

ATLANTIS

Journal of the Spanish Association of Anglo-American Studies

43.1 (June 2021): 199-220

e-ISSN 1989-6840

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.28914/Atlantis-2021-43.1.11>

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Emotional Rhetoric in Tea Advertising

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Drawing on rhetorical and pragmatic (Relevance Theory) approaches to emotions, this article examines claims of cultural and patriotic identity in British tea websites as examples of emotional rhetoric. I hypothesise that such claims operate as persuasive strategies designed to elicit empathy towards the product in potential consumers and ultimately to persuade them to identify with it. Results indicate that cultural identity in the form of patriotism, understood as social identity, collective memory and a feeling of belonging to or pride in one's country, can fulfil a threefold creative effect: at a rhetorical level, it contributes to the design of a stylistically pleasing text; at an informative level, it introduces an unexpected or foreign element into the advertisement; and at a pragmatic level, it involves potential addressees in the recovery of a message that can be tailored to suit their specific individual experiences.

Keywords: emotions; rhetoric; tea advertising; relevance theory; cultural identity

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La retórica emocional en la publicidad del té

A partir de un enfoque retórico y pragmático (Teoría de la Relevancia) sobre las emociones, este artículo analiza el valor retórico emocional de expresiones de identidad cultural o patriótica en páginas web británicas dedicadas a la publicidad del té. Mi hipótesis propone que dichas expresiones se emplean como estrategia persuasiva encaminada a desarrollar la empatía de los consumidores potenciales hacia el producto y la posible identificación con él. Los resultados de la investigación apuntan a que tales expresiones, entendidas como identidad social, memoria histórica y sentido de pertenencia u orgullo por el propio país, desempeñan una triple función creativa: a nivel retórico contribuyen al diseño de un texto estilísticamente atractivo; a nivel informativo introducen un elemento inesperado en el anuncio; y a nivel pragmático involucran al receptor en la recuperación de un mensaje que puede adaptarse a experiencias personales concretas.

Palabras clave: emociones; retórica; publicidad del té; Teoría de la Relevancia; identidad cultural

I. INTRODUCTION

As an integral part of communication—and indeed of our social condition—emotions guide us towards saying things “in a certain way and not in another” (Strey 2018, 119). This article addresses the role of emotions in the field of advertising. In particular, it studies the use of emotional appeals on British tea websites. I hypothesise that copywriters in this context have resorted to cultural and patriotic claims in order to elicit the empathy of potential consumers and, ultimately, seek their identification with the product. This proposed dynamic interaction between emotions, patriotism and cultural identity, which appears to be substantiated in online tea advertising, will be analysed from a twofold perspective, rhetorical and pragmatic. Additional support is drawn from studies that deal with the construction of identity and the narrative of identities.

While the importance of emotions in communication is beyond doubt, serious debate has arisen regarding the ways in which it might best be approached from a rhetorical and pragmatic angle. In ancient Greece, rhetoric was seen to be closely associated with argumentation and reason, with emotions viewed as being of a somewhat lower order. However, Aristotle developed the idea that conclusive arguments and proofs could be accepted more easily when a person’s speech moved the listener to feel an emotion or *pathos* (Rapp 2005). The interpretation of emotions has also been controversial for theories of pragmatics. It has not always been clear, for example, how to respond to certain challenges, in particular the risk that different audiences may interpret emotional claims in different ways, the ineffability of emotions—the lack of words to describe meanings that are nevertheless conveyed by a text—and the fact that they usually involve the activation of perceptual and mental images. Such nonpropositional effects have either been excluded from pragmatics or, if acknowledged, have remained largely unstudied (for an overview, see Wilson and Carston 2019).

Since my discussion focuses on the domain of advertising, it is necessary to take into account the relationship that exists between emotions, the marketplace and cultural meanings. In fact, there are certain peculiarities surrounding tea that make it an interesting product as a means of exploring this type of relationship. In the first place, tea may be regarded as a traditional element of British culture. According to recent research contrasting promotional strategies, emotion-laden techniques tend to be associated with the promotion of a country’s typical product(s); however, more rational appeals would be employed to promote the same product(s) in countries where their level of popularity is not so high (Izquierdo and Pérez Blanco 2020). Secondly, tea is endemic in areas geographically distant from the UK, some of which were once under British colonial rule. This situation is partly used by online tea advertisers to engage the potential consumer emotionally with the product.

Successful marketing strategies have been seen as emerging from, and developing, the link that connects consumer symbolism and lifestyle orientations (Elliott and Wattanasuwan 1998; Arnould and Thompson 2005). Advertising, as part of a cultural system, holds a dialectical relationship with the consumer: on the one hand, it creates

cultural meanings to be consumed—the symbolic construction of brands—while on the other, and simultaneously, it takes cultural meanings from the consumer's world and transfers them to the product—the symbolic construction of the self (Elliott and Wattanasuwan 1998, 136-39). In turn, the symbolic construction of the self appears to rest on experiences of two types: those that are lived and those that are mediated (Elliott and Wattanasuwan 1998, 135). While the latter refers to marketing communication, the former comprises those activities that are practical and immediate, such as the purchase and use of brands. Consumers can, then, be conceived of as both seekers and makers of identity. They are active participants in the symbolic process who “bend advertisements to fit their life circumstances” (Arnould and Thompson 2005, 875). As shown in section 3, this view fits well with the sort of interpretive addressee outlined in Relevance Theory (RT). The current study asks the following research questions:

RQ1 What kind of cultural identity claims can be found in online tea advertising?

RQ2 How is tea, as a marketing product, used to support such claims?

RQ3 How can pragmatics handle the emotional interpretation of these claims?

In order to answer these questions, section 2 examines the role of rhetoric and emotions in web advertising; section 3 introduces a theoretical framework for the analysis, based on Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson's RT (1995); section 4 describes the corpus and the methodology used; section 5 presents the analysis and discussion of the data; and section 6 offers some concluding remarks.

2. RHETORIC, EMOTIONS AND ADVERTISING COMMUNICATION

Web advertising is somewhat different from other types. As a technological medium, it attracts and relies on techno-literate consumers, people who in general are more likely to actively search for such texts rather than simply coming across them inadvertently while flicking through a magazine, watching television or listening to the radio. The emergence of this dynamic consumer is very significant for this study, since it directly affects three specific elements that characterise web advertising (Janoschka 2004; Labrador et al. 2014): language, information and length. Many kinds of advertisements are designed to be short, with catchy phrases intended to grab the addressee's attention in seconds. Web advertisements, in contrast, are often somewhat sustained in length, and longer texts tend to include information about a product that is more likely to satisfy the curiosity of the potential techno-literate consumer. The purpose of this study is to show how such features bear a close relationship to the rhetorical expression of emotions.

All advertising can be conceived of as a basic, although complex, communicative act: at one end of the process the copywriter plays the part of information-provider and elicitor of certain behaviour; at the other end, the addressee becomes both the attention-giver and the eventual adopter of the product or service (Martínez-Camino

and Pérez-Saiz 2012, 454-55). Similar to orators in ancient times, who sought the positive judgement of the audience, contemporary advertisers need to deliver their message so that it triggers the desired response in potential consumers, that is, to acquire the promoted product or service.

It therefore seems reasonable to examine web advertising language from a rhetorical perspective in order to see how part of its effectiveness is based on texts that are likely to be creatively and aesthetically interesting (McQuarrie and Philips 2008a). Contemporary advertising has often been described as exemplifying gentle mental biasing instead of heavyweight persuasion (Simpson 2001; Martínez-Camino and Pérez-Saiz 2012; Del Saz-Rubio 2018). This kind of “soft” persuasion appears to favour insinuations that appeal to consumers’ emotions, while setting aside open and direct statements based on reason. Such an observation is not intended to see reason as being in opposition to the “tickle” of emotional cues employed in advertising, because in practice most advertisements can be understood as a mixture of the two. What I argue here is that in most advertisements it is possible to identify a preferential tendency towards one direction or the other and, as such, it might indeed be suggested that certain passages in advertising texts do pursue an emotional impact on the consumer.

This article, then, proposes that online tea advertising relies on patriotic and cultural identity claims as examples of emotional rhetoric. That is, adverts aim to persuade and do so by creating an appropriate state of mind for addressees, thus appealing to their emotions. Yet culture and identity are difficult notions that interrelate in complex ways. As Alejandro Grimson observes, as human beings we feel we are part of a collective, a region and a country in the world, as well as of a particular generation, social class and gender group (2010, 63). These identity categories are inscribed into a culture. Thus, while culture refers to a configuration of “countless diverse elements that are complementary, oppositionally and hierarchically interrelated” (Grimson 2010, 75), identity could be defined as our sense of belonging. It may be, however, that when dealing with such complex and challenging issues, institutions, and to some extent the media and advertising, “let a national context stand in for *the* context thus privileging particular stories [...], identifying people and places in national terms and even assigning motivation on the basis of national traits and predilections” (Skey 2011, 64; italics in the original). This would ultimately risk the national context becoming a homogeneous, stereotyped ideal and a taken-for-granted notion of cultural identity (de Cillia et al. 1999; Ajtony 2013). The point in this article is to examine how cultural identity—variously understood here as social or collective identity, feelings of belonging or even expressions of national pride (de Cillia et al. 1999; Ariely 2017; Sardoc 2017)—relates directly to emotions.

The relationship that links emotion to identity is social in nature. For Jack Barbalet, for example, emotions have a macrosociological presence; that is, they appear to exist simultaneously in individuals and in the social structures in which these individuals participate (1992). It follows, then, that emotions can only be fully appraised when

they are examined taking into account the situation in which they are experienced. Thus, it is my contention that the patriotic claims found in online tea advertising tend to emphasise what people have in common, providing a sense of belonging and strengthening bonds with others, specifically those who share the same culture.

In addition to this engaging effect, I hypothesise that patriotic claims in tea advertising also play the rhetorical role of a *foreign element*, a concept developed by Gonzalo Martínez-Camino and Manuel Pérez-Saiz to refer to a feature that does not follow logically from the type of product that is being advertised, but is typically found in tickle or emotional advertisements as a means of differentiation (2012). Readers of online tea advertisements enter the communicative act with a certain framework of knowledge as to what might be expected or appropriate; this knowledge has been accumulated through previous experience, as well as through a personal history of interactions. Knowledge of this kind might include the appearance of tea, its aroma, flavour and colour, along with an understanding of how to brew tea and possibly other useful bits of information—best consumed with or without milk or sugar, beneficial effects of tea-drinking, etc. Patriotic claims, and hence cultural identity, are not likely to be part of this information. It follows, then, that the inclusion of patriotic claims in an advertisement might be felt to be unexpected and as such would be an additional aspect of creativity. In contrast to traditional advertising, the potential length of texts on websites appears to be an advantage in terms of dealing with any uncertainty that such unexpected or foreign elements might bring about.

Emotions in communication, however, are not exempt from risks. James Averill notes that emotions are not simply feelings located in the mind of the individual, but rather exist in the interaction that takes place during communication (2001). To act effectively, then, copywriters need to “enter” the world of the addressees; conversely, addressees affected by a message have to “identify” with their addressers. Averill also observes that emotions are elusive in nature and may not be experienced in the same way by all participants in the communicative act. This apparent conundrum can only be resolved through recourse to a theory of communication.

3. PRAGMATICS AND EMOTIONS: THE CASE OF RELEVANCE THEORY

RT is a cognitive model of human communication (Sperber and Wilson 1995; Carston 2002; Clark 2013; Sperber and Wilson 2015). A long-standing goal of RT “has been to show that stylistic and poetic effects traditionally associated with figurative utterances arise naturally in the pursuit of relevance, and call for no special treatment not required for the interpretation of ordinary literal utterances” (Wilson 2018, 191). According to RT, then, the interpretation of persuasive communication is governed by the same principles that apply to ordinary, spontaneous communication. Moreover, it is claimed that in order to assess the import of the rhetorical properties of a text it is necessary to transcend purely rhetorical perspectives, because other than noting that

rhetorical elements “add a certain ‘vividness,’ ‘liveliness’ or ‘beauty’ to the text,” such perspectives “say little about the resulting effects on interpretation” (Wilson 2018, 192). It appears, therefore, that RT as a theoretical model can provide an elegant approach to the study of advertising communication.

RT seeks to answer two essential questions: what is communicated and how communication is achieved. According to this framework, addressers aim to communicate their thoughts in the form of an array of propositions, the ultimate aim of which is “to alter the addressees’ *possibilities of thinking*: that is, the range of inferences for which he has evidence, and which he is somewhat more disposed to draw as a result of the ostensive act” (Wilson and Carston 2019, 35; italics in the original). The addressees’ “possibilities of thinking” can also be referred to as their cognitive environment (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 42) and, together with the notions of ostension and manifestness, constitutes a key element of the model.

An ostensive communicative act is one that attracts the addressee’s attention in order to focus it on something related to the communicator’s intentions and carries a certain import. Since I have characterised the use of patriotic claims as unusual or foreign elements in tea advertising, their presence can be regarded as possible cues to ostension. An ostensive act is, however, a much broader concept than a speaker’s meaning: it consists of an array of propositions that differ in their degree of manifestness. In other words, propositions are manifest to an individual depending on how likely this individual is to entertain them and accept them as true or probably true (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 38-46; Sperber and Wilson 2015).

Within RT, the selection of information is governed by two principles. First, the cognitive principle of relevance, based on the idea that we, as evolved beings, continually select relevant stimuli and discard that which is not worth processing. Relevant stimuli are those that interact with contextual assumptions already available to the addressee in order to trigger cognitive effects—to strengthen or discard existing assumptions or include new ones not previously held—with minimal processing effort. Second, the communicative principle of relevance, which posits that when communicators produce an utterance they are, through this very act, indicating that it is worthy of the addressees’ attention and hence the effort involved in processing it. In this scenario, relevance is defined in cost-benefit terms: an interpretation becomes most relevant when it achieves the maximum cognitive effect with the minimum processing effort (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 125-32). While processing effort refers to amount of attention, memory and reasoning, the cognitive effect, as already indicated, refers to the modification or alteration of the addressee’s cognitive environment.

These notions, taking into account the central role played by inferencing, fit within the recent attempts of RT to address the emotional import of a message. Inferences, as an array of propositions that can be more or less manifest to the addressee, are very useful in explaining the interpretation of emotions. Unlike other pragmatic approaches, RT envisages the open-endedness and high degree of indeterminacy typically found in

emotional communication as propositional effects (Yus 2016; Carston 2018; de Saussure and Wharton 2019; Wilson and Carston 2019). Emotions are made up of intimate and personal experiences, recollections, images, etc. and therefore, they are not in themselves propositional. Nevertheless, when skilful communicators, among whom we may count copywriters, foresee or attempt to elicit emotions by producing demonstrative utterances, these expressions may increase the manifestness of the array of propositions. In this way, emotions can contribute to the relevance of a text and may be accepted as weakly communicated explicatures (Carston 2018, 211-13; Wilson and Carston 2019, 37). Louis de Saussure and Tim Wharton use the term *emotional effects* to refer to the interpretive reaction triggered by the direct manifestation of an emotion and argue that they interact with the derivation of cognitive effects (2019). In this way, emotional effects produce an enrichment in the cognitive environment that, in turn, motivates them at the cognitive level as weakly communicated information. Interestingly, the same authors note that there may be addressees who will not find an emotional answer to the verbal message, in which case they will not arrive at an emotional interpretation of the text.

4. CORPUS AND METHODOLOGY

Taking as a reference the digital version of the World Tea Directory (2019), the data for this research were extracted from ten British websites selling loose-leaf tea online. The corpus consists of 258 texts amounting to 51,343 words. This allows for accurate data analysis, in that corpora containing between a few hundred and a few thousand words are deemed appropriate in Languages for Specific Purposes studies (Bowker and Pearson 2002, 48; Ramón and Labrador 2018, 214).

Another aspect that deserves some consideration is the suitability of the product with respect to the advertising medium (Statista 2020). In the UK, one of the world's top countries in terms of per capita tea consumption, tea can be seen as falling into the product category of a convenient, staple food (Holton 1958), that is, a product that represents frequent purchases, not associated with exerting specific or unusual demands on consumers' time and effort. However, the loose-leaf tea promoted on these websites cannot be found on supermarket shelves, but is rather advertised directly by small retailers and tea manufacturers themselves; thus, it can only be purchased online and/or in small outlets. Such details are very significant for the classification of the product examined here, which seems to best correspond to Richard Holton's category of a speciality product (1958, 55). Purchases of these goods tend to involve some analysis and evaluation of merits, brand comparison and quality concerns, along with a certain investment of time and effort in the process. This situation, then, appears to accord with the advantages offered by online advertising and the profile of the new technoliterate consumer described in section 2.

All the promotional webpages examined here are freely available and addressed to the general public. The information was downloaded manually and all searches were

carried out during the year 2019. In order to ensure maximum homogeneity in the data, only websites that included full descriptions of the product in body-text format were considered, thereby discarding those comprising sketchy, short sentences around a particular feature of the product. Other variables, such as tea type—black, green, white—and tea origin, did not form part of the selection criteria.

In terms of methodology, the analysis of the corpus involved the use of technology as well as close reading of the texts. I used *AntConc* (3.5.8), a freeware corpus analysis toolkit developed by Laurence Anthony, which allows the user to retrieve information about different word types, the rank they occupy in the corpus and their frequency of occurrence (2019). The initial analysis of the corpus yielded a list of 4,331 word types, the most frequent being the definite article *the*, followed by the noun *tea* in the second position, the latter clearly indicating the thematic area of the texts. However, since the activation of mental images and emotional effects depends on interpretive effects associated with a string of elements rather than on individual lexical items, the recovery of the intended import is closer to what Wilson calls “the lingering of linguistic form” (2018, 193-95). Therefore, the word frequency list provided by *AntConc* was useful only to a limited degree and the identification of the cultural identity or patriotic claims had to be substantiated manually through individual readings of the texts.

It should be noted that, having been taken from the web, these texts could be regarded as multimodal, since they are usually accompanied by images. Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen highlight the importance of visual communication, structured according to particular rules and capable of conveying meaning, so that advertisements can be conceived of as “a complex interplay of written text, images and other graphic design” ([1996] 2004, 15). The advertisements studied systematically contained images of tea leaves and occasionally included pictures related to brewing instructions. It was felt, however, that this type of information did not contribute in any significant way to the analysis being undertaken here. Thus, for the purposes of this study only the linguistic content is considered.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of data is presented in this section, which is divided into four subsections, each corresponding to an expression of cultural identity or patriotic claim: tea as a national beverage, tea and celebrity endorsement, tea and colonialism and tea and localisation.

5.1. Tea: A National Beverage

Under this heading, I have grouped those examples in the corpus that express the importance attached to tea drinking as a claim to cultural or patriotic identity. The analysis begins with some examples reflecting that “the idea of tea drinkers as a nation has become emblematic of the British identity per se” (Farrell 2002, 19). I then go on

to consider two aspects of tea drinking that are arguably related to cultural identity: the food that is regarded as appropriate to accompany tea and the moment(s) of the day associated with the consumption of tea. The analysis of the data shows how advertisers skilfully use patriotic claims related to national belonging, food and daily practices and habits to elicit the empathy of potential consumers.

Examples (1) and (2) contain propositions that addressees are very likely to regard as true, namely, that tea is an important drink for British people and British people love (black) tea (1) and that tea enjoys popularity among all social groups (2). Thus, these two examples strongly communicate the significance of tea within the UK. Such propositions, further enhanced by the phrases *nation's favourite* and the informal *for us Brits* in (1), along with the loose form *is almost in our veins* in (2), generate a sense of tea being an integral part of British culture, a defining feature of British everyday life and thus a signal of identity. An interpretation along these lines requires a certain processing effort, in that copywriters do not explicitly state this message. Such an effort, nevertheless, will be rewarded with cognitive effects about tea as a beloved national symbol, the respect people may feel for their shared traditions, the sense of belonging that is attached to tea, etc. Thanks to the linguistic elements used, advertisers are able to encourage an emotional interpretation of their texts, leading addressees to feel proud of or comfortable with their British origins. In this way, national identity, which might be regarded as an unusual or foreign element in the advertisement, may eventually become a persuasive feature to encourage tea consumption.

- (1) English Breakfast Tea. Our nation's favourite black tea is known throughout the world and is still the most popular thirst quencher for us Brits. (Rosie Lea Tea)
- (2) Tregothnan celebrates the fact that tea cuts across all sections of community and is almost in our veins. (Tregothnan)

Other issues that seem to be involved in tea advertising in order to promote the idea of a national beverage are food and the period of the day associated with tea drinking. With respect to the former, Kate Fox notes that the tea “taken at around four o'clock [...] consists of tea and cakes or scones [...] or perhaps little sandwiches” (2005, 77-78). Food of this type does indeed appear in the advertising texts of the corpus, where tea is introduced variously as “a perfect accompaniment to a slice of drizzle cake”; “an ideal accompaniment to a little slice of cake”; “great with some cakes or snack sandwiches”; “ideal with the classic gingerbread biscuit”; “best savoured with a (Cornish) cream tea”; “a great companion for / pairs well with madeleines, financier, scone or Victorian sponge cake”; “goes particularly well with cake or biscuits”; “works extremely well as an accompaniment to chocolate cake”. Apart from offering some practical guidance on convenient flavours that can be combined with tea drinking, the above expressions may also work as claims to cultural identity that seek to appeal

to the emotions of potential readers. As I will show, however, such claims feature more as insinuations than clear statements.

The evocative power of food is well established, at least since the narrator of Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* described travelling back into a memory while savouring a madeleine dipped in tea. Arguably, the presence of food expressions in the corpus could trigger sensory-perceptual and affective experiences in British consumers, due to the familiarity and knowledge that they have about tea drinking; such experiences can be recalled, reconstructed or imagined and will vary widely from one individual to another. Despite their ineffability, references to food eaten with tea may help the potential reader activate cognitive effects about the pleasure attached to eating such food, including moments of delight, happiness and even possible childhood memories. Brands with which consumers have had real experiences can acquire deep meaning. As noted, this frequent sensual experience can be used "in nostalgic activity, and/or to restore a sense of security" (Elliott and Wattanasuwan 1998, 140).

Similarly, our corpora associates tea with time in various ways, for instance, by mentioning the first meal of the day: "perfect as a daily breakfast tea"; "a great option for / a wonderful choice of a breakfast tea"; "a truly memorable breakfast tea". In other examples, tea appears in conjunction with other periods of the day: "a perfect tea [...] for a little afternoon indulgence"; "can be enjoyed at any time of the day—but particularly at breakfast or in the afternoon"; "to be enjoyed in the morning"; "recommended to drink as a mid morning to early afternoon tea"; "to be enjoyed mid-morning or in the afternoon"; "best savoured around 3 p.m."; "a great companion during your afternoon tea break"; "perfect taken with afternoon tea"; "can be enjoyed any time of the day but especially wonderful later afternoon and evening"; "an ideal after meal or evening drink"; "an ideal late evening or after-dinner beverage"; "especially perfect just before bed." Table 1 illustrates the occurrences of food types, times of the day and meals that accompany tea in my sample.

TABLE 1. Tea and food habits

Food types	Tokens	Times of day	Tokens	Meals	Tokens
biscuit(s)	3	morning	16	breakfast	24
cake(s)	11	afternoon	16	dinner	2
cream tea	4	evening	4	meal	11
financier	2	before bed	1		
madeleine	2				
sandwiches	3				
scones	2				

Undoubtedly, given that tea is a stimulant, such references may be interpreted as helpful advice as to the best moment to drink the variety of tea in question.

Nevertheless, they may also work as claims to cultural identity and, as such, play a persuasive emotional role. On the one hand, the above extracts also show what Mary Farrell aptly calls “the ubiquitous cup of tea” (2002, 43), that is, that tea time in Britain is any time. Correspondingly, tea can have a domestic value when drunk in the intimacy and privacy of one’s home (Fromer 2008, 531) or can play “the role of provider for social intercourse and refreshment” (Farrell 2002, 26).

Arguably, then, on reading the above expressions, addressees familiar with this background may be able to trigger weakly implicated propositions about the pleasure of drinking a cup of tea and the joy, happiness, comfort, solace and so on, that it provides. This may be accompanied by personal recollections, images and lived experiences, which in turn would interplay with the deriving of cognitive effects. Some support for this might be found in the following examples:

- (3) Its nutty, sweet taste makes it perfect accompaniment to breakfast or as a mid morning pick me up. (Kensington Tea)
- (4) This makes a beautiful refreshing alternative for drinking at breakfast or for a little afternoon lift. (Rosie Lea Tea)
- (5) Wrap your hands around a steaming mug of Chilli Spiced Chai and bring some warmth and comfort into a cold winter morning! (Chantler Teas)

Through the careful crafting of these texts, copywriters achieve more than simply enlivening the passages. Thus, the relationship of tea drinking with boosts in vitality, as in (3) and (4), or a state of well-being (5) would become more manifest if the action of tea drinking were to take place repeatedly, as part of a daily routine. Additionally, all this is part of a particular cultural practice that affects general eating habits, work schedules, etc. It is against such a background that the elements analysed in this section—tea drinking habits, typical food accompanying the beverage, tea time—may be understood as features of cultural identity expressed through patriotic claims. They form part of the ideational fabric of people’s lives and, consequently, may be missed and longed for. Potential consumers, then, might infer notions about food and time related to tea as shaping identity, providing a sense of belonging and holding people together. And if potential addressees are indeed able to trigger positive emotions about tea drinking, then they will be in the right mood to purchase the advertised product.

5.2. Tea and Celebrity Endorsement

A common marketing strategy, celebrity endorsement (Erdogan 1999), consists in juxtaposing the image of a brand with the alleged qualities of a celebrity—beauty, charm, trust—in the hope that these properties are transferred to the product or brand itself.

Likewise, I suggest that tea copywriters refer to cultural symbols as a specific variety of cultural identity or claim to patriotism in order to engage consumers. By definition, then, celebrity endorsement features as an unusual, foreign element in the advertisement (Martínez-Camino and Pérez-Sáiz 2012), a strategy that brings about a certain amount of surprise and that, according to my hypothesis, will be resolved emotionally. Some instances in the corpus that employ this strategy can be found in the following examples:

- (6) No wonder that Queen Elizabeth II was so captivated by the glamour of this tea and named it as “Oriental Beauty”! (Tea Repertoire)
- (7) Named after the British Prime Minister for whom it was specially created in 1831, Earl Grey is a quintessential British tea. (Ringtons)
- (8) English Breakfast was also instrumental in the Monty Python spam sketch (waitress: ‘Well, there’s egg and bacon; egg, sausage and bacon; egg and spam; egg, bacon and spam...’), which thereafter gave annoying and unsolicited emails their nickname. (*adagiotea.co.uk* 2019)
- (9) James Joyce, a gourmand as well as a prolific writer, began Ulysses with not one, but two Irish Breakfasts. (Adagio Teas UK)
- (10) Hear Me Roar!—House Lannister inspired loose leaf tea. This blend is as rich as the House of Lions itself and is the ideal accompaniment to an evening of plotting. (Rosie Lea Tea)

The items underlined in (6) to (10) are not likely to count among consumers’ normal expectations with respect to tea advertising, in that no obvious, prior relationship exists. For this reason, I suggest that celebrity endorsements may be seen as a creative, rhetorical strategy. A common feature to all of them, nonetheless, is that they seem to be a part of (British) potential readers’ broad knowledge about their country’s past and present history—the Queen, Charles Grey—entertainment or “popular culture” (Weight 2002)—the comedy group Monty Python and the reference to the fictitious noble families in the series *Games of Thrones*—and literature—although James Joyce was Irish, he and his work will probably be taken as belonging to the same literary canon as *David Copperfield* by the English writer Charles Dickens and *The Portrait of a Lady* by the American Henry James, which also appear in my sample. By virtue of this, the inclusion of such references will immediately be perceived as highly significant and will elicit the kind of interpretation aimed at by the copywriter. The various passages show how these celebrities themselves relate to the advertised product, through having tasted it—(6) and (9)—having inspired it—(7) and (10)—or having

found it helpful—(8). Potential addressees may use this information to strengthen the manifestness of propositions introduced by the copywriter, in particular those related to the excellence of the product, its outstanding quality or its widely recognised status within British culture. The monarchy, for instance, has been perceived as one of the central elements of Britishness (Weight 2002).

Furthermore, cultural familiarity with these celebrities may lead consumers to evoke or (re)construct recollections, mental images and perceptual experiences associated with them. Hence, the underlined elements in (6) to (10) become emotional cues that can help the potential addressee to derive weak implications relative to their relationship with the named celebrities—possible admiration, moments of happiness, lessons learnt from them, etc. The additional processing effort brought about by an element that is foreign or unusual to the advertisement can in this way be transformed into cognitive effects and, ultimately, a positive orientation towards the product.

5.3. Tea and Colonial Times

As a commercial product, tea presents an interesting duality. While it is consumed around the world, it is grown in only a few countries, the majority in East Asia. Advertising takes advantage of this. Some tea-producing countries were once part of the British Empire and, as can be seen in the following examples, colonialism is used as a marker of cultural identity in online tea advertising to elicit the addressees' empathy for the product:

- (11) The Kenilworth Tea Garden—named after the Kenilworth Castle in Warwickshire, England—is situated in the Central Province of Sri Lanka. (The Tea Makers of London)
- (12) Ceylon Sonata is a traditional black tea from the renowned Kenilworth Estate in the Kandy region of Sri Lanka. In colonial times, this island nation was known as Ceylon, and so this name is still used to describe all teas grown here. (Adagio Teas UK)
- (13) Nuwara Eliya, referred to as “Little England” by locals, is known for its cool weather, architecture and golf courses, as well as being the most well-known of Sri Lanka's tea-growing districts. (The Tea Makers of London)
- (14) Our innately superior version of this much-loved loose leaf tea hails from the Margaret's Hope Tea Garden; nestled at the foot of the Himalayas. Famed for being one of the oldest and most popular Darjeeling estates in the world, it was named in the 1930s after the owner's daughter who so adored the garden. (The Tea Makers of London)
- (15) Glenburn [...]. The revered Himalayan garden was founded in 1859 by a Scottish tea company. (The Tea Makers of London)

- (16) This Ceylon loose leaf black tea is produced in the famous Lover's Leap estate in Sri Lanka. [...] Lover's Leap was the only tea plantation owned by the Ceylon tea pioneer, Scotsman James Taylor. (The Tea Makers of London)
- (17) Tea planting in the Indian district of Darjeeling was introduced in 1841 by Arthur Campbell, a civil surgeon of the Indian Medical Service. [...] The British government also established tea nurseries during that period. (The Tea Makers of London)

The shared goal in these passages is not to recreate a bygone age, but rather to use it as a claim to cultural identity that will move readers emotionally, with quality and excellence being attributed to the product. In fact, empires in general, and the British Empire in particular, have often been viewed as carriers of national identity, helping to dilute internal differences and to unite people (Bryant 2003). Simultaneously, colonial times can illustrate the notion of cultural identity as collective memory, that is, the "recollection of past events which are thought to be important for the members of a specific community" (de Cillia et al. 1999, 154). Of interest here is how readers can arrive at an emotional interpretation. Common to extracts (11) to (17) is the relationship that has been established between Britain, the mother country, and the colony in question. Sometimes this is a naming relationship, as in (11) between "the Kenilworth Castle in Warwickshire, England and The Kenilworth Tea Garden situated in the Central Province of Sri Lanka"; in (12) between today's Sri Lanka and "in colonial times, this island nation was known as Ceylon"; in (13) between the native term *Nuwara Eliya* and the expression "referred to as 'Little England' by locals"; in (14) between "the Margaret's Hope Tea Garden"; "nestled at the foot of the Himalayas" and "it was named in the 1930s after the owner's daughter"; and in (15) between "Glenburn and the revered Himalayan garden." Place names, as has often been noted, can serve as social signals of group membership and as an indication of national identity (Helleland 2012).

Arguably, copywriters, with their skilful use of place names, may seek an emotional reaction in potential readers. Addressees, in accordance with the principle of relevance, will find in such place names a means to increase the manifestness of certain propositions in order to arrive at the intended interpretation. Thus, propositions evoking former traders who ventured to remote lands—and felt homesick for the known, their country, for everything they had left behind— will become more salient. Place names, then, may be understood as standing for the familiar, bringing comfort and relief at times of an acute longing for home. Using names closely related to one's culture but from a faraway place may also be understood as a way of paying tribute to one's own country, an expression of loyalty and respect towards it. Activating these weakly communicated propositions can be seen as an emotional response to the advertisements. And such emotional effects, in turn, may interact with cognitive effects, which would result in addressees feeling proud of themselves and their country and engendering a lingering sense of pride in their past.

To all of these more or less weakly activated propositions, it is necessary to add others, namely, those that the reader may generate through expressions of praise found in the same passages: “the renowned” (12); “the most well-known of Sri Lanka’s tea-growing districts” (13); “famed for being one of the oldest and most popular Darjeeling estates in the world” (14); and “the revered Himalayan garden” (15). Since these expressions highlight a present-day situation, they are likely to be felt by addressees as strengthening propositions about the wise choices made by their fellow compatriots centuries ago, the notion of how things done well transcend time, the assumed prosperity of a powerful country, success breeds success, etc. The remaining examples, (16) and (17), seem to invite a similar interpretation. All references here deal with real people and real events—“the Ceylon tea pioneer, Scotsman James Taylor” (16); “tea planting in the Indian district of Darjeeling was introduced in 1841 by Arthur Campbel”¹ (17)—along with the mention of a date and the actions of the British government in (17). This information may appeal to addressees’ emotions by making more manifest those propositions relating to the outstanding talents of these pioneers, their brave endeavours, the struggles and difficulties they must have faced and so on.

The emotional interpretation suggested for examples (11) to (17) may also be accompanied by cognitive effects relating to the tea advertised as a result of Britain’s imperial past, as an important legacy of the Empire, as a high-quality outcome of Britain’s international power, etc. Correspondingly, potential readers may draw cognitive effects about themselves as descendants of those brave and adventurous men, as legitimate inheritors of the successful results of their efforts and, therefore, as loyal drinkers of the beverage itself. It is in this way that colonisation, as a marker of cultural identity or patriotism, can be used to appeal to addressees’ emotions in order to enhance the quality and excellence of the product.

5.4. Tea and Localisation

Localisation is a term borrowed from marketing terminology. Usually denoting the opposite of globalisation, it indicates a “friendly” business strategy based on the combination of national and intensive local conditions (Coca-Stefaniak et al. 2010). Three of the ten websites in my sample sell tea grown in the UK, which surely represents a transformation of the market in business terms. From a rhetorical standpoint, localisation is also of interest. In the context of the present study, it can be understood as a marker of cultural identity that seeks to connect the addressee with his or her country in an attempt to elicit their empathy with the product. In my corpus, localisation appears to present a threefold dimension: love for one’s country, for its culture and for its history. I will now illustrate how this is achieved.

Love for one’s country may be fostered through expressions that emphasise the role of a geographical area or the country as a whole with respect to the product: “hand blended and packaged right here in Fishguard, West Wales”; “based in Broadstairs

in Kent, a dear little seaside town with amazing beaches”; “unique hand-plucked leaves from our Cornish estate, grown on the banks of the 18 metre deep sea creek six miles inland from Falmouth”; “homegrown leaves”; “quintessentially British”; “this blend of truly British tea and the first ever tea produced on British soil.” I suggest that potential addressees, as they recover the copywriter’s intended meaning, may find these passages relevant. First of all, because they contain what for many potential consumers would be unexpected information, namely, the proposition that tea is in fact grown in the UK. Secondly, by referring to places that are probably familiar to them, but that in this case are the locations for culturally significant processes previously conducted in faraway countries, these passages might be perceived as embodying a claim to cultural identity and, consequently, be subject to an emotional interpretation. Such information might thus lead readers to increase the manifestness of the array of propositions that the copywriter may have intended to communicate—British products are the best; British people are encouraged to consume British products; Britain can be self-sufficient; Britain is a resourceful country; its people are hardworking, imaginative and innovative; etc.

Love for one’s own culture is the second dimension that may be connected with localisation. Examples (18) to (21) below refer to world-renowned elements of British culture, particularly its well-kept lawns, plants such as lavender and roses, plus the sport of polo. An attachment to the countryside, alongside a love of gardens, has often been recognised as a specific defining feature of Englishness (Bryant 2003, 403); hence, the use of the adjective *English* in examples (18) and (20) is particularly noteworthy. At the same time, however, for many English people “the difference between being English and being British is, for the most part, unclear, unimportant and/or irrelevant” (Bryant 2003, 396). Due to their descriptive nature, these passages may stimulate a reader’s perceptual experiences and mental imagery, thus leading them to strengthen the manifestness of propositions about excellence, beauty and the recognition of British things in general. Furthermore, since the tea advertised specifically incorporates—(18) to (20)—or relates to—(21)—these British icons, readers may derive additional cognitive effects about the high quality of the tea. Also, through product consumption, prospective consumers are invited to identify with the fineness, distinction and greatness that seem to characterise these aspects of Britain’s cultural heritage. Through the use of love for one’s culture as a foreign element in tea advertising, readers may arrive at an emotional interpretation of these passages and develop empathy for the product.

(18) The tea in its dry form takes on the beauty of an English lawn. (Kensington Tea)

(19) Our homegrown black tea and Assam is blended with Lavender from the Cornish Riviera. This fragrant tea is subtle and delicate celebrating the flavours of both the tea and lavender. (Tregothnan)

- (20) You can now order English roses from Tregothnan at any time of year – and they are delicious too! Our Rose Tea is a delicate blend of our homegrown tea leaves, Assam and gorgeous rose petals. (Tregothnan)
- (21) [...] this blend of truly British tea, created with transatlantic tastings by Nic Roldan with Tregothnan for Sunset Polo events. We have created this blend specially to celebrate polo, the ‘Sport of the Kings.’ (Tregothnan)

Finally, history is also associated with localisation, as in the extract:

- (22) Tregothnan’s new Spitfire Tea is a celebration of the brave men and women who protected our skies since the first RAF planes flew 100 years ago. The iconic Spitfire plane is a symbol of British strength and valour. 2018 is the 100th anniversary of the Royal Air Force. To mark this centenary celebration, Tregothnan has blended two bastions of Britishness—an icon of the skies—the revered Spitfire aircraft and the most British tea in history. [...] Sir Winston Churchill decreed in 1941 that the South West of England should be covered with tea crops for Britain to become self-sufficient in tea growing, should the country be cut off during the war. He was concerned that a shortage of Britain’s favourite drink would mean a dip in morale so great that the war would be lost. Sixty years later Churchill’s wishes were finally realised when Tregothnan in Cornwall became the first place to grow tea on British soil. (Tregothnan)

This text nicely exemplifies how history is employed to seek the emotional involvement of readers. Copywriters appeal to principles and shared values, such as protection—“protection of skies”—or courage—“brave men and women”; “British strength and valour”—objects of pride—“bastions of Britishness”—and a politician who represented the country and its people during its “finest hour”—“Sir Winston Churchill”; “he was concerned”; “Churchill’s wishes.” The Second World War symbolises a momentous period of British history: the War united the four nations of the UK, and on hearing Churchill’s speeches “it was difficult not to feel part of a great nation on an heroic enterprise that would inevitably end in victory” (Weight 2002, 35). Thus, this moment in British history, and all that surrounds it, can be considered an example of cultural identity understood as collective memory. All of these seemingly foreign elements to advertising may be regarded as ostensive cues to emotions and be used to strengthen propositions related to the importance of loyalty to one’s country, the country as a signifier of shared interests and the sense of belonging attached to one’s motherland.

The various emotional effects that I have described may interact with cognitive effects, enriching the cognitive environment of readers and eliciting more or less weakly implicated information about Britain as an impressive country, the importance of preserving one’s culture, commitment to the common good, the need to defend and preserve the country’s values and so on. All of these propositions, I argue, will

be transferred to the tea grown in Britain, which may simultaneously be regarded as benefiting from, and contributing to, the nation's wealth, progress and positive profile.

6. CONCLUSION

This article has addressed the use of cultural and patriotic claims in British tea websites as examples of emotional rhetoric. Following the Aristotelian tradition, it has been assumed that rhetoric and emotions need to be closely linked to help copywriters deliver their message successfully. Results show that this can be achieved, on the one hand, through the design of an attractive text consisting of careful, creative stylistic choices that may illustrate what Wilson calls the "lingering of the linguistic form" (2018, 194-95). Hence, instead of consisting of isolated lexical items, an accumulation of references to various aspects of Britain's culture and social life may lead the prospective consumer to understand them as a tentative cue to ostension. On the other hand, such claims aim to please the audience, that is, to gain their favour by inducing in them an appropriate mood or state of mind. From this perspective, I have variously defined patriotic claims as examples of social identity, collective memory and the feeling of belonging or pride in one's country. Tea as a product embodies an interesting duality between production—generally outside the UK—and consumption—within the UK. It has been shown, however, that advertising tends to blur this dichotomy by placing the UK, with its imperial past, at the centre of the discourse on tea.

Furthermore, taking Martínez-Camino and Pérez-Saiz's notion of the foreign element into consideration (2012), I have argued that these markers of cultural identity do not form part of a potential consumer's encyclopaedic knowledge of, or expectations about, tea advertising. Consequently, they are likely to be perceived as relatively surprising aspects of the text and as instances of advertising creativity. Using RT, the interpretation of patriotic claims as expressions of cultural identity has been associated with more processing effort, extra contextual effects and emotional value. Only those readers who are particularly sensitive to such claims will derive weakly implicated information relative to the role of Britishness as a value that dignifies tea. Thus, it may be concluded that, by using patriotic claims as markers of cultural identity, advertisers of online tea engage the reader in an act of emotional creativity.¹

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¹ I am grateful for the helpful comments of the two anonymous reviewers.

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Received 17 March 2020

Revised version accepted 13 July 2020

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