

**THE LANGUAGE OF EMOTIONS IN DIGITAL COMMUNICATION
TRANSFORMATION OF EXPRESSIVE MEANS**

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Abstract: This article examines the development of emotional language in digital communication. It analyzes the changes in the system of expressive means that arise during the transition from traditional written forms to multimodal digital communication. Particular attention is paid to new graphic and visual elements that compensate for the loss of intonation and nonverbal cues in oral speech. It is shown that the digital environment generates a new emotional grammar that combines verbal, symbolic, and visual components. The functions of emotional markers in the processes of self-presentation, social identification, and interpersonal interaction are considered. The risks of emotional standardization and the loss of individual style in the context of the widespread use of formulaic means of expressing feelings are emphasized. It is concluded that the transformation of emotional language in the digital environment reflects profound changes in modern communication and requires further philological research.

Keywords: digital communication; emotionality; expressive means; visual markers; multimodality; symbolization; graphic means; emotional grammar; self-presentation; linguistic norm.

In the 21st century, the digital environment has become the primary space for human communication. Emails, instant messengers, social media, and blogs have evolved into fully-fledged forms of speech, where participants interact primarily through text. However, this text has a different quality than traditional writing: it is emotionally charged, spontaneous, multilayered, and often has a hybrid structure, combining features of oral and written speech. Digital communication has given rise to a new language of emotion, which combines the properties of written, oral, and visual speech. While previously the expression of feelings relied primarily on vocabulary, tropes, intonation, and context, today users have access to pictograms, memes, stickers, visual markers, graphic elements, and other forms of nonverbal communication of emotion, which in a short time have formed an independent sign subsystem. The object of this study is the language of digital communication. The subject of this study is the methods of expressing emotions and the transformation of expressive means in the digital environment. The aim of this study is to identify the characteristics of the modern language of emotions, define new forms of expression that have emerged as a result of the transition to digital communication, and trace the mechanisms of their functioning. The objectives of the study include: describing the main means of emotional expressiveness in digital communication; determining the reasons for the emergence of new forms and changes in their functions; analyzing the influence of visual and graphic elements on the structure of modern text; identifying trends in the further development of digital emotionality; and tracing the role of social and cultural factors in the formation of new models of emotional behavior. The research methods include descriptive, comparative, and structural-semiotic analysis, elements of pragmalinguistic research, and observation of real linguistic material on social media.

Digital communication has become a natural part of everyday life, radically changing not only its form but also its very nature. It combines the properties of oral and written language, creating a hybrid type of interaction characterized by brevity, dynamism, situational relevance, and a high degree of emotional intensity. Chat messages or comments on social media, although written, are structurally reminiscent of spoken remarks—short, informal, and aimed at eliciting an immediate response from the interlocutor. While spatial and temporal distance disappears in digital communication, important elements of emotional expression—intonation, voice timbre, facial expressions, and gestures—are lost. In traditional oral communication, these nonverbal means carry the primary emotional component. The digital environment forces people to compensate for their absence by creating alternative ways to express feelings. This is how a special "emotional grammar" of digital text emerges. The user employs not only words but also symbols, unusual punctuation ("!!!", ellipses), graphic techniques (word stretching, capitalization), and intentional deviations from the norm that would be perceived as errors in traditional writing. In digital communication, these become expressive devices that convey tonal and emotional nuances. Emotional grammar also suggests the emergence of new Communicative roles. While written speech was previously more formal and distant, the digital environment erases these boundaries. People write as if they were speaking, meaning emotionality becomes a natural and necessary part of the text. Thus, the conditions for the emergence of new expressive resources are already being created at the environmental level.

The traditional system of expressing emotions has always relied on vocabulary, phraseology, syntactic intonation, and artistic devices. However, in digital communication, a significant portion of these means lose their immediacy and expressiveness due to the high speed of communication, limited space, and the visual nature of the environment. As a result, there is a shift from words to symbols. Verbal expression of emotions is being replaced by signs and graphic images: pictograms, stickers, memes, images of cultural objects, and formulaic reactions. Even simple graphic elements—ellipses, repeating letters, unusual line breaks—become full-fledged vehicles of emotion. Common uses include: repeated letters ("thank you," "very strongly")—expressing emotion through sound extension; capital letters ("I COMPLETELY DISAGREE")—simulating loud speech and raising one's voice; reinforced punctuation—question marks or exclamation marks in multiple instances; and deliberate word distortion ("I like it," "crash," "uuuh") as a means of conveying spontaneity. These elements perform functions similar to intonation in spoken language: they set the tone, highlight accents, and structure emotion. Visual markers—memes, template images, and GIF animations—occupy a special place. They not only convey emotion but also immerse the statement in cultural context. The same symbol can convey irony, sarcasm, support, or mockery, depending on the situation. Thus, digital communication transforms a symbol into a multifunctional sign, the meaning of which is determined not by its form, but by context and the collective memory of its users. It's important to note that the ubiquitous use of symbols changes the structure of modern digital text: it becomes multimodal. The verbal level is no longer the sole or dominant one: it interacts with the visual and paralinguistic layers, creating a complex ensemble of meanings.

In the digital space, emotional language serves not only a communicative but also a self-presentational function. Modern people shape their digital identity through their choice of expressions, visual markers, and writing style. The emotional code they use becomes part of their "digital profile." Younger audiences are characterized by overt emotionality, expressive abbreviations, playful forms of writing, stylized conversational speech, and a high rate of exchange. The older generation, by contrast, often adheres to a more neutral and normative style, avoiding excessive emotional signals. Thus, emotional strategies shape subcultural differences. Emotional language becomes a tool for social positioning: it helps people establish or break

distance, indicate closeness with their interlocutor, and express belonging to a particular group. Writing style itself acquires symbolic significance, becoming a marker of identity. Along with expanding expressive possibilities, digital language also carries risks. The main one is emotional standardization. Universal symbols and formulaic response formats are gradually displacing individual ways of expressing feelings. Where people once forged ahead with words, they now choose from a limited set of visual cues. This leads to: a depleted vocabulary; a reduced expressiveness of traditional speech; a superficial perception of emotions; and a loss of individual style. Furthermore, visual elements are often culturally ambiguous. The same sign is interpreted differently by different age, social, and national groups. This can lead to misunderstandings and communication errors. The need for media literacy—the ability to interpret symbols and understand their cultural context—is growing. The digital environment is developing its own punctuation norms, distinct from traditional ones. The excessive use of exclamation marks, ellipses, and question marks is transformed into a unique emotional code. For example, ellipses in digital speech not only signal the incompleteness of a thought but also convey anxiety, doubt, tension, or hidden irony. Capital letters acquire the function of a graphic equivalent of a shout or emphasis, although in some communities they are also used as an element of playful stylistic behavior, making interpretation context-dependent. Thus, digital punctuation functions as an emotional regulator, ensuring an accurate reading of the author's communicative intent. Of particular significance is the multimodal level, which unites textual, visual, and symbolic elements. Emojis, stickers, and GIF animations form a vast repertoire of emotional indicators, bringing digital discourse closer to spoken language. These elements not only convey emotion but also perform socially significant functions: they clarify the tone of a statement, prevent conflicting interpretations, shape the communication style within a community, and facilitate the creation of a user's individual digital identity. A set of characteristic expressions, graphic markers, and preferred symbols forms a person's "digital signature," which can be used to determine their communication habits.

The digital environment is creating new rules of speech behavior. Emotionality is becoming the norm, even a mandatory element of communication: the absence of emotional markers can be perceived as coldness, aloofness, or harshness. Thus, the language of emotions is shaping a new ethic of communication, where expressiveness is not just a desire, but a social requirement. Language researchers are faced with the task of describing and explaining these changes: what is becoming the new norm, which forms are stable, and which are likely to disappear? Digital communication as a phenomenon is transforming the very concept of linguistic norms, adding visual and paralinguistic components.

Digital communication has radically changed our understanding of the language of emotions. Modern people express feelings through a variety of means—verbal, visual, graphic, and contextual. These means form a new emotional system, multimodal and dynamic, reflecting the characteristics of digital culture. The transformation of expressive means does not displace traditional forms of emotionality, but rather transfers them to a new space where symbols and visual codes play a significant role. Language is becoming hybrid, combining oral and written language, the rational and the sensual, the individual and the collective. Thus, the language of emotions in the digital space is a natural stage in the development of communication, opening up new research prospects for philology and requiring a thorough analysis of the mechanisms that shape modern linguistic norms.

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