

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18454/RULB.2021.25.1.9>**ТЕКСТУАЛЬНАЯ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТЬ В СТРУКТУРЕ БИЗНЕС-КОММУНИКАЦИИ:
ПРАГМАЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКИЙ АСПЕКТ**

Научная статья

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Аннотация

В статье предпринимается попытка рассмотреть некоторые теоретические проблемы текстуальной деятельности как важного регулятора социального взаимодействия в процессе международной бизнес-коммуникации. Эффективность обмена текстовой информацией – необходимое условие успешного взаимодействия представителей различных культур в процессе бизнес-коммуникации. Однако одну и ту же информацию можно передать различными способами: в устной или письменной форме; в виде монологической речи или диалогического взаимодействия; непосредственно, глядя собеседнику (аудитории) в лицо, или опосредованно – по телефону, факсу, телексу, электронной почте. Способ осуществления речи значительно влияет на отбор и аранжировку языковых средств в процессе текстовой деятельности. В статье приводятся примеры целей и способов передачи информации посредством бизнес-текстов.

Ключевые слова: бизнес-коммуникация, бизнес-текст, текстовая деятельность, эффективность, социальное взаимодействие, культура.

**TEXTUAL ACTIVITY IN THE STRUCTURE OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION: PRAGMALINGUISTIC
ASPECT**

Research article

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Abstract

The paper makes an attempt to discuss some theoretical problems of textual activity as an important social interaction regulator in the field of international business communication. The efficiency of information exchange is an important prerequisite of successful interaction of representatives of different cultures in the process of business communication. However, the information can be transferred by different means: orally or in the written form; by monologue or dialogue speech; directly – face-to-face – or indirectly – by telephone, fax, telex, e-mail. The method of information transfer influences the choice and arrangement of language means in the process of textual activity. Some examples of goals and ways of communicating information by business texts are given.

Keywords: business-communication, business-text, textual activity, efficiency, social interaction, culture.

Introduction

Until recently, the main and primary object of linguistic analysis was the text as a material from which only various data on the system-structural parameters of the language were drawn. Now the text is considered not only as a research material, but also as its subject – the product of textual activity. The textual activity itself, being a reflection of human thinking, is a process of generating many different kinds of texts.

Textual activity serves to meet the immediate material needs of a person indirectly – through the satisfaction of his most important need for self-expression, in the organization of relationships and interactions with other people. People are constantly in the process of interrelated actions, the means of coordination of which is language communication. The existence of language already implies a social connection between people and, therefore, communication as a necessary condition for the life of the individual in society and society in individuals. "Without language, there is no human community, there is no common cause" [1, P. 3].

Speech is included in the complex world of human existence, where it, acting as a form of communication, is opposed to material and production activities, being at the same time genetically and functionally woven into the joint work of people, which caused its emergence and development, predetermining any activity – material and spiritual, production and communication.

Frank Dance found 96 definitions of the notion "communication" [2], but we think that the definition, given in Collins Dictionary of Business, is the most suitable: "Communication is the exchange of information in an organization" [3]. Accordingly, by business communication we understand interpersonal exchange of textual information for the purpose of organizing and optimizing a particular type of business activity: industrial, scientific, commercial, managerial, etc.

No area of human activity can be considered without taking into account the features of speech communication. Communication means understanding and mutual understanding. Mutual understanding is not a direct act, but mediated by the exchange of messages, news, messages, information, i.e. texts in the process of textual activity. The success of almost any activity of people depends on the degree of mutual understanding. This is most important in the process of making business and management decisions. Therefore, understanding and mutual understanding is the basis for effective communication, especially in business.

Let's start by identifying where effective speech communication is required outside and inside a business enterprise.

Business communication penetrates into practically all the spheres of human activity. Organizations rely on communication among employees at all levels to decide on and implement their goals. These goals are established by thinking and talking about them and then committing them to paper in the form of a business plan. When the business plan is ready, the businessman will find partners and convince them to take part in the transaction, get loans. So, he makes a business plan not only for himself, but also to demonstrate the reliability of the conceived business. The businessman himself needs a plan to act not blindly, but according to a well-thought-out, calculated scheme. The business plan allows you to see the model, the image of the future operation, so that you can focus on key issues, do not forget anything significant, and prepare in advance for the implementation of the required actions. The business plan helps to determine what contracts and transactions need to be concluded to ensure the operation, assess its rational scale and expected result, and achieve confidence in success. As an external document, a business plan is necessary for an entrepreneur to enter into contacts with interested persons and organizations, it is designed to convince them of the thorough verification of the operation. The business plan can also be requested by official, state bodies, without whose permission the entrepreneur cannot carry out his plan.

From a linguistic point of view, a business plan is a complex fragment of professional textual activity, the generation and understanding of which depends on knowledge of a broad pragmatic context. When compiling it, it is generally accepted to adhere to a certain structure. In terms of lexical composition, a business plan is a business text rich in such professional terms as audit, off-shore, hedging, futures transactions and many others that are incomprehensible to a wide range of people. As you know, professional jargon is considered a metalanguage of a certain sphere of use, which covers both individual and collective cognitive systems belonging to a certain group of specialists.

In an effort to achieve their goals, people in business must make and implement many decisions. Often their deliberations depend on reports that are prepared by others and that analyze the pros and cons of various actions. In larger companies, the data may be put together using a computerized management information system that prepares reports automatically. In smaller companies, management may obtain the required information through face-to-face contact with lower-level employees or in the form of hand-prepared memos or reports.

However, without communication, it is impossible to get the necessary loans, attract investment capital. To provide the required financing, you need to fill out numerous forms, discuss the terms of the loan. Selling and buying stocks, bonds, and other securities requires a lot of verbal communication and written business correspondence. After obtaining the necessary capital, entrepreneurs should keep their investors informed about the state of Affairs.

To obtain the necessary supplies and services, companies develop written specifications with a precise description of their requirements. They place orders for materials and negotiate with the aim of making profitable deals.

Among the very mobile, fairly quickly and continuously expended material resources are working capital. No business operation can be carried out without human resources, labor force.

The primary and most important task of an entrepreneur is to form a working team. Organizations attract, train, interest and evaluate their employees in the process of communicating with them. Preliminary interviews, a multi-stage process of selecting candidates for a job, psychological testing, and the use of recommendations are widespread. If a company wants to hire someone, it must advertise the job, review the resume, conduct an interview, and finally make a job offer. There are also temporary employment contracts, which are issued for work, but for a certain probationary period and only then decide whether to extend the contract for a longer period. The new employee should be introduced to the entire organization. The employer should explain to him his duties, personally discussing with him his achievements or failures in such a way that employees feel a direct connection between their hard work and the monetary reward received for it.

Communication can take place between managers and employees, as well as between representative bodies, such as trade unions. Information is also passed to people and organizations outside the company. For example, company newspapers such as *Ford News* not only inform employees about the firm, but presents a picture to the outside world of its operations [4].

No matter what material and monetary resources and employees an entrepreneur has, he cannot do without interaction with other firms, entrepreneurs.

As a rule, it is formed by transactions. The conclusion and execution of the transaction must be preceded by negotiations between the parties involved in it. A transaction becomes legally binding if it is secured by an official contract drawn up in accordance with the current legal norms.

The most important stage of any business operation is the process of producing goods – a huge flow of interactions that includes numerous communicative acts. The idea of creating a new product arises in someone's head, and for its implementation one must conduct marketing research, an advertising campaign for the sale of goods. When the time comes for full-scale production, the company prepares a manufacturing plan. As production gets under way, workers report any problems that arise. Records are kept regarding raw materials, inventory levels, and product quality. In the process of manufacturing goods, there are a lot of technical and moral problems that require discussion and appropriate decisions. The necessary orders are given, records of material and labor costs are made, financial reports and operating instructions are drawn up. The contracts or deals are concluded for the provision of services in the field of transportation and sale of goods. Finally, arrangements are made by phone or in writing for shipping the product.

Any interaction with customers also requires communication in one form or another. Promotional letters and brochures, offer letters, personal call offers to customers, telephone consultations – all this is used to attract customers. Communication plays an important role in resolving conflict issues and customer complaints. Even price tags on products are a form of communication.

Communication also occurs between businesses and government. Often, companies must demonstrate their compliance with regulations by preparing reports. It is another type of business communication of an entrepreneur in any operation. We are talking about state taxes paid by entrepreneurs to the state and local budgets. Their social necessity is unquestionable. If one of the parties violates the transaction, the other party may apply to a court or arbitration in the hope of compensating for the losses incurred. Often there are difficult and even tense relations between entrepreneurs and employees of various public services that

control their activities, including the tax police and the tax Inspectorate. Ideally, the relationship between entrepreneurs and government authorities should be a collaboration. And, again, it is language communication that is the link between the individual and society.

And finally, after the end of the production cycle, the last stage comes – the performance evaluation. In order to properly evaluate the results of any activity, you need to pass the relevant information to management, who will draw conclusions about the achievement of certain results. Statistical data on such important indicators of production as costs, sales, productivity, turnover and others are prepared. These can be various types of reports, invoices, memos, etc.

Of course, such a description of the business operation does not claim to be exhaustive. We simply listed a number of elements involved in a typical business communication situation. These situations, as well as their understanding, are dynamic: they change in accordance with cause-and-effect relationships, conventions, and other restrictions on the sequence of actions and events.

The concept of these events and situations also includes the characteristics of the person himself – his knowledge, his actions, rules of behavior in society, the ability to argue his point of view, the ability to evaluate, engage in creative activities, etc. Here, both the addresser, i.e. the one who sends the business message, and the addressee, the one to whom it is sent, are important. Already in the very definition of a communicative act, there is an idea of the need for interaction between two parties – “transmitting” and “receiving”.

It is quite natural that numerous communicative acts are usually included in the flow of the above-mentioned interactions. This is evidenced, first of all, by a great diversity of contracts. The conclusion of contracts or drafting of contracts, however, is preceded by a long period of business negotiations. The latter can be carried out either directly in the form of face-to-face business communication or by phone, or indirectly in the form of business correspondence (business letters, memoranda, faxes, business documentation, reports, instructions, questionnaires, forms, etc.)

Ways or media of business communication vary from written methods, such as annual reports, to oral methods such as discussions, to the use of information technology, such as a modem or a “fax” machine, videos and electronic mail. Thus, by the way of business communication, we understand, first of all, the code, the communication channel and the norm of interaction.

The means of transmitting information from person to person are divided into verbal and non-verbal. Verbal communication is communication with the help of words, non-verbal is the transmission of information using various non-verbal symbols and signs. Verbal communication is the sum total of all types of speech activity representing the receipt, processing, transmission, storage and usage of both professionally and emotionally relevant information. The process of verbal communication is necessarily carried out either orally or in writing.

Let's consider the main parameters for which the oral and written versions of business speech are contrasted.

First of all, they differ in their material form: the flow of sounds and lines of written words, intonation division and punctuation marks are extremely different phenomena. Then, undoubtedly, the conditions of generation. Thus, the main feature of oral speech is its irreversibility, the progressive and linear nature of its deployment in time. While written speech is deployed in a static space, which provides the writer with the opportunity to get out of the time flow of speech, think about it, return to what has already been written for the purpose of correction and clarification.

The specificity of oral speech in comparison with written speech is also determined by the fact that the speaker and the listener have at their disposal a whole complex of linguistic, paralinguistic and extralinguistic means, which the writer and the reader lack: intonation, facial expressions, gestures, situational conditionality of speech give the oral utterance an implicit semantic background, which in written speech can be expressed only by lexical and syntactic means.

Writing, when the writer has the ability to comprehend what is written, go back and adjust the text to fit with their ideas about his form, of course, is a more complex speech activity than brief oral statements – replica dialogues, requests, commands, one-word orders, etc.

Indeed, if, in analyzing brief oral utterances, we can confine ourselves to stating any one illocutionary force for each utterance, then in studying written texts we find a hierarchical system of goals that coordinates the formal organization of discourse, which determines the nature of the connections between utterances. “As a part of the language in general (and not a specific language), then the communicative attitude as its component is, in all probability, a universal category” [5, P. 172].

Oral and written business language systematically present the distinguished varieties of the literary language. If written business speech represents an official business style of speech, then oral business speech is characterized by various forms of hybrid style formations.

Written business speech is represented by all types of business letters, documents that record social and legal relations – contracts, deals, transactions, agreements and all types of related documents. “The written form, as the most universal and accessible for study and perception, is the main and only form of documenting procedural actions in civil proceedings. At the present stage of development of legislative stylistics, there is clearly a tendency to typify and standardize written procedural documents” [6, P. 19].

Oral business speech is presented in the framework of business negotiations, meetings, consultations, interviews, etc. According to modern researchers in the field of business communication [4], [7], oral forms of business communication are given much more time (listening – 45%, speaking – 30%) than written (writing – 9%, reading – 16%). This is not surprising, since most of the time businessmen spend on business conversations, negotiations, discussions, interviews, speeches at meetings and presentations, where they either talk themselves or listen to others. Working with the staff, holding meetings and interviews, various speeches take a lot of time.

The overall picture of the interaction of oral and written speech will become even more complicated if the analysis introduces variability in the form of monological and dialogical speech. So, for example, the monologue-instruction of the head on any production issue can be presented either in the form of a written order, or in the form of an oral order. The dialogue between two employees of the company can take place either in the form of a conversation, or through the exchange

of business letters or memos. As for the meeting of Directors, production meetings, they are a special type of business communication, in which oral speech (monologue, dialogue and even polylogue) and written speech (agenda, minutes of the meeting, various reports, etc.) coexist.

The differences between dialogue and monologue speech are significant. If monologue speech tends to be more bookish, dialogue speech tends to be colloquial, which is reflected primarily in the textual organization and syntactic features of speech. However, numerous pragmatic factors and various ways of combining them in each specific act of communication lead to the fact that the actually observed speech variants can be presented in such a way that the transition from written to oral speech in a number of parameters will look like a smooth and gradual, and not at all abrupt. This is facilitated by the existence of various norms of interaction, i. e. the position of communicants in space. From the point of view of the norms of interaction, there are: a) direct or contact communication; b) indirect or distant communication.

Face-to-face communication has a number of advantages. It allows you to have instant feedback, constructive criticism and exchange of opinions, encourages cooperation, and promotes the rapid dissemination of information.

Indirect, or distant, communication is not only such traditional communication as mail and Fax, but also paging communication, speech on radio, television, in the media, communication through a Bulletin Board, the Internet.

A special place is occupied by a telephone conversation. On the one hand, it is an oral dialogical communication, and, on the other hand, it is a kind of distant communication.

The connections between communicants both in the process of direct and indirect communication are diverse. They can be straight, directed from the speaker to listener or from writer to reader, and the opposite, going from listening to speaking or reading to writing. They can also be explicit and hidden.

In the case of monologue oral speech, the “speaker – listener” relationship is twofold. On the one hand, there is a direct, explicit connection made by extralinguistic factors, such as facial expressions, pantomime, which accompany the performance (speaking) and are a reflection of the mental state of the speaker at the time of speech. On the other hand, there is an explicit, but mediated by the text of the message, connection with all the features inherent in the oral statement. There are also other connections, for example, the direct connection “from the listener to the speaker”, which we understand as any reaction to the text of the message: the attentive intense look of the listener, signs of agreement or disagreement with the thoughts expressed by the speaker, remarks, notes, etc. that somehow affect the speaker.

Describing the process of oral monologue communication, we can also talk about hidden connections. Hidden feedback “from the message to its author” has the specificity that the speaker is both its creator and its performer. In the case of a report, oratorical speech, the speaker is influenced by the already written part of the speech. In the audience, the prepared speech may be perceived differently than its author intended.

Thus, both written and especially oral forms of speech are represented by a whole range of options, the content and form of which depend, in addition to the purpose, topic of the message and method of communication, on such parameters as the nature of relations between communicants. When we communicate with people who share similar experiences and expectations, much what we say automatically fits into their mental framework. Interestingly enough, one person may react differently to the same words on different occasions. A message that might be perfectly clear and acceptable in one situation can lead to confusion and hostility in another, depending on the emotional relationship between receiver and sender [8].

Cultural background of communicators is also of great importance. It is a generally known fact that businesspeople of different nationalities sometimes have problems in understanding each other because of differences of ethnic and cultural character. Cross-cultural competence deals with religious, political, philosophical, educational, ethic aspects of communicators’ views.

Different cultures prefer different styles of social interaction. Nevertheless, it is necessary to differentiate language and culture. For example, English-speaking world is divided today into many parts from the cultural point of view. For instance, Australian English has also developed a number of features that reflect history, culture and traditions of Australia [9].

The digital era has brought with it many new means for the purpose of business communication. Today one can reach a colleague instantly with a touch of a button. Businessmen have the opportunity to check their emails and text each other at any time. It is very important for business organizations to use the latest technology for communication purposes [10].

Conclusion

In conclusion it should be stressed that good communication is vital for the efficient running of a business. Someone who is able to communicate skillfully (especially in the field of business) has a great advantage over others. This is confirmed by the data of sociological studies, according to which 85% of employers consider knowledge of speech culture to be extremely important qualities of potential employees. For communication to be effective the correct message must be sent and received. That’s why the sender of the message should think about his or her audience, let them know what to expect, use vivid language, stick to the point, connect new ideas to familiar ones, emphasize and review key points, minimize noise, and provide opportunities for feedback [7]. We should not forget that business communication is sometimes compared to a two-way street, because representatives of the business world spend a lot of time receiving and transmitting information, which also requires great skills in listening and reading, speaking and writing. Consequently, effective verbal communication is the basis of efficient business communication. Embracing new technology is also essential here.

Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

Conflict of Interest

None declared.

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