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Communication strategies of features in British newspapers

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‘Newspaper feature is an article written from a ‘human interest’ angle, also called ‘soft news’ and a feature story’ [1]. It usually deals with a particular subject. A feature is quite longer than a standard news story. It usually includes more details and background based on more extensive research than a news story. It is related to contemporary events that are of public interest.

‘The joy of feature writing lies in its variety. Being varied features are hard to defy. The safest guide is negative: they are not news’ [1].

Writing features demands that writers attract and hold the reader’s attention and in addition they can require that writers research and master complicated subjects, then turn a larger part of information into accessible and digestible form.

As to the ways of attracting reader’s attention, writers have a wide range of communication strategies to create a headline, express their position, make original interpretation and use figurative language.

The aim of the research is to study communication strategies used in features taken from ‘The Guardian’: direct speech, human touch and presence affect in writing features.

Features can be divided into four categories: profiles, background features, opinion pieces and product stories.

We have examined a profile feature of an individual person from ‘The Guardian’ (8, April, 2019) ‘I still find it crazy’ [3].

It is based on an interview, where direct speech is used as a dominant communication element. The feature hero’s voice we can ‘listen’ to in the headline itself: ‘I still find it crazy’.

There are three main elements, which arouse readers’ and scientists’ interest: the author’s position, original interpretation and figurative language. The author has the right to create his own history using such means, which will help to place the correct accents.

Reading the article, we feel the hero’s perception of life. The author includes direct speech of the hero, but it does not look like an interview. The feature has narrative style, including direct speech. ‘I look at how hard Padraig Harrington worked, how hard Vijay Singh worked’ [4]. Repetition of the phrase ‘how hard’ reflects hero’s attitude to life and success. It emphasizes that the hero is a hard-working person. Moreover, we can meet figurative language in the feature. For example, ‘Nick Faldo has taken Wallace under his wing’. This idiom makes the feature more impressive and highlights the meaning of prominent player Nick Faldo to the hero.

The author expresses his attitude to the hero. Speaking about the hero’s failure, the author is quite supportive. ‘Wallace was widely considered as unfortunate not to have earned one of Thomas Bjørn’s captains picks for last year’s Ryder Cup... but Wallace did not let any sense of dejection linger’. This makes us respect the hero.

More than that, the author uses ‘human touch’ technique, focusing on the emotional side of the feature. To interpret the event through the perception of the author himself or the transfer of sensations of the hero. This feature is focused on emotional distress of the hero. The interview includes expressive phrases: ‘I still find it crazy’, ‘I’m there to compete, there trying to win. If I

can give myself a chance come Sunday, you know I'll be trying to win the tournament' – these phrases reflect confidence of the hero and his emotional state. "I haven't thought: 'I've made it.' I know how intensely I need to work to keep up the quality of my golf", – the hero says. Short phrases reflect the golf player's decision, ambitions to overcome difficulties, to win. The writer emphasizes that his hero is firm determined to become the 35th player in the world. Such phrases confirm author's position.

It is the story of success, that's why the description of the personality is important here. The writer highlights hero's confidence and expresses his position. The writer, describing the hero's ups and downs in his career, emphasizes that you are not a loser till you work hard and hope that you will succeed in your hopes, dreams and aims. The is the message of the feature to the reader.

The feature is perceived to be facts-heavy and the details included in them depend on the writer's judgements of what will interest the readers. The strategy of film techniques is reflected in the following feature 'Body shock: Suspiria's Damien Jalet unleashes his headless dancers' ('The Guardian' 1, April, 2019). It may work well for communication and the 'presence effect' that used to show events in real time. The author describes a dance using action verbs in Present Simple Tense to arouse reader's imagination: 'Seven nearly nude dancers move first around and then on top of it (ice cap), scraping fistfuls of a gunky white substance from the surface and dripping the goo over themselves. The landscapes of body and set slowly merge' [4]. The visual description gives us an impression that we see this dance in reality.

The author makes us surprised writing about the performance: 'What is startling about Vesel is how easily you forget you are watching humans altogether...It is difficult to distinguish their individual forms – or even determine which limb is which – and so they exist as unified sculptures' [4].

Moreover, to illustrate some communication strategies of opinion features we have examined experts' opinion 'How many work emails is too many?' ('The Guardian' 3, April, 2019)

The feature starts with an idea that should interest the reader. 'Many of us feel overburdened by emails at work' (being 'bombarded' with 71 emails a day). [5] The beginning of the feature appeals to office workers. Its tone is informative and opinionated for the purpose of communication.

The writer of the feature is an expert, so he makes concluding statements that can be useful for readers. He puts the most important words at the end. 'Strategic ignorance has a cost – you may miss things and annoy some people. But there's a pay-off: you win back time which can be used to get your job done' [5].

As we can see from the analyzed texts, the authors of features try to contact and influence the reader. The author expresses his opinion, his original interpretation, the figurative language and 'human touch' technique usually attracts, causes interest, awakens the imagination of readers. Besides, author does not only tell the reader what happened but explains why it is important, and who is affected and how.

To sum up, this exigence is articulated through three characteristics that have dominated feature journalism from the very beginning: it is intimate, it portrays people in close details and it allows the journalist to be subjective and therefore intimate with his or her audience; it is adventurous, in the sense that it takes the audiences on journeys to meet people and places that are interesting; and it is literary in the sense that it is closely connected with the art of writing, narrativity, storytelling.

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The realization of the phenomenon of russian culture in the TV program "White Studio"

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Russian culture is a phenomenon incorporating the dynamically developing process of spiritual and material value formation, the reflection of the nation during different historical periods, the basic ideological principles of the people and the cultural resources of the state. This complex and multifaceted phenomenon is explored in the theory and history of culture. However, of no less importance is the "synchronous reflection" of Russian culture in interpersonal and mass communication. As it turns out, this reflection is surprisingly accurate, rich and figurative. Most importantly, it is nearly always emotional and honest in its emotionality." [1]

That Russian culture is a topic of discussion in modern discursive practices is indicative of the fact that it is considered an actual experience – an experience of personality, of society. This study analyzes the methods employed in the realization of Russian culture in the TV program "White Studio" (broadcast on the channel "Culture"). The genre of this program is a "deep screen interview". [2] Host Daria Zlatopolskaya raises the most important issues of human existence with her studio guests, who tend to be famous directors, actors, musicians, writers etc. Five episodes of "White Studio" broadcast between September and June 2015 form the empirical base of this study. The chronological segment we selected constitutes part of a larger study of this TV program, and, in the episodes analyzed here, we outline the main methods employed in