

LINGUISTIC STRATEGIES OF BUSINESS DISCOURSE

ЛІНГВІСТИЧНІ СТРАТЕГІЇ ДІЛОВОГО ДИСКУРСУ

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The article highlights the linguistic strategies of professional business discourse. Business discourse covers a wide range of professional activities. Business discourse participants apply various means of business communication, both oral and written, to realize professional communication. Among the verbal means of business communication are meetings, seminars, telephone conversations, presentations, teleconferences, videoconferences, etc. Written means of business communication consist of a wide range of documents, including instructions, business letters, contracts, permits, and emails. Verbal and written means of business communication require effective linguistic strategies for their implementation. Concerning verbal means of business communication, they actively utilize linguistic strategies such as negotiation, various types of presentations (informative, educational, motivational, etc.), interview strategies (selection, disciplinary, counseling interviews, employee complaint interviews, disciplinary interviews, appraisal interviews, and termination interviews). Public speaking strategies include researching the potential audience, using notes, delivering effective speeches, employing inclusive language, anticipating questions, and preparing thoughtful answers. In turn, written means of business communication have their own set of linguistic strategies. Participants of business discourse use them in various types of corporate documents, advertising materials, emails, contracts, permits, and other similar documents. Corporate documents that ensure employee participation in the coordinated work of companies include recommendations, instructions, and promotional texts. Among the linguistic strategies in these documents are formal vocabulary, simple grammatical forms, and a strong emotional background. Advertising texts target potential consumers of the company's products. Linguistic strategies in advertising texts include presenting information about the product, its advantages, and characteristics, along with the company logo, often using creative techniques such as verse form and musical accompaniment. Emails usually have a clear structure. They employ such linguistic strategies as the use of formal vocabulary in official correspondence, abbreviations, and acronyms.

Key words: business discourse, means of business communication, linguistic strategies, corporate documents, public speaking strategies.

У статті розглянуті лінгвістичні стратегії професійного ділового дискурсу. Діловий дискурс охоплює велику кількість галузей професійної діяльності. Для ефективної організації професійної комунікації застосовуються різноманітні засоби ділової комунікації – усні й письмові. Серед усних засобів ділової комунікації вирізняються проведення зборів, семінарів, телефонних розмов, презентацій, теле- та відеоконференцій, тощо. Письмові засоби ділової комунікації включають велике коло документів, таких як інструкції, ділові листи, контракти, дозволи, листи електронної пошти, тощо. Як усні так і письмові засоби ділової комунікації потребують ефективних лінгвістичних стратегій для їхньої реалізації. Щодо усних засобів ділової комунікації, в них активно застосовуються такі лінгвістичні стратегії, як стратегія проведення переговорів, стратегії для презентацій різного типу (інформативні, освітні, стимулюючі, тощо), стратегії проведення інтерв'ю (відбіркові, дисциплінарні, консультативні, інтерв'ю з працівниками щодо скарг, оціночні інтерв'ю та інтерв'ю щодо звільнення). Стратегії публічних виступів охоплюють вивчення потенційної аудиторії, використання конспекту, виголошення промов, використання інклюзивної мови, уміння передбачити запитання та підготовку до відповідей. У свою чергу, письмові засоби ділової комунікації мають власний інструментарій лінгвістичних стратегій. Вони застосовуються в корпоративних документах різного роду, в рекламних текстах, в листах електронної пошти, в контрактах та дозволах, тощо. Корпоративні документи, які забезпечують участь персоналу в злагодженій роботі компаній, включають рекомендації, інструкції, пропагандистські тексти, накази, тощо. Лінгвістичні стратегії цих документів – значною мірою формальний вокабулярій, прості граматичні форми, посилений емоційний фон. Рекламні тексти націлені на потенційних споживачів продукту компанії, тож серед лінгвістичних стратегій – представлення інформації про продукт, його переваги та характеристики разом з логотипом компанії, при цьому часто застосовуються креативні прийоми, наприклад віршована форма, музичний супровід, тощо. Листи електронної пошти мають чітку структуру, серед лінгвістичних стратегій – застосування формального вокабулярію у офіційному листуванні, скорочень та аббревіатур.

Ключові слова: діловий дискурс, засоби ділової комунікації, лінгвістичні стратегії, корпоративні документи, стратегії публічних виступів.

Statement of the problem. The choice of linguistic strategies for professional discourse determines the success of achieving professional goals. In this light, choosing linguistic means and procedures that ensure the effectiveness of business

contacts, the achievement of profitable agreements, and the development of mutually beneficial business relations are essential. In general, linguistic strategies of business discourse determine both the peculiarities of business procedures, including

communication, and the requirements for business documentation.

Analysis of recent research and publications.

The issue of language strategies of discourse has been the focus of researchers for more than half a century. In particular, Fillmore [5], Spiro, Bruce & Brewer [14] paid attention to the peculiarities of the connection between the elements of the text. J. Gampers [6] traced the structural elements of discourse as a communicative practice, its features, and patterns. O. Makiedonova analyzed the existing approaches to linguistic strategies. The researcher views a linguistic strategy as “a complex of speech actions aimed at achieving the overall communicative purpose of the speaker” [10, p. 132].

Throughout the recent decade, numerous studies highlighted the issues of business discourse. In particular, Y. Levchenko & I. Britchenko highlighted specifics of business communication [9].

N. Zinukova highlighted the linguistic peculiarities of texts of English business discourse [1]. Milovan, V. et al. reflected on the importance of presentation skills in contemporary business [11]. Wang, X., & Li, H. analyzed the language characteristics of types of business English speeches [16].

V. Laturkar presented a textbook on business communication that highlights various aspects, such as written and verbal communication, media and technology in communication, and communication in teams and organizations [8].

Setting objectives. The purpose of the article is to highlight the linguistic features of business discourse strategies. The objectives of the article are to specify the types of business discourse and characterize the specifics of verbal and written business discourse strategies in terms of their functional application.

Results and Discussion. Before discussing the linguistic strategies of business discourse, it is worthwhile to consider the concept of business discourse. As some scholars view it, business discourse deals with conducting economically advantageous transactions and successful deals, which are preferable for one party over another and lead to the accumulation of assets [13, p. 124].

Business discourse happens in verbal and written communication. Business discourse participants engage in verbal communication in various meetings, workshops, telephone calls, presentations, online conferences, and other events. Written communication occurs in many forms, including letters, reports, newsletters, and emails. These forms of communication correlate in business discourse with those forms of business activity that require numerous means to achieve success. Informal communication also plays

a crucial role in business discourse. In this case, we refer to cultural aspects of verbal, non-verbal, and transpersonal communication. Informal communication requires a more detailed study. The article highlights linguistic strategies in verbal and written communication.

The book *Business Communication* presents verbal and written communication strategies – presentations, conducting interviews, public speaking as means of verbal communication, and business letters and cards as means of written communication. The book also reflects the strategy and tactics of negotiations [9]. Reflecting on verbal and written communication strategies leads us to a better understanding of their interconnection in business discourse.

Milovan et al. suggested types of presentations based on their purpose, namely informative, educational, stimulating, persuasive, and those for decision-making [11, p. 89].

As a business discourse strategy, interviews fall into the categories of selection interviews, counseling interviews, employee complaint interviews, disciplinary interviews, appraisal interviews, and termination interviews [3]. These types of interviews signify particular stages in corporate culture. Each one has its specific features and requires specific skills.

Public speaking as a form of verbal communication has been evolving for centuries. The authors developed strategies for successful public speaking. In this context, knowledge of the potential audience, utilizing an outline, narrating your speech, using inclusive language, anticipating, and preparing for inquiries are sufficient [8, p. 64].

X. Wang and H. Li suggested dividing business speeches into promotion, skills training, sales, decision-making, and problem-solving speeches [16, p. 2]. This differentiation corresponds to the types of texts of corporate discourse. Thus, documents that reflect and reinforce membership in the corporate work environment correspond to promotion speeches from the above classification. Documents containing guiding principles and instructions correspond to skills training speech. Advertising materials correspond to sales speeches. Legal authorizations and contracts correspond to decision-making speeches. And email notifications correspond to problem-solving speeches.

Strategies of written discourse play an essential role in the business discourse of organizations and companies. Thus, documents that reflect and reinforce membership in the corporate work environment are remarkably similar to documents of election campaigns [15]. Their task is to create and foster a sense

of membership among all employees and to raise the effectiveness of their work activities in general. This group of documents is an invaluable tool for increasing employee participation in the ongoing corporate life. As a rule, they are lengthy, color-coded, and vividly divided into sections representing different subjects or explanations. They contribute to creating an atmosphere of friendliness, orderliness, and perfect harmony that should exist in the corporate environment.

Propaganda texts are for employees and outsiders. They usually contain highly formal vocabulary and simple grammar, avoiding complex subordinate or relative clauses. A strong emotional background and a high aesthetic form are characteristic of this style.

The purpose of the guidelines is to show employees solutions to problems that may arise in the workplace. Their main goal is not to instruct employees but to make it easier for most employees and prevent them from wasting time, resources, and money. Here, the corporation is a friendly and helpful organization that tries to positively influence employees by reducing stressful situations and eliminating all possible difficulties.

These documents bear a striking resemblance to the previous category in that they consist of sections describing different issues. However, despite this, they are usually much shorter and less colorful. According to the corporation, a typical recommendation should not be attractive; however, it should be informative. This attitude results in the uninteresting design of their pages. Documents of this kind are prepared primarily for office workers. The guidelines are not addressed to third parties, as they are strictly confidential. Their reassuring and complementary nature strongly influences the grammar and vocabulary of the guidelines, which are kept as simple as possible. Therefore, authors prefer more polite forms over imperative ones.

The following example illustrates this trend: *Use luggage that is secure and has a strong combination lock.*

Another group of texts is Instructions. These documents instruct employees of the behavior and activities to preserve the reputation of the company. Their goal is to train employees to behave and act in line with the corporate strategy and stop them from taking irrelevant actions.

Instructions are generally similar in appearance to the previous group of documents. Lines separating paragraphs highlight their distinctive nature. However, there are two essential features. First, each Instruction consists of the same paragraphs: Background, Purpose, Procedures, Responsibilities/

Duties, a section related to the topic of the document, and a list of other relevant documents, but the structure of the Guidelines varies depending on the theme. The purpose of Instructions is to show the seriousness of the issues addressed. As a result, the texts contain complex grammar and vocabulary, which forces the reader to pay more attention to their content.

Advertising material tries to persuade potential customers to consume more of a particular product. Corporations use leaflets, brochures, and magazines belonging to companies or corporations as advertising materials. They contain materials informing about the advantages and specific features of the products. Among the strategies in advertising materials are a corporation's logo and advertising slogan, such as a short fragment of poetry or music.

Using simple vocabulary and well-known grammatical structures that do not prevent a potential customer from reading the advertising text carefully can help achieve this goal. It has an advisory character, strengthening the atmosphere of friendliness and warmth.

Email is a method of creating, transmitting, or storing primarily written forms of human communication enabled by digital communications systems. Individual email messages that flow within a company typically contain both regular and variable elements. Each email starts with headers such as:

- From: The email address or usually the sender's name;
- To: The email address(es) or name(s) of the recipient of the message;
- Subject: A summary of the message;
- Date: local time and date of the message.

The length of one email message depends on the subject and its seriousness. A typical email letter ends with the words: Sincerely Yours/ Yours, Best regards.

Email is the most diverse group of documents that exists in a company or corporation. Their formality depends mainly on the position of the sender and its recipients. Company managers use extremely formal vocabulary and grammar, while ordinary employees tend to send informal messages containing numerous abbreviations, phrasal verbs, local semantic leaps [4], and idioms. The content of the documents provided and their accessibility can influence their formality.

Contracts and permits are legal and authorization documents that regulate the cooperation between companies and contractors. They contain all decisions regarding costs, timelines, obligations, and potential financial penalties in case of delay. Permits are legal documents. Local authorities that abide by legislation issue such documents. Contracts and permits regulate the interaction between the manage-

ment board of a company and third parties and have a unified appearance and layout.

The length of the documents described depends on their content. Contracts and permits related to serious issues, such as safety, production, or environmental management, are always lengthy, and those regulating minor repairs, water supply, maintenance, or air emissions are only a few pages long. Each document consists of three parts: an introduction, a regulatory part, and an approved part with signatures and stamps. The introduction contains the title, date, brief descriptions of the signatories, and the document number. The normative part usually consists of paragraphs and outlines the various responsibilities that need to be fulfilled before final adoption. The purpose of the approval part is to give the document legal force.

Thus, corporate discourse is a type of business discourse used to communicate between a corporation and its staff, defining their roles and relationships, from job postings and interviews to orders and seminars for formal induction into the production process. Since communication between different parts of the company needs to be fast and efficient, conversations contain specific terms, most often in the form of abbreviations and acronyms.

In general, abbreviation is a process in which a part of the original word is removed. It expresses the tendency of Modern English to monosyllabism. Shortening takes the form of word truncation, acronyms, and abbreviations. By truncation of words, we mean “reducing them to a shorter form. It is the dropping of one or more syllables of a word” [7, p. 47], for example, bus (omnibus), phone (telephone), lab (laboratory), photo (photography), etc.

The use of abbreviations and syntactic simplifications is obvious in email messages [2].

Some authors mention the use of professional jargon by social groups of people involved in business [12]. Professional jargon has been used in business circles as formal jargon, corporate jargon and marketing language. The linguistic strategy of formal jargon is the use of professional terminology, which is not characteristic of corporate jargons. Buzzwords, neologisms, and acronyms are used in marketing language.

Thus, the analysis of verbal and written business communication has led to defining their main characteristics and linguistic strategies. Moreover, it has identified the types of documents that overlap, as some types of business speeches correspond to the texts in corporate discourse.

Conclusions. Linguistic strategies of business discourse are tools of verbal and written communication in various fields of business. They require specialist approaches and have specific features. Presentations, conducting interviews, and business speeches are means of verbal business communication. They have specific features depending on their purpose and participants. Each of them requires specific linguistic strategies to enable participants of business discourse communicate effectively. In particular, in verbal business communication such strategies as negotiation strategies, public speaking strategies, strategies for various types of presentations, interview strategies are applied.

Written business communication happens in corporate documents. Corporate documents are guidelines, instructions, emails, contracts, and permits. Written business discourse participants apply appropriate linguistic strategies for compiling these documents. There are particular linguistic strategies in advertising texts. In many cases, verbal and written means of business communication apply similar linguistic means depending on their goal and sphere of application.

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