

CONCEPTUALIZING EMOTIONS THROUGH DISCOURSE: A PRAGMATIC VIEW ON THE READER'S INTEREST

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The paper adopts a sociopragmatic approach to the study of emotion processes and investigates discursive traits of the reader's interest. The field of written popularization was examined to establish how it conceptualizes the reader's interest through discourse structures. The text materials were obtained experimentally. They consist of 104 pairs of expository text; each of the pairs includes a text published in an academic source and a popular science text created by the participant for provoking the reader's interest. The comparative methods of empirical discourse analysis are used to identify and describe popularisation strategies. The results show that participants employed four strategies to transform academic texts: reduction (N = 94), simplification (N = 81), contextualization (N = 58), and concrete elaboration (N = 17). The strategies tend to present the most significant text ideas, reduce reader's efforts for processing, and introduce the reader into the discourse-world. The findings suggest that the strategies aim to enhance the optimal relevance and conceptualize reader's interest through the communicative dimension of relevance.

Keywords: *emotion, reader's interest, emotive pragmatics, popularization, expository text, relevance*

1. Introduction

Emotional interest (or curiosity) is a crucial variable affecting the reader's text processing: it motivates the reader to spend more time on the text and put more cognitive efforts into its processing, focuses and sustains reader's attention, as well as specifies reader's evaluations of text content (Fulmer et al., 2015; Silvia, 2006, pp. 66—73; Putro and Lee, 2017; Springer et al., 2017). According to research, interest has a positive impact on reading outcomes, including comprehension, text memorization, and learning from texts (Clinton and van der Broek, 2012; Clinton-Lisell, 2022; Fitria, 2019; Naceur and Schiefele, 2005). This effect is particularly significant for reading expository or informational texts that introduce new concepts and knowledge to readers. Therefore, generating interest in such texts is crucial for successful reading outcomes.



1.1. Problem statement

There has been a long tradition in psychology to treat the subset of interest associated with reading as *text-based interest*. The major test-based triggers seem to be well established; they include novelty (or surprisingness), coherence, vividness (i.e., imagery, suspense, unexpectedness), concreteness, engaging themes (death, sex, power, war, etc. (Hidi, 2001, pp. 196–198; Schraw and Lehman, 2001, pp. 31–36; Silvia, 2006, pp. 77–82; Wade, 2001, pp. 246–250). Renninger et al. (2018) have summed up that “readers were interested in the texts including unusual, incongruent, surprising, or novel ideas, and/or content that described actions and feelings that they found important and could identify with”. Furthermore, a large number of psychological studies make assumptions about some genre-specific features—text organisation, text content, and linguistic style—that activate interest responses: “imagery and descriptive language”, “figurative language”, “concrete language units”, “simple vocabulary”, “well-organized texts”, “personally engaging content”, and so on (see, e.g.: (Choi, 2006; Hidi and Baird, 1988; Lepper et al., 2022; Mikk and Kukemelk, 2010; Sadoski and Paivio, 2013; Shin et al., 2016)).

In the present paper, we will expand this research area by taking a pragmatic perspective on interest. A wide range of experts and professional authors have pointed out that linguistic (rhetorical) techniques make up the underlying resource for increasing text-based interest (Gendenshtein, 2005; Odintsov, 1982; Piotrovskaya and Trushchelev, 2019, 2022). In support of this view, discourse studies show that expository discourse employs specific verbal strategies to present content most effectively for acquiring knowledge (see (Calsamiglia and van Dijk, 2004; Khoutyz, 2019; Odintsov, 1982; Tokareva, 2006; van Dijk and Atienza, 2011)). In this way, the strategies for increasing text-based interest could serve as a key to the pragmatic understanding of the reader’s interest.

1.2. Theoretical framework

Our approach draws on the sociopragmatic view of emotion processes and regards them as variables embedded in discourse and social practices (see (Alba-Juez, 2021; Langlotz and Locher, 2013; Piotrovskaya and Trushchelev, 2022)). As Wetherell (2012) has noted, “Discourse *tames* and *codifies* affect” (p. 52). Building on Wetherell’s ideas about the social nature of emotions, the sociopragmatic approach appeals to the conception of *affective practice*, which “focuses on the emotional as it appears in social life and tries to follow what participants do” (p. 4). According to this conception, emotions are inextricably linked with meaning-making activity, and patterns of affective and discursive practices constantly intertwine to varying extents within social fields (pp. 20–52; see also (Koschut, 2020; Moisaner et al., 2016; Olson et al., 2020; Wetherell, 2013)). Similarly, Social Semiotics engen-



ders reflection on affect as a multimodal practice that is deduced from semiotic actions and artefacts people use to communicate (Westberg, 2021). In this sense, social interactions, most of which are verbal, are important sources for gaining information about emotion processes.

In line with the principles of emotionally laden interaction (Burdelski, 2020; de Saussure and Wharton, 2020; Hayakawa, 1977, pp. 117–136; Katriel, 2015; Koschut et al., 2017; Langlotz and Locher, 2013; Shakhovskiy, 2008, pp. 217–224; Piotrovskaya and Trushchelev, 2020; Wharton and Strey, 2019), the reader's interest is projected into discourse and appears as the emotive variable built into communication. Such communication is categorized into two notions – *emotiogenicity* and *emotive pragmatics*.

Emotiogenicity (Russian wording *эмоциогенность*) is an attribute of the discourse with regard to the reader's processing (Piotrovskaya, 2009; Piotrovskaya and Trushchelev, 2021; Shakhovskiy, 2008, p. 181). It derives from three communicative factors that define a vast range of emotional responses. These factors are context (the settings of communication, the participants, the type of activity, and others), text characteristics, and the recipient's personality (e.g., recipient's expectations, knowledge, goals, individual interests, and others) (Bohn-Gettler and Kaakinen, 2022; de Saussure and Wharton, 2020; Shakhovskiy, 2008, p. 218; van Berkum, 2018). Renninger et al. (2018) suggest that a reader's interest can be triggered by various factors, including (1) contextual factors such as the reading environment, such as working with computers or reading in a group setting, (2) features of the text itself, such as relatable characters or coherent plotlines, and (3) personal relevance to the reader, such as prior knowledge or a personal connection to the topic. *Emotiogenicity* is thus a core of *emotion-evocative communication* ("affective communication" in (Hayakawa, 1977, pp. 117–136); "talk evoking emotions" in (Burdelski, 2020, p. 30)), where multilevel features construct emotional impact and induce recipient's emotions in separate ways. Strongly speaking, any discourse manifests emotion-evocative communication because any discourse "calls forth some kind of emotional response – including indifference – on the part of listeners" (Katriel, 2015, p. 58). In this respect, Hayakawa (1977) has argued that any word has *affective connotations*, that is, "the aura of personal feelings" the word arouses according to the uses to which it is put (p. 84).

Many scholars have been highlighting the strategic nature of emotion-evocative communication. In this line of thinking, the founder of the Linguistic Theory of Emotions Viktor Shakhovskiy (2008, pp. 217–224) has pointed towards a distinction between *emotiogenicity* and *emotive pragmatics*. He has made an important observation that recurrent emotional responses appearing in the given communicative settings could be typified. Therefore, the author can predict the reader's emotional responses and construct *emotiogenicity* of the discourse (p. 219). In this way, *emotive pragmatics* is grounded in the author's intentions that underlie strategies of using discourse means to bring the emotional impact to the recipient.

From the pragmatic perspective, *emotiogenicity* and *emotive pragmatics* correlate with two aspects of *perlocutionary effect* (Austin, 1962): *emotiogenicity* correlates with the actual effect of communication; *emotive pragmatics*, with the speaker's goals (see (Kang, 2013, pp. 62–63)).



Consider an example. The speaker tells a funny story that includes vivid details surprising to the listener. Imagine that the storyteller conveys the details just to either clarify the plot of the story or arouse the listener's interest. The surprisingness can provoke either the unintended or intended emotional response. In both cases, the surprisingness increases the emotiogenicity of the story in terms of the listener's personality – his/her expectations and knowledge (the actual effect of communication). But only in the second case, the surprisingness is related to emotive pragmatics according as the storyteller's goal. The storyteller decides to arouse the listener's interest by communicating surprising content and using the appropriate strategy.

Since the reader's interest is a prerequisite for successful interaction to some degree, it is an ever-present concern of authors in any communication and social interaction (see, e.g., (Kintsch, 1980; Kneepkens and Zwaan, 1994; Lane and Kent, 2018; Piotrovskaya and Trushchelev, 2022)). Undoubtedly, the reader's interest is crucial for science popular communication, where affective practices of managing interest are intertwined with expository practices that aimed to convey and explain unfamiliar information. To facilitate the formation of new knowledge, authors stimulate the reader's interest and motivation. It is reasonable to assume that emotive pragmatics occupies a prominent point in the pragmatic space of popularization and conceptualizes the reader's interest.

2. Methodology

2.1. Aim of the study

In this study, we make the assumption that popularization strategies for increasing text-based interest conceptualize the reader's interest. Our purposes are

- (1) to inspect linguistic ways in which the popularization discourse provides emotive pragmatics and constructs the interest-evoking impact and
- (2) to identify discursive traits of the reader's interest.

2.2. Materials

The expository texts to be analyzed here are obtained experimentally. The data was collected in the spring of 2021. We asked first-year students at the Herzen University (St. Petersburg, Russia) to select academic (Russian) expository texts (primary texts) and, on this basis, create popular science texts (secondary texts) that *interest* non-specialist readers. The students were not limited in time. They performed on their own and were able to use literature on texts popularization.

We received 104 anonymous works, each of which includes both primary and secondary expository texts (208 texts in total). Only students of non-philological departments passed the works. The composition of the material base is summed up in Table.



The material base for the study

The subject of expository texts	The number of works	The size of primary texts (tokens)		The size of secondary texts (tokens)	
		Total	Mean	Total	Mean
Arts	11	14 413	1310	7505	682
Biology	17	19 063	1191	8264	516
Choreography	20	20 711	1036	13 387	669
Ecology	1	679	679	523	523
Jurisprudence	1	1043	1043	523	523
Mathematics	16	18 562	1160	10 390	649
Medicine	2	1030	515	2473	1237
Psychology and education	21	20 107	957	12 587	609
Physical culture and sport	15	9624	642	5637	376
Total	104	105 232	1012	61 289	589

2.3. Methods

The pragmatic investigation of emotions implies a multidimensional context-oriented analysis of discourse variables (Alba-Juez, 2021; Alba-Juez and Mackenzie, 2019; Bouko, 2020; de Saussure and Wharton, 2020; Katriel 2015; Ozyumenko and Larina, 2021; Piotrovskaya, 2009; Piotrovskaya and Trushchelev, 2021). It is widely observed that the text has a discursive nature and manifests the interaction between writers and (potential) readers (Hoey, 2001, p. 14; Martin and Rose, 2007, pp. 1–16). Therefore, text structures could demonstrate the ways of using language to provide emotive pragmatics.

In order to analyze text structures, we have employed comparative methods of empirical discourse analysis in conjunction with methods of observation, systematisation, and classification. To detect all cases of text transformation, the application *TextCompare* (available at: <https://textcompare.ru/app>), which is based on the measurement of Levenshtein distance, has been employed.

3. Results

3.1. Reduction strategies

First of all, there were conspicuous differences in the size of primary and secondary texts. As is shown by Table 1, most total and mean values for the primary texts exceed the same values for the secondary texts. Only 18 works (17 %) showed the opposite tendency. The study found that among the other 86 works analyzed, there was a quartile distribution of size differences. Specifically, 78 participants reduced the primary texts by at least 39 %, while 43 participants reduced them by at least 58 %, and 22 participants reduced them by at least 79 %. This tendency marks strategies associated with operations of information reduction. In the words of van Dijk (1977, p. 144), such operations entail that “information is simply left out”.



Reduction strategies were used by 94 participants (90%). The following passage is a case in point (hereinafter, removed text spans are presented in square brackets):

(1) 'Балет «Жизель» впервые увидел свет рампы в 1841 году в Париже. [Через год балет увидели зрители Петербурга, а еще через год – москвичи]. Замысел [фантастического балета в двух действиях «Жизель, или Виллисы»] принадлежал известному французскому поэту [прозаику и театральному критику] Теофилю Готье (1811–1872).'

Translation: The ballet Giselle sees the light of day in 1841 in Paris. [A year later, the ballet was seen by audiences in St. Petersburg, and another year later by Muscovites.] The conception [of the fantastic ballet in two acts, 'Giselle, or Willis'] belonged to the well-known French poet [prose writer and theater critic] Theophile Gautier (1811–1872).

The case displays two ways to apply reduction strategies, macro-structural and micro-structural.

The macro-structural way, which has been taken by 74 participants, involves the reduction of a text span equal to or greater than one sentence (as the second sentence in [1]). For instance, one participant reduced a description of the circulatory system's functions by removing one sentence; and another participant deleted nine sentences that convey information about Leonardo da Vinci's inventive activity.

The participants attempted to remove rhetorically and thematically entire units, as the following cases exemplify:

(2) 'Многие формы многогранников изобретены не самим человеком, а созданы природой в виде кристаллов. [Например, кристаллы поваренной соли имеют форму куба, кристаллы льда и горного хрусталя (кварца)... имеют форму шестиугольной призмы, на основании которой поставлены шестиугольные пирамиды].'

Translation: Many shapes of polyhedrons were not invented by man but created in the form of crystals by nature. [For example, salt crystals have a cube shape, ice crystals and rock crystals (quartz)... have a shape of a hexagonal prism with hexagonal pyramids at the base.]

(3) 'Благодаря разливам Нила эта земля была одной из плодороднейших в мире. [Именно поэтому экономика Древнего Египта основывалась на сельском хозяйстве в плодородной долине Нила. Надо было только уметь задерживать воды и совершенствовать земледелие. Это требовало общих усилий, общей организованности, которые возможны только при сильном централизованном государстве].'

Translation: Because of the floods of the Nile, local land was one of the most fertile in the world. [That is why the economy of ancient Egypt was based on agriculture in the fertile Nile Valley. It was only necessary to be able to retain water and improve farming. This required joint efforts and a united organisation which was possible only with a strong centralized state.]

Case (2) presents a description passage where the removed component is an illustration of the general statement (the signal is a word *например* [for



example]); Case (3) presents a two-part causation passage where the removed component is an 'effect part' (words *именно поэтому* [that is why]) (see (Meyer, 1992)).

Cases (1)–(3) show that participants removed text spans that supply specific information about more significant ideas, which set the way for discourse elaboration. In this sense, the data demonstrates a special type of the macro-structural strategy – *summarising strategy*, which was used by 41 participants. They attempted to eliminate specific information about significant ideas and produce a written overview of the main points of a primary text.

The micro-structural way of reduction, which was used by 83 participants, involves the reduction of the sentence part(s) (see the third sentence in [1] above). The following cases are significant as well:

(4) а. '[живая и неживая] природа'

Translation: [animate and inanimate] nature

б. 'Сьюзен Деллингер [из США]'

Translation: Susan Dellinger [from the USA]

с. 'сердце [, способствующее движению этой жидкости]'

Translation: the heart [which contributes to the movement of this fluid]

(5) а. '[В 1953 г.] американский ученый Стэнли Миллер [(1930–2007)] смоделировал такие устройства.'

Translation: [In 1953] the American scientist Stanley Miller [(1930–2007)] simulated these conditions.

б. 'Тогда [на одной из приемов художника Георгия Якулова] она встретила Сергея Есенина.'

Translation: Then [at one of the artist Georgy Yakulov's receptions] she met Sergei Yesenin.

(6) а. 'Преподавание хореографии является одним из способов социализации людей [и в первую очередь детей, подростков и молодежи].'

Translation: The teaching of choreography is one of the ways to socialise people [, especially children, teenagers, and youth].

б. 'В настоящее время [в условиях интенсивных и глобальных перемен] человечество ищет пути выхода из кризисных и конфликтных ситуаций.'

Translation: At the present time [of intense and global changes], humanity is looking for ways out of crisis and conflict situations.

Cases (4)–(6) show that the removed spans provide specification in the clause layer. The typical micro-structural operation was to delete modifiers ([4a]–[4c]), temporal or locative markers ([5a] and [5b]), and explanatory or specifying constructions ([6a] and [6b]). Also, 27 participants reduced conjunction constructions, as the following cases exemplify:

(7) а. 'Это выходит за пределы [человеческого восприятия и] представления о реалиях нашего земного мира...'

Translation: This goes beyond [human perception and] view of realities of our material world...

б. '«Дочь фараона» – парадный, зрелищный [монументальный] спектакль...'

Translation: *The Pharaoh's Daughter* is a grand, spectacular[monumental] performance...



It should be noted that 19 participants deleted proper names (names for a particular person, toponyms, historicisms) and academic terms (e.g., *глобализация* [globalization], *катализатор* [catalyst], *социальный институт* [social institution]):

(8) а. 'Революционные идеи гуманизма послужили причиной создания шедевров [Леонардо да Винчи, Микеланджело, Альбрехта Дюрера].'

Translation: The revolutionary ideas of humanism caused the creation of masterpieces [by Leonardo da' Vinci, Michelangelo, Albrecht Dürer].

б. 'Гипотеза А. И. Опарина – Дж. Холдейна завоевала много сторонников, так как получила экспериментальное подтверждение [возможности абиогенного синтеза органических биополимеров].'

Translation: The Oparin-Haldane hypothesis won many supporters because the experimental confirmation [of the possibility of abiogenic synthesis of organic biopolymers] had been obtained.

Thus, the micro-structural way follows the same tendency as the macro-structural way: it bears the elimination of specific information about more significant ideas. This fact elucidates why 70 participants have combined macro-structural and micro-structural strategies.

3.2. Simplification strategies

Simplification strategies make a text accessible to a broader audience by facilitating text organisation and text vocabulary. These strategies have been used by 81 participants (78 %).

As far as text transformation is concerned, simplification is generally assumed as reduction (see, e.g., (Zhong et al., 2020)). So, it is safe to assume that participants deleted proper names and academic terms (see the cases [8a] and [8b] above) because these words might be incomprehensible to potential readers. Similarly, 17 participants deleted definitions of academic terms by using the macro-structural reduction strategy.

It is noteworthy that 32 participants created short wordings that outline removed information. For instance, sentence (9) replaces six sentences that convey information about the nutritional features of the amoeba:

(9) 'Амебам, как и любым другим живым организмам, нужно питание.'

Translation: Amoebas, like any other living organism, need nutrition.

The following cases demonstrate how participants used short wordings along with the micro-structural reduction strategy:

(10) а. 'В своих творениях архитекторам нужно совместить **функциональность, гармоничность, комфортность, экономичность и долговечность.**'

Translation: Architects need to combine **functionality, beauty, harmony, comfort, economy, and durability** in their creations.

а'. 'В своих творениях архитекторам нужно совместить **много качеств.**'

Translation: Architects need to combine **many features** in their creations.



(11) в. 'Это явление обсуждали и изучали **ученые, философы, художники и богословы.**'

Translation: This phenomenon has been discussed and studied **by scientists, philosophers, artists, and theologians.**'

б'. 'Это явление обсуждали и изучали многие люди.'

Translation: This phenomenon has been discussed and studied by **many people.**'

49 works demonstrated two simplifying operations. The first operation was to replace uncommon and/or abstract (academic) words with common and/or more concrete words:

(12) а. 'демеркуризация'

Translation: demercurisation

а'. 'удаление ртути'

Translation: the removal of mercury

б. 'окисление'

Translation: oxidising

б'. 'взаимодействие с кислородом'

Translation: an interaction with oxygen

с. 'эксцентричный'

Translation: eccentric

с'. 'своенравный'

Translation: wayward

д. 'скорее исключение, чем правило'

Translation: the exception rather than the rule

д'. 'большая редкость'

Translation: great rarity

The second operation was to introduce modifiers to elucidate the meaning of uncommon and academic words and abbreviations:

(13) а. 'Платон'

Translation: Plato

а'. 'древнегреческий филолсоф Платон'

Translation: **ancient Greek philosopher** Plato

б. 'инфляция'

Translation: inflation

б'. 'инфляция, т. е. обесценивание денег'

Translation: inflation, **i. e., fall in the purchasing value of money**

с. 'СПИД'

Translation: AIDS

с'. 'СПИД (синдром приобретенного иммунодефицита)'

Translation: AIDS (**acquired immunodeficiency syndrome**)

It should be noted that most of the participants did not simplify syntactic structures and text macrostructures. Only four participants converted one complex sentence into several simple ones; two participants divided primary texts into sections and created headings for them; and three participants segmented primary texts into paragraphs.



3.3. Contextualization strategies

In the words of Shin et al. (2016, p. 42), “contextualizing strategy elicits emotional interest by providing a situation that readers can relate to or identify with before the main text is presented”. We propose to expand on this interpretation and consider contextualizing strategies with reference to the notion of *contextualization*. In its most general form, contextualization entails the import of context – as a “given” external to the discourse unit – into communication (Fetzer, 2018). The “given” can be thought of as a dynamic sociocognitive construct including many variables – communicative settings, participant characteristics, previous text spans, types of interaction, and so on (see, e.g., Sperber and Wilson, 1995; van Dijk, 2008)). Leckie-Tarry (1991) held the methodological view on contextualization in terms of “differences in the emphasis at each level of context” (p. 119). So, expanding on the interpretation by Shin et al., contextualizing strategies link with the level at which the text brings in readers.

This type of strategies was used by 58 participants (56 %).

55 participants attempted to design dialogic engagement by using dialogicity/metadiscourse units (see (Bondi, 2018; Hyland, 2005, 2014; Makkonen-Craig, 2014)).

First, participants used writer-oriented markers that express the author’s attitude towards propositions. The following examples employ attitude modifiers in (a) and (b), an exclamatory marker in (c), a parenthetical expression in (d), a booster in (e), and a hedge in (f):

(14) a. ‘отличный вопрос’

Translation: a **great** question

b. ‘интересное исследование’

Translation: an **interesting** research

c. ‘Она способна к размножению в течение почти трех десятков лет!’

Translation: It is capable of breeding for almost three decades!

d. ‘К сожалению, спорт не играет важную роль в жизнь многих людей.’

Translation: **Unfortunately**, sports do not play an important role in many people’s lives.

e. ‘По всей видимости, далее, в процессе эволюции...’

Translation: **Apparently**, further, in the process of evolution...

f. ‘Я не уверена, что вы знаете об этом.’

Translation: **I’m not sure** if you know about this.

Second, participants used engage markers that manifest and build a connection with potential readers. For example, the following case employs a question, a question-answer pattern, and directives:

(15) a. ‘Так что же такое граф?’

Translation: So, what is a graph?

b. ‘Надо ли нам изучать эти понятия? Конечно надо!’

Translation: Do we need to explore these notions? Of course, we need!

c. ‘Давайте более подробно рассмотрим это определение.’

Translation: Let us take a closer look at this definition.

d. ‘Представьте ситуацию, что...’

Translation: Imagine the situation that...



Also, participants used markers that indicate communicative settings. Such markers encode the reader's position, discursive actions, and temporal parameters. They occur as personal pronouns or vocatives, discursive verbs, and temporal adverbs or verb tense forms respectively:

(16) a. '**Сегодня мы будем говорить** о дробях.'

Translation: Today, we are going to talk about fractions.

b. '**Теперь мы обсудим** другой вопрос...'

Translation: Now, we will discuss another question...

c. 'Как **вы уже поняли**, современные технологии развиваются...'

Translation: As you already understood, contemporary technologies are developing...

39 participants took another way of contextualization and referred to the reader's experience. For clarity, consider the following cases:

(17) a. 'Как **вы знаете**...'

Translation: As **you know**...

b. '**Вы**, наверное, **видели**, как...'

Translation: *You have probably seen* how...

(18) a. '**Вспомните, вы ведь наверняка хоть раз сталкивались** с жизненным кризисом, таким, например, как ссора с близкими друзьями или потеря работы.'

Translation: **Think back, you have probably experienced** a crisis at least once, such as a fight with close friends or a job loss.'

b. 'Я думаю, **каждый** когда-то **держал** в руках птичье перо и **видел**, как оно устроено...'

Translation: I think **everyone has** at least once **held** a bird's feather in the hands and **seen** how it is made...'

The cases employ two kinds of linguistic means that refer to a reader, on the one hand, and to the reader's experience, on the other. To refer to a reader, the personal pronouns (e.g., *вы* 'you'), a personal verb form (*знаете* 'know-PRS.2PL'), and pronominal quantifiers (e.g., *каждый* 'everyone' in [18b]) are employed. To refer to the reader's experience, the cases employ cognition and perception verbs (*знаете* 'know', *видели* 'seen', *вспомните* 'think', *видел* 'seen'), imperfective verb forms, and nouns that designate entities with which a reader is likely to have dealt.

3.4. Concrete elaboration

Choi (2006) defined concrete elaboration as "replacing less concrete words and phrases with more concrete counterparts and adding concrete descriptions" (p. 24). According to Dual Coding Theory, this strategy affects the reader's interest by facilitating a reader to create mental images (Sadoski and Paivio, 2013, pp. 115–132).

This strategy of concrete elaboration was used by 17 participants (16%). For example, one participant gave a detailed description of Pheidippides's running from the battlefield of Marathon to Athens:



(19) 'Среди спортсменов ходит легенда, что греческий воин Фидиппид преодолел дистанцию в 37,5 км до Афин, чтобы сообщить о радостной победе в войне. Марафонец действительно донес счастливую весть и рухнул замертво со словами: «Радуйтесь! Мы победили!».'

Translation: There is a legend among athletes that the Greek warrior Phidippides covered 37.5 km to Athens to report a joyful victory in the war. The marathon runner actually delivered the happy message and collapsed dead with the words, "Rejoice! We won!"

The participants also created concrete analogies and comparisons to explain scientific concepts. For instance, one participant expounded a psychological notion of 'gestalt' by comparing it with a dish 'doner', the taste of which is the combination of many ingredients. Also, 5 participants used concrete elaboration along with contextualizing strategies. As an illustration, one participant explained the notion of a 'graph' by referring to the reader's experience of city walks.

4. Discussion

The results demonstrated that participants primarily sought to reduce concrete information and not introduce new. So, 94 participants (90 %) applied reduction strategies; while only 17 participants (16 %) used concrete elaboration. It is well known that the reader's interest is often triggered by concrete content, such as character identification, activity level, vivid description, observable comparison or explanations, and others (see, e.g., (Hidi and Baird, 1988; Odintsov, 1982; Piotrovskaya and Trushchelev, 2019; Sadoski and Paivio, 2013; Wade, 2001)). A number of previous studies on the reader's interest have shown that concretization is often employed by (Russian) school textbooks, most notably textbooks on Geography and History (see (Piotrovskaya and Trushchelev, 2019, 2020; Trushchelev, 2022)). Bornstein et al. (2020) have found that the concrete processing mode – in regard to cognition – increases the intensity of basic emotions, which include interest (see (Izard, 2007, p. 261)). In light of the findings, it appears that the strategies employed by the participants were more geared towards decreasing text-based interest rather than augmenting it.

We can assume that participants avoided significant transformations of primary text content. If so, it would be enough for participants just to insert some contextualization means (e.g., questions or directives) into primary texts. Such operations would take much less effort than operations to implement reduction strategies. However, only 6 participants did so.

Recently, several pragmatic works about emotions (de Saussure and Wharton, 2020; Wharton et al., 2021; Wharton and Strey, 2019) have appealed to the *Relevance theory* that is based on two principles, cognitive and communicative. *Cognitive principle*: "Human cognition tends to be geared to the maximisation of relevance" (Sperber and Wilson, 1995, p. 260). *Communicative principle*: "Every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance" (p. 260).



Wharton et al. (2021, p. 261) have proposed that the cognitive principle underpins not only verbal interaction but also human cognition. Following the acknowledged psychological findings, they stipulated that emotions are caused by the object that must in some way be *relevant* to the person (p. 264). In their view, emotional relevance depends on the addressee's goals that derive from purposes, motivation, interests, desires, and so forth. In particular, epistemic emotions, which include interest, depend on the goal of acquiring knowledge; therefore, the relevance of an object can be appraised in agreement with this goal and determine epistemic emotional responses (pp. 265–266; see also psychological works (Connelly, 2011; Renninger et al., 2018)). Hence, there is a cause-and-effect ratio between gearing to the maximization of relevance and emotional responses.

The communicative principle is associated with the notion of *optimal relevance*. According to Wilson (1998, p. 60), an object is optimally relevant to an addressee if (1) it is worth the addressee's effort to process it and (2) it is compatible with the addressee's abilities and preferences. Therefore, "An utterance, on a given interpretation, is consistent with the principle of relevance... if the speaker might reasonably have expected it to be optimally relevant on that interpretation" (p. 61). As de Saussure and Wharton (2020) have noticed, speakers "should make their communicative stimuli appear at least relevant enough to be worth processing" (p. 192). Thus, optimal relevance should match the reader's gearing to the maximization of relevance to some degree.

Consider now the participants' strategies in terms of relevance.

First of all, the participants increased optimal relevance by removing pieces of specific information about significant ideas. The sense of reduction operations is quite obvious: significant ideas are more relevant enough to be worth the reader's efforts to process them. It was probably for the same reason that most of the participants also did not apply concrete elaboration.

Second, the avoidance of concrete elaboration might be associated with coherence, which implements optimal relevance pertained to the reader's efforts for processing (Wilson, 1998, pp. 64–73). According to Givón (2020, pp. 107–143), the ground of a coherent discourse is 'referential coherence'. It cues cognitive operations to activate and de-activate referents, search for antecedent referents, and connect new referents with antecedent referents. To minimize the reader's efforts for referent processing, participants reduced specific information and did not introduce new.

Third, participants increased optimal relevance by applying simplifying strategies. The 'simpler' text, the fewer efforts readers put into processing, and, hence, the greater the optimal relevance. Similarly, reduction strategies reduce the size of a text and consequently reduce the number of stimuli that require efforts readers put into processing.

Fourth, the participants increased optimal relevance through contextualization. Contextualizing strategies make content more familiar and accessible to readers by establishing the link between readers and the discourse world. The reader recognizes his/her position in the text and supposes that the text deserves his/her efforts for processing.



5. Conclusion

The present study contributes to the ongoing socio-pragmatic inquiry into emotions and advocates for pragmatic perspectives on emotion processes. Specifically, the study aimed to shed light on the discourse processes underlying the conceptualization of the reader's interest. To this end, the study investigates four common popularization strategies employed to enhance the reader's engagement. The findings demonstrate that popularization discourse conceptualizes the reader's interest with respect to the communicative dimension of relevance (this output supports and expands the pragmatic view of epistemic emotions (Wharton et al., 2021, pp. 265–266)).

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КОНЦЕПТУАЛИЗАЦИЯ ЭМОЦИЙ В ДИСКУРСЕ: ПРАГМАТИКА ЧИТАТЕЛЬСКОГО ИНТЕРЕСА

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Статья основывается на социопрагматической трактовке эмоций как дискурсивных переменных. Обсуждается концептуализация читательского интереса в письменной научно-популярной коммуникации. Материал исследования получен экспериментально: студентам нефилологических специальностей РГПУ им. А.И. Герцена было предложено выбрать научный текст и создать на его основе научно-популярный текст, который заинтересует неспециалиста. Получены 104 работы, каждая из которых включала первичный научный текст и вторичный научно-популярный текст. Для анализа материала использовались сравнительные методы эмпирического дискурсивного анализа. Выявлены и описаны четыре типа стратегий трансформации научного текста: стратегии исключения (94 ии.), упрощения (81 ии.), контекстуализации (58 ии.) и конкретизации (17 ии.). Эти стратегии направлены на представление наиболее значимых идей текста, сокращение усилий читателя по восприятию текста и введение читателя в «мир» дискурса. Стратегии повышают оптимальную релевантность речевого сообщения и концептуализируют читательский интерес с точки зрения коммуникативных параметров релевантности.

Ключевые слова: эмоция, читательский интерес, эмотивная прагматика, популяризация, объяснительный текст, релевантность



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