oriented studies confirm the continuing relevance of evaluative language research in modern linguistics. On this basis, the article identifies the principal methodological approaches that may be effectively applied in the comparative study of emotional-evaluative units in English and Uzbek.

Keywords

emotional-evaluative units, evaluation, appraisal, affect, judgement, appreciation, discourse, pragmatics, semantic prosody, connotation.

Introduction

In modern linguistics, emotional-evaluative units are regarded as one of the most significant means of revealing the anthropocentric essence of language. Language does not merely transmit information about external reality; it also verbalizes the speaker's attitude, emotional reaction, approval, disapproval, irony, sympathy, protest, and value-based position. For that reason, emotional-evaluative units should not be interpreted as peripheral or optional components of meaning. On the contrary, they function as an important mechanism through which subjectivity enters speech and discourse [1; 5–8].

Hunston and Thompson's volume explicitly presents evaluation as a broad cover term for the expression of attitudes, feelings, and values in written and spoken discourse.

The relevance of this topic is determined by the fact that the study of emotional-evaluative units makes it possible to clarify the complex interrelations of language, thought, culture, and personality. Within the anthropocentric paradigm, language is interpreted as a system inseparably linked with human cognition, social experience, and emotional life. Therefore, emotional-evaluative meaning cannot be reduced to a mere connotative "addition" to denotative content. It is better understood as an active semantic-pragmatic component that structures discourse, directs interpretation, and influences the addressee [1; 5–8].

Another important feature of this field is terminological diversity. In English-language linguistics, scholars commonly use such notions as *evaluation*, *appraisal*, *affect*, *stance*, *attitude*, and *evaluative language*.

In Uzbek linguistic studies, close or overlapping phenomena are usually approached through categories such as emotional-expressive vocabulary, connotation, subjective evaluation, stylistic colouring, and axiological modality. Although the terms differ, they all converge around



one common problem: the linguistic representation of feeling, value judgement, and subjective positioning.

Materials and Methods

The present article is based on a descriptive-analytical and comparative methodology. The principal research material consists of major theoretical works devoted to evaluation and emotional meaning in language, as well as recent studies representing corpus linguistics and translation studies.

Among the core sources are S. Hunston and G. Thompson's *Evaluation in Text: Authorial Stance and the Construction of Discourse* [1; 5–8], J. R. Martin and P. R. R. White's *The Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English* [2; 42–58], J. Read and J. Carroll's article on appraisal annotation [3; 421–447], Alan Partington's study of evaluative prosody [4; 279–303], and Anna Wierzbicka's work on emotions across languages and cultures [5; 10–17]. The bibliographic records for these works consistently identify them as central references in evaluation, appraisal, annotation, evaluative prosody, and cross-cultural emotion research.

Results and Discussion

One of the central conclusions of English-language scholarship is that evaluation is not confined to a narrow group of explicitly evaluative words such as *good*, *bad*, *excellent*, or *terrible*. Rather, it is a wider discourse-semantic category that expresses the writer's or speaker's viewpoint, feelings, values, and ideological orientation. Hunston and Thompson demonstrate that evaluation is deeply involved in discourse organization and interpersonal meaning, since it helps speakers and writers position themselves toward the propositional content and toward their audience [1; 5–8]. This approach was particularly important because it shifted research away from purely lexical observation and toward a broader discourse model.

A highly influential development in this field was the emergence of Appraisal Theory, formulated by J. R. Martin and P. R. R. White. In this model, evaluative meaning is divided into three major subsystems: *attitude*, *graduation*, and *engagement* [2; 42–58; 2; 92–95]. The subsystem of *attitude* is itself subdivided into *affect*, *judgement*, and *appreciation*. *Affect* is concerned with the expression of emotional reactions; *judgement* deals with the evaluation of people and their behaviour according to social or ethical norms; *appreciation* refers to aesthetic and value-based assessment of objects, processes, texts, and phenomena [2; 45–58].

This framework is especially productive because it provides clear analytical criteria for differentiating various layers of emotional-evaluative meaning. Summaries and previews of Martin and White's book consistently describe it as the first comprehensive account of the Appraisal Framework and emphasize these same subsystems.

The role of *graduation* is particularly important in the study of adjectives and adjective-like units, because evaluative meaning is often expressed not only through the presence of a positive or negative quality, but also through the scaling of its intensity [2; 135–136]. Likewise, the subsystem of *engagement* is important because it shows how a speaker's or writer's voice interacts with other possible voices, opinions, and interpretations in discourse [2; 92–95].

Consequently, the study of emotional-evaluative units must include such aspects as degree, certainty, mitigation, emphasis, and dialogic positioning, not only simple positive or negative labelling.

Another important result of modern research is that evaluative meaning can be studied empirically through corpus methods.

Corpus-oriented research also gave rise to the notion of *evaluative prosody* or *semantic prosody*.

Alan Partington argues that evaluative colouring often emerges not from isolated lexical meaning alone, but from recurrent collocational environments and typical discourse patterns [4;



279–303]. In other words, some words may appear neutral in dictionary definitions, yet they regularly occur in negative or positive contexts and therefore acquire stable evaluative force in real communication. This idea is highly relevant for the study of emotional-evaluative adjectives and other units, because it demonstrates that lexical meaning must be examined together with syntagmatic co-occurrence and discourse context.

Conclusion

The analysis shows that in modern English-language scholarship emotional-evaluative units are no longer understood as merely expressive lexical additions. They are now treated as a complex semantic-pragmatic and discourse-based category that reflects emotions, value judgements, interpersonal stance, communicative intention, and ideological positioning.

The most influential approaches in this area include evaluation studies, Appraisal Theory, corpus-based annotation of appraisal resources, semantic prosody, and cross-cultural semantics

For Uzbek linguistics, the importance of these approaches lies in their ability to provide a more precise and multidimensional framework for the study of emotional-expressive and evaluative meanings. They make it possible to analyze such units not only from the lexical or stylistic point of view, but also in terms of discourse organization, pragmatic effect, intensity, contextual realization, and cultural specificity.

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