

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18454/RULB.2018.15.3.4>**СТРАТЕГИЯ ЭМОЦИОНАЛИЗАЦИИ КАК СРЕДСТВО МАНИПУЛЯТИВНОГО ВОЗДЕЙСТВИЯ В ДИСКУРСЕ БРИТАНСКИХ СМИ**

Научная статья

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**Аннотация**

Статья посвящена вопросам эмоционально-оценочного воздействия, при этом особое внимание уделяется исследованию стратегии эмоционализации, используемой журналистами для освещения событий в дискурсе СМИ, а также изучению ее риторического потенциала. Автор статьи рассматривает стратегию эмоционализации как намеренное использование эмоционально-оценочных средств и риторических приемов с целью манипуляции мнением аудитории, а также приводит конкретные случаи и способы ее реализации в дискурсе британских "качественных" СМИ. Исходя из предлагаемого анализа языковых данных, было доказано, что стратегия эмоционализации является одним из наиболее распространенных способов манипулятивного воздействия автора дискурса СМИ на адресата. Статья способствует пониманию дискурсивных механизмов современных СМИ, воздействующих на восприятие обществом освещаемых событий.

**Ключевые слова и фразы:** дискурс СМИ, риторика, манипуляция, стратегия, эмоции.

**EMOTIONALISATION STRATEGY AS A MEANS OF MANIPULATION IN THE BRITISH MASS MEDIA DISCOURSE**

Research article

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**Abstract**

The article is devoted to the issues of emotional and attitudinal impact. Particular attention has been paid to the study of the emotionalization strategy used by journalists to cover events in mass media discourse and to the study of its rhetorical potential. The author of the article identifies the strategy of emotionalization as the intentional use of emotional and attitudinal means and rhetorical devices with the aim of manipulating the audience's opinion. The particular cases and ways of its implementation in the British "quality press" discourse are presented. As evidenced by the suggested analysis of linguistic data, it is proved that the strategy of emotionalization is one of the most common ways of exerting manipulation by the author of media discourse on the addressee. The article promotes deeper understanding of modern mass media discursive mechanisms that shape and impact public opinion about the covered events.

**Keywords:** mass media discourse, rhetoric, manipulation, strategy, emotions.

**Introduction**

Emotions have always been part of public discourse, being one of the main factors in regulating social behavior and polarizing social groups as well as shaping decision-making. On the one hand, emotions separate the social and political sphere from personal relationships and distance reason-based theories from personal opinions, whereas, on the other hand, they make our communication more lively and appealing to the audience.

Recently, due to the development of information technologies and Internet communication, the means of emotional expressiveness have become a focus of interest of many scientists. Thus, the study of their rhetorical potential in the modern mass media discourse is especially interesting since mass media play a crucial role in shaping the audience's perception of social, political and cultural events and problems.

Considering emotions from a rhetorical point of view, it is essential to turn to the views of Aristotle, who argued that "orators try to alter the people's thoughts and beliefs in such a way that they will be prone to a particular kind of emotion" [1, P. 43]. According to his theory, "the persuasion of a public audience does not only depend on arguments, but also on the emotional state the audience happens to be in" [1, P. 47]. In other words, by imposing certain emotions on the audience, the author influences the latter and makes it take the point of view that is advantageous for him.

As the famous French psychologist and sociologist, G. Lebon, claims, "crowds cannot be guided through rules <...>, but it is necessary to look for something that can impress them <...>" [2, P. 5]. Another prominent scientist, T.A. van Dijk, argues that "facts are better described and remembered if they contain strong emotions" [3, P. 5]. N.S. Dankova points out that "the media product is currently becoming not only the subject of factual and formal information, but also the subject of the information experienced by the recipients emotionally and causing a sense of involvement" [4]. It is obvious that emotionally marked language can have a strong impact on the recipient. Therefore, emotional argumentation plays a key role in the process of modern communication and, especially, in terms of mass communication.

One of the important features of modern mass media is a variety of ways and means of influencing the addressee, which can be carried out in several ways: . influencing through the information itself, argumentation and the use of emotional tools [5, P. 126]. In general, the impact in modern media is carried out both with the use of traditional (logical and emotional) and modern (information) methods of influence. Recently, studies have shown that a more reliable and quick method of changing the public opinion is to change the emotional meaning and attitude to a particular problem. A logical way of influencing either does not always work or works not for everyone, since a person tends to avoid the information that can prove to him that his behavior is erroneous [6]. As a result, a tendency to use the strategy of emotionalization, by which we mean **the intentional use of emotional and attitudinal means and rhetorical devices with the aim of manipulating the audience's opinion**, is increasingly noticeable in the modern mass media. Thus, the study has posed the following research question: how does the strategy of emotionalization function and is linguistically marked and identified in the modern mass media discourse?

#### Method

The methodology of this study is based on a discourse analysis of the text. This methodological approach is, from our point of view, the key to understanding the social processes associated with mass perception of social problems covered in the media. The reliability of the scientific results is supported by the convincing analysis of the collected linguistic material taken from the recent British "quality" newspapers dated 2016-2018. The method of continuous sampling was used to collect the material.

#### Discussion

Some cases of using the strategy of emotionalization in which the author influences the audience through the *emotionally marked vocabulary* should be considered:

(1) *The thing which Putin and the cronies around him fear as much as legal sanctions is the glare of a public spotlight exposing what they're really up to. <...> We already do it for suspected terrorists who are subject to financial sanctions, and for banned terrorist organisations too, so why should some of the nastiest human-rights-abusing criminals on the planet be any different?* [7].

(2) *The task will be a supremely challenging one, for Trump is as bullishly self-confident as he is ignorant. He will not be easily deflected or denied. And the crass, know-nothing nationalism that lay at the heart of Friday's speech is a powerful force. Like America's new leader, it appeals to the darker side of human nature, bolstering the insidious claims of jealousy, envy, greed and hubris. It thrives on fear, chauvinism, discrimination and not always subliminal notions of ethnic, racial and moral superiority. It is a product of our times* [8].

In the example № 1 the author emotionally manipulates the public opinion through the use of expressive vocabulary in order to show his negative attitude towards the Russian oligarchs whom he disrespectfully calls the "friends" of the Russian President, V.V. Putin. Avoiding the direct expression of the author's views suggests the inclusive use of the pronoun "we": the author hides his own opinion under the collective pronoun "we", thus identifying himself with his readers. In the example № 2, the author's attitude to the American President, D. Trump, his speeches and politics is also transmitted indirectly through the emotionally marked vocabulary with negative meaning. In both cases, it is the emotional argumentation that is the main instrument of manipulative influence on the audience.

The use of testimonials (references to the credible opinion leaders: either of well-known personalities or professionals in a certain field) is also one of the most common methods of emotional influence in the British mass media discourse, with the main emphasis being put on assessing the fact and degree of its emotional influence on the audience. It is necessary to note that testimonials can be used for the purpose of creating both a positive and negative image or opinion:

(3) *ROMAN Abramovich became one of Russia's richest men with the help of Vladimir Putin who he gifted a £25m yacht while being described as the leader's "favourite son". <...>* [9].

(4) *The MI5 chief will accuse the Kremlin of "flagrant breaches of international rules" and warn that Mr Putin is pursuing an agenda through "aggressive and pernicious actions by its military and intelligence services"* [10].

In the example № 3 the author gives his opinion about the oligarch R. Abramovich, ironically calling him the "favourite son" of the Russian president. When mentioning the names of reputable people, especially the world-famous celebrities, together with other personalities, there is the so-called "halo effect", which is that the authority of a person and the attitude towards him or her are automatically projected onto all the people around him [11, P. 124]. In this case, the attitude towards the businessman R. Abramovich is given exclusively through the prism of his relationship with V.V. Putin and the reader has to accept the author's opinion about this person. In the example № 4, the opinion of the director of the British special service MI5, Andrew Parker, on the actions of the Russian military structures and special services is quoted. It is a kind of emotional manipulation when the author actually presents the opinion of another person, hiding his opinion under the reference to the credible person.

Another way to strengthen the emotional argument in the British mass media discourse is the use of statistics. The use of large numbers in the articles on politics is presented not as factual information, but as a hidden estimate:

(5) *On the plus side, 62 per cent consider Trump a 'strong person' and 58 per cent call him 'intelligent.'* [12]

(6) *In an extraordinary turnaround, May's rating is now at -20% (with 31% approving her leadership and 51% disapproving)* [13].

Under the statistical data, the author veils his true aim - influence on the addressee. In the examples № 5 and 6, very detailed statistical data are given to enhance the emotional effect of the information presented, its clarity and reliability, and also to show his point of view - support (№ 5) or disapproval (№ 6) of a particular politician.

To enhance the emotionality of the arguments presented, the authors tend to use the rhetorical device of self-presentation [11, P. 138]:

(7) *I doubt that Donald Trump cares one oddly quiffed iota for the opinions of the British travel industry* [14].

(8) *...personally, I think he [Donald Trump] is a rank opportunist whose rhetoric is at best tub-thumping hot air, at worst, dangerous and inflammatory guff...* [Ibid].

Such self-presentation markers as the personal pronoun "I" together with the verbs, denoting propositional attitude and opinion ("think", "doubt"), and the viewpoint adverb "personally" are used in the examples № 7 and 8 for the direct expression of

the authors' opinions, references to their experience, reputation or professionalism and for the enhancement of their image in the eyes of the readers. In these cases, the authors do not act as journalists who transmit information in the media, but as individuals having their own viewpoint on the covered issues, which undoubtedly increases the emotionality of the authors' arguments as well as the degree of their influence on the reader. In this regard, it is submitted that the higher the emotionality of the provided arguments is, the higher the authors' credibility is and, consequently, the more effective the communication is [15, P. 155].

### Results

As suggested from the analyzed material, it can be inferred that the strategy of emotionalization is used in the British mass media discourse to create both a positive and negative image (either opinion or attitude) of some person (or event) in order to manipulate the readers' thinking and opinion. The spectrum of linguistic means of presenting this strategy is quite wide. Emotions can be represented in various ways: from quotations and references to the authoritative opinion, statistical data, direct expression of the author's personal opinion to emotionally marked words including common nouns, personal pronouns, viewpoint adverbs, propositional predicates, adjectives with emotive meaning and numerals. It is also important to emphasize that in order to manipulate the reader, the author not only does seek the identification with the readers' opinion, but also tends to improve his own reputation by creating an image of an emotional person who expresses his feelings openly, which, in turn, undoubtedly inspires confidence in the audience and raises the authority of both the author himself and the information he provides.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, it is necessary to mark that the strategy of emotionalization is one of the most common and important tools of the author's manipulative influence on the reader in the British mass media discourse.

The study of the strategy of emotionalization is of interest not only for the scientists in the field of linguistics and rhetoric, but also for those who are interested in the issues of psychology, sociology and other fields of humanitarian knowledge. This research contribute to understanding of the mechanisms and tools of manipulative influence, namely, the nature of the communicative relationship between the author and the addressee, especially in such cases when the author manipulates the reader's feelings, arouses and imposes a certain emotional state on the readers. Thus, he directs the process of communication in the direction which is advantageous for him and forces the reader to play the passive role of the "victim of manipulation": to accept the author's position and agree with him. If we have the awareness of emotional manipulation, it is possible to detect the explicit and implicit ways of manipulating our thoughts and feelings as well as to understand the ways of influencing the psychology and behavior of the mass addressee and national consciousness as a whole.

### Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

### Conflict of Interest

None declared.

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