



VASILE ALECSANDRI UNIVERSITY OF BACĂU  
Faculty of Letters  
Str. Spiru Haret, nr. 8, Bacău, 600114  
Tel./ fax ++40-234-588884  
[www.ub.ro](http://www.ub.ro); e-mail: [litere@ub.ro](mailto:litere@ub.ro)



## CALL FOR PAPERS

*Interstudia*, no. 27

### **Framing the world through loaded language**

We propose to explore this interdisciplinary topic that acknowledges the importance of investigating the potentialities offered by language in the speaker`s/writer`s attempt of framing the world in such a way as to correspond to their communicative goals.

It is a fact that our choice of words can influence others` way of thinking and acting by appealing to logical arguments and solid evidence or, by appealing to emotions.

**Emotional appeal:** what, when, why and how?

Aristotle considered it a mode of persuasion, meant to stir emotions in the listener/reader when the speaker/writer is aware of the fact that they cannot win the argument, as they have no factual evidence for their claim. Speaker/writers can accomplish their goal in multiple ways. One of these is their resorting to loaded language in order to frame reality according to the goals they had in mind when they entered the respective interactional context. Success depends on a good understanding of the audience, as well as on knowledge of the emotion triggers.

According to Garber (*Loaded Words*, 2012:1), the term “*loaded* tells a story of abundance, excess, danger and desire.” The term, with reference to words, has been into use since mid-twenties. Anderson (1996:128) insisted that “language is not free of values...[ and that] the words used are *loaded* with emotions and attitudes, some of which are positive (*plus words*), while others are negative (*minus words*).”

*Loaded language*/emotive language/high-inference language (Jackson & Jackson, 2018) exploits the positive and negative emotional value/emotional charge (Macagno & Walten, 2014) /emotional valence (Frijda & Mesquita, 2000) that words have in addition to

their literal meaning; it is used by speakers/writers in an attempt to create a favourable or unfavourable impression on the listeners` s/reader`s mind and to influence the latter`s attitude, either positively or negatively.

Loaded/emotive language functions as a persuasive technique, as well as a manipulative one. Loaded words reflect the speaker`s/writer`s deliberate and purposeful choice of vocabulary with which they want to persuade an audience or to manipulate the audience`s action towards their goal. It is an already established fact that the pragmatic function of manipulation is linked to the use of language. Manipulative communication is an object of study in rhetoric, argumentation theory, politics, law, media and marketing and it achieves pragmatic goals. Emotional manipulation asks for an emotion from the listener (Baron, 2003) – an emotion which will be later exploited by the speaker.

Discourse studies allow research on loaded language, as “Some words are loaded with connotative associations that make them highly sensitive elements in public discourse, especially political and legal discourse” (Meijs & Blackwell, 2011). Emotionally-loaded words are distinguished from value-loaded words (Anderson & Furberg, 1996); while the first group includes the words that express the speaker`s feelings and the listener can easily deduce whose feelings they express, in the case of the second group, the feelings and attitudes appear as justified, but they do not really exist.

Loaded words are strategically used by journalists, public figures, politicians and ordinary citizens. They can enter argumentation and include metaphorical phrases, idioms, euphemisms, name-calling, even foreign words and doublespeak, as some loaded language is used in ways that are deliberately ambiguous or even contradictory.

In literature, the writer`s choice of vocabulary helps to persuade a reader to his point of view (Rog & Propp, 2006) and to generate emotions. Poetic language is considered, for example, the best example of over-loaded/stuffed language, meant to arouse emotions to the highest degree.

Media comes up with loaded words especially in headlines and in articles on social and cultural trends.

Advertising exploits loaded language to its fullest potential; an emotional advertising appeal depends on feelings and perceptions when promoting people, places or products and trying to provoke action.

Research on loaded language may be useful for understanding political discourse, too. Political rhetoric makes use of both persuasion and manipulation. Politicians, in their attempt

of gaining political advantage, operate with either empty or (over)loaded words (charged with meanings and implications); they can even become experts in the use of loaded language.

Nowadays world, which seems to have lost its compasses - being tormented by unprecedented health, social, racial and political problems – and which is characterized by unprecedented liberty of thought and speech, seems to have become the fertile soil in which loaded language can plant its seeds. Dealing with and trying to solve problems such as racism, migration, war, violence, gender discrimination, getting power, getting supremacy, terrorism, children`s rights, poverty, prejudices, pandemics – and many others – calls for people`s emotions. Consequently, as topics of speech or written discourse, they need to be embedded within emotional messages.

Meditating upon Roland Barthes` assertion (made in 1957): “What I claim is to live to the full the contradiction of my time” Marjorie Garber (2012) concludes:

*Writing today, whether it focuses on literature, art, politics, economics or philosophy, should be fully loaded – highly charged , explosive, weighty, intoxicating, fruitful, o`erbrimming. This is the best way, in fact, to combat narrowness, bias and prejudice – loaded language in the restricted sense – wherever those attitudes are found, whether in words, in questions or in intellectual life.*

We invite specialists in such fields as linguistics, discursive analysis, literature, communication studies, political studies, cultural studies, sociology, philosophy, epistemology, logic, journalism, digital humanities, etc. to contribute papers addressing problems related to the issues presented above. The following topics are suggested, but by no means should they be considered exhaustive:

- Emotive vs. non-emotive overtones; Empty vs loaded words in daily conversations, media, new media: problems and realities
- Grading/degrading Others; Praise vs blame
- Exaggeration vs. minimization
- From negative connotations to positive connotations or the other way round
- Doublespeak - Emotive misnomers: euphemisms and dysphemisms for social and political reality. Political correctness/incorrectness
- Emotional overtones in literature
- Subjective language and literary meaning
- Reader-oriented rhetorical strategies in literature
- Loaded language and propaganda

- The loaded language of political violence
- Shifting perspectives on Race and Gender through value-laden words
- Emotional advertising appeal
- Difficulties of dealing with cultural-loaded expressions in translations

**Contact person:** Elena BONTA

E-mail address [bonta.elena@ub.ro](mailto:bonta.elena@ub.ro) or [elenabonta@yahoo.com](mailto:elenabonta@yahoo.com)

## Registration form

### 1. Author information

- Name and surname
- Academic title
- Affiliation/Institution
- Personal research areas
- Representative scientific publications (3)
- Phone number
- Regular/ mail address

### 2. Submission of paper

- Title of paper
- Key-words (5)
- Thematic area

## Deadlines

Submission of paper	<b>September 15, 2020</b>
Notification from the scientific committee	<b>October 15, 2020</b>
Submission of the final version of the paper	<b>November 1, 2020</b>
(Estimated)Paper publication	<b>November 30, 2020</b>

## Useful information

*Interstudies* (Review of Interstud Interdisciplinary Centre for Studies of Contemporary Discursive Forms) is an academic journal indexed in the EBSCO, CEEOL, INDEX COPERNICUS, FABULA, KVK international databases

*Instructions for Authors* are available at <http://interstudies.ub.ro/en/instructiuni-pentru-autori/>

Submitted papers will follow the standard procedure of blind peer review ensured by the international scientific committee of the journal

For further information, please visit <http://interstudia.ub.ro/en/>