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## **THERESA MAY'S PORTRAIT IN BRITISH MASS MEDIA**

**Abstract:** The means of expression can clearly characterize an ordinary person, an actor, an artist, or even a politician, and Theresa May is certainly one of these figures. The second «Iron Lady» is famous for her cold-blooded policy which helped her to make a very successful career during national changes in the country. Both her way of doing politics, speech, and her personal style had been a subject of discussion by ordinary people and journalists long before she took office as the Prime Minister. Thousands of opinions were published in different magazines because there is a saying: so many people, so many opinions. The article analyzes several figures of speech that were used in the British media to describe Theresa May.

**Keywords:** Theresa May, speech portrait, British mass media, means of expression.

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## **РЕЧЕВОЙ ПОРТРЕТ ТЕРЕЗЫ МЭЙ В БРИТАНСКИХ СМИ**

**Аннотация:** Выразительные средства четко могут охарактеризовать человека, будь то актер, художник или даже политик, и Тереза Мэй – несомненно, одна из этих деятелей. Вторая

«Железная леди» известна своей хладнокровной политикой, которая помогла ей сделать очень успешную карьеру во время национальных перемен в стране. Ее способ ведения политики, речь и личный стиль были предметом обсуждения простых людей и журналистов задолго до того, как она заняла пост премьер-министра. Тысячи мнений было опубликовано в разных журналах, ведь есть поговорка: сколько людей, столько и мнений. В статье анализируются несколько стилистических тропов, которые использовались в британских СМИ для описания Терезы Мэй.

**Ключевые слова:** Тереза Мэй, речевой портрет, британские СМИ, выразительные средства.

A speech portrait is a linguistic personality embodied in speech that includes the following components:

- a. Sociopsycholinguistic portrait – social, psychological, biological features; personal interests and hobbies;
- b. Features of the speech portrait at the level of its lexicon: description and analysis of all system-language levels;
- c. Features of speech culture – features of communicative behavior, consideration of the addressee factor, peculiarity of vocabulary [2].

The speech portrait analysis is a characteristic of different levels of demonstrating a linguistic personality, among which the key aspects are phonetic features, in particular, intonational characteristics of the personality: rate of speech, its melody, and way of pausing and highlighting words that carry meaning and expression.

Means of expression are usually lexical and help to create a certain image in the reader's head. The most common figurative tools are metaphor, metonymy, litotes, hyperbole, paraphrases, etc. [2]. Expressive means (figures of speech) increase the expressiveness of speech, give it expressiveness with the help of such syntactic constructions as: rhetorical question, parallelism, inversion, dichotomy, etc. [2].

The new Prime Minister of Great Britain – Teresa Mary May was chosen for our analysis. Not only had the career achievements of her come under the watchful eye of the world community, but also personal ones. The press actively writes about the complex character and flawless

exposure of Lady May, for which one of her colleagues even called her a «stupid woman» [3]. And her extravagant style of dressing and love of peculiar shoes immediately became the object of discussion.

An example of a metaphor characterizing Theresa May from the negative side can be seen in an article published on the website of the newspaper «The Economist» dated January 7, 2016 [1].

The article is called «Theresa **Maybe**, Britain's Independent Processor»; it describes the actions of Theresa May during six months of her work as Prime Minister. The subtitle of the article says: «after 6 months, it is still unclear what the new Prime Minister wants – perhaps it is not even clear to herself» [1]. «Teresa–Can–Be», as the author of the article also calls her, is accused of indecision, chaotic policies regarding Brexit and the inability to determine a clear way out of the European Union.

An example of an epithet characterizing Teresa May from the positive side can be seen in the same article: «If Britain's next few years will be about avoiding traps, then the **wary tenacity** of Mrs. May could be just what the country needs» [1].

Here May's actions are called «watchful stubbornness» [1]. The sentence says that if in the next few years Britain will have to get around the traps such as complex political situation in the country, then May's wary obstinacy is what the country needs. Here we see the hardness of the nature of the Prime Minister, on the one hand, and the reasonableness of her actions, on the other.

Most often, Theresa May, being the second woman Prime Minister of Great Britain, is compared to the first woman Prime Minister – Margaret Thatcher. In an article published on the website of the newspaper «The Economist» dated January 7, 2017, one can find the following comparisons:

1. «Her allies talked of an epochal moment, **comparable to Margaret Thatcher's break with the past in 1979**» [2].

2. «There is one lesson in the overdone **comparison of Mrs. May to Thatcher**» [2].

Exploring ways and mechanisms of image creation policy is an actual problem in modern linguistics. The image of politicians is a problematic issue, since there are many prominent figures, both past and present, whose image is interesting to study from the point of view of linguistics, psycholinguistics, media linguistics, psychology, and other sciences. This article is only a small part of the study, which involves a

thorough study of the image of the politician, the means and the phenomena that create it.

According to the analysis results, the most popular means of expression among the journalists while talking about Theresa May are epithet, comparison, and metaphor. The most common of these is the epithet. It was clear that the journalists preferred to create their own metaphors, which attract the attention of the readers, make them keep their eyes and analyze the information they read. The media divided Theresa May's characteristics into two oppositions: resolute – indecisive, wise – short-sighted.

Based on the means of expression with a positive and negative estimate percentage ratio, it can be concluded that during her first 6 months of work as a Prime Minister, British mass media created a more negative than positive image of Theresa May.

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