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ЛЕКСИЧЕСКИЕ ОСОБЕННОСТИ ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНОГО ЖАРГОНА В КОРПОРАТИВНОЙ КОММУНИКАЦИИ

В настоящее время современные корпорации используют различные дискурсивные события, такие как объявления о работе, деловая корреспонденция, письма генеральных директоров и годовые отчеты для поддержания фирменного стиля, который полностью отражает профессиональный целевой язык. Сегодня коммуникация служит важным инструментом корпоративного взаимодействия как общей идеологической позиции, направленной на достижение конкретных корпоративных целей. В данной статье рассматриваются важные лексические и синтаксические характеристики британского и австралийского профессионального жаргона и выявляются наиболее распространенные лексические особенности, встречающиеся в корпоративном общении. Для достижения этой цели поставлены следующие задачи: (1) выявить особенности межличностного дискурса, используемые в общении. (2) выявить наиболее выдающиеся лексические характеристики в британской и

австралийской корпоративной коммуникации. В статье раскрывается частотность лексических единиц в межкультурной деловой коммуникации и доказывается, что профессиональный жаргон в корпоративном общении играет огромную роль в поддержании корпоративной идентичности. Следовательно, корпорации выбирают определенный стиль общения для достижения корпоративных целей.

Ключевые слова: межкультурное корпоративное общение, профессионально-жаргонные слова, речевое поведение, годовой отчет, лексика

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LEXICAL PECULIARITIES OF PROFESSIONAL JARGON IN CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

Today, modern corporations use various discursive events, such as job advertisements, business correspondence, CEO statements, and annual reports to maintain a corporate identity that fully reflects the professional target language. Today, communication serves as an important tool for corporate interaction as a common ideological position aimed at achieving specific corporate goals. This article discusses the important lexical characteristics of professional jargon in British and Australian corporate communication and identifies the most common lexical features encountered in corporate communication. To achieve this goal, the following tasks were set: (1) to identify the features of interpersonal discourse used in communication. (2) to identify the most prominent lexical characteristics in British and Australian corporate communication. The article reveals the frequency of lexical units in intercultural business communication and proves that professional jargon in corporate communication plays a huge role in maintaining corporate identity. Consequently, corporations choose a particular communication style to achieve corporate goals.

Keywords: intercultural corporate communication, professional jargon, speech behaviour, annual report, lexis.

Introduction

The issue under this study is associated with the target-specific language of corporate communication whether it is spoken or written; it is used to maintain corporate identity. It also implies careful examination of British and Australian corporate communication and their linguistic features. The study aims to identify and calculate the frequency of linguistic and syntactic features of professional jargon in corporate discourse. In order to address these aims, this study relies upon the corporate documents published online; British and Australian media outlets, written transcripts of corporate spoken and written communication. The significant framework for this study was formulated by Littlejohn (1983), Brown and Levinson (1987). The relevance for the communication theory is obvious in modern linguistics; it is one of the most widespread topics for discussion among various linguists. Communication is important because it helps to achieve significant communicative purposes, maintain corporate identity, and meet various goals. Politeness is also one of the key factors; it takes an important place in intercultural communication and speech etiquette and it also plays a huge role in modern research, that is why the analysis of these theories formed the basis for further investigation.

Globalization has led to invention of new language realia (neologisms, professionalisms, etc). Hence, the phenomenon of professional jargon in corporate discourse has its own peculiarities in terms of language used. This study concerns lexical and syntactic peculiarities of professional jargon, their use within a sentence, and/or written transcripts of Annual Reports, CEO statements. Successful communication between international business partners is influenced by a literate use of business etiquette and the knowledge of professional jargon.

Hence, the following research questions were proposed accordingly:

- What is professional jargon?
- What is Annual Report and what role does it play as a part of corporate discourse?
- What are the most frequently used linguistic features of professional jargon in corporate communication?
- What are their sociolinguistic characteristics?

The issue under this study implies new research as linguistic and syntactic features of professional jargon have not yet been studied in the context of corporate communication. The author of this study conducts the analysis of research material and make out the relevant conclusion.

Literature review

The phenomenon of professional jargon as a part of corporate discourse has been investigated by many linguists (Galperin, (1977), Hudson (1978), Young and Travis (2011).

Speech etiquette, as a linguistic event, originated a long time ago. It is obvious that successful communication cannot exist without proper use of speech etiquette. Thus, long-term relationships among business partners are not achieved without correct communication. Business etiquette is a set of rules or norms that are required to maintain a positive image, meet specific set of targets or maintain corporate identity. G.P. Grice has formulated a set of postulates which speech communication can include: the postulates of quality (the message should not be false or without proper grounds), quantity (the message should not be too short or too long), relationship (the message should be relevant to the addressee) and method (the message should be clear, do not contain words and expressions incomprehensible to the addressee). Needless to say that effective transmission of any information should be correct in terms of tact and politeness.

This article taps into communication theory which is crucial in establishment of appropriate communicative aims. Under the term *communication theory* a specific set of theories that can help in understanding of communication process are usually understood (Littlejohn, 1983). He states that ‘communication does not happen without meaning, and people create and use meaning in interpreting events’ (Littlejohn, 1992, p. 378)

In classical Latin, *communicare* meant ‘to share with’, ‘to share out’, ‘to make generally accessible’ or ‘to discuss together’ (Betteke van Ruler (2018). ‘Communication process works as a one-way process of meaning construction, in which the sender attempts to construct or reconstruct the meaning developed by the receiver; communication as a two-way process of meaning construction, in which to or more people construct new meanings together; and communication as a

omnidirectional diachronic process of meaning construction, in which the focus is on the continuous development of meaning itself' (ibid.)

It is obvious that essential communication rules are required for successful communication between international business partners because it can affect meaningful agreements, transactions, and even affect their future partnerships.

Language that is typical for business communication is enriched with various peculiarities in terms of language levels. This study is mainly focused on lexical and syntactic features that are reflected in corporate communication.

When we discuss specific issues related to any kind of discourse it is quite important to bear in mind institutional nature because it reflects the true nature of what actually discourse refers to and this is 'analysis of language in use' (Brown and Yule, 1983, p.1).

Corporate discourse exists as a part of institutional discourse and opens new background for this study. By the term *corporate discourse* people tend to understand as 'the way of corporate being' (Jaworska, 2018) which presupposes any corporate practices, goals, and principles.

Some linguists are certain that corporate discourse 'goes beyond the notion of discourse as language in its use' (ibid.) and it proposes more.

As concerns corporate identity, it is 'the qualities of a company that are aimed towards familiarization with the target customers' (Cambridge Dictionary)

This study explores professional jargon from the stylistical perspective and provides the analysis of stylistically expressed elements used in corporate documents. It also looks upon how these elements are placed in the sentence or the way sentences are structured.

Theoretical foundation of this study relies on previous research associated with (1) discourse and its nature Fairclough (1995, 2003), Brown and Yule (1983), Paltridge (2006), (2) study of discursive features of speech etiquette in corporate communication (Malyuga 2019), (3) communication theory and its functioning in corporate discourse (Jaworska, 2018); (4) the speech act theory and its focus on communication (Austin, 1975).

Method

This research relies upon British and Australian business correspondence and business letters as research material.

The corpus compiled for analysis was formulated out of Annual Reports and CEO statements of famous British and Australian corporations such as HSBC, GSK, Vodafone, British American Tobacco, RB, Unilever, Diageo, Rio Tinto, Astra Zeneca.

Specifically, 10 extracts of CEO statements were analysed where 5 British and 5 Australian business letters taken from Annual Reports.

The study was based on linguistic analysis, stylistic analysis. As concerns methods that were used in this study there were such as continuous sampling method, descriptive, discursive, and comparative which were selected for investigation of linguistic phenomenon.

Continuous sampling method was used to find out a phenomenon in various samples selected for research.

Descriptive method was selected in order to find out linguistic phenomenon while linguistic research and describe it for further analysis.

Discursive method relies on discursive and linguistic features that can be identified in many samples. It cannot be realised without the proper understanding of what stands for *discourse*.

Lexical approach is applied in order to investigate lexical items as a part of corporate communication, investigate its feature on the lexical level.

Therefore, the author investigates lexical and syntactic features of speech etiquette in corporate discourse which is realised by means of *linguistic* and *stylistic analysis*.

Linguistic analysis was used to found out and point out specific linguistic phenomenon and describe it from the linguistic point of view.

Stylistic analysis was used in order to look for stylistic features of speech etiquette in corporate discourse.

Results

Corporate discourse is formulating the modern world of global corporations. The corpus compiled for analysis was formulated out of 10 Annual Reports and 10 CEO statements of famous British and Australian companies such as HSBC, GSK, Vodafone, British American Tobacco, Unilever, API, AU Post, CBA, CSL, Elders.

Professional jargon is a phenomenon which has been studied by many linguists throughout the world. Business communication, especially, professional jargon, is a kind of communication which is characterized by many institutional properties.

According to Young and Travis (2011) 'the way of communicating the business message can be realised only through the help of professional jargon'. They state that each profession uses its own way of communication which belongs to a specialist community and can raise certain issues for those who are not involved.

According to Hudson (1978) professional jargon is also used to emphasize the high position or corporate identity. He also argues that the overall meaning of professional jargon has been changing all over decades.

Thus, Hudson (1978, p.3) outlines several characteristics of professional jargon such as:

- (1) It reflects a particular profession or occupation;
- (2) It is pretentious, with only a small kernel of meaning underneath it;
- (3) It is used mainly by intellectually inferior people, who feel a need to convince the general public of their importance;
- (4) It is, deliberately or accidentally, mystifying.

According to Grabarczyk (Grabarczyk, 1989 Scientific Discourse against the Background of Standard Language. In C. Laurén and M. Nordman (eds.) *Special Language: From Humans Thinking to Thinking Machines* pp. 190- 189), professional jargon is defined as 'a complex of all linguistic means obtained in a professionally limited sphere of human communication' (ibid, p. 180). In addition, one of the features that characterize professional language is that it 'eliminates the linguistic units of emotion and picturesqueness' (ibid: 182); as a result, it can be assumed that professional jargon can be also considered as unemotional (ibid).

The scholar asserts that professional jargon can be examined through two approaches, such as functional style in terms of stylistic peculiarities; and scientific style in which vocabulary is examined (ibid: 180). As professional jargon is used among certain professional community, vocabulary is one of the most important things to focus on. In this regard, the author states that professional jargon is characterized 'by the high frequency of nouns' (ibid, p. 188) as professional jargon is aimed at precision.

According to Galperin (1977) defines jargon as 'a group of words that exists in almost every language and whose aim is to preserve secrecy within one or another social group' (Galperin, 1977, p. 110).

Hence, the author states that jargon belongs to a specialized vocabulary applied for particular social group and that can often evolve into slang or colloquial words.

As to common characteristic of professional jargon, as a phenomenon, can be summarized as follows.

(1) Professional jargon is a part of specialised language used to communicate within a specific professional community either verbally or in writing.

(2) Professional jargon belongs to the special colloquial vocabulary layer from the perspective of stylistics according to Galperin (1977) and specialized (professional) vocabulary according to Grabarczyk and Schilling (1965).

(3) The purpose of professional jargon is to preserve secrecy within a certain profession so that the language used is incomprehensible to the outside community. In addition, professionals apply professional jargon for the purpose of establishing more effective and efficient communication among professionals in particular professional settings.

(4) Professional jargon is usually a noun developed through new meanings imposed on old words.

(5) Professional jargon is unemotional.

The main difference between professional jargon and terms, professionalisms and slang is the following: professional jargons are considered *secretive* in a sense that they are used and understood among professionals in a particular community; whereas, the purpose of professionalisms, slang and terms is to effectively transfer the message to the a general English language user in a comprehensive manner.

In addition, unlike professional jargon, professionalisms tend to be emotional; slang is mostly applied in spoken discourse; and terms are newly coined concepts commonly evident when referring to a specific science. (in Galperin, 1977, Hudson, 1978, Young and Travis, 2011)

Discussion

In modern world, business communication has certain peculiarities on many. This research focuses on word-level and sentence-level analysis.

This article bases on *lexical approach* which is as to Lewis (1993) ‘the primary purpose of language is the creation and exchange of

meaning' (Lewis, 1993, p. 51). The scholar considers that lexis is one of the most important areas to be analysed.

Regarding this, Lewis (1993, p.89) introduces the following characteristics:

- (1) Meaning is not totally predictable from form;
- (2) Each is a minimal unit for certain syntactic purposes;
- (3) Each is a social institution.

He states that 'language consists of chunks which, when combined, produce continuous coherent text that 'these chunks can be distinguished in four different types, such as words, collocations, fixed expressions and semi-fixed expressions' (Lewis 2008, p. 7). He divides multi-word lexical items into polywords, arbitrary combinations and a sort of mini-idioms (ibid, p. 8).

The scholar notes that a collocation 'is the readily observable phenomenon whereby certain words co-occur in natural text with greater than random frequency' (Lewis, 2008, p 8), for instance, '*make a mistake*' (ibid).

The third lexical item as a part of Lexical Approach according to Lewis (2008) is expressions, to be more precise, fixed expressions of which four different types can be distinguished: social greetings (e.g. '*Good morning*'), politeness phrases (e.g. '*No thank you, I'm fine*', 'Phrase Book' language (e.g. '*Can you tell me the way to..., please?*') as well as idioms (e.g. '*You're making a mountain out of a molehill*') (Lewis, 2008, p. 9-10).

The fourth type of lexical item is defined as semi-fixed expressions which can vary from very short to long and 'from almost fixed to very free' (Lewis, 2008, p. 11).

To continue, Lewis (1993) also proposes a slightly different classification of lexical items: words, multi-word items, polywords, collocations and institutionalized expressions (Lewis, 1993, p. 91-98).

As regards polywords, the scholar explains polywords as lexical items often evident in dictionaries; these items are rather short and consist of two to three words. In addition, these words can be linked with any word class and in terms of meaning it could vary from 'immediately apparent' (Lewis, 1993, p. 92) to completely different from the other words (ibid). Lewis also offers some examples of polywords: 'taxi rank', 'put off', 'of course', 'by the way', 'all at

once' (ibid).

Referring to collocations, Lewis (1993) notes that collocations 'describe the way individual words co-occur with others' (Lewis 1993, p. 93).

Lewis (1993) also deals with analysis of institutional expressions in his theoretical contributions. The scholar explains that institutionalized expressions 'allow the language user to manage aspects of the interaction; they are pragmatic in character' (Lewis, 1993, p. 94). In other words, with the expression of the utterance, the listener or the reader can identify what is being actually done and, subsequently, said focusing on the linguistics and language as such (ibid). Lewis sub-categorizes institutionalized expressions in the following way: 'short, hardly grammaticalized utterances: *Not yet. Certainly not. Just a moment, please.*

According to (Lewis, 1993, p. 90) 'there are also such lexical items as multi-word items which are subdivided into two main groups – collocations and institutionalised expressions'.

As the present research is focused on investigating tendencies of professional language, namely professional jargon, the Lexical Approach will be exercised in terms of lexical items in order to successfully conduct the analysis on the composition of professional jargon evident in British and Australian corporate communication. The classification used as the basis for the analysis is as follows: words, polywords and collocations (fixed – relatively fixed – novel) (Lewis, 1993, 2008).

Annual Report as a Genre

According to Cambridge dictionary, 'Annual report is a report made by a company each year that includes the company's audited (=officially examined) accounts, along with statements of profits or loss and how the management thinks the company will do in the future.

Based on the definition, it can be assumed that annual report is a report which corresponds to a certain institutional discourse, namely, discourse of economics. After the concept of the annual report is explained, it is essential to discuss what the particularities in terms of communicative purpose(s) of it are.

According to Bhatia (2004), promotional genres are mainly referred to advertisements; however, the scholar explains that such genres as company brochures, fundraising letters, book reviews and

even annual reports are also included in the colony. It is because most of these genres serve more than one communicative purpose of which one of them is to promote something (Bhatia, 2004, p. 59-62). As a result, in this genre colony annual report can be viewed as secondary unlike in reporting genres in which annual report is treated as primary genre (Bhatia, 2004).

As regards the main communicative purpose of promotional genres, it is to promote 'a product or service to a potential customer' (Bhatia, 2004, p. 60). In addition, the product or service what is being promoted can vary according to the specific genre (ibid). The scholar also emphasizes that other genres that are unlikely to be considered as belonging to promotional genres (e.g. annual report) might not necessarily promote a product or service, but a public issue, an idea, or something similar (ibid: 61). Based on Bhatia's studies, it can be assumed that annual report as a promotional genre share the same communicative purpose in which the annual report promotes the performance of an organization or a company to the general public as well as its shareholders.

Bhatia explains that annual reports entail 'reporting on overall perspective on an organization' (ibid).

According to Breeze (2013) The Annual Report is 'the principal document used by public companies to disclose corporate information to their stakeholders'. Being a promotional document, Annual Report offers a wider opportunity for corporate communication because it is a part of 'financial public relations' which is a set of activities to designed to communicate with stockbrokers, financial analysts, institutional and private investors, financial journalists, and the financial press (ibid.)

Thus, Annual Reports are aimed at establishing and maintain long-term relations with vital audiences, which can help to maintain corporate image and follow to achieve corporate goals (Breeze, 2013)

In order to distinguish the collocation types, Oxford Collocation Dictionary was used.

Thus, this sociolinguistic research revealed that the overall number of lexical items met in the British corporate communication was 292 cases, the most frequent lexical item in British corporate communication were poly-words – 159 cases, whereas the least frequent lexical item were institutionalized expressions – 10 cases.

As to Australian corporate communication, the overall number of lexical items was 317 cases, the most frequent lexical item were also poly-words – 179 cases, and the least frequent were institutionalized expressions – 15 cases (Figure 1 and Figure 2).

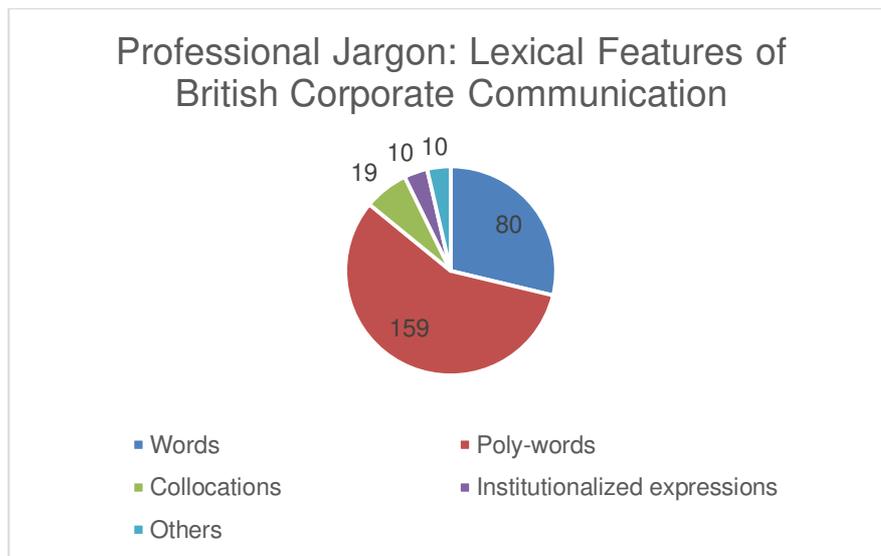


Figure 1. Professional Jargon: Lexical Features of British Corporate Communication

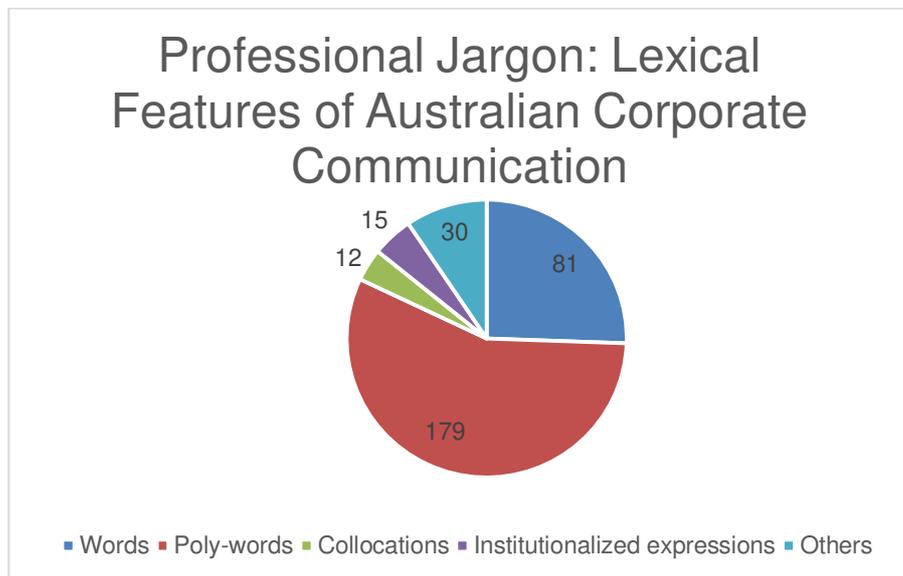


Figure 2. Professional Jargon: Lexical Features of Australian Corporate Communication

The results of this sociolinguistic research reveal that Australian corporate communication is rich with institutionalized expressions 20 times more than British corporate communication.

Conclusion

This study was concerned with the investigation of corporate discourse, genre analysis, and application of lexical approach to identification of British and Australian corporate communication with the aim to find out the most frequently used lexical features.

By the means of the theory by Lewis (1993) applied as a tool for the further analysis, the author of this research was able to use lexical approach to this research.

Professional jargon is an unemotional part of specialised language used to communicate within a specific professional community; it belongs to the special colloquial vocabulary layer and specialized (professional) vocabulary establishing more effective and efficient communication among professionals in particular professional settings.

Annual Report is a part of corporate discourse and it plays a huge role in shareholders' communication, provision of financial data, and maintenance of corporate image.

This sociolinguistic research revealed that the overall number of lexical items met in the British corporate communication was 292 cases, the most frequent lexical item in British corporate communication were poly-words – 159 cases, whereas the least frequent lexical item were institutionalized expressions – 10 cases.

As to Australian corporate communication, the overall number of lexical items was 317 cases, the most frequent lexical item were also poly-words – 179 cases, and the least frequent were institutionalized expressions – 15 cases.

As to their sociolinguistic characteristics, the author considers both British and Australian lexical features of professional jargon are unemotional, peculiar to institutional discourse, however, the author have not find any sharp cultural differences.

The corpus compiled for analysis was formulated out of 10 Annual Reports and 10 CEO statements of famous British and Australian companies such as HSBC, GSK, Vodafone, British American Tobacco, Unilever, API, AU Post, CBA, CSL, Elders. The overall amount of lexical features found was 609 cases.

The relevance of this research is that it contributes to the analysis of the current investigations of professional jargon. It helps to explore new facets of professional jargon in corporate communication.

The theoretical contribution of this research is that it can be used in theoretical frameworks of any linguistic investigations, books, and further researches.

The practical implication of this research is that it opens new facets of the sociolinguistic analysis and helps to open new frames of similar research.

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