Language, emotion, and poetry / שפה, רגש ושירה

One of the main aspects of language is related to emotions. We use language to communicate our emotions and also to induce emotions in our addressees. In this course, we will discuss the notion of emotion, how emotions are communicated, and how words with emotive content are represented in the lexicon. A major part of the course will deal with poetry, a form of art which uses language as a medium and aims to communicate emotions to the readers and induce emotions in the readers. We will discuss the basics of poetry and the use of various poetic devices from a linguistic perspective. In particular, we will discuss how emotive qualities are conveyed by the poetic text and by reciters in vocal performance, and how readers and listeners respond to these emotive qualities. The discussed topics and principles will be demonstrated by texts and recorded recitals of English poetry from various periods.

The topics of the course include:

1. The functions of language (Roman Jakobson's model)
2. The notion of emotion, semantic models of emotive words
3. Phonetic background: speech sounds, phonation and voice quality, prosody
4. Emotive speech: conveying emotions with intonation and voice quality
5. Sound symbolism: iconic relations between speech sounds and meaning
6. Figurative language
7. Introduction to poetry and poetic devices
8. Emotive qualities of poetic texts and reader response
9. Vocal performance of poetry and listener response

Course requirements and grade

- Attendance is mandatory!
- Weekly assignments: 30%
- Final exam: 70%

Selected bibliography

Bakker, I., van der Voordt, T., Vink, P., & de Boon, J. (2014). Pleasure, Arousal, Dominance: Mehrabian and Russell revisited. *Current Psychology*, *33*(3), 405–421. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-014-9219-4

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Gafni, C., & Tsur, R. (2015). "Softened" voice quality in poetry reading and listener response. *Scientific Study of Literature*, *5*(1), 49–82. https://doi.org/10.1075/ssol.5.1.03tsu

Gafni, C., & Tsur, R. (2019). Some Experimental Evidence for Sound-Emotion Interaction. *Scientific Study of Literature*, *9*(1), 53–71. https://doi.org/10.1075/ssol.19002.gaf

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Jakobson, R. (1960). Closing statement: Linguistics and poetics. In T. A. Sebeok (Ed.), *Style in language* (pp. 350–377). New York, NY: The Technology Press of Massachusetts Institute of Technology and John Wiley & Sons.

Juslin, P. N., & Scherer, K. R. (2005). Vocal expression of affect. In Jinni A. Harrigan, R. Rosenthal, & K. R. Scherer (Eds.), *The New Handobook of Methods in Nonverbal Behavior Research* (pp. 65–135). Oxford University Press.

Obermeier, C., Menninghaus, W., Koppenfels, M. von, Raettig, T., Schmidt-Kassow, M., Otterbein, S., & Kotz, S. A. (2013). Aesthetic and emotional effects of meter and rhyme in poetry. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *4*(JAN), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00010

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Tsur, R. (2006). Delivery style and listener response in the rhythmical performance of Shakespeare's sonnets. *College Literature*, *33*(1), 170–196. https://doi.org/10.1353/lit.2006.0014

Tsur, R., & Gafni, C. (2019). Phonetic Symbolism: Double-Edgedness and Aspect-Switching. *Literary Universals Project*. Retrieved from https://literary-universals.uconn.edu/2019/07/20/phonetic-symbolism-double-edgedness-and-aspect-switching/