

## General questions relating to both linguistics and literature. Philology (UDC 80)

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## ОСОБЕННОСТИ ДЕЛОВОГО ЭТИКЕТА НА СОБЕСЕДОВАНИИ-ИНТЕРВЬЮ

## Аннотация

В статье представлены результаты исследования стенограмм собеседований по найму с позиции коммуникативного поведения доминирующего коммуниканта (специалиста по кадрам). Для того, чтобы достичь своей главной цели – определить, насколько кандидат соответствует требованиям работодателя – интервьюер использует различные этикетные формы, способствующие более продуктивному общению и обуславливающие кооперативность его стратегий и тактик.

**Ключевые слова:** Собеседование, рекрутер, этикетные формулы, речевые стратегии и тактики, стратегии кооперации

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## BUSINESS ETIQUETTE IN JOB INTERVIEW

## Abstract

The article presents the analysis of job interview transcripts from the perspective of dominant communicant's (HR manager) communicative behavior. The interviewer uses various etiquette forms that facilitate a more productive dialogue and stipulate cooperative strategies and tactics in order to achieve the main goal – to determine whether the job applicant meets the requirements of the employer.

**Keywords:** job interview, recruiter, etiquette formulas, speech strategies and tactics, strategies of cooperation.

Recruiting is a relatively new sphere for Russian communication environment that scarcely attracted linguists as the object of study. This professional discourse started its development in Russia together with the development of market economy in the end of 1990-s of XX century. The communicative centre of the reviewed discourse is a job interview between a recruiter and a job applicant; the unique communicative act with a number of specific features. Identification of these features let the author confirm the opinion of a well-known researcher of Russian business communication R. Ratmayr about a phenomenon of “new Russian politeness” in economics that was spread from the West during establishment of market relations [Ratmayr: 191].

The empirical base for the study are transcripts of 43 TV programmes “Kadry reshayut” (KR) broadcast in 2010 on the online television channel “Uspeh” [http://www.uspeh.tv]. The analysis of live communicative acts has revealed that altruism and cooperation of a recruiter's verbal behavior is shown at all linguistic levels. Principally, it is based on the use of various etiquette forms of politeness accepted in society as rules and traditions.

The significance of the study arises from the need to describe a recruiter's verbal behavior that will allow potential participants of the

job interview forecasting the verbal communication and building an efficient plan of successful verbal interaction. Furthermore, the presented material will assist in training basics of Russian business communication for Russian and international students.

The use of cliché and half-cliché sayings (“recheniya”) is known to facilitate the communication process and make it more successful.

We will analyze final parts of job interviews. As separate verbal pieces they are referred to the zone of “spoken dialogue for which the probability of the use of standards is maximal” (Borisova, 2009: 239). **The strategy of final decision** is one of communicative tactics of a recruiter in the final part of the interview. This strategy defines “semantic, stylistic and pragmatic choice of the speaker” [4: 147] as well as the choice of the corresponding linguistic means at different levels (morphologic, syntactic, lexical, etc.) which have the role of “verbal tactics indicators”.

Typically, final parts of interviews are started with the **tactics of request** used by recruiters who render tribute to etiquette.

- Thank you / Maria/ for answers // (KR, episode 8)

- It is all / thank you very much for the interview / should I give my feedback now? ( KR, episode 16)

- Well / thank you / Andrey // (KR, episode 25)

First of all, interviewers use the **tactics of request**. They ask job applicants for time to make decision because in many cases it should be done during the interview. The wide range of verbal variants of the cliché formula with the meaning of “small amount of time” (*I need ... minutes, seconds; Give me ... minutes, seconds*) is used for implementation of this tactics. There are 4 structural types of its content:

1) Neutral vocabulary:

- Tatyana / I will need **five minutes**/ to watch the records and decide / if I present you later // (KR, episode 1)

- I need / .../ need **some time** to/ take a decision // (KR, episode 3)

- Uh-huh // Well// Oksana/ thank you/ give me/ please/ **a minute of time**/ I have to analyze one more time /everything we have discussed today / ... / your experience/ and I will give you answer // (KR, episode 4)

- Thank you/ Irina/ I need **twenty seconds**/ to think over what/ you have said/ and understand / whether you are suitable for this position or not // (KR, episode 6)

Now I need **several minutes** to think over and make my decision // (KR, episode 8)

- Thank you // Sergey / I need **just ten seconds** to analyze our interview // (KR, episode 28)

2) Colloquial phrases:

- Well/ Yekaterina/ now I need **a couple of minutes** to think // (KR, episode 7)

- Yulia / there you go, I need **two moments** to think / what will happen later // give you feedback // (KR, episode 12)

- Now I will think for **just a minute** / yes / about everything/ we have just discussed // (KR, episode 5)

3) Loans:

- Let do it in this way / I ask you about **smalltime-out** / to think over / and summarize the information / I heard from you / and then I will come to some conclusion based on the results // (KR, episode 14)

4) Appellative words:

- Well / Lyudmila / then give me / please/ **several split seconds** to / analyze our interview // (KR, episode 30)

The use of such phrases in nearly each job interview once more confirms social status of verbal-behavioral tactics. «Cliché sayings are extracted from memory unlike those invented in speech – this is a social aspect of speech act. The personal aspect of a speech act is in adaption of cliché samples for a specific situation and their combination» [5: 14].

In some cases when interviewers need a longer quantity of time they mainly choose a construction with prepositions “during”/“within” that serves as a linguistic marker of an official business register. The period of required time varies from **five days** to **two weeks**.

I will inform us about my decision within **five days** / I will be glad / if you join our team // (KR, episode 21)

During **five days** you will get either the positive response to organize our next meeting or the negative response // (KR, episode 24)

Within **five days**/ I think / I will be able to connect you / it will be either a positive or a negative answer. The lack of my signal means the negative answer // (KR, episode 25)

I or my colleagues will report the result to you during **ten working days** // (KR, episode 13)

We will analyze our meeting // <...> and the response will be given during **two weeks maximum** // (KR, episode 11) The **back-passing tactics** is used by some recruiters as argumentation:

*After our meeting I will agree on the time with the company-customer and I think / that I will get feedback within five working days*

// (KR, episode 22)

The specialists who do not specify the deadline for rendering of decision shift responsibility, too:

*I will contact you after communication with our client* // (KR, episode 17)

*I will be able to provide you with more detailed information / when our next meeting is planned* // (KR, episode 20)

One bright feature of job interviews as a verbal situation in professional discourse is revealed at a stylistic level. The official register is harmoniously combined with conversational register (litotes, diminutive suffixes, etc.) that is apparently determined by specifics of a recruiter's strategy – the strategy of cooperation. This is expressed in wish to encourage positive course of conversation despite its seriousness and formality, and “soften the blow” for the job hunter if the decision is negative.

Objectivity and forethought of the decision are underlined by a dominant communicant with the help of lexical and semantic markers. It is specified that the time is needed:

a) to think: the use of such verbs and phrases like *to watch the records, to analyze, to think over, to comprehend, to understand, to reason out, to summarize;*

b) to sum up: *to take decision, to give answer, to provide feedback, to summarize, to report.*

The most frequent is the verb **to think over**. It means that the opinion voiced afterwards will be grounded and reasoned out.

The listed lexical markers promote implementation of the **request tactics** within the etiquette borders of the main strategy of a recruiter.

As it was already mentioned some specialists who conduct interviews announce their decisions immediately and explain them indirectly. The example is shown in the final part of episode 10. According to specialists, this is an ideal interview conducted by the skilled recruiter who can take decisions immediately in the course of the dialogue.

*- Having analyzed our communication and your experience / I can tell/ that you have good experience of project management <...> // I am ready to recommend you for this company* // (KR, episode 10)

It is interesting that both positive and negative responses may be given in such situations. Recruiter: *- Kseniya/ thank you for the interview / now I have to give you a kind of feedback ...* Job seeker: *- Uh-huh//*

Recruiter: *- It is a difficult situation / I will tell you this / you are not a lawyer / (the job applicant is a lawyer– author )* (KR, episode 19)

It is obvious that successfully implemented tactics in main part of the interview (identification of motivation, experience, and conformity to the requirements of the employer) allow the recruiter making decision in the course of the conversation. Undoubtedly, it is connected with personality factor: the recruiter's high professionalism.

The analysis of the records revealed that interviewers use standard etiquette forms for verbalization of **tactics of farewell** most actively in the final parts of interviews. HR managers bid farewell in a positive way thus implementing two corresponding techniques – **tactics of gratitude** and **tactics of feedback**.

The study has revealed 4 types of farewell (depending on combinations of tactics and explicitness of their expression):

1. Standard farewell. It is expressed explicitly, in small amounts.

*- Good bye* // (KR, episode 22)

*- Good bye* // (KR, episode 29)

Apparently, a minimal etiquette form of farewell for

implementation of cooperation strategy is too official and not efficient for closing conversation as one of the recruiter's goal is to leave the positive opinion. Therefore, extralinguistic factors come to the fore: an interlocutor may recommend a recruiter to other job applicants or employers.

1. Farewell + gratitude.

It is the most frequent verbalization form through the use of direct sayings and types of gratitude which acquire an additional function of positive attitude.

*- Thank you / Elena / see you later!* (KR, episode 29)

The explanation tactics is usually used at this point because the specialist expresses its gratitude as well as explains its reason. The more standard is the phrase when a speaker shows appreciation to an interlocutor for taking part in a meeting.

*- Thank you / for arriving here // Have a nice day!* (KR, episode 7)

*- Thank you / for coming! It was important to meet you / to find the suitable position* // (KR, episode 15)

*- Thank you for the meeting! Thank you / for coming! I will contact you after a meeting with our client // Good bye!* (KR, episode 17)

There are also examples of half-cliché sayings when a communicant adapts ready phrases extracted from memory for the communicative situation.

*- Thank you for positive attitude / for an interesting story /...* (KR, episode 23)

*- I am grateful to you / for the time you devoted to our meeting / for your smiles / good spirits / I think / that we will meet each other // Thank you / Nina / and see you late* // (KR, episode 26)

*- Wonderful! Thank you for the meeting! Thank you for your time! I was glad to meet you* // (KR, episode 5)

3) Wishes + gratitude.

It is implicit farewell through the use of verbal-behavioral tactics of wish and gratitude.

*- Have a nice day / Thank you for the meeting* // (KR, episode 13)

*- I am thankful to you / for coming to the interview / on time / and in good spirits // Have a nice day!* (KR, episode 20)

4) Farewell + gratitude + wishes.

*- Thank you for the time / you devoted to me / and see you late // Good luck! Andrey: - Thank you / good bye!*

*- Take care!* (KR, episode 26)

*Thank you/ Lyudmila/ Best wishes and good bye* // (KR, episode 30)

The presence of 2nd, 3rd. and 4th listed farewell types testifies verbal creativity of the interviewer who tries to diversify verbal content of tactics thus maintaining pleasant conversational ambience till the end.

The reviewed material let us come to the conclusion that the main points for a specialist closing the interview are:

1) to express opinion thoughtfully and objectively in order not to offend a job applicant (tactics of positive and negative response; tactics of compromise; tactics of praise);

2) to explain the decision for the interlocutor to draw conclusions for “future” (tactics of explanation, tactics of persuasion);

3) to leave the most positive impression (tactics of gratitude, tactics of well-wishing, tactics of buck passing).

Therefore, in order to achieve the communicative goal recruiters choose the strategy of cooperation with “altruistic dominant” [6: 31]: their opinion is expressed reasonably within verbal professional etiquette; etiquette formulas and linguistic indicators of all levels (lexical and semantic, morphological, syntactical, stylistic) are actively used. Communication in job interviews is an example for the use of formal politeness in Russian business environment in accordance with standards of cooperative communication in modern business.

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**К ВОПРОСУ О ФЕНОМЕНЕ ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКОЙ УВЕРЕННОСТИ/НЕУВЕРЕННОСТИ В БРЮССЕЛЕ И**  
**ВАЛЛОНИИ**

*Аннотация*

*Процессы глобализации побуждают языковые коллективы Бельгии выбрать: оградить себя, свою идентичность от влияния глобализации или же стать частью объединительных процессов. Ввиду ситуации многоязычия в Бельгии существует не одна манера говорить по-французски. Все меньше франкофонов ощущают себя неуверенно в использовании французского языка.*

**Ключевые слова:** языковая уверенность / неуверенность, бельгизм, вариативность, пограничный ареал.

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**ABOUT THE LINGUISTIC SECURITY / INSECURITY PHENOMENON IN BRUSSELS AND WALLONIA**

*Abstract*

*Processes of globalization make linguistic communities of Belgium choose: to protect their identity from the influence of globalization or to become the part of the unification. Due to the multilingual situation in Belgium there are some manners of speaking French. And fewer francophones feel insecure using this language.*

**Keywords:** linguistic security, insecurity, belgicism, language variety, border area.

One of the most interesting object in linguistic type of research is Belgian Wallonia and Brussels. Language situation in this area can be described as plurilingualism: in Belgium there are three official languages: Dutch (58% Belgians), French (41%), German (less than 1%) [7]. Nevertheless English takes the leading position in spheres of trading, business and mass-media.

It should be noticed that besides the influence of English on the culture and languages in the realm French of Belgium presents one of the forms of French language that has its own history and the way of life. There is no unique French language [2, p. 127]. It has various forms in Europe, Canada, and Africa by interaction between individuals and languages.

The object of this research is lexical belgicism, notably expressions, words, forms which can occur on the territory of Belgium as well as

in France, Africa (the example: the verb «prester» as «provide services» in Congo, numerals «nonante», «septante» - in the north of France, in Switzerland, Congo and Burundi). Due to the absence of distinct linguistic borders of Francophonie area Brussels and Wallonia is the frontier (or marginal) area [1, p. 6].

Lexical peculiarities lead to analyse the status of the French in Belgian area. This notion is concerned with the linguistic security / insecurity («sécurité / insécurité linguistique») issue. The terminology was coined by the American sociolinguist William Labov [4] who studied linguistic communities in New-York. Linguistic insecurity is a feeling of linguistic difference perception. Insecurity can be explained in social, cultural (the level of individual grammar competence) and geographic ways. Investigations of this phenomenon were pursued in 1897 by Virgile Rossel but the terminology was not worked out. She noticed that the Belgians, the Swiss and the Canadians feel “linguistic superiority”

of France which was manifested in literature.

One of the way of protection from linguistic insecurity is hypercorrection, or behavior which is characterized by constant control in all discourse levels. The hypercorrection can be described as an insecure linguistic behavior and as the fact of using a large number of lexical features [6, p. 111-114]. The hypercorrection can provoke the abuse of clichés that are considered as adequate and the abundance of mistakes (phonetic, grammatical). The typical example of hypercorrection in French is the use of lexical word formation based on Greek or Latin languages (e.g., «associations caritatives» instead of «charitables»).

In general, residents of such areas as Switzerland, Canada and Africa are given to undervalue their manner of speaking and to give a negative image to their language variety.

So, language security is a feeling of safety, consciousness of language norm, when a speaker is sure of the legitimacy of speaking (statement), the use of words even if he / she goes beyond the norm. Linguistic insecurity, on the contrary, is related with the fact that speakers consider their speech intolerable towards the norm, what generates anxiety in speaking language or its variety.

The issue of linguistic insecurity is pending even today, different types of survey, polls were and are worked out, representing field studies of various resident groups. Actual studies are conducted in Universities of Provence, Reunion, Liège.

The object of researching in my paper is lexical features of Belgian variety of French; I take different mass-media as a source, both capital and regions since 2013 till today.

Sources: capital mass-media RTL.be (online), RTBF.be (online), 7sur7.be (online), LeSoir.be (online and printed editions) and regional ones LaLibre.be, LaMeuse.be, NordEclair.be, LaNouvelleGazette.be, LaCapitale.be and web portal Lavenir.net. The main subject is “soft” news about sport, culture and politics.

Table 1 - The analysis helped to systematize few groups of localisms presented in the table below

Notion	Example	Comments
<i>Neologism born and current only in Belgium</i>	Dans quelques semaines, de nombreux élèves deviendront étudiants et quitteront le cocon familial pour s'installer en <b>kot</b>	Using of « <b>kot</b> » instead of «chambre» as «student room»
<i>Orthographic simplification</i>	Je ne peux pas me coucher tard, demain je vais au <b>buro</b>	Instead of correct «bureau» (office)
<i>Expressions of Flemish speech</i>	Yves Lampaert (Topsport Vlaanderen-Baloise) a gagné vendredi la <b>kermesse</b> de Zvevezele	Using of «kermesse» instead of «fête en plein air» as «holiday»
<i>Wallonisms</i>	Les services de secours ont travaillé plus que d'habitude ce dimanche, à <b>laducasse</b> de Mons	Instead «fête en plein air», «festival, party»
<i>Brusselisms</i>	Venait le moment de l'énonciation du nom des joueurs: c'était folklorique et créatif à souhait, comme un Roumain découvrant la <b>zwanze</b>	Instead of «humour, galéjades», «joke»
<i>Anglicisms (English words)</i>	«Elle soigne aussi son <b>look</b> », «avec son atmosphère et son <b>look</b> sixties...», «Le nouveau <b>look</b> d'Obama fait parler de lui», а также его преобразование в языке: «ainsi <b>relookée</b> , la Dragster n'est pas sans rappeler la splendide Rivale»	« <b>look</b> » (appearance):
	«Mon disque tombe entre les mains d'un DJ qui <b>flashe</b> sur le morceau et le joue le soir même dans son club», «Un apprenti motocycliste a été <b>flashé</b> à 137 km/h»	Verb « <b>flasher</b> » (découvrir, apercevoir)
	«Quand je suis sur Twitter, je lis les trucs <b>people</b> et sensationnels»	Noun transformed into an adjective « <b>people</b> » (humain)