

РИТОРИЧЕСКИЕ СТРАТЕГИИ В КОНТЕКСТЕ ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНОЙ КОММУНИКАЦИИ

Л.А. Ильинская, М.В. Платонова, Т.Г. Смирнова

Рижский технический университет. Ул. Калькю 1, Рига, Латвия,
LV-1048

Постоянный интерес к изучению современных научно-технических текстов обусловлен изменениями природы этих текстов, а также расширением набора риторических функций, которые они могут выполнять. Помимо информационной и аргументативной функций, многие специальные тексты выполняют также экспрессивную функцию с целью привлечь внимание к изложенным теоретическим фактам и эмпирическим данным. Для передачи новой информации всё чаще используются различные риторические приёмы, такие как вербальная метафора, персонификация, эпитет и аллюзия. Использование стилистически окрашенной лексики в специальных текстах позволяет сфокусировать внимание читателей, гарантируя, что новой информации уделено достаточное внимание. Вопрос приемлемости использования более экспрессивных способов передачи информации в специальных текстах остаётся предметом для дискуссии, но, несмотря на разницу во мнениях, тенденция использовать стилистически окрашенную лексику с большой долей вероятности продолжится и в будущем.

Ключевые слова: профессиональная коммуникация, риторическая стратегия, риторический приём, специальный текст, научно-технический дискурс.

The recurrent interest in the study of the contemporary scientific and technical texts is determined by the changes in the nature of these texts and the range of rhetorical functions they perform. Scientific and technical texts (further in the article referred to as special texts) are developed according to a set of conventions that aim at promoting communication and interpretation of the information presented. The transmission of information from the writers to the readers has been considered to be the main purpose of the scientific discourse.

Recently, a discussion on the rhetoric of science has become a focus of numerous studies [2; 3; 4]. In the traditional approach, the term 'rhetoric' was used to refer mostly to the organization and content of special texts, being the part of the concept of discourse [cf. 6]. However, according to Prelli [4], the modern analysis of the rhetoric of science should give an account of how scientists decide what to say to support their point of view; explain how a scientific audience differs from other audiences; discuss how scientists present and articulate knowledge, and finally, what genres, forms, and media scientists use to communicate that knowledge.

The rhetorical functions that the special texts are intended to perform define the application of certain rhetorical strategies, such as description, classification, definition, process analysis, comparison, exemplification, and argumentation. These strategies can be used both separately and in various combinations. Contemporary special texts are characterised by the tendency for expanding the range of functions they perform. Apart from purely informative and persuasive functions, many special texts also fulfill expressive function in an attempt to attract attention to the facts and evidence presented. Such rhetorical strategies as metaphoric representation and analogy are used to highlight or foreground certain information promoting interestingness and initiating discussion [cf. 5].

The rhetorical functions of the special texts have rarely been analysed with the focus on the degree of their interestingness, emotive character and poetic imagery. However, it is important to note that the contemporary special texts display a tendency for genre hybridity, which is manifested in increasing expressivity of scientific and technical discourse. The article analyses the rhetorical devices, which recently have become more frequently used in the production of special texts, for example, allusion, metaphor, personification, metonymy, and simile. Genre and pragmatic analyses

are integrated in the study of special texts in order to identify the instances of application of rhetorical elements characteristic of different genres of scientific and technical discourse, and to demonstrate how they contribute to meaning representation in the context of professional communication.

Genre analysis is required to investigate certain cognitive strategies necessary to achieve the communicative goals shared by the members of the discourse community [cf. 7]. Genres are viewed as “conventionalised forms of texts which reflect the functions and goals involved in particular social occasions as well as the purposes of the participants” [8]. Nevertheless, they demonstrate the tendency for mixing and change, giving rise to new rhetorical contexts and producing new generic forms [cf. 7]. Genre is a part of a communicative situation, and the communicative purpose of the text is the most important factor because it helps the participants distinguish one genre from another.

Popular science is one of the dynamically developing genres, which can be realised in a form of a book or journal article aimed at familiarising the society with scientific inventions, discoveries and/or technological innovations. The increasing interaction between scientific community and the general public alongside with the increasing use of multimedia and development of IT condition the changing character of the discourse in question, promoting multidisciplinary and expressivity of professional communication. Different aspects of genre, namely, its use, structure and interpretation, have become widely employed in the discourse analysis and communication studies.

To illustrate the tendencies discussed, the field of architecture has been chosen as the medium. The themes addressed in the texts on architecture may include the issues connected with civil engineering, thermal comfort, environment-related questions, sustainable building practices, computer modelling, philosophical implicatures of architecture, art and aesthetic values. It means that the hybrid nature of texts on architecture is also conditioned by growing degree of multidisciplinary, as the variety of the issues addressed by these texts presupposes the application of rhetorical devices typical of different genres.

The frequency of application of rhetorical devices in special texts is to a great extent influenced by the particular genre these

texts belong to. Blurring the boundaries between purely scientific and popular scientific generic forms, the researchers produce texts, which are more appealing to non-professional readers, as they are characterised by emotional mode of expression, picturesque vocabulary and extensive use of rhetorical devices, and thus promote the dissemination of knowledge and even commercial success of the publications.

This phenomenon is well illustrated by the following example taken from a book by R. Harbison, the author of numerous publications on the history of architecture. It can be generally defined as belonging to the genre of popular scientific prose.

At St. Peter's Bernini *orchestrates* the whole progress of the worshipper and overpowers Michelangelo's structure without actually erecting anything very solid himself. With a gigantic altar canopy he creates powerful turbulence that affects the surrounding space. Though this construction is coated in metal, its forms are fluid. The *whole twists and vibrates*, starting from *Solomonic* columns and ending in an open canopy hung with fluttering cloth fringes rendered in gilt bronze¹ (emphasis added).

The author of the text both discusses the details of the interior of St. Peter's Cathedral using professional terms and attempts to render the aesthetic and spiritual effect to be experienced in the building. He employs a number of rhetorical devices, such as verbal metaphor, personification, and allusion. Despite its explicit expressive character, the text is aimed at a reader with certain professional background knowledge, capable of decoding the meaning of specialised terms both in the situational and cultural contexts.

It is important to note that even the genre of scientific article, which is regulated by the most rigorous set of conventions, is under the influence of this tendency. Although these articles are developed using unemotional, precise language of scientific prose, the authors use rhetorical devices characteristic of other genres, but with certain limitations. Having analysed volumes 7, 8, and 9 (2013-2014) of the Scientific Journal of RTU, Architecture and Urban Planning, it has been identified that apart from traditional rhe-

¹ Harbison, R. *Travels into the History of Architecture*. UK: Reaktion Books Ltd, 2009, p. 174

torical strategies discussed above, some authors have introduced the elements unconventional for scientific writing. As illustrated by the following example, metaphors are frequently used as elements of foregrounding.

An exemplar case of recent modernisation of very sophisticated architectural *opus of modernism* in Poznan: Collegium Novum of Adam Mickiewicz University [...] Design from 1968 was strongly vertical, with dispersed horizontal lines due to *elaborated rhythm of concrete girders*² (emphasis added).

The range of devices used by researchers may also include such figures of speech as rhetorical questions that are typical of such operative genres as publicist and promotional writing.

... during the rise of global capitalism, *cities have also become commodities*, which are being evaluated, advertised and presented on the global level. [...] After all, why what provokes the commodification of the past which in turn *transforms the cities into a stage for a spectacle that is directed by economic, rather than political actors*?³ (emphasis added)

The concentration of rhetorical devices in the latter example allows maintaining that the conventions of scientific writing have become relatively flexible, and are limited only by the creative potential and professional competence of the author.

In the contemporary special texts, new information is often brought into focus using various rhetorical devices. The application of stylistically marked vocabulary within the special text allows focusing the attention of the readers on a particular information cluster, ensuring that the new information is not disregarded or missed. The issue of acceptability of the more expressive ways of communicating information in the special texts is still open to discussion, but despite the differences in opinions, this tendency is ongoing and is not likely to revert in the nearest future.

² Rumiez, A. Fractal Architecture. Architecture and Urban Planning. Vol 8. Riga: RTU Publishing House, 2013, p. 45

³ Cepatiene, R. The Patterns of Urban Landscape Commodification. Architecture and Urban Planning. Vol 8. Riga: RTU Publishing House, 2013, p. 50

Список литературы

1. Bhatia, V. *Analyzing Genre: Use in Professional Settings*. London: Longman, 1993
2. Cepatiene, R. *The Patterns of Urban Landscape Commodification // Architecture and Urban Planning*. Vol 8. Riga: RTU Publishing House, 2013. C. 50-59
3. Connor, U. *Contrastive Rhetoric: Cross-Cultural Aspects of Second Language Writing*. NY: CUP, 1996.
4. Harbison, R. *Travels into the History of Architecture*. UK: Reaktion Books Ltd, 2009.
5. Iljinska L., Platonova M., Samuilova O., Smirnova T., *Rhetorical Strategies in the Contemporary Professional Text // VALODA-2014: Valoda dažādu kultūru kontekstā*. Daugavpils: Saule, 2014. C. 406–413.
6. Kress, G. *Linguistic Processes in Sociocultural Practice*. Victoria: Deakin University Press, 1985.
7. Ornatowski C. M. *Rhetoric of Science: Oxymoron or Tautology? Special Issue: Writing and Science, The Writing Instructor*, September 2007. Available at: <http://www.writinginstructor.com/ornatowski> (Accessed April 15, 2015).
8. Prelli, L. J. *A Rhetoric of Science: Inventing Scientific Discourse*. Columbia, SC: U of South Carolina, P. 1989.
9. Rumiez, A. *Fractal Architecture // Architecture and Urban Planning*. Vol 8. Riga: RTU Publishing House, 2013. C. 45-49
10. Scarinzi A. *Evoking Interest, Evoking Meaning: the Literary Theme and the Cognitive Function of Stylistic Devices // The State of Stylistics: PALA 26*. Edited by G. Watson. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008. C. 137 – 154.
11. Trimble, L. *English for Science and Technology, a discourse approach*. GB: CUP, 1985.

Об авторах

Профессор **Лариса Александровна Ильинская** руководит Институтом прикладной лингвистики в Рижском техническом университете (РТУ) с 1999 года. Получив степень кандидата филологических наук в Ленинградском педагогическом институте в 1979 году, она начала работать в РТУ в должности доцента. Автор более чем 70 публикаций, включая 4 учебника для студентов инженерных наук. Основные направления исследования – семантика, прагматика, дискурсивный анализ, перевод научно-технических текстов и текстуральная лингвистика. Профессор Ильинская – глава научного комитета конференции «Значение в переводе: иллюзия точности» (Meaning in Translation: Illusion of Precision), почётный член Латвийской ассоциации переводчиков. Эксперт Латвийской академии наук. Email: larisa.ilinska@rtu.lv.

Марина Валерьевна Платонова – ассоциированный профессор сопоставительной и сравнительной лингвистики в Институте прикладной лингвистики, декан Факультета дистанционного обучения и гуманитар-

ных наук Рижского технического университета (РТУ). Получила степень PhD в Латвийском университете в 2011. Автор более чем 30 публикаций. Основные направления исследования – теория перевода, сопоставительная лингвистика, семантика, прагматика, терминология и текстуальная лингвистика. Член Европейского общества переводоведения с 2007. Эксперт комиссии оценки учебных программ по переводу, член совета Европейской ассоциации магистерских программ по переводу (European Master's in Translation Network). Почётный член Латвийской ассоциации переводчиков. Эксперт Латвийской академии наук.
Email: marina.platonova@rtu.lv.

Татьяна Герардовна Смирнова – доцент Института прикладной лингвистики в Рижском техническом университете (РТУ). Глава Методической комиссии Института прикладной лингвистики, член рабочей группы по развитию научного потенциала РТУ. Автор более чем 20 публикаций. Основные направления исследования – звукоизобразительность, семантика, прагматика и терминология. Email: tatjana.smirnova@rtu.lv.

RHETORICAL STRATEGIES IN THE CONTEXT OF PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

L. Ilynska, M. Platonova, T. Smirnova

Riga Technical University. 1 Kalku Str., Riga, Latvia, LV-1048.

Abstract: *The recurrent interest in the study of the contemporary scientific and technical texts is determined by the changes in the nature of these texts and the range of rhetorical functions they perform. Apart from purely informative and persuasive functions, many special texts also fulfill expressive function in an attempt to attract attention to the facts and evidence presented. New information is often brought into focus using various rhetorical devices, such as verbal metaphor, personification, epithet, and allusion. The application of stylistically marked vocabulary within the special text allows focusing the attention of the readers on a particular information cluster; ensuring that the new information is not disregarded or missed. The issue of acceptability of the more expressive ways of communicating information in the special texts is still open to discussion, but despite the differences in opinions, this tendency is ongoing and is not likely to revert in the nearest future.*

Key Words: professional communication, rhetorical strategy, rhetorical device, special text, scientific and technical discourse.

References

1. Bhatia, V. *Analyzing Genre: Use in Professional Settings*. London: Longman, 1993
2. Cepatiene, R. *The Patterns of Urban Landscape Commodification. Architecture and Urban Planning*. Vol 8. Riga: RTU Publishing House, 2013. pp. 50-59
3. Connor, U. *Contrastive Rhetoric: Cross-Cultural Aspects of Second Language Writing*. NY: CUP, 1996.
4. Harbison, R. *Travels into the History of Architecture*. UK: Reaktion Books Ltd, 2009.
5. Iljinska L., Platonova M., Samuilova O., Smirnova T., *Rhetorical Strategies in the Contemporary Professional Text*. In: VALODA-2014: Valoda dažādu kultūru kontekstā. Daugavpils: Saule, 2014, pp. 406–413.
6. Kress, G. *Linguistic Processes in Sociocultural Practice*. Victoria: Deakin University Press, 1985.
7. Ornatoski C. M. *Rhetoric of Science: Oxymoron or Tautology?* Special Issue: *Writing and Science*, *The Writing Instructor*, September 2007. Available at: <http://www.writinginstructor.com/ornatoski> (Accessed April 15, 2015).
8. Prelli, L. J. *A Rhetoric of Science: Inventing Scientific Discourse*. Columbia, SC: U of South Carolina P. 1989.
9. Rumiez, A. *Fractal Architecture. Architecture and Urban Planning*. Vol 8. Riga: RTU Publishing House, 2013. Pp. 40-49
10. Scarinzi A. *Evoking Interest, Evoking Meaning: the Literary Theme and the Cognitive Function of Stylistic Devices. The State of Stylistics: PALA 26*. Edited by G. Watson. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008. pp. 137 – 154.
11. Trimble, L. *English for Science and Technology, a discourse approach*. GB: CUP, 1985.

About the authors

Professor **Larisa Iljinska** is the Head of the Institute of Applied Linguistics of Riga Technical University (RTU) since 1999. After receiving a PhD from the University of Saint-Petersburg in 1979, she joined RTU as an assistant professor. She has authored over fifty publications, including four resource books for students majoring in various scientific technical domains. Her research interests lie in semantics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, translation of scientific technical texts. She is the Head of the scientific committee of the scientific conference “Meaning in Translation: Illusion of Precision”. She is an honorary member of the Latvian Association of Interpreters and Translators. Email: larisa.ilinska@rtu.lv.

Marina Platonova is an associate professor of Contrastive and Comparative Linguistics at the Institute of Applied Linguistics and the Dean of the Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities at Riga Technical University (RTU). She has obtained a PhD from the University of Latvia in 2011. She is the author of more than 30 publications. Her research interests lie in the fields

of translatology, contrastive linguistics, semantics, pragmatics, terminology and text linguistics. She has been the member of the European Society for Translation Studies since 2007. She is also included into the list of experts in the field of translator training and is the member of the Board of European Master's in Translation Network. She is an honorary member of the Latvian Association of Interpreters and Translators. Email: marina.platonova@rtu.lv.

Tatjana Smirnova is an assistant professor specializing in linguistics and translation at the Institute of Applied Linguistics, Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities at Riga Technical University (RTU). She is the head of Methodological Commission of the Institute of Applied Linguistics, a member of the working group on the advancement of institutional research capacity of Riga Technical University. She is the author of more than 20 publications. Her research interests lie in linguistic iconicity, semantics, pragmatics, and terminology. Email: tatjana.smirnova@rtu.lv.

* * *