

MSC 2020**International Scientific and Practical Conference «MAN. SOCIETY.
COMMUNICATION»****LINGUISTIC APPROACH TO STUDY OF STRATEGIES FOR
INCREASING TEXT-BASED INTEREST**

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Paveltrue2007@rambler.ru**Abstract**

The article provides the linguistics approach to investigation of text-based interest. This approach is founded on basic tenets of linguistics of emotions that allow to combine linguistic and psychological research methods and outcomes. The article gives a description of the role of interest in emotive educational discourse and the linguistic methods of text-based interest analysis. The communicative situation of reader's interest evoking due to the expository text may be considered as one of the kinds of emotive discourse, namely, an emotion-evoking discourse. In this discourse the speaker's intention "to evoke recipient's interest" is the reason of usage of interest-evoking rhetorical strategies, i. e. the special text generation strategies focused on the subsequent evoking of recipient's interest. Such strategies may be examined using methods of communicative-functional linguistics. First, these methods allow to identify particular strategies. For instance, the article provides an example of the analysis of two such strategies in Russian textbooks, a text dialogization and a contextualization. Second, the communicative-functional methods allow to reveal the main ways of using language and creating completed text in realizing such strategies. In our opinion the formation of text dialogicity, the concretization of text content and the formation of text emotiveness refer to such ways.

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1. Introduction

In psychological terms the emotion of interest, or curiosity, is treated as a specific positive experience that is connected with somebody's needs and motivation to find out something new about an object and desire to interact with it (Izard, 2007; Silvia, 2017). The emotion of interest is known to be essential to the learning process as it is this emotion that "continually influences mental processes" (Izard, 2007), creates "the psychologically comfortable mode of mental work" (translated by L. P. & P. N.) (Kholodnaya & Gelfman, 2016) and constitutes an initial phase of individual interests development (Renninger & Hidi, 2019). Interest significantly influence the learners' attention and goals, self-regulation of their activity and choice of mental strategies in fulfilling training tasks (Ainley, 2017; Renninger & Hidi, 2019).

Insofar as text is one of the common forms of imparting knowledge to learners, more and more experts have been claimed that the expository texts in school textbooks should not be merely comprehensible for a learner but also interesting, that is, such texts should evoke an emotion of interest (Kholodnaya & Gelfman, 2016).

2. Problem Statement

The psychologists have distinguished and described approximately 20 text characteristics that can evoke recipient's interest while reading an expository text (Ainley, 2017; Schiefele, 2009; Silvia, 2006). The specialists have made an attempt to separate out a number of basic ones, which usually include novelty, vividness (i. e., imagery, suspense, unexpectedness), coherence (i. e., ease of comprehension, relevance, poor organization), the importance and relevance of information, concreteness, and engaging themes (death, power, sex et al.) Schiefele (2009) has briefly generalized the studies of "interesting text": "...well-organized and comprehensible texts with concrete, surprising, and vivid information enhance text-based interest" (p. 199).

Consequently the psychologists take into consideration the text characteristics which are primarily determined by the text perception situation (e. g., ease of comprehension or novelty) too. Therefore, the text characteristics such as prior knowledge, familiarity, reader goals et al. are often added to these lists (Silvia, 2006). Moreover, as P. J. Silvia noted, many of distinguished text characteristics had not been described and were concluded from supposes and intuition.

It should also be noted that the most of distinguished "interesting text" characteristics are in fact characteristics of its content. It is somewhat characteristic of reader's text processing as a process of constructing a mental model of text content. At the same time this approach does not allow to distinguish and describe real "interest-evoking rhetorical strategies" (Hidi & Baird, 1988, p. 480), and their importance was emphasized by Hidi and Baird (1988). They have identified two kinds of such strategies that can be used in expository texts and are aimed at evoking of two types of text-based interest, that are "knowledge-triggered interest" and "value-triggered interest" (Hidi & Baird, 1988, p. 470). The first kind of strategies is related to the intention to make up with new and unexpected (from a reader's point of view) information in a text, and the second one is related to various ways to increase the relevance and significance of

information presented in a text. However this approach has seldom been taken into account in further psychological studies.

It seems that many disputable issues of text-based interest can be worked out using a linguistic approach. It will allow to describe in more details both the “interesting text” characteristics and different interest-evoking rhetorical strategies.

3. Research Questions

- 3.1. What is the role of interest in emotive discourse?
- 3.2. What is the role of interest-evoking rhetorical strategies in expository text?
- 3.3. How can we investigate text-based interest using linguistic methods?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is the assertion of an alternative methodological approach – linguistic approach to text-based interest investigation founded on basic tenets of linguistics of emotions (the Russian linguist Shakhovskii (2008) has offered a special term “emotiology” to denote this scientific field).

5. Research Methods

The methods used in this research include linguistic communicative-functional methods and methods of discourse analysis.

6. Findings

6.1. Interest and emotive discourse

From the very beginning of the linguistics of emotions is being closely connected with the communicative-functional approach to the study of linguistic data (Shakhovskii, 2008). The expected result of rapid development of emotiology according to this approach has been the innovative discourse-pragmatic approach to emotion (Alba-Juez & Larina, 2018; Alba-Juez & Mackenzie, 2019). Therefore, it is particular relevance to current research of emotive discourse that is a discourse which has “some affective content or effect” (Koschut, 2018).

Katriel (2015) distinguishes three types of emotive discourse (“emotionally laden discourses”) which highlights three typical situations of emotional verbal interaction: a discourse on emotions, an emotional discourse, and an emotion-evoking discourse.

The first two kinds are connected with transmission of emotions as a special kind of information (“interpersonal meanings” in linguistic terms (Alba-Juez & Larina, 2018)). A discourse on emotions is usually called “a description of emotions in speech” in Russian emotiology (Piotrovskaya, 2015, p. 780). Such discourse contains a description of someone’s emotional states or the story about any emotionally laden events (e. g., *He feels sad*). An emotional discourse involves the direct expressing of emotions (e g.,

Oh! My son – my son!). As we stated earlier, this type of emotive discourse has subtypes, which are determined by the mode of emotions expressing.

A specific and the most underexplored kind of emotive discourse is an emotion-evoking discourse which is not connected with transmission of emotions as a specific kind of information and hence it may not have “affective content” at all. On the one hand, the academics and philosophers have been investigating and describing verbal means of intentional emotional influence since ancient times. On the other hand, psychologists and psycholinguists have been studying text emotiogenicity as a text characteristic depending both on its content (including means of emotional exposure) and on a situation of text perception, i.e., on personality of a recipient and communicative context of text perception (Shakhovskii, 2008).

Current psychological research of text-based interest is focused largely on exploration of expository texts emotiogenicity. The proposed linguistic approach directs merely on research of verbal means of emotional influence in terms of an intention “to evoke recipient’s interest”. It is assumed that such means relate to certain interest-evoking rhetorical strategies which are rated as a “strategic tool” (Katriel, 2015, p. 58) of an emotion-evoking educational discourse and aimed at increasing the potential emotiogenicity of an expository text. It is no doubt that study of interest-evoking rhetorical strategies is not fully able to predict and explain a real emotiogenic effect of an expository text.

6.2. Interest-evoking rhetorical strategies in expository text

Interest-evoking rhetorical strategies may be treated as strategies of text generation focusing on the subsequent evoking of recipient’s interest. At the heart of any strategy of text generation, as well as the strategic usage of language as a whole, are the speaker’s communicative intentions (Fetzer, 2018). The intentions are a necessary part of text conception because they determine some verbal form of influence on a recipient and play a meaning-organizing role (Dridze, 1984). More properly, the intentions “meaningfully line up a material in a text and thereby organize its texture” (Duskaeva, 2012, p. 254). Therefore, we may claim that the intention “to evoke recipient’s interest” underlies the applying of different interest-evoking rhetorical strategies.

The intentions of authors of expository texts are largely determined by the requirements for a textbook that a producent wants to realize (Kholodnaya & Gelfman, 2016). The intention “to evoke recipient’s interest” may be defined as facultative since the requirement “to make a text interesting” is not mandatory, although it seems to be sure.

The result of the interaction of various strategies of text generation is an expository text. Based on Dridze’s (1984) study, it is advisable to treat expository text as a functional system, “within the framework of which linguistic constructions are used to realize certain communicative-cognitive goals and can vary according to these goals” (p. 62).

Thus, it is possible to match the intention “to evoke recipient’s interest” and various “linguistic constructions” that were created by applying different interest-evoking rhetorical strategies. Such constructions are presented in an expository text, which is a product of text generation and an object of perception.

6.3. The nature of analysis of an emotion-evoking discourse

The examination of emotion-evoking discourse may be rated as one of the directions of text communicative-functional analysis.

It is important to underline the relevance of this approach to linguistic research of text-based interest. First, this approach is focused on the description of “linguistic constructions” intentionality (Mackenzie, 2016) and hence allows to identify the interest-evoking rhetorical strategies. Secondly, according the functional approach, surface structure of text is examined not merely in terms of how it realizes the speaker's intentions, but also in terms of semantic representations. This allows us to take into account many characteristics of “interesting text” highlighted by psychologists. Finally, the communicative-functional analysis implies a comparative examination of involved texts. This is especially important if one takes into consideration facultative nature of the intention “to evoke recipient’s interest” and, as a consequence, the broad variability of means to realize it.

For illustrative purposes let’s provide an examination of two texts fragments from the Russian textbooks on physics (1) and social science (2); “interesting” details in the fragments are shown in bold.

(1) Yesli **nasha** gipoteza o padenii tel pravil'na, to tela odinakovogo vesa dolzhny vseгда padat' odinakovo. **Kak proverit' eto na opyte? Voz'mom** dva odinakovykh lista bumagi i odin iz nikh **skomkayem. Otpustim** nesmyatyy list i komok: **budut li oni padat' odinakovo? Net**, komok padayet namnogo bystreye, khotya yego ves raven vesu nesmyatogo lista! Znachit, razlichie v padenii tel obusloveno ne ikh vesom. [If **our** hypothesis about the fall of bodies is correct, then bodies of the same weight should always fall the same. **How to verify this from experience? Let’s take** two identical sheets of paper and **crumple** one of them. **Let** the crumpled sheet and the lump **fall: will they fall the same way? No**, the lump falls much faster, although its weight is equal to the weight of a crumpled sheet! Therefore, the difference in the fall of bodies is not due to their weight.]

(2) S detskikh let ty slyshish' ot starshikh slovo «zarplata». S etim slovom svyazany v tvoyey pamyati dolgozhdannyye pokupki, podarki, syurprizy. Zarplata – sokrashchenny variant vyrazheniya zarabotnaya (zarabótannaya) plata, t. ye. plata za rabotu. Po-nauchnomu ona nazyvayetsya trudovym denezhnym voznagrazhdeniyem. [Since childhood you hear the word “salary” from older people. The long-awaited purchases, gifts, surprises are associated with this word in your memory. Salary is an abbreviated version of the expression salary (earned) salary, i.e., salary for work. In a scientific sense, it is called labor remuneration.]

Let’s analyze the means of interest evoking in terms of two universal contextual factors that underlie strategic usage of language units, that are interpersonal (“people-based activity”) and representative (“content-based activity”) factors (Berry, 2016).

In the case (1) the first factor underlies the simulating of the dialogue between the author and a reader. For example, the participants of a communication are expressed by the possessive pronoun *nash (our)* and the imperative forms with coactions meaning of the verbs *vzyat', skomkat' and otpustit' (to take, to crumple and to let fall)*. The interrogative constructions (*Kak proverit' eto na opyte? Budut li oni padat' odinakovo? [How to verify this from experience? Will they fall the same way?]*), the emotionally coloured utterance with the exclamatory marker (...*khotya yego ves raven vesu nesmyatogo lista!* [...although its weight is equal to the weight of a crumpled sheet!]) are used in this case too, and the attributes of dialogue

are also represented by answer the question (...*budut li oni padat' odinakovo? Net* ...[...will they fall the same way? No...]) The second factor underlies a concretization of the text fragment content. The concretization is carried out by describing the concrete, visual situation of the experiment to test the abstract theoretical hypothesis (*tela odinakovogo vesa dolzhny vsegda padat' odinakovo [bodies of the same weight should always fall the same]*). For this purpose the author replaces the abstract word *telo [body]* with the highly concrete words *list bumagi [sheet of paper]* and *komok [a lump]* and uses verbs that refer to concrete sequential actions (*vzyat', skomkat' and otpustit' (to take, to crumple and to let fall)*). Moreover, for the content concretization the author uses the mentioned means aimed at the simulating of the dialogue.

In the case (2) an addressee is expressed by the personal pronoun *ty [you]*, the finite form of the verb *slyshat' [to hear]* and the possessive pronoun *tvoi [your]*. However, the reader explication is largely due to the representative factor of language usage in this case. This factor underlies the content concretization by describing a typical life situation familiar to a learner. For this purpose the author not merely uses the concrete words (*starshiy, pokupki, podarki, syurprizy [older people, purchases, gifts, surprises]*), but also represents the recipient's internal world using the verb of perception *slyshat' [to hear]* and the noun *pamyat' [memory]* which refers to "the semantic field of mentality" (Pliva, 2019, p. 291). The interpersonal factor is found merely in usage of the pronouns *ty [you]* and *tvoi [your]*. These pronouns reflect not merely the social roles of the author (a teacher, a senior) and a reader (a student, a child), but also a certain individualization of communication, because they refer to one person, and not a group of people.

The described strategic usage of language allows the authors of the expository texts to apply two interrelated interest-evoking rhetorical strategies, namely text dialogization and contextualization. The nature of the first strategy is to create a "dialogue character" of expository text and thereby simulate a "dialogue between a learner and a text" (Kholodnaya & Gelfman, 2016, p. 48). The emotiogenicity of this text characteristic has always emphasized by Russian psychologists and textbook authors. The second strategy is aimed at providing speculative situations, in which a reader may feel him- or herself as a participant (Shain et al., 2016). The examining of emotiogenicity of this strategy has begun relatively recently. In the case (1) both strategies are used, and in the case (2) is realized merely a contextualization strategy, which stipulates the explication of a reader, i. e. a reader should be simply marked in a text as the participant of the situation.

On the whole, both strategies aim to involve a reader "as "a partner" in the intellectual search" (Kholodnaya & Gelfman, 2016, p. 40). It can be assumed that these strategies can be connected with such characteristic of "interesting text" as its relevance and significance for a reader. Using the names of the two kinds of text-based interest proposed by Hidi and Baird (1988), we may say that these strategies are aimed at evoking of value-triggered interest.

The provided cases demonstrate that the proposed linguistic approach to research of text-based interest allows to describe not merely interest-evoking rhetorical strategies, but also the main ways to use language and create completed text during realization such strategies.

Our earlier examinations of expository texts have allowed us to identify three main ways of such realization, namely the formation of text dialogicity, the concretization of text content and the formation of text emotiveness (Piotrovskaya & Trushchelev, 2019). The formation of text dialogicity relates to the interpersonal factor of language usage and the fundamental communicative nature of any discourse (Fetzer,

2018). The concretization of text content is associated with a representative factor of language usage and the universal rule of content deployment of almost any text, according to which the topic of text is expended in particular propositions. The formation of text emotiveness is connected with both the interpersonal factor (during the manifestation of speaker's or recipient's emotions) and the representative one (during describing character's emotions). The emotigenicity of these means was experimentally proved using the method of semantic scaling on the material of expository texts on geography (Piotrovskaya & Trushchelev, 2019).

It seems that the described means constitute the foundation of most interest-evoking rhetorical strategies. So, the dialogization strategy is realized mainly due to the formation of text dialogicity, and the contextualization strategy due to the concretization of text content.

7. Conclusion

Therefore, according to linguistic approach to researching of text-based interest we may highlight the communicative situation of reader's interest evoking due to the text. It is proposed to consider this situation as one of the kinds of emotive discourse, namely, an emotion-evoking discourse. In expository text producing the speaker's intention "to evoke recipient's interest" underlies usage of special text generation strategies, that are interest-evoking rhetorical strategies. To realize the linguistic examination of such strategies the most relevant are the methods developed within the framework of the communicative-functional approach. These methods allow us not merely to identify particular strategies, but also to reveal the main ways of using language and creating completed text in realizing such strategies. In our opinion the formation of text dialogicity, the concretization of text content and the formation of text emotiveness refer to such ways.

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