

Manifestation of Expressiveness in Weather Forecast Texts

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The paper focuses on the manifestation of expressiveness in weather forecast text by means of graphic devices. Capitalizing a word, especially if it is not a proper noun is one sure way to create emphasis. Quotation marks make weather forecast text look less monotonous than it might look without them, but their real function is to keep the words of an addresser from becoming confused with those of some other speaker. Graphic stylistic devices are used for weather forecast information to be better understood providing new insight in its content, making the form presentation far from being trite, dry and pedantic.

The contents of the text is interpreted by modern linguistics as the reflection of a definite fragment of reality while the meaning of the text embraces the intellectual and emotional estimation of this fragment into that. Emotionality and expressiveness in weather forecast text (WFT) are manifested by means of lexical, stylistic, grammatical and graphic devices.

WFT from "The Washington Times" actualizes addresser's pragmatic intentions on all linguistic levels including the graphic one. One should distinguish verbal and visual texts in WFT. The visual WFT is considered to be the graphic implementation of the verbal texts, i.e. the graphic spacing of the text, the use of different sets of print, visual material of pictographic and ideographic nature. Every text level corresponds to the subcode which brings additional information into the message, so visual text plays an important part in WFT decoding.

Such visual graphic techniques as capitalization and quotation marks are widely used in WFT. The most basic rule for capitalizing words in WFT is to capitalize proper nouns, that is, nouns which name specific natural phenomena such as hurricanes: Hurricane Andrew (August 23, 1998), etc.

In addition to the fixed and agreed-upon rules for the uses of capital letters there are a number of conventions in WFT. Capital letters in combination with quotation marks are used in WFT to give emphasis to a particular weather extreme by setting it off as a proper name, or by giving emphasis to any local, temporal or qualitative characteristic that needs it.

An addresser accentuates definite words in the context graphically to draw addressee's attention to them. Being marked out graphically these words are worth regarding as communicative and expressive blocks of a statement (Kutzy 1981:50).

Graphic accentuation in WFT is conditioned by the sense implied by the addresser and his attitude towards these blocks. Therefore, being the regulative and pragmatic device graphic figurativeness influences an addressee in a definite way.

It is common knowledge that writing clearly means using words that are understood instantly by the audience. Clarity eliminates ambiguity and confusion. Clarity in WFT is achieved by means of statistics and precision in word and technique selection. Numerical facts, or statistics, enable the author "to pack a great deal of information into a small package" (Verderber 1984:264). When statistics are well used, they can be most impressive; when they are poorly used, they may be boring and downright deceiving. One sure way to create wording that has emotional impact in WFT is not to overdo statistics and to avoid pedantic and dry statements of facts. Writing precisely requires author's selection of the words and various techniques (such as graphic stylistic devices) that best represent his intentions and ideas. Alongside the capitalization quotation marks as one of the most effective devices of visual accentuation are used in WFT. They are aimed at:

1. Focusing on the expressive center of a statement.

Lightning ignited the huge "sundance" fire in northern Idaho on Aug.15, 1967 (August 15,1998).

In this case quotation marks make WFT look less monotonous than it might look without them, draw reader's attention to a particular block of the sentence. These expressive centers of statements make the audience visualize the definite natural phenomena in striking detail through vivid word pictures as "vivid language paints meaning in living color" (Verderber 1984:284). The uncommon usage of a standard word/phrase can be highlighted with quotation marks in WFT making the audience perceive the information as the new one or at least as providing the new insight.

2. Indicating direct quotation.

The resulting reduction in sunlight was blamed for causing "year without summer" in 1816 (April 6, 1998).

The isolation of somebody else's words from the words of an addresser is achieved due to visual accentuation against the graphically neutral WFT background. Graphically marked words in such a case keep their autonomy reflecting somebody else's point of view and, therefore, being a sort of quoting or documentary material. These graphically accentuated elements being the addressee's object of comparison and comprehension appear to be stylistic devices of pragmatic effect. Graphic stylistic devices make WFT information more emphatic, they are used to provide the proper attitude of an addressee towards the definite natural phenomenon.

Short quotations incorporated in WFT indicate direct discourse, the exact re-creation of words spoken or written by another person. Direct discourse places another person's language directly before readers as if the writer were not present (Rosen and Behrens 2000:428). Knowing when and how much to quote is something of an art. Well-selected, short and few in number quotations are used in WFT key places to keep readers focused on factual information not distracting their attention. WFT includes direct quotations to help the audience in their evaluation of the content and to add to the newspaper's credibility as the source of information.

Readers require some preliminary knowledge to decode graphically accentuated information. Their incompetence can prevent from proper decoding of WFT information.

In conclusion we would like to say that WFT information is more likely to be understood when it is well organized, related to previous knowledge or experience. Information clarity, vividness, expressiveness are the functions of the WFT quality. Graphic stylistic devices tend to develop material creatively, make WFT both informative and interesting.

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