Abstract

The thesis deals with evaluation in English newspaper discourse. The corpora analysed were newly created for the purposes of the sub-analyses; they comprise articles from three British online newspapers - three tabloids (the Sun, the Express, the Mirror) and broadsheets (the Telegraph, the Independent, the Guardian). The classification of the thesis' core dimensions of evaluation – opinion and emotion – draws on Appraisal Theory (Martin and White, 2005). The thesis pursues answers to two fundamental questions 1) What means do British online newspapers use to express evaluation? 2) What differences (if any) are there in construing evaluation between the tabloids and the broadsheets? In order to obtain the answers, at first, a small manual analysis of six 'positive' and six 'negative' articles (one from each newspaper) is conducted. Attention is paid to the key word analysis and the word classes expressing evaluation, namely adjectives, nouns, and verbs. Based on the findings, I decided to explore evaluation conveyed by adjectives, in the second part of the study, by employing evaluative adjective lexico-grammatical patterns described by Hunston and Sinclair (2000) and further amended by Bednarek (2007b, 2009). These patterns, which are associated with the dimensions of opinion and emotion, are analysed in the corpora in terms of function and frequency. The results prove that evaluation is highly context dependent and a mere key word analysis is not sufficient as a significant amount of implied evaluation can be overlooked. On the other hand, the local grammar approach can be considered as a useful device to detect instances of evaluation in newspaper discourse.