

TOPICS IN LINGUISTICS

Issue 5 – September 2010

Aspects of Language and Discourse

Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra
Faculty of Arts

Názov/Title

TOPICS IN LINGUISTICS
Aspects of Language

Vydavateľ/Publisher

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Elektronické vydanie

Počet strán/Pages

41

ISSN: 1337-7590

Registračné číslo Ministerstva kultúry SR: EV 2584/08

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Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa v Nitre
Filozofická fakulta

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Príspevky/Papers



Is the Internet a Tool for the Development or Destruction of Language and Human Communication?

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Abstract

The Internet is a tool which, in some ways may be beneficial and in other ways destructive, for its users. Even though the Internet users can benefit from the possibility of fast communication and connection with people in the whole world and use the Internet as a vast source of information, they may also suffer from

the negative effects the Internet leaves in those who do not make proper and wise use of it.

Keywords

Internet, on-line communication, culture, pragmatic, psychological, linguistic, e-mail, chat, face-book, cyberspace.

Introduction

The Internet is a communication medium representing a new epistemology. The influence of the Internet on human communication can lead to enriching or disastrous consequences. One of the merits of the Internet is that it provides great information accessibility, immediate interactive communication, and rapid connection mediation. The use of the Internet for communication purposes inevitably affects the quality of speech and thinking. Some of the negative impacts of Internet usage are: impoverishment of vocabulary, simplification of speech, the overuse of English expressions in other languages, abruptness, etc., and it has a great impact on lifestyle in general. Modern linguistic research shows that the Internet and other types of electronic use of language may result in the destruction of languages other than English and, in the end, of literacy and correct spelling, in the introduction of a new era of 'technobabble', and in a loss of creativity and flexibility caused by the imposition of global sameness. The use of electronic media for communication (mobile phones, e-mail, facebook, etc.) often results in a weakening of social skills, in the deprivation of personal relationships, in a feeling of lonesomeness and depression, and in the 'addiction to a keyboard'. This paper will examine some of the positive and negative aspects of Internet communication in light of several pragmatic, linguistic, and psychological approaches.

1. A Few Thoughts on Language

Language is a universal means of communication with a social nature, which serves as a tool for thinking and a means of storing human experience and for the development of national cultural traditions. It has a systematic and symbolic nature (C.f. Černý 1996, 17). J. Findra emphasizes that language provides man with the space in which he lives his spiritual life and with which he enters into the global space of social life (C.f. Findra 1998, 5) and defines language as a gift from God, who gave us the ability to use language as a means for communication, which in its essence is the basis for human togetherness. Man as a social being is capable of existence only because of language. Language is the tool that keeps us together as a national community, it binds but does not enslave; on the contrary, it makes us become an independent national subject. Without the possibility to communicate via language, society would fall apart and become a group of isolated individuals and thus gradually cease to exist. Language serves man in social interaction as well as in satisfying all the spiritual and material needs which are the presupposition of his

existence. Language is not a reflection of its creator. It cannot deceive; it does not possess the true or the good, the wrong or the bad. Language is a tool which in the hands of man can become a tool of the good or of the bad. Language serves both the good man and the bad man. It cannot defend itself or revolt. Unfortunately, even today man misuses the vulnerability of language. It is often used to spread a lie instead of the truth. Thus, it is used to twist the truth, to manipulate others and even to destroy the beauty of its forms and take apart the components which hold it together as a work of art (C.f. Findra 1998, 7-8).

Language, according to W. von Humboldt, is not a product (Erzeugtes) but rather a creative process (Erzeugung) and its function is to name objects as well as to be a tool for communication (Humboldt 2000, 64). The same author analyzes the essence and properties of language in the following ways (C.f. Humboldt 2000, 69-76):

a. Language is a thought-building organ. The intellectual activity, entirely spiritual and deeply interior is materialized in speech and thus it becomes accessible to sensual perception. Therefore, the intellectual activity and language create an inseparable unity.

b. Thinking is not possible without language. Even when thinking is happening in quiet, the creation of notions or thinking is impossible without language. Language is an indispensable prerequisite for thinking even in the condition of a total isolation of man. Nevertheless, language normally develops within a society and man can understand himself only when he verifies the comprehensibility of his words to other people in practice.

c. That which makes language useful in the one-time act of articulation of a thought is constantly repeated in the entire spiritual life of the human person; the mutual transfer of spiritual values through language gives man trust and stimulus.

d. The whole language activity starting with its most simple manifestations is the result of unification of the individual perception and the common essence of humanity.

e. Understanding can only happen through a spiritual activity. Thus, both understanding and speaking are just two different activities of the same language force.

f. Language is not some kind of material that can be covered in its totality; but rather, it is a constantly developing organism, in which the laws of production are defined and the dimension and, to a certain degree, also the kind remain quite undetermined.

g. The power of language may be considered as a physiological activity and the power coming out of it has a purely dynamic nature. Behind the influence of language on man are the laws of language and its forms; behind the influence of man on language is the principle of freedom.

Furthermore, W. von Humboldt makes a parallel between the law of nature and the laws that govern language. In his understanding in both cases the deepest and the most interior forces of man are put into action and thus language facilitates a better understanding of the universal form made eternal in nature (Humboldt 2000, 74).

J. Findra (1998) also wisely observes that language is not a mere reflection of its creator – man. Language serves a good man and a man filled with hatred in the same manner. Every human being may use it to express love or hatred, affection or cruelty, the truth or a lie while making language more beautiful, rich and creative or do quite the opposite: contribute to its impoverishment and perhaps even destruction. It is man's responsibility to protect and cultivate the gift of language without which humanity could not exist.

2. Some of the Great Advantages of Internet Communication

2.1 The Speed of Information Exchange

One of the major advantages of internet communication is the rapid exchange of information and the possibility to easily send and deliver a number of often graphically complicated data. The Internet has also increased the accessibility of information, as it "allows people to access rich educational and cultural resources that are otherwise unavailable to most people or may take much longer to locate at the library" (*Mega Essays* 2009). They can obtain current and up-to-the-minute information. The technical possibilities of the Internet software products help discover plagiarism. On-line virtual reality games have been used for psychotherapy.

2.2 The Possibility of Communication across Country and Continent Boundaries

The possibility to communicate with people from any part of the world is a great advantage of Internet technology. "People all around the world break the boundaries of time, distance and identity by conversing with one another in various chat rooms... the Internet allows you to keep in touch with family and friends" (*Mega Essays* 2009).

2.3 Virtual World Open to All

The Internet offers a tool for those who feel a need to associate with others, for example, coping with the same or a similar problem. The Internet and cyberspace become "more safe", and the fear that someone might recognize me is overcome. The on-line communication users are more open when expressing their feelings or sharing intimate things about themselves; they feel accepted and better understood; they find support and even some kind of "affection" or "love" (C.f. Vybiral 2005, 278-279). One of the recent articles in *Medscape* (2009) states that "The Internet may help to empower youth, particularly those in disadvantaged circumstances... A recent review concluded that adolescents are primarily using the Internet to reinforce offline relationships; and they also seem to use online forums such as homepages and blogs to gain positive feelings of mastery and competence. In addition to this, participation in the e-PAR program has allowed youth to use the Internet and other technologies (photography and video cameras, music production software) to document their lives and create awareness for health and community issues such as drug-use, violence,

discrimination, and homelessness" (Shu-Sha – Kaveri 2009).

2.4 Education via Internet

On-line education (*e-learning* or *distance learning*) is another aspect of Internet communication that shows positive results. Research shows that students tend to be more active and participate more through on-line education. They seem to be less shy and feel more confident and free to communicate their ideas (C.f. Vybiral 2005, 279-280). There is evidence that computer and Internet use improves test scores, history chronology learning, and the motivation to learn.

2.5 Creativity, Innovation and Coinage

Creativity, innovation and coinage may, to a certain degree, be seen as positive aspects of on-line communication. Some expressions used in the world of Internet communication are called *internetisms*. Wikipedia (The Free Encyclopedia) defines the Internet slang (Internet language, Internet Short-hand, netspeak, or chatspeak) as "slang that Internet users have popularized and, in many cases, coined. Such terms often originate with the purpose of saving keystrokes, and many people use the same abbreviations in text messages, instant messaging, and Twitter, Netlog or Facebook . Acronyms, keyboard symbols, and shortened words are often methods of abbreviation in Internet slang". Some internetisms are acronyms, such as ILY (I love you), 2G2BT (Too good to be true), 4EAE (For ever and ever), CUL (See you later), ATB (All the best), YSYS (Yes, sure you do). Word shortening has also spread over short message writing, e.g. abrvtd txt msg snt mbl fon (abbreviated sms messages sent on a mobile phone), AFAIK CU 2NITE (As far as I know, I'll see you tonight.) "In other cases, new dialects of Internet slang such as leet or Lolspeak develop as ingroup memes rather than time savers. In leet speak, letters may be replaced by characters of similar appearance. For this reason, leet is often written as l33t or 1337" (Wikipedia).

Analogous jargon or encoding emotions and non-verbal communication is often expressed by using common symbols. 'Emoticons', or 'smileys', are symbols used to express emotions or convey facial expressions, such as :) a smile, happy :-o a smiley with a nose (nose dash optional in any emoticon) ;) a wink :-(a frown :< very sad :-> devious smile >:-(mad or annoyed :c bummed out, pouting :-| grim :-/ skeptical :o shouting :O shouting loudly :-D laughing :-p sticking out tongue :-& tongue-tied, etc. A person can express his or her feelings or emotional states instantly by using these symbols and thus approximate face-to-face communication.

3. Possible Threats of Internet Communication

3.1 Language and Culture

A language develops with the development of a culture. It is not a natural product but rather a social and cultural product. People use language not only to communicate with one another but also to transmit social and cultural information, values and emotions (C.f. Buchtová 2006, 13).

Language culture is a process, degree and state of perfection of a language; in a broad sense, it is also the result manifested in the differentiation and steadfastness of its means. Language culture is the manifestation and consequence of the entire cultural development of the society (C.f. Král and Rýzková 1990, 26). Language culture is the study and instruction on the perfection of speech. It is the role of linguistics to study, describe and objectively analyze the complex situation of a standard language at a

certain moment of its social existence and come to conclusions accordingly. However, the linguist has the right and duty to express his or her thoughts on the standard language and actively influence it (C.f. Ondrejovič 2008, 221). Language culture is mostly an issue of a practical examination and decision. One can argue about the principles of this procedure; however, it is impossible to construct a system of language control (C.f. Ondrejovič 2008, 222). The modern sociolinguistic approach considers language as a heterogeneous system with a great number of varieties and (behavior) norms determined by the language community. Thus, national language can have the following varieties: a) codified (correct, prestigious); b) common (non-codified, standard); c) substandard; and d) dialects. The speaker can use one or the other variety depending on the occasion and purpose of his or her speech and even implement "code-switching" if desired. The following paragraphs will examine some aspects of the Internet language culture mainly from the pragmatic, linguistic and psychological point of view.

3.2 The Pragmatic Approach: The Functions of Language

According to David Crystal (2002) language fulfills the following cultural, social and individual functions:

- "the exchange" of facts and attitudes through language (communicative function);
- the expression of emotions through language;
- social interaction through language;
- the power of language (language expression);
- the control over reality through language;
- collection and storage of data;
- the instrument of thinking (cognitive function); and
- the expression of identity through language.

The function of identity, which reveals a person's individuality and the social identity of the speaker, is manifested in various ways:

- a) physical identity (the relationship between the language and age, sex, physical type and health condition of the speaker);
- b) psychological identity (the relationship between the language and personality and other psychological factors of the speaker);
- c) geographic identity (based on the regional background and regional varieties of speakers, which may be manifested in the accent and timbre of speakers);
- d) ethnic and national identity (language in relation to other national communities and to nationalism);
- e) social identity (related to the social stratification of a community, to social status and roles of the speakers as well as to social solidarity and distance);
- f) contextual identity (situationally determined varieties of speech and writing; and
- g) stylistic identity and literature (the concept of style; authorship identity; literary language in poetry, drama, and prose).

The communicative function (the exchange of ideas) is the primary function of language. It is also called the *referential* or *propositional* function. Language is also used to express emotions and to eliminate possible tension in interpersonal relationships. Language communication often fulfills the function of social interaction and helps maintain interpersonal relationships. Language is thus used as a means for establishing an awareness of unity and solidarity (C.f. Ondrejovič 2008, 77-78).

The primary five functions of communication are: a) to inform (to transfer information, to add another piece of information, to "let know", to announce, to declare, etc.); b) to instruct (to lead, to teach, to guide); c) to persuade the addressee to alter/change his or her opinion (to influence, to manipulate, to gain someone's favor); d) to negotiate, to come to an agreement (to solve a problem); and e) to entertain (to make someone or oneself laugh, to unbend) (C.f. Vybíral 2005, 31).

3.3 The Pragmatic and Sociolinguistic Approach: Face-To-Face Communication and Verbal vs. Non-Verbal Communication

One of the major threats of on-line communication is that it often replaces every day face-to-face human interactions. A professional article in *Mega Essays* (2009) makes the following observation of the Internet as a communication tool: "The Internet allows people to keep in closer touch with distant family members and friends, and to find information quickly. Like many technologies, the Internet has lulled people with its novelty and convenience, which will create a sense of dependency. From a simple e-mail to the complex world of virtual communities, the Internet allows people to communicate with each other. Unlike face-to-face communication though, the participants of the chat rooms only use words to communicate with each other; the participants are unable to see the non-verbal cues that are an integral part of face-to-face communication." It is not only language that is relevant in human communication, which is supposed to be functional. Eye contact, the tone, body posture and gestures are indicators that reveal much more about the relationship, attitude, intention, etc. between speakers. In order to evaluate whether communication between speakers is functional and successful or dysfunctional, all of the above mentioned indicators must be present in human interaction. Otherwise it is impossible to come to objective conclusions.

3.4 The Psychological and Sociological Approach: Internet Addiction and Impersonal Relationships

Another serious problem is Internet addiction. According to Shu-Sha - Kaveri (2009). Excessive Internet use is emerging as one of the more negative aspects of young people's online activities. In the literature, such extreme use is often synonymous with the terms 'compulsive Internet use', 'problematic Internet use', 'pathological Internet use', 'Internet dependence', 'computer addiction' and 'net addiction'. Internet addiction, the term we use here, has been defined as the use of the Internet to escape from negative feelings, continued use of the Internet despite the desire to stop, experience of unpleasant emotions when Internet use is impossible, thinking about the Internet constantly, and the experience of any other conflicts or self-conflicts due to Internet use. There is evidence that Internet addiction has a negative effect on academics (a drop in grades), family relations (having to hide their excessive Internet use from parents), physical health (sleep deprivation due to long hours of Internet use), mental health (depression), and finance (cost of accrued Internet expenses). Interactive communication applications such as chat rooms, instant messaging, e-mail, and online games have most commonly been associated with Internet addiction among youth.

The usage of Internet communication via e-mail, chat, ICQ, virtual discussion groups, common interest communities, and web log has a psychological effect on every user. It is difficult to give up this type of communication for those who have become accustomed to it. The Internet has changed our communication manners. In comparison to regular

letters, most people send more messages to other people through the Internet. The quality of writing has changed; it is considered a unique type of communication – *the typed communication* (C.f. Vybírál 2005, 272). Using this kind of communication, the user also has a possibility to express his or her intonation and gestures. However, research shows that this type of communication often strikes as distant, cold, impersonal and superficial. Furthermore, Shu-Sha – Kaveri (2009) also state that “there is some evidence that frequency of computer use can have a negative effect on academics and that using the Internet for playing games and general entertainment purposes decreases the quality of friendships and romantic relationships”.

3.5. The Psychological Approach: Loneliness and Depression

R. Kraut discovered that after two or three years of using Internet communication, the *heavy users* communicated less in the real world and felt lonelier and even more depressed than those who did not use the Internet frequently (Kraut et al. 1988, 368-375).

3.6. The Psychological and Pragmatic Approach: Disinhibition

Another negative effect of Internet communication is the forms and manifestations of disinhibition. The loss of scruples and the excessive spontaneity may be anomalous. According to John Suler (2003), disinhibition through on-line communication is caused primarily by the following six factors: a) You Don't Know Me (anonymity); b) You Can't See Me (invisibility); c) Delayed Reactions (asynchronicity); d) It's All in My Head (solipsistic introjection); e) Leveling the Playing Field (neutralizing of status); and f) Interaction Effects. From the pragmatic point of view, this type of communication may be partially considered as dysfunctional due to the possible lack of the function of identity (the speaker might tell lies and pretend a false identity), which causes the creation of a false image in the mind of the other participant of the communication. The neutralization of status – a common phenomenon in internet communication – breaks the rule of politeness in communication.

3.7. The Psychological Approach: Anonymity

Anonymity on the Internet protects a person from being identified. Nevertheless, even in this anonymous environment the individual wishes to act and manifest himself. He wants to be protected and at the same time, contribute to the *community* with something. Internet users are attracted not only by the anonymity protection but also by the possibility to come out of the anonymity and reveal their identity, which they can deliberately control. Solipsism leads to the creation of an imaginary world in the head of the person, which is manifested, for example, in Internet made *friendships*. This enables one person to create his or her own fantasy world about another person, while, in fact, we communicate, at least to a certain degree, with ourselves: with our expectations, hopes, beliefs, dreams, even with our need to promote ourselves (C.f. Vybírál 2005, 272-276). Anonymity may result in the users become irresponsible for their behavior while communicating on-line. This may cause dissociation states of the users. For example, a person may be addicted to on-line pornography or aggressively attack the participants in a chat room; however, when they come out of the on-line space, they claim to be someone else (C.f. Vybírál 2005, 276).

3.8. The Pragmatic Approach: Time Delay

Time delay is another negative factor which often results in creating a tension among the participants in on-line communication. Chatgroups – “continuous discussions on a particular topic, organized in ‘rooms’ at particular Internet sites, in which computer users interested in the topic can participate” (Crystal 2006, 11) – allow the users to interact in real time (*synchronously*) or in a postponed time (*asynchronously*). Internet Relay Chat (IRC) is one of the main systems “available to users, consisting of thousands of rooms dealing with different topics” (Crystal 2006, 12). Users can thus open several rooms and engage in more than one conversation simultaneously. In addition, the user may also be engaged in an ICQ conversation and be writing an e-mail to someone. This manifold interactive communication may, however, affect the concentration of the user and require the user to behave and experience things in different ways at the same time. “The time delay (usually referred to as *lag*) is a central factor in many situations: there is an inherent uncertainty in knowing the length of the gap between the moment of posting a message and the moment of receiving a reaction. Because of lag, the rhythm of an interaction – even in the fastest Netspeak encounters, in instant messaging, synchronous chatgroups, and virtual worlds – lacks the space and predictability of that found in telephonic or face-to-face conversations” (Crystal 2006, 34). The expectation of an immediate response, especially during a synchronous on-line communication can easily cause tension. “All lags cause problems, but some are much worse than others. A low lag is of the order of 2-3 seconds, a delay which most participants tolerate – though even here some people find their tolerances tested, for 2-3 seconds is significantly greater than that found in most conversational exchanges” (Crystal 2006, 34). The frustration may be caused on both sides of the communication chain. The response may also be delayed if the user takes time to think about his or her answer. On the other hand, instant messages are, on the other hand, often badly thought out and structured.

3.9 The Pragmatic Approach: Breaking the Rule of the Conversational Turn

Crystal talks of another crucial problem in Internet communication; namely, of breaking the rule of the conversational *turn*. Turn taking is a core feature of traditional face-to-face interaction, which enables interactions to be successful. In a face-to-face conversation, “people follow the routine of taking turns, when they talk, and avoid talking at once or interrupting each other randomly or excessively” (Crystal 2006, 35). However, when an electronic interaction involves several people, such as in chatgroups, virtual worlds, and e-mails which are copied repeatedly, lag can interfere with the conversational turn. Moreover, when there are long lags, the ability to cope with a topic may be destroyed.

3.10 The Linguistic Approach: Structural, Lexical and Stylistic Features

Furthermore, Crystal (2006) is concerned about the structural, lexical and stylistic manifestations of language used in on-line communication. He presents the following seven main properties of written language:

- a) *graphic* features: the general presentation and organization of the written language, defined in terms of such factors as distinctive typography, page design, spacing, use of illustrations, and color;
- b) *orthographic* (or *graphological*) features: the writing system of an individual

language, defined in terms of such factors as distinctive use of the alphabet, capital letters, spelling, punctuation, and ways of expressing emphasis (italics, bold-face, etc.);

c) *grammatical* features: the many possibilities of syntax and morphology, defined in terms of such factors as the distinctive use of sentence structure, word order, and word inflections;

d) *lexical* features: the vocabulary of a language, defined in terms of the set of words and idioms given distinctive use within a variety;

e) *discourse* features: the structural organization of a text, defined in terms of such factors as coherence, relevance, paragraph structure, and the logical progression of ideas;

f) *phonetic* features: the general auditory characteristics of spoken language, defined in terms of such factors as the distinctive use of voice quality, vocal register (e.g. tenor vs. bass), and voice modality (e.g. speaking, singing, chanting); and

g) *phonological* features: the sound system of an individual language, defined in terms of such factors as the distinctive use of vowels, consonants, intonation, stress, and pause.

Crystal asks the question whether all Internet users present themselves, "through their messages, contributions, and pages, with the same kind of graphic, orthographic, grammatical, lexical, and discourse features" (Crystal 2006, 10).

One of the problems is seen in the structure of e-mails. In comparison to a paper-written letter (which follow a certain pattern: opening expressions, closing expressions, etc.), e-mail has no set structure or stylistic features that it should follow. E-mails tend to vary in length and style.

The Internet is "a world where many of the participants are highly motivated individualists, intent on exploring the potential of a new medium, knowledgeable about its procedures, and holding firm views about the way it should be used. The most informed of this population are routinely referred to as *geeks* – defined by *Wired Style*, an influential Internet manual, as 'someone who codes for fun, speaks Unix among friends, and reads Slashdot daily'" (Crystal 2006, 18). Even though there is a "great deal of linguistic innovation and ingenuity in their usage... at the same time, everyone is aware that too much idiosyncrasy causes problems of intelligibility" (Crystal 2006, 18).

Another linguistic problem manifested in on-line communication is the intentional simplification and deformation of language expressions. The simplified forms used on the Internet affect the syntactic, semantic, compositional and stylistic level of language. Most changes in expression are due to the shortness of time, the acceleration of information transmission and the deviation from the beauty of language to communication utility (C.f. Vybiral 2005, 281).

Some of the major psychological reasons for the simplification of language forms may be: a) when the participants of communication react quickly, without thinking and making corrections; b) when the participants adopt a commonly used language with a limited vocabulary, and influence each other in this way; c) when the participants' vocabulary is not sufficiently cultivated; and d) when they use language

as "gestures" to express their reluctance against the conformist users of the correct or literary language (C.f. Vybiral 2005, 281).

While the usage of internetisms (the internet slang, acronyms, abbreviations, and emoticons) can be a contribution to language dynamics, it can have a destructive effect when used in excess and when causing the user's language skills to become weaker and less cultivated as a result of using them too frequently. The user can easily impoverish the grammar, spelling, style, syntax and vocabulary of his or her language.

Another negative aspect of on-line communication is the inversion of the linear sequence of information, e.g. in discussion forums where the last message becomes the first read, since, ironically, we prefer to read backwards, starting with what is the newest, the most fresh piece of information.

Last but not least, some linguists express the fear that English – the dominant language in on-line communication – can represent a severe menace to other languages. The common use of English may result in accelerating the process of disappearance of languages in the world. W. von Humboldt asks if language did not reach with its roots deep down into the very nature of humanity and was not tightly connected with the origin of its nation, from where would the mother tongue draw a power and fervor so much greater than other languages for both the lettered and the unlettered? (C.f. Humboldt 2000, 72). In Humboldt's understanding, to receive a mother tongue is to receive a part of oneself. Every language draws a circle around its respective nation from which it is possible to come out only when one simultaneously enters the circle of another language (C.f. Humboldt 2000, 73). The number of languages in the world varies from 3000 to 10,000, depending on whether dialects are counted in the total number. These differences in number are due to the lack of a clear definition distinguishing language from dialect. It is known that approximately 20 languages perish every year (Ondrejovic 2008, 34). According to the statistics of G. Déczy (1973, 12) between the year 1970 and 1985 the number of languages decreased from 4500 to 2800.

Conclusion

The Internet is a tool which in many ways may leave enriching or destructive effects on language and its users. On the one hand, the Internet may connect people from all over the world and provide information otherwise inaccessible to the user, while, on the other hand, it may deprive its users of that which they possess in their human relationships, in their soul, mind and even in their language skills. Crystal believes that there is "the need for greater predictability, reliability, and familiarity," which "affects all Internet situations, and also the language which is found there" (Crystal 2006, 18).

In order to answer the question of whether the rapidly developing language of internet communication is a contribution to language culture we must bear in mind that language culture is above all a matter of practical examination and decision. We may discuss the principles of this procedure; however, we may not construct a system of language control which would function as perfectly and precisely as an electric switch (C.f. Ondrejovič 2008, 222).

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The Organization of Topicality in Medical Interviewing Revisited

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Abstract

The paper offers partial results of a long-term project aimed at an inquiry into the field of medical interviewing. The main goal of the project is to search for communicative strategies of doctors and patients that can convey empathy and trust. Via an interdisciplinary analysis, based on the data excerpted from the most recent edition of the British National Corpus (2007), the author attempts to bring quantitative and qualitative evidence that doctor-patient communication has undergone significant modifications, resulting in a social redefinition of the asymmetrical roles of the main protagonists. The present paper draws attention to those communicative practices of doctors and patients that are related to the

organization of medical and social topics and frames.

Keywords

Medical interviewing, topic shifts, frames, empathy, British National Corpus.

Introduction

Communication topics, the subject matter of the following pages, do not occur in an interactional vacuum. They are embedded in the process of verbal (or non-verbal) interaction, realized via a variety of utterances. Topics are introduced, developed, and dissolved by questions (Paget 1983: 71). Certain speech-act types (e.g. reactives) help the interlocutors keep control over what is to be discussed, and allow them to initiate new topics (Mishler 1984: 69). In addition, there is a strong interrelation between the variables 'topic change' and 'interruption' (Wynn 1995: 97). Though control "over topicality is one of the primary ways that power is exercised by professionals in institutional encounters" (Davis 1988: 304), not too much scholarly attention has been dedicated to the study of topics and topic variation within discourse. The explanation for this is usually found in the fact that it is quite difficult to define the notion of topic. According to Brown & Yule, "formal attempts to identify topics are doomed to failure" (1983: 68).

Aims, methods, and analyzed material

The present treatise reports on an interdisciplinary investigation within the field of medical interviewing, with the aim of discussing communicative practices of doctors and patients that are related to the process of the initiation and organization of medical and social topics and frames. With respect to the primary goal of my long-term research, that being a search for discourse strategies of doctors and patients that are capable of conveying empathy¹ and trust, it focuses only on a selected number of strategies, some of which can be characterized as so called topic transition activities (cf. Ainsworth-Vaughn 1998).

For the purposes of the analysis I have taken advantage of the spoken component of the *British National Corpus* (BNC XML ed. 2007) and its collection of transcribed and annotated medical interviews. I have selected 50 medical interactions, all of them dyads, with the total extent of text amounting to 34,376 words (that equals 5525 turns). In order to be successful in meeting my research aims, I have combined the statistical perspective² of medical science with the qualitative viewpoints of conversation and discourse analysis (cf. Wynn 1995). My findings are compared and contrasted with findings resulting from previous studies referring to the initiation and organization of topicality in

doctor-patient communication, conducted in the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s.

Topic transition activities

Owing to the fact that defining the notion of 'topic' presents such a difficult task, Ainsworth-Vaughn suggests studying topic transitions/shifts instead. In her view (1998: 58), "topic means something either too large or too small to be analyzed when it refers only to meaning (referential content)". She argues that the investigation into referential ties of the content of the interaction should be complemented with an investigation into sequential ties. Referring to the concept of cohesion, Ainsworth-Vaughn (1998) proposes two main categories of topic shifts: *reciprocal* (also 'collaborative') and *unilateral* (cf., e.g., West & Garcia 1988), further delimiting four topic-transition activities: (i) *reciprocal activities* for the former, and (ii) *links*, (iii) *minimal links*, and (iv) *sudden topic changes* for the latter.

Each topic-transition activity represents a particular function of a topic change/shift. The first is characterized by a mutual contribution of both dialogue interactants to closing down a topic. The second is a topic shift with specific reference/cohesion. The third can be described as a topic shift with minimal reference/cohesion, and the fourth as a sudden topic shift with no reference/cohesion. According to Ainsworth-Vaughn (1998: 61), the topic-transition activities should be viewed as representatives of a continuum, becoming less and less cohesive with the preceding discourse. In my opinion, this continuum is compatible with the discourse functions grounded in symmetry (*reciprocal activities*) and/or asymmetry (*sudden topic changes*) of the interactant relations in the communicative event.

To exemplify the above claims and to provide illustrations from the medical practice, it can be said that the system of topic transition activities, as suggested by Ainsworth-Vaughn, is capable of showing to what degree a topic change is undertaken jointly by the doctor and patient, or, on the other hand, just by one of the parties. Whether a topic shift in a medical consultation is cohesive or not is interactionally relevant. "It may legitimise the patient's concern, and it always displays listenership (...) and respect for the other participant's role in determining what is to be talked about" (Ainsworth-Vaughn 1992: 413-413). Cohesive topic shifts can also be viewed as instances of

cooperative principle, and they contribute to the cooperative nature of doctor-patient communication. Moreover, the choice between various forms of topic changes determines the distribution of power and face-threats between the participants of the medical interview (cf. Wynn 1995: 98).

Taken one after another, Ainsworth-Vaughn (1998) supplies the following examples of topic transition activities. Regarding *reciprocal activities*, there are three main types. In a first one, the participants close down the topic by exchanging affirmative expressions such as 'okay, all right, yeah'. "In a second type of reciprocal activity, first one speaker formulates – summarizes or assesses – the preceding topic, and then the other speaker affirms the summary or assessment" (1998: 67). In a third type, one speaker makes a proposal for a future action, and the next speaker agrees with the action.

Unilateral transitions in the form of *links* describe remarks that acknowledge the previous speaker's contributions, but are immediately followed by a topic change, with no affirmative move on the part of the other participant. *Minimal links* can be characterised as affirmative terms (e.g. *okay, all right, mhm*) that occur at the beginning of a turn, and are again immediately followed by a topic shift, without giving the next participant any opportunity to react and to agree or disagree with this change. Concerning *sudden topic changes*, there is no acknowledgement to the preceding discourse. Interestingly, as Ainsworth-Vaughn's material proves, this type is produced by both the doctor and the patient. Examples of all the types excerpted from the material I have been working with will be presented later.

Topics and frames in definitions

Despite the fact that a large portion of scholars avoid defining a topic, and do not provide any criteria for how a topic could be identified, it seems to be inevitable, at least for the sake of quantification, to specify how this term should be understood when it is utilized within the confines of the present treatise. Let me, therefore, paraphrase a definition by Schiffrin (1987), stating, in a very simple way, that topic is what interactants talk about; in other words, it is the subject matter or theme of the utterance or communicative exchange (cf. Wynn 1999: 43). Following Shuy (1983: 192), I take the advantage of three main criteria that help identify and separate topics from one another: (i) *subject matter differences*, (ii) *prosodic differences from the previous topic* (e.g. pauses, changes of intonation), (iii) *the internal cohesion of the topic* (sequence markers, anaphora referencing, etc.).

There is one more word which deserves specification at this point – 'frame'. It belongs to the terminological equipment of those scholars who draw on the theoretical traditions of Goffman's sociology and Gumperz's anthropology. In comparison with topics, frames are superordinate messages "about what activity is being engaged in when words are uttered in interaction. The frame is the definition of what is going on, without which no message could be interpreted" (Tannen & Wallat 1983: 207). To put it differently, unlike topics, frames are not only *what* you say, but also *how* you say it. Or, as Drew & Heritage put it, "frame focuses on the definition which participants give to their current social activity – to what is going on, what the situation is, and the roles which the interactants adopt within it" (1992: 8).

Switching from a more general perspective to the perspective of medical interviewing, it has been frequently emphasized (Cicourel 1981) that the nature of doctor-patient interaction is a representative example of so called *frame-conflict*. It is a clash of

expectations and wants with which the two major protagonists (the doctor and patient) approach the medical encounter. While the doctor's aim is to reach a diagnosis as quickly as possible, the patient wants to share the story of her suffering. Evidently, "this results in conflicts of both time and interest that are sometimes difficult to resolve" (Wodak 2004: xii).

The concept of *frame-conflicts* taking place in surgeries finds its close analogy in Mishler's (1984) *conflict of voices*. In his view, doctors focus solely on medically relevant topics that report physical and objective facts taken as symptoms (he calls this strategy the 'voice of medicine'), and are inattentive to life, psychosocial topics presented by patients (the 'voice of life-world'). Consequently, the topics employed during the medical interview are frequently divided into two classes: medical and (psycho)social. As topics discussed during the interview often consist of both medical and social components, and, moreover, sometimes there is no exact break between the two, it is beneficial to acknowledge the parameters given by the particular frame within which the topic occurs (Todd 1983: 179). In this way we can apply a more sensitive categorization, aware of a medical-social continuum. The following two illustrations supply examples, one medically-dominant (Example 1) and one socially-dominant topic (Example 2) excerpted from the BNC.

- (1) D: We'll need to stop your Tagamet we'll need to switch your Tagamet over
Mary.
P: What to?
D: To Zantac or er Losec.

(BNC/H4F/37-39)

- (2) P: Pardon me for saying so, that's a lovely pen. [I'm plain daft.
D: Yes, it is, isn't it?] [Are you?
P: Yeah.]
D: [(ha-ha)]
P: Sorry, you
D: [(ha-ha)]
P: (ha-ha)]
D: No, it's, it's, it's, it's
P: It's a beautiful balanced pen.
D: Yes. It's the only one I like.
P: Yeah.
D: I have about forty pens at home.
[And, it's a, a nice, I, no
P: Do you collect them by yourself or?]
D: I don't, I don't collect them.
P: People just give you them.

(BNC/H4W/46-60)

Apart from categorizing topics as either medically-dominant or socially-dominant, the following distributional analysis of topics comprises the categorization into doctor- or patient-initiated topics, and the classification according to their occurrence in the respective interview phases (information-gathering, diagnosis, treatment). Before I approach the analysis itself, let me offer summaries of the few studies that touched the territory of the topicality of medical interviews in previous decades (Chart 1).

Chart 1: Findings resulting from previous studies on the analysis of topics and frames in doctor-patient interaction

Todd (1982)	Patients talk within medical frames but do not initiate medical topics.
Todd (1983)	Doctors and patients framed their

	conversations in different ways – the former in the medical and the latter in more social terms.
Shuy (1983)	The patient is not expected to expand, amend, or disagree with the topic selected by the doctor.
Mishler (1984)	Doctors often avoid topics they do not feel comfortable with.
West (1984)	Topic shifts function as resources frequently employed for dominating and controlling the interaction.
Frankel & Beckman (1989)	The most pressing topics should be ranked and addressed first. ³
Goldberg (1990)	Topic shifts are interrelated with interruptions.
Fisher & Groce (1990)	Patients have few opportunities to introduce topics that are of interest to them.
Wynn (1995)	Most topic shifts are coherent, i.e. that referential links can be established between almost any topic and the underlying medical purpose of the consultation.
Frankel (1995)	Topic initiation can be ambiguous.

(cf. Wynn 1999: 64–68)

Statistical distributions

As displayed in Tables 1 & 2 (see below), the distributional analysis of topics extracted from my corpus material has resulted in the following findings. Out of 50 medical interviews, comprising 5525 turns (34,376 words), it is possible to aggregate 415 topics. 293 (71%) topics are initiated by doctors, and 122 (29%) by patients. 192 (46%) of them occur during the information-gathering phase, 55 (13%) during the phase of diagnosis, and 168 (41%) during the treatment phase. 284 (68%) topics are medical (or the medical component prevails), and 131 (32%) topics are social (or the social component prevails).

Table 1: Absolute frequency of topics in doctor–patient interaction

Abs.	Participant		Phase			Total
	Doctor	Patient	Info-gather	Diagnosis	Treatment	
Medical	234	50	141	38	105	284
Social	59	72	51	17	63	131
Total	293	122	192	55	168	415

Table 2: Relative frequency of topics in doctor–patient interaction

%	Participant		Phase			Total
	Doctor	Patient	Info-gather	Diagnosis	Treatment	
Medical	80	41	50	13	37	68
Social	20	59	39	13	48	32
Total	71	29	46	13	41	100

As previous studies most frequently lacked a statistical perspective, there is not much that can be revealed via the quantitative comparative analysis of my findings with the findings discovered in the past decades. It is for this reason that the comparison will be effected on the qualitative level in the subsequent sections. At this moment, let me just draw attention to the results of the F-test and the Pearson correlation coefficient as they may provide an interesting starting point for a more delicate interpretation of the medical and/or social topics in use.

According to the F-test (0.0002), there is a significant statistical disparity between the number of medical topics, on the one hand, and the number of social topics, on the other hand, all that with regard to the participants of the medical encounter. By contrast, the

F-test (0.893) reveals that the same significance does not apply to the interview phases. In other words, the calculation proves that while doctors and patients *do* employ different topic categories (obviously doctors medically-dominant, patients socially-dominant), it cannot be said that there is a significant predominance of medical topics taking place during the information-gathering phase, and of social topics taking place during the treatment phase. Also the correlation confirms that there is strong correspondence between the category of participants and the category of topics ($r=0.3845$), and, by contrast, there is no significant correspondence between the category of topics and the category of interview phases. What is more, it also shows that we cannot expect any relationship between the variable ‘participant’ and the variable ‘phase’. To put it another way, both speakers initiate topics independent of the dialogue section.

Since the following paragraphs will examine not only medical and/or social topics as such, but also topic shifts as defined by Ainsworth-Vaughn (1998), let me present one example for each topic transition activity; this time just for illustration, without any comments or wider situational context (see Examples 3–8).

Reciprocal I

- (3) P: *Alright.*
D: *Right.*
P: *Right.*
D: *Okay Mr (anonym).*

(BNC/H56/82–85)

Reciprocal II

- (4) P: *Apparently they should be on their way because Nottingham was er*
D: *They should be.*
P: *Yeah.*
D: *They should be.*

(BNC/GY7/206–209)

Reciprocal III

- (5) D: *Ok. Some people need Dermavate to tick over with but er it's a bit potent to keep people going and going and going on so we'll see how you go with that.*
P: *Lovely.*

(BNC/GYE/85–86)

Unilateral – links

- (6) P: *I just need a repeat prescription for Dianette please.*
D: *Dianette. Yeah. Are you okay?*

(BNC/G5Y/26–27)

Unilateral – minimal links

- (7) P: *That's okay, isn't it?*
D: *Yeah. Okay. The other thing you need is a chest X-ray, and that's very important er to see exactly what degree of trouble is going on.*

(BNC/GYC/107–108)

Unilateral – sudden change

- (8) P: *Painful down*
D: *[Right.*
P: *from my finger up.] (8.0)*
D: *Now, (.) are you on anything in the way of tablets that could be upsetting your, your system (.) at all?*

(BNC/G47/47-50)

Medical vs. social topics and frames: doctors

The distributional analysis of doctor-initiated topics with respect to their classification (Figure 1) shows that a significantly larger portion of instances belongs to the category of medical topics (80%), and only 20% of the 'cake' remains for the category of social topics. Regarding the relative distribution with respect to the interview phases (Figure 2), the data demonstrate that the largest dialogue section as far as topic initiation is concerned is the information-gathering phase (51%), then the treatment phase (38%), and the least numerous is the phase of diagnosis (11%).

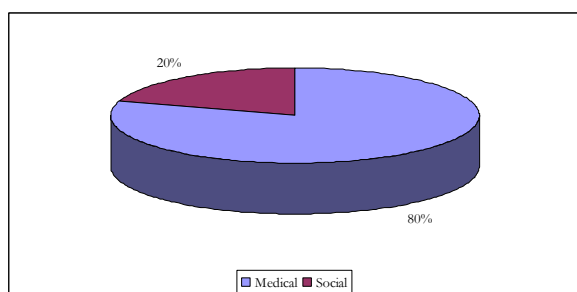


Figure 1: Relative distribution of doctors' topics with respect to their classification

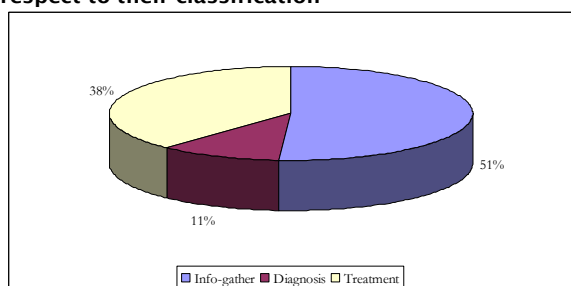


Figure 2: Relative distribution of doctors' topics with respect to the interview phases

Honestly enough, the above results are not so surprising. What they indicate (cf. the results calculated for patient-initiated topics) is that the doctor-patient interaction, in simple terms, has to establish a medically-oriented environment. If not, the main goals of this interaction, that being to examine, to diagnose and to cure the patient, will not occur, which would cast serious doubts upon the meaningfulness of the medical consultation.

To put it differently, while the way, for example, questions are posed, information-giving realized, interruptions initiated and the politeness principle manifested could be remodelled in favour of the client/patient,⁴ the information itself, the subject matter of the doctor-patient communication, should somehow stick to the medical perspective. Here I should add a note that the discourse type discussed within the scope of the present paper is a general-practice consultation, not a psychotherapeutic session. Though it is definitely beneficial to incorporate psychosocial aspects of the patient's life into the dialogue, medical issues should, in my view, prevail (cf. Example 9).

- (9) D: *That's, that's two months and that keeps you covered for a while, doesn't it?*
P: *But you see the thing is, that's true but sometimes the way they deal with it, they deal with it say eight weeks, so which makes it what? [About seven*
D: *Yeah, he's just put] yeah he's just put depression. I mean how do you actually feel at the moment?*
P: *Well, I feel better than I was, but I've been at Haywoods Heath which was a religious community*
D: *Hmm.*
P: *and er I feel, I feel as though I'm generally (unclear).*
D: *And mood during the day?*
P: *That's fine, not too bad.*
D: *See if you're actually better medically*
P: *Mm.*
D: *you actually become fit for work.*
P: *Right.*

(BNC/GY7/35-48)

In the above illustration (Example 9), the problem the patient visits the doctor with is depression. As is evident from the excerpt, first the doctor lets the patient express her feelings – actually it is he who initiates and develops the topic through a series of questions (*I mean how do you actually feel at the moment?, And mood during the day?*) – and only then transfers the topic into the sphere of medical science (*See if you're actually better medically*), which is affirmed by the patient's *Right*. This example shows that in spite of the fact that the interaction is directed by the doctor towards a medical topic, the topic shift is realized in a reciprocal (collaborative/ cooperative, mutual) manner, i.e. with the assistance of the patient. In relation to this, in my opinion, it can be asserted that it is not necessarily the topic itself, whether medical or social, but the character of the discourse strategy leading to the selected topic which decides about the degree of power exercised by each interlocutor and about the place at which the particular doctor-patient relationship holds to the symmetry-asymmetry scale. Thus, topic shifts may function as resources frequently employed for dominating and controlling the interaction (West 1984), but also as language devices capable of conveying power-equality.

In her 1998 research, Ainsworth-Vaughn analyzed topic shifts in 12 encounters, involving eight doctors and eight patients, and comprising some 31,000 words. What she found out is that out of 124 doctor-initiated topic transitions, 83 could be classified as reciprocal activities, and only 41 as unilateral. My findings, though not based on firm quantitative data, also show a significant prevalence of the symmetry-oriented topic shifts.

The cooperative tendencies of doctors can be further tracked in their willingness to discuss or listen to most patient-initiated topics, which is in sharp contrast with what Mishler (1984) claims (cf. Chart 1). Doctors seem to be quite open as far as the content matter is concerned. Example 10 introduces a patient who starts the consultation with a description of events that are not related to the medical problem she has. What is interesting, the doctor lets her talk until she herself decides to share what the real problem is about. Theoretically, "referential links can be established between almost any topic and the underlying medical purpose of the interaction" (Wynn 1995: 97). Here, however, the larger context of the interview suggests that the info provided by the patient is not medically

relevant. The fact that the doctor is willing to listen to the patient can be assessed as an expression of empathizing with the patient. This assessment is supported by the appearance of "discourse features that convey an emotional response to aspects of the patient's story" (Cordella 2004: 135).

- (10) D: *Do have a seat anyway.*
P: *Er I've been doing a, been writing a book now, for about ten years.*
D: *Aha.*
P: *Erm I was on the railway for thirty years, as a driver on the railway at wouldn't remember*
D: *Er no, no. Bit before my time, I'm afraid.*
P: *And erm anyway it was a wonderful place, wonderful relationship with the men and erm about the only odd thing about it I've come up against a snag which I didn't think I've had a ghost writer, I've got publishers, and as I can't get er permission for all the photos that I want.*
D: *Oh dear, that's a shame.*
P: *Because there's a ten year*
D: *Oh*
P: *er one thing or another, I must have spent a couple of thousand pounds on these photos. [Anyway*
D: *(unclear)]*
P: *you're just interested [(unclear)*
D: *no no no.]*
P: *But er well what it is I've got a mouth problem.*
D: *Mhm.*

(BNC/GYJ/3-17)

Another type of conveying empathy by topic development is the so called *self-disclosure* (Goldstein 1997, Hill & Knox 2002). This discourse strategy reflects a doctor's empathic attunement and involvement in the treatment situation. In this regard, the patient may perceive the doctor as more humane in the relationship and less threatening and remote (cf. Watkins 1990). "An increase of trust and a sense of reassurance often promotes more intimate communication on the part of the client" (Clark 2007: 195).

The following two examples demonstrate how the doctor discloses his personal feelings and perspectives. Furthermore, they show two different levels of self-disclosure. In Example 11, the doctor reacts to the patient's worries by sharing his professional experience. The patient expresses complaints regarding judicial issues and the danger of being taken to the court, and the doctor reacts in a supportive way, communicating his own problems (and of medical practitioners in general) with solicitors and the legal system as such. In Example 12, the doctor is much more personal. Hearing the patient's story about the loss of her close relatives, he conveys understanding by giving a remark about a close person of his own.

- (11) P: *And then we had a phone call from the police about a month ago.*
D: *Oh right, good.*
P: *Saying that it had gone straight to court, it was in court, you know,*
D: *Oh right.*
P: *but we haven't heard anything.*
D: *Oh well I mean they may have been adjourned or a*
P: *Even though*

- D: *it may have been referred to a higher court.*
P: *You think so.*
D: *(unclear)*
P: *Erm*
D: *I mean we we haven't heard anything directly, I'm only glad that the police are actually telling you something.*
P: *Yeah yeah.*
D: *(cough)*
P: *It was a big shock that day, when we had that [phone call*
D: *Mm.]*
P: *But it was I you know, to know that you haven't got to fight,*
D: *[That's right, yeah.*
P: *T to take him] to court.*
D: *[(unclear)*
P: *Erm]*
D: *But it's a long process. I mean we have dealings with solicitors for all sorts of things, asking reports and we send a lot of notes away to have a lot of er medical opinion reports and they take ages to come back. And that's a these are the preliminary things that the solicitor must go through before they get near court.*

(BNC/G5M/47-68)

- (12) P: *You see, [they tell you to stop smoking*
D: *The day it happened] the day you got this*
P: *Aye.*
D: *heart attack, (snaps fingers) that was it.*
P: *Well what really set my mind when I lost my sister and my brother.*
D: *Mm.*
P: *Cathy and Hughie like, [in two*
D: *Yeah.]*
P: *months smoking.*
D: *That's right. That's right. I mean we we've got a friend and she used to smoke sixty a day, [and she never*
P: *(unclear)]*
D: *even talked about stopping, till her pal, into hospital, a dif a bypass operation. And that was it.*

(BNC/H53/24-35)

As is evident from these examples, doctors often frame the interaction with the patient in a socially-oriented way. To conclude this section, let me offer one more example which, based on the excerpt, may also look socially-dominant. However, if the larger context is taken into consideration, it is clear that the doctor's comment about the winter weather is medically relevant and cannot be avoided from the information-giving.

- (13) D: *That's really only a problem in the winter time.*
P: *Aye.*
D: *You will be getting very cold weather*
P: *Aha.*
D: *during the winter here. You know a lot of frosty weather.*
P: *(unclear) a coincidence cos at the time I started taking them actually trying to spare my branch work in a bank.*
D: *Mhm.*
P: *Er the heating had broken down and I don't know whether it was cough because of*

the heating or because of the tablets or whatever but they're, they're alright.

D: *Yes. Well I think er th th time that people notice this most is definitely in the winter.*

P: *Aha.*

(BNC/H4P/34-45)

Medical vs. social topics and frames: patients

The distributional analysis of patient-initiated topics with respect to their classification (Figure 3) shows that a significantly larger portion of instances belongs to the category of social topics (59%), and only 41% of the 'cake' remains for the category of medical topics. Regarding the relative distribution with respect to the interview phases (Figure 4), the data demonstrate that the most numerous dialogue phase as far as topic initiation is concerned is the treatment phase (46%), then the info-gathering phase (35%), and the least numerous is the phase of diagnosis (19%).

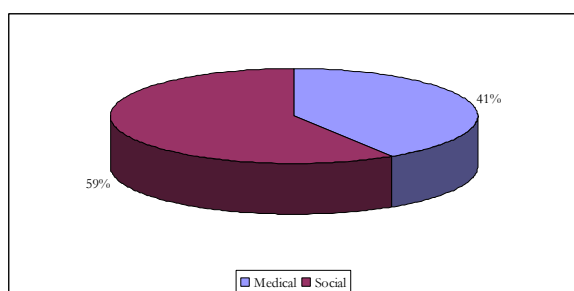


Figure 3: Relative distribution of patients' topics with respect to their classification

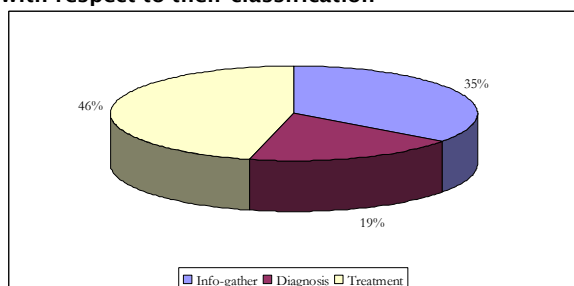


Figure 4: Relative distribution of patients' topics with respect to the interview phases

As is to be expected, unlike doctors, who are much more productive in initiating medically-dominant topics, patients are more productive the opposite way. Or, as Todd (1983: 172) maintains, doctors and patients frame their conversations in different ways – the former in medical and the latter in more social terms. Nonetheless, there can be found instances when patients talk within medical frames, and even initiate medical topics (cf. Todd 1982). The qualitative analysis, moreover, indicates that contrary to what Fisher & Groce (1990) suggest, patients are frequently given opportunities to introduce topics that are of interest to them (see Example 10). And contrary to what Shuy (1983) argued, they even expand the topics selected by the doctor.

In the last illustration of this paper, we can follow a medical consultation in which the patient complains about back pain. After a brief history-taking,⁵ the doctor is about to propose a treatment (*Let's see if we can get you something to make a life a bit easier for you*), but the patient suggests her own (*Would the physiotherapy help it at all?*), based on her preceding experience (*Cos*

it helped me the last time). She does not challenge the doctor's proposal as it has not been expressed yet, she just acts as a competent client who is able to cooperate with the medical authority, and thus, in my opinion, deserves his trust.

- (14) P: *If I get up out a chair it's murder. (.)*
 D: *Right. And you [say the tablets*
 P: *She gave me]*
 D: *have helped?*
 P: *No. I've be I was using what so you call it? (unclear) tablet but I'd something [(unclear)*
 D: *Aha.] Not making much difference.*
 P: *No.*
 D: *No. Right. Let's see if we can get you something to make life a bit easier for you. (11.0)*
 P: *Would the ph physiotherapy help it [at all?*
 D: *It might.] I was just thinking about that just now, [whether*
 P: *Aye.]*
 D: *we should get you down there.*
 P: *Cos it helped me the last time.*

(BNC/H56/22-34)

Before finalizing my paper, I would like to provide a brief remark on the formal side of the issue under scrutiny: the construction of topicality. According to Ainsworth-Vaughn (1998), this is done by cohesive elements, namely repetition, anaphora and semantically linked lexical items. As some of the above offered examples prove, my findings confirm her conclusions (for details see Ainsworth-Vaughn 55-75).

Conclusion

As outlined in the introductory passages of this paper, the organization of topicality in medical consulting has been so far given only very peripheral attention. Owing to the fact that defining the notion of topic presents such a difficult task, scholars preferred to study either some other aspects of doctor-patient interaction or they concentrated on a rather vague examination of how topics relate to power control. One of the rare attempts to provide a deeper insight into the way that topics are constructed, developed, and exchanged in the process of the medical encounter was realized by Ainsworth-Vaughn (1998). Taking advantage of her classification of topic transition activities, I have decided to contribute to the discussion, specifically with the aim of revisiting the findings of those infrequent investigations of the past and to report on the communicative practices related to establishing empathy and trust between the main protagonists of the medical encounter.

Although topic initiation can be ambiguous (cf. Frankel 1995) because often it is not clear whether its purpose is medically- or socially-oriented, my investigation has confirmed that medically-dominant topics prevail on the part of the doctor, while socially dominant topics prevail on the part of the patient. Nevertheless, it should be added that this, at first sight, asymmetrical distribution does not necessarily relate to the asymmetrical character of doctor-patient relationship as such. The topic transition activities indicate that doctors prefer to use reciprocal (collaborative) topic shifts, which are capable of conveying power equality. In addition, doctors empathize with their patients by letting them talk about their personal feelings and perspectives, and, in this respect, frequently disclose not only professional experiences from the medical practice, but even more delicate issues regarding their

private lives. Thus, doctors manifest empathic attunement and involvement in the patients' treatment situation. Patients, on the other hand, do not 'hide in the voice of lifeworld', but are also active contributors within the medical frame. They seem to be more educated than some generations ago (probably thanks to technical innovations responsible for the accessibility of medical information).

Endnotes

¹ In general, I understand empathy as an "emotional experience between an observer and a subject in which the observer, based on visual and auditory cues, identifies and transiently experiences the subject's emotional state. To be perceived as empathic, the observer must convey this understanding back to the subject" (Hirsch 2009).

² Besides calculating absolute and relative numbers, I also use more sophisticated approaches, namely correlation and the F-test. Correlation is a measure of the relation between two or more variables. Correlation coefficients (I employ Pearson) can range from -1.00 to +1.00. The value of the former one represents a perfect

negative correlation, the value of the latter represents a perfect positive correlation. The F-test calculates statistical evidence whether two samples have the same standard deviation with specified confidence level. Samples may be of different sizes. In lay terms, it proves whether two samples differ to such an extent that this differentiation is worth studying.

³ Whether the most pressing topics should be ranked and addressed first or not is a matter of discussion, and cannot be solved here. What can be said, however, is that in the interviews I have investigated it does not work this way.

⁴ The meaning of the structure "...in favour of the patient..." refers to the notion of patient-centredness. Nevertheless, the medical interview organized towards doctor-centredness may also result in positive treatment outcomes for the patient.

⁵ History-taking is a part of the information-gathering phase (depending on whether it is a first visit or a follow-up), and can comprise of past medical history, family history, social history, etc.

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Pragmatic Principles in Advertising Discourse

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Abstract

Advertising is a discipline that can be approached from various perspectives. The present paper studies the discourse of TV advertising from the point of view of pragmatics. In fact, the paper presents the results of the author's socio-pragmatic analysis of American television commercials for products of everyday use. It examines the way the pragmatic principles, both first-order and higher-order ones, are applied in the verbal devices with which a commercial addresses TV viewers. Simultaneously, the paper accentuates the persuasive intention that is implied in every message being advertised. Therefore, advertising communication

is understood as a persuasive form of communication in which the persuader's intention is disguised by a number of mitigating strategies. One of these strategies is represented by foregrounding both the product's qualities and the character of the target consumer.

Keywords

Advertising discourse, persuasion, pragmatic principles, voice-over, secondary participant, super

Introduction

In a social interaction, the participants follow a certain number of pragmatic principles that enable them to achieve their communicative goal successfully. In advertising discourse, the advertiser's goal is to persuade the consumer to buy the product that is being advertised. The persuasive intention is recognized by both participants – the persuader, the source of the persuasion, and the persuadee, the target of the persuasion. The persuader constructs his message in a way that enables him to foreground the persuadee's benefit and to communicate as much about the product as possible. Depending on what is being advertised to whom, the persuader provides factual information and/or emotions. As far as the discourse of TV advertising is concerned, both facts and emotions are communicated by all the communicative codes the medium of television is equipped with. In other words, language, pictures and sound are subordinated to the persuader's intention. Owing to the audio-visibility, the persuader can take advantage of linguistic items (e.g., expressions, sentence structures, etc.) and paralinguistic aspects (e.g., body language, intonation, etc.) in order to tailor the pragmatic principles to his or her persuasive intention.

1. Implicature in Advertising

"Because you're worth it," explains Eva Longoria in a commercial for the L'Oréal Paris Vive Shampoo why women should buy this particular cosmetic product. Even though her words praise the target consumer, in this case a female, what they really communicate is the appeal 'Buy the product I'm promoting'. The very same appeal is, in fact, encoded in every message being advertised, regardless of what is being advertised to whom.

From the point of view of pragmatics, advertising communication is based on implicature. This means that the advertiser does not directly order the consumers to go and spend money, but instead, he or she tells them how splendid, marvelous and unique a product is, and/or how splendid, marvelous and unique the consumers are. The implicature enables the advertiser to disguise his or her persuasive intention with which he or she enters advertising communication. Following Brown and Levinson (1978), every advertised message can be understood as an act impeding one's freedom of decision. Therefore, the

implied directive *buy the product* is mitigated by indirect speech acts that draw the consumers' attention to the benefits they obtain when buying the product. In other words, consumers infer the meaning that it is really worth spending money on what they see in TV commercials.

2. Uniqueness of TV Advertising

A TV commercial is an audio-visual type of advertising communication. Owing to dynamic pictures, music and sound effects, and spoken and superimposed texts, it is an ideal medium for communicating product information as well as the social values the advertised commodity represents. In other words, the presentation of the product, but mainly the demonstration of a happy family, a perfect businessman or an attractive teenage girl with a flawless complexion, make us believe what we see. That is also the reason why TV advertisements are accepted more personally (Vysekalová and Mikeš 2003), unlike other media advertising. Nonetheless, a TV commercial remains a persuasive communicative situation no matter how friendly, helpful, warming and kind it pretends to be. It is a social interaction between the persuader and the persuadee. Even though present-day advertising has a tendency to be parasitic upon an ordinary, face-to-face conversation (cf. Myers 1994, Urbanová 2006, Pelclová 2010, etc.), the persuader-persuadee's communicative rights differ from those of the participants' of an authentic dialogue (cf. Lakoff 1982).

2.1 Language Entities of TV Advertising

Considering the nature of TV advertising, the persuader's verbal interaction is materialized by three language entities: the voice-over, the secondary participant and the super. The voice-over is the off-screen commentary which can provide a verbal description of what is happening on the screen and/or it serves as a post-scene commentary that anchors the intended meanings presented by the visual code. The secondary participant represents the character featuring in a commercial. There are commercials which employ more than one secondary participant. In such commercials, the secondary participants are depicted in a dialogical situation; the persuadee, thus, witnesses their interaction. By contrast, there are commercials in which the secondary participant turns directly to the persuadee by speaking directly to the

camera. The eye contact with the persuadee is a significant aspect of evoking the appropriate dialogical mood. The super serves as a highlighter of the key phrases uttered by the voice-over and/or the secondary participant. However, the super can also provide additional product information that is not mentioned by the spoken entities, such as "These statements have not been evaluated by the Food & Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease" (Osteo Bi-Flex commercial). Considering two language varieties, the voice-over and the secondary participant use the spoken language variety, while the entity of the super takes advantage of the written language variety. However, it does not mean that the spoken entities cannot include features typical of the written language variety (e.g., well-organized sentence structures, tendency towards formality, etc.), and that the written entity, the super, cannot include features typical of the spoken language variety (e.g., loose constructions, non-fluency, etc.). Following Urbanová (2006), language of advertising represents a hybrid form of communication which mingles features of two language varieties.

3. Pragmatic Principles in Advertising

Although advertising is often defined as a unilateral, non-personal mass communication (cf. Arens 2005, Schultz 1995, etc.), the persuader treats the persuadee as an individual. An efficacious strategy of what Fairclough (1989: 62) calls "synthetic personalization" is the adoption of features that are typical of the discourse of ordinary conversation. The extralinguistic features of a real-life situation are predominantly communicated by the visual code: the secondary participants are engaged in contextual situations the persuadee is familiar with, e.g., having a good time with one's friends when eating out, doing shopping in a supermarket, playing football, going to work, etc. The linguistic features are, of course, reflected in the participants' use of language. For instance, the mother in a Nestlé Nesquik commercial uses the directive speech act "No, honey" when she does not want to allow her daughter to buy junk food products. The endearment *honey* indicates a close and intimate mother-daughter relationship; the use of the determiner *no* with any other phrase or expression signals the mother's superior social status. From the point of view of pragmatics, the exploitation of the features of face-to-face conversation is reflected in the way the persuader constructs his or her contribution. In short, the persuader follows conversational principles in order to succeed in achieving his or her persuasive intention. In terms of Grice's (1975) and Leech's (1983) studies, this means that the persuader is cooperative and that he or she treats the persuadee with respect.

Following Grice's Cooperative principle (CP), the command *buy the product* should be sufficient for achieving the persuader's communicative goal. However, this directive speech act represents a threat to the persuader's negative-face want (Brown and Levinson 1978). In order to mitigate its impact, it is necessary for the persuader to be polite, i.e., to observe the Politeness Principle (PP). This means that the persuader has to introduce the product in such a way as to make the persuadee start longing for it. Therefore, the persuader accentuates the product's unique features, demonstrates the advantage of the product usage and pays special attention to the persuadee's benefits connected with the possession of the product being advertised. Consequently, the persuader provides such an amount of true product information that is considered as being decisive. Furthermore, the persuader needs to organize his or

her message in a way that is socially acceptable for the persuadee. The persuader has to combine the observance of the maxims of the CP with the observance of the maxims of the PP, especially those maxims that are persuadee-oriented.

Besides the Cooperative Principle and the Politeness Principle, the application of other pragmatic principles, such as the Interest Principle, the Pollyanna and the higher-order principles can be also studied in the discourse of TV advertising.

The objective of the present paper is to introduce the author's results of her analyses published in her dissertation thesis. Besides vocabulary and grammar, the author focused on the pragmatic principles in American TV commercials for products of everyday use. In fact, the author studied how exactly the three language entities participate in the application of the pragmatic principles in TV advertising discourse.

3.1 Interest Principles and Pollyanna Principle

Those principles that the persuader prefers to be observed in almost every advertising communication are the Interest Principle and the Pollyanna Principle. Since the former concerns an interesting and unpredictable way of delivering one's message, it can be claimed that it is in the persuader's best interest to observe this principle. The audio-visuality of the medium provides the persuader with an infinite number of possibilities of expressing what needs to be communicated in an amusing, unhackneyed way. The tendency towards the observance of this particular principle is reflected in all three language entities. The Interest Principle thus enables the persuader to reduce the impact of persuasiveness on the persuadee. On the other hand, some commercials can employ an identical narrative structure of providing product information, which might cause that the originality of the message delivery disappears. In other words, the persuadee is able to define the narrative pattern of a commercial from the very beginning, and thus, he or she knows what to expect; hence an aversion to the message being communicated. Accordingly, the attraction of such a commercial diminishes.

As far as the Pollyanna Principle is concerned, it is related to the topic preference; it is preferable to discuss pleasant topics to ones that make people feel embarrassed. However, a commercial is supposed to promote even those products that are connected with unpleasant issues, such as obesity, problems with aging or sexual life, etc. When advertising a product that might have unpleasant connotations, the persuader violates the Pollyanna Principle to a degree that is necessary for indicating the topic of a commercial. For example, a commercial for non-prescription medicine that is supposed to stimulate one's libido, starts with a scene in which the female secondary participant speaks directly to the persuadee, saying:

Spark? You wanna know where the spark went? I used to think – sex life. Hmm. That's gonna fit somewhere in between kids, work, cleaning, stress. Even if I was in the mood, I was just too tired. Well, that was before I heard about Avlimil.

The use of the echo question makes the persuadee get the impression that it was him or her who had invited the lady to share her sexual experience. At the same time, the use of the hesitator *hmm*, the vernacular morphophonemic variant *gonna*, the discourse marker *well*, plus the informality and emotive tinge increase the level of the spontaneity of her contribution.

However, the violation of the Pollyanna Principle is compensated for by the female voice-over that follows. She introduces the product that is meant to solve the unpleasant problem and stresses out the product's positive aspects, saying: "Introducing Avlimil. The new non-prescription once daily tablet, made just for us", where the inclusive *us* reflects a high level of involvement of femaleness. Depending on a persuasive strategy, the Pollyanna Principle is predominantly violated by the secondary participant in medical products commercials.

3.2 Politeness Principle

As far as the Politeness Principle is concerned, the application of the maxims highly depends on what type of contextual situation is employed as well as on the character of the product. The tendency in today's advertising is to foreground the benefits the persuadee obtains when buying a product (Čmejrková 2000), such as improving one's physical appearance, receiving a nutritious source of energy, climbing up a social ladder, etc. Consequently, the persuader prefers the observance of the Approbation Maxim and the Tact Maxim, especially the observance of the submaxims concerned with the maximization of praise of and benefit to 'other'. Within advertising discourse, the term 'other' can refer to both the product and the persuadee.

The observance of the Approbation Maxim occurs either as the maximization of the product praise or the persuadee's praise. In other words, the persuader praises the product and/or the persuadee. For example, the male voice-over in the commercial for a make-up by L'Oréal Paris praises the product by enumerating what exactly it does:

L'Oréal first never-fail makeup that fights the five signs of makeup meltdown. Infallible hides blemishes, ends rub-off, stops shine, combats signs of fatigue, fights heat and humidity for sixteen hours of beautiful skin.

The male secondary participant in the commercial for Subway maximizes the persuadee's praise by pointing out to the fact that it is the persuadee who chooses the ingredients, not the company:

Every Subway sandwich is made fresh, right in front of you. So you choose all the ingredients [...] 'Cause when you really think about it they don't make the sandwiches. You do.

Placing the nucleus on the personal pronoun *you* signals the maximization of the persuadee's participation in sandwich preparation. Moreover, the impact of the verbal message is multiplied by pointing directly at the persuadee, as the picture below demonstrates:



Figure 1 – Maximization of the persuadee's praise

The maximization of the persuadee's benefit occurs mainly at the end of a commercial when the persuader appeals to the persuadee to undergo a certain action that is meant to be beneficial for the persuadee, e.g., "Love the skin you're in" (Olay Regenerist), "Don't just live, thrive" (V8), "Think outside the bun" (Taco Bell), etc. Since the entity that usually finishes a commercial is the entity of the voice-over, the Tact Maxim is observed especially by this particular entity. Moreover, the same maxim is also observed by the entity of the super because it usually repeats the final appeal.

Since the Generosity and the Modesty maxims concern the speaker, they can be identified as the persuader-oriented maxims. The former deals with the maximization of the cost and the minimization of the benefit to the persuader. It is not in the persuader's interest to inform the persuadee about how much money he or she will earn when the persuadee buys the product or how much money and effort he or she has had to invest into a particular marketing campaign. The latter considers the maximization of the persuader's dispraise and the minimization of his praise. The tendency that prevails in today's advertising is to background these two maxims, i.e., that the persuader does not apply them. However, there are commercials in which these maxims are applied.

The observance of the Modesty as well as of the Generosity Maxim happens mainly in the commercials for medical products where the secondary participant makes a confession. For instance, in the commercial for Prevacid, the male secondary participant describes his problem with acid, then he offers the solution:

Few years ago, I got this pain, no big whoop, just a little bit heartburn, yeah, burning, piercing, fireball right here. So I cut down a little of foods that bother me. I changed my diet, I worked out, even my mom tried to help. (*female voice*) Sun, try sleeping on an incline. So I slipped some two by fours under my bed. Oh yeah, my wife really loved that one. Then I started drinking that chalky stuff, pop and acid reducers. They all helped but the pain keeps coming back. Two, three days a week. Okay. Follow visit my doctor. He says it's Acid Reflux Disease and prescribes Prevacid to help prevent the acid and heal the damage.

Sharing one's personal experience results in the maximization of the persuader's cost and dispraise.

However, the end of the commercial can be interpreted as violating these particular maxims:

So I take it like he says and guess
what, it really helps stop the acid
pain. How's that for happy ending?

In other words, the happy ending, the use of the product that is being advertised, makes the persuader maximize his praise and benefit. On the other hand, the message that the product can cure acid reflux disease contributes to the maximization of the persuadee's benefit.

The maxims that consider both the persuader and the persuadee simultaneously are the Agreement Maxim and the Sympathy Maxim. While there were no examples of the latter in the author's work, the former was mainly applied in female-oriented commercials. Following Holmes, women demonstrate agreement with their interlocutor more often than men. That is the reason why the observance of this maxim occurs mainly in those commercials that are targeted at a female audience, such as commercials for female medicine, cosmetic products and pre-packaged food products. For example, the secondary participant in the commercial for L'Oréal Revitalift starts her contribution with the presupposition that middle-aged women want to reduce the signs of aging, saying: "When you are fortyish you want an intense defense against aging." In other words, the secondary participant opens her conversation with an opinion with which the majority of the target group can agree. The maximization of the agreement between the persuader and the persuadee intensifies their relationship.

3.3 Cooperative Principle

According to the Cooperative Principle, the participants are advised to be brief and organized, to avoid ambiguous expressions and to provide such an amount of true information that is relevant for the communicative situation in which they are engaged. In advertising discourse, the persuader offers information that emphasizes the product's quality and uniqueness. In other words, the persuadee learns about those product attributes that make it distinguishable from other competing products.

The entity that provides product information most is the entity of the voice-over. This entity observes the Cooperative Principle to the degree the topic allows. In other words, the amount of information is a rather topic-related issue. Definitely, there are differences in what type of product information is communicated in the commercials for beer and in the commercials for medical products. The beer commercials are more focused on social values the consumption of a particular brand conveys. In short, beer commercials are meant to reinforce the brand image. On the other hand, commercials for medical products endeavor to provide as much product information as possible. Nonetheless, the temporal-spatial limitation of a TV commercial has an impact on what is really mentioned. Depending on the topic, the voice-over contribution contains such product information as the persuader considers significant. Consequently, the distribution of such information is subordinated to the observance of the CP. For example, the voice-overs in the commercials for food products inform about the ingredients, flavors, etc. They prefer independent verbless clauses, e.g., "Arby's new Market Fresh Five-Star Club upon roasted turkey and ham plus two cheeses on new Arby's white bread" (Arby's New Five-Star Club), or non-finite ones, e.g.

The new Chipotle Grilled Stuft
Burrito. Loaded with carne asado

steak, chipotle season rice, spicy
southwest chipotle sauce and a
blend of three melted cheeses. All
wrapped up and grilled to go. For
the perfect balance of flavor and
spice. (Taco Bell)

On the other hand, there are commercials in which the voice-over operates with figurative language, which results in the violation of the CP due to the ambiguity of the expressions used. Examples can be found in cosmetic commercials that promote products the name of which contain a pun. For example, Maybelline New York produces a mascara called Sky High Curves; the voice-over in its commercial says:

Now lashes go sky high with
extreme length so in curves.
Maybelline New York unleashes new
Sky High Curves, extremely in-curl
mascara. Patented brush builds
extremely the under lash line and
it's a daring thirty degree curl for
gravity to find lashes that never
seem to stop.

In other words, the female voice-over combines metaphoric expressions in order to provide as much product information as possible. At the same time, the use of figurative language allows her to communicate the message in an interesting way.

Besides the voice-over, the other entity that has a tendency towards the observance of the CP is the entity of the super. The observance results from the role this particular entity usually has in advertising communication: it functions as a communicative device that visualizes the key phrases provided by the spoken entities. Moreover, this entity operates with disjunctive language (Leech 1966), which means that it prefers independent phrases that often utilize special graphic effects. Owing to its rather abbreviated character, the super provides an unnecessary amount of information relevant to the topic being discussed. For instance, the qualitative adjectives "weightless" and "flawless" are superimposed as independent adjectival phrases, accompanying corresponding utterances "A weightless liquid makeup" and "One touch on the pad gives you flawless coverage", respectively, that are pronounced by the female voice-over in the commercial for Almay Nearly Naked, see the pictures below:



Figure 2 – Observance of the Cooperative Principle

Within the context of this particular situation, the supers observe the CP with the assistance of the visual code.

On the other hand, the very same information might be provided by the super several times during a commercial. For example, the commercial for Friendly's exposed the same super "Free Sundae" twice. Providing the same type of information in the very same phrase might be interpreted as a disorganized way of over-informing the persuadee, therefore, the Maxim of Manner and the Maxim of Relation are violated. Nonetheless, the repetition of the same phrase is done on purpose; it enables the persuader to highlight the aspect he or she considers be the most crucial. Of

course, this aspect is meant to be beneficial to the persuadee. Accordingly, the violation of these two maxims results in the maximization of the persuadee's benefit and/or the product praise, hence the observance of the Tact Maxim and the Approbation Maxim.

Like the voice-over, the entity of the super can also utilize figurative language. In such cases, this entity violates the CP.

As far as the secondary participant is concerned, its application of the CP is highly dependent on the way this particular entity functions in a commercial. As mentioned above, a commercial can adopt such a contextual context in which the secondary participants talk to each other, i.e., the persuadee witnesses their interaction. Due to the tendency to imitate a real-life discourse, the participants violate the CP, as demonstrated in the commercial for a soda drink called dnL:

Leprechaun: Get your dnL! Free dnL!
Young Man: Hey, you're the guy giving away the dnL?
Leprechaun: No, lad. That would be the other leprechaun with a green wagon full of dnL. Who wants dnL?

The leprechaun's rather irritated answer illustrates a violation of all the maxims of the CP.

3.4 Higher-Order Principles

Following Myers (1994), the persuader inclines towards irony, parody and joke in order to discover new and innovative way of attracting the persuadee's jaded attention. The Irony Principle and the Banter Principle that Leech (1983: 142-145) defines as higher-order principles should then be followed by the persuader in order to observe the Interest Principle. Nonetheless, the persuader employs irony in a rather low number of commercials, and especially in male-oriented commercials. An example can be found in a Rolling Rock beer commercial, the narrative structure of which is based on a parody of the discourse of TV documentaries about animals. Its secondary participant

compares human seducing methods to those of animals, commenting:

A female has lured a male into a foreign territory, the dance floor. Dance poorly and she'll find him inadequate. Dance too well and he'll raise suspicions amongst the pack. Instinctively he tries to escape ... or maybe not.

The secondary participant's use of formality as well as his voice-quality, plus the corresponding situation of a dance floor indicate the hyperbole and parody applied in this particular commercial. However, there is a risk of misinterpretation or incomprehension of an ironic message, therefore, the persuader rather prefers jokes and humor to irony and banter.

4 Conclusion

In order to mitigate his or her persuasive intention, the persuader mostly employs features of spoken discourse, namely of the discourse of ordinary, face-to-face conversation. The employment of these features is reflected not only at the lexico-grammatical level, but also on the persuader's treatment of the pragmatic principles. However, the application of the individual principles is determined by the function of the language entities TV advertising operates with. While the entity of the voice-over and the super arrange product information, the entity of the secondary participant mediates a real-life situation that is somehow related to the product consumption. Consequently, the entity of the voice-over and the entity of the super have a tendency towards the observance of the Cooperative Principle and the Approbation and Tact Maxims. The entity of the secondary participant, on the other hand, rather violates pragmatic principles. All language entities incline towards an observance of the Interest Principle and the Pollyanna Principle.

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On Some Pragmatic Aspects of Last Wills and Testaments

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Abstract

The paper gives an insight into legal discourse. It focuses on the pragmatics of the language of the law. It attempts to reveal how the legal setting influences the performance and interpretation of last wills and testaments. Their analysis proves that the context determines the actual communicative validity of a last will text. The author comes to the conclusion that communication in a legal setting is temporally, spatially, and socially asynchronous. The asynchrony influences the

interpretation of a last will and testament. The achievement of finding an actual pragmatic meaning is a matter of matching up the linguistic elements of the code with the schematic elements of the context. Successful interpretation of a last will and testament depends on certain linguistic and pragmatic factors such as selecting appropriate linguistic means, which have to transfer the information in the most precise form, being easily understood by the interpreter, as well as an understanding of the future setting and future situation, a clear identifying of the linguistic means in a given setting, and others.

Keywords

Legal discourse, language of the law, pragmatics, speech act, last will and testament, actual communicative validity, legal act performance, legal act interpretation

Introduction

The subject of my interest is "language as a medium, a process and product in the fields of the law where legal texts, spoken or written, are generated in the service of regulating social behaviour" (Maley, 1994: 11). My attention is concentrated on the pragmatics of the language of the law. From historical records it is apparent that legal English has always differed from common-use-language. It has developed under specific historical conditions and was shaped by the number of other languages brought to England by invaders, mainly Anglo-Saxons, Scandinavians and the Norman French. Despite the efforts aimed at simplification and clarification, the language of the law has succeeded in keeping its special status for centuries. The gap between legal language and everyday language is still very wide. "It seems that there has never been a time since the Norman Conquest when English of the law has been in tune with common usage. It has always been considered a language apart" (Maley, 1994: 11). Bhatia (1994a: 140) points out that "legal draftsmen prefer to use terms which have stood the test of time" and calls legal language "a frozen variety of English".

2. Application of Speech Act theory in the Legal Discourse

The goal of this article is to provide some pragmatic insights into legal discourse through investigating the language of last wills and testaments. The motivation for choosing wills as the basis for the research was the fact that among the variety of legal documents, the language of wills is viewed as one of the most resistant to change. For the purpose of the research the last wills and testaments of Joe di Maggio, John F. Kennedy, Marilyn Monroe, Jackie Kennedy Onassis, Elvis Presley, Babe Ruth, and Richard Nixon were subjected to the analysis. They were found on the Internet, made within the years 1945 and 1997. All were written in legalese.

2.1 Interrelation of Pragmatics and Context

Through an investigation of the language of the selected last wills and testaments from a pragmatic point of view, I intend to reveal how speech acts theory fits into the legal discourse. I base my research on Fromkin & Rodman (1978: 189) who define pragmatics as "the general study of how context affects linguistic interpretation" and on Widdowson's (1996: 63) view of

the context as "a schematic construct". My aim is to uncover if and how the legal setting influences the performance and interpretation of wills and testaments, if their interpretation is valid only under certain conditions, if it is wholly or partially limited by the context.

2.2 A Speech Act as a Unit of Communication

The analysis here is conducted in terms of speech act theory. In recent years many empirical research studies have appeared providing a description of the production and interpretation of speech acts as well as their classification (Blum-Kulka, 1981, 1989; Boxer, 1993; Cohen and Olshtain, 1993; Olshtain and Cohen, 1991, etc.). Peter Trudgill (1992: 69) in *Language and Society* says that the term speech act is used in "pragmatics for the minimal unit of analysis of conversational interaction". Richards, Platt and Weber in the *Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics* (1992: 264) regard it as an utterance, a functional unit in communication. Cohen in his *Speech Acts* (1997: 384) identically finds a speech act as "a functional unit in communication". Austin determined three components of the internal structure of a speech act as follows: locutionary meaning, illocutionary force (the pragmatic force of an utterance that can be understood only within the particular context), and perlocutionary reaction. Yule (1996:49) calls it perlocutionary effect. According to Widdowson (1996: 131) speech acts are acts of communication performed by the use of language, either in speech or writing, also involving three constituents: reference, force and effect. According to Jolana Nižníková (1994: 3) there are "sentences with a certain communicative function. In addition to their propositional constituent and communicative function they include a modal aspect". She (ibid: 5) calls them "speech acts, utterance acts or utterances" and considers them "elementary, basic units of communication, classified on the basis of phonic, semantic and/or syntactic criteria". Horecký (2000: 14) uses the term "an utterance act". He considers it "a basic unit of communication that says something about reality" and includes two components "a proposition and an intention". Yule (1996: 47) characterises speech acts as "actions performed via utterances". In Lock's view (1997: 174) "speech acts are labels for the kinds of things we are doing when we act upon one another

through language". Tarnyiková in *Pragmatics* (2000: 289) points out, "the idea of doing things through language does not refer only to verbal actions (i.e. asking questions, issuing commands, making compliments, apologies, requests, etc.) but also doing things that change the state of affairs, such as naming a ship, proposing marriage, opening an exhibition, nominating a candidate, sentencing somebody to death, letting a student fail, declaring a conference open, etc". A last will and testament is a legal document composed for future use. It is logical that certainty and stability are the essential qualities of the law. In addition to a proposition the utterances in last wills also contain certain illocutionary force. As illocutionary force in last wills and testaments has to be valid for a long period of time, it is unavoidable having to pay a lot of attention to the language of the document. The creator of a last will and testament has to use very precise language so as not to give any opportunity for misinterpretation. A will must not mean something different than what the creator intends. Its content should not be understood differently in different conditions and situations. In Yule's (1996: 15) words the writer "has to project themselves into mental, social, temporal and spatial locations, different from theirs without actually being in these locations".

3. Transferability of a Legal Act

Consistent with the goals of the present paper I feel the need to provide a more detailed description of the conditions that guarantee good transferability of a legal act and to inspect felicity and infelicity of a legal act performance and interpretation in last wills and testaments. The form, content and intentions of a felicitous legal act performed in a last will and testament have to be precisely reconstructed in the mind of the interpreter. In other words, a successful legal act performance demands the formulation of locutionary and illocutionary meanings clearly so that their performance can make a desired impact on the target addressee. Good transferability of a legal act includes its performance as well as its interpretation. Performance is on the side of the creator of a last will and testament, interpretation on the side of the interpreter. In Slovak linguistics, Dolník and Bajžíková (1998: 99) introduced the term "interpretation competence" It is "the ability of a language user to correlate the structure of linguistic expressions of a text with the structure of their knowledge appropriate to the understanding of the text" (ibid: 103).

3.1 Reference and Inference

Reference and inference play an important role in the process of performance and interpretation of a last will and testament. Reference, according to Yule (1996: 17), is "an act in which the speaker, or writer, uses linguistic forms to enable the listener, or reader, to identify something". Inference is the role of the reader/listener to guess by reasoning what the writer's intention is. It is "the listener's task to infer correctly which entity the speaker intends to identify" (ibid: 17). The role of inference in text interpretation is also emphasised by Dolník and Bajžíková (1998: 117). According to them "its function lies in actualisation of the knowledge which is not explicitly expressed in the text". They (ibid: 119) also mention "pragmatic interpretation (understanding) of a text which is based on the recipient's pragmatically relevant knowledge".

Everything that relates to speech act transferability in general is relevant to transferability of legal language acts. Successful performance and successful interpretation of a legal act carried out in last wills and testaments require not only the creator's and interpreter's general "pragmatic competence" but also

their good general language competence as well as "language specific-semantic competence". The terms in quotation marks are taken from Blum-Kulka (1981: 91) who also points out that "the utterance is interpreted on the basis of shared assumptions between the speaker/writer and the hearer/reader over and above the linguistic content of the sentence used" (ibid: 90).

3.2 Implicature

We also realise that good transferability presupposes the importance of implicature. The philosopher Paul Grice introduced the idea of implicature so that the connection between logic and conversation could be expressed. Grice (1975: 57) claims that utterance meaning can be divided into two parts: "what is said and what is implied". Implicature is what is not said directly but is meant by the speaker, who believes that it will be recognised by the hearer in a given situation, place, time, and setting. It is generally known that interpretation of a will is complicated and non-straightforward. If the language of the will does not provide sufficient grounds for interpretation, extralinguistic factors and aspects have to be investigated.

It is sufficiently evident that the performance and interpretation of a legal language act needs a lot of legal, professional linguistic, general linguistic, pragmatic and other knowledge. Moreover, successful transferability of a legal act also presupposes a good knowledge of general rules of social interaction, rules of societal interaction (in a professional community) and a good knowledge of their application in different temporal and spatial conditions and situations.

It can be concluded that the felicitous transferability of a speech act lies in an absolute balance between "intention-to-identify" and "recognition-of-intention". (The terms in quotation marks were taken from Yule, 1996: 19.) In last wills and testaments it is almost impossible to achieve such a state of equilibrium, i.e. the state in which the weights and forces are evenly spread. The reason may lie in the following: many times the balanced relationship cannot be reached between one speaker and one listener (or a small number of them) as it is the case in everyday communication. It is much more complicated to achieve such equilibrium between the creator or a team of creators (authors/writers) and the interpreter who are spatially, temporarily, personally and sometimes socially distant. In these circumstances it is very difficult to select the means that are most apt to fit best. In the legal setting the creative space of the creator is considerably restricted by conventions, traditions and the requirement of all-inclusiveness of a last will and testament text. It happens that the desired equilibrium is broken by the creator or the interpreter. In last wills and testaments as well as other legal documents lawyers are the creators of the documents; they formulate utterances and control acts. They use the words and phrases they can rely on (which have been used for ages) "regardless of what a testator had in mind" (Melinkoff, 1963: 297). The evidence is that legal documents of the same type are worded almost identically. Lawyers are also the readers (addressees) of legal documents, as clients need their interpretation. In a certain sense the accurate interpretation of a legal text may be seen as the translation of a text from one language into another with the aim of achieving "sameness in meaning" (Blum-Kulka, 1981: 89).

3.3 Conditions of a Felicitous Transferability of a Legal Act

In my understanding, felicity conditions belong among the pragmatic features of speech acts carried out in last wills and testaments. According to Austin (1962: 146),

who is one of leading speech-act theoreticians, "speech acts cannot be true or false". He (ibid: 147) says, "by uttering sentences we perform acts which can be successful or unsuccessful". An intention of a speech act is not recognised unless it is performed under appropriate conditions. In other words, speech acts can be felicitous, if done appropriately, or infelicitous, if done inappropriately. To be successful, each speech act must be performed in appropriacy or felicity conditions that are stated as necessary for a speech act to happen. It is reasonable to agree with Blum-Kulka (1981: 89), according to whom "the felicity conditions for the performance and interpretation of speech acts might be based on the speaker/writer's ability to relate linguistic content to pragmatic context". Hurford and Heasley (1996: 250) also emphasise the importance of felicity conditions. According to them they are "the conditions that must be fulfilled in the situation in which the act is carried out if the act is to be said to be carried out properly, or felicitously." Yule (1996: 50) also finds felicity conditions inevitable for performing a successful speech act "as without meeting them a speech act cannot be felicitous". His conditions are stated for a spoken language. I adopt them to legal language acts. The words *to utter* and *utterance* are understood as *to produce words* and *production of words in both spoken and written ways* in a similar way as the term *speech act* is used to refer to both spoken and written acts. Yule divides felicity conditions (ibid: 51) into:

a) general conditions:

- the language being used is understood by both the speaker/writer and the hearer/reader;
- what is uttered is uttered seriously;
- the utterance is meaningful;
- the speaker has to have a certain power to utter such an utterance and perform a speech act by it.
- the performer of a perlocutionary act must be physically/mentally capable of such an act;

b) content conditions:

- the content of the utterance has to be in accordance with an act;

c) preparatory conditions depend on the type of a speech act. In the case of promise there are two preparatory conditions: first the event will not happen by itself, and second, the event will have a beneficial effect;

d) sincerity conditions. In the legal setting the honesty of legal act performance is strongly emphasised. The importance of good faith, sincerity and confidence as well as the avoidance of bad faith are inevitable presuppositions of felicitous legal act performance and interpretation.

A legal act is performed felicitously if its form, content and intentions constructed by the creator in a certain context are precisely reconstructed in the mind of the interpreter. It is possible only if the same illocutionary force is kept for a required amount of time. If these requirements are deliberately broken and violated, the interpreter cannot deduce precisely the intended information. I emphasise the direct relation between the quality of last will legal act construction as well as its reconstruction in terms of the determination of the testator's donative intent.

Conclusion

The aim of the paper is to prove that communication in a legal setting is temporally, spatially, and socially asynchronous. The asynchrony influences the interpretation of a last will and testament. The correct interpretation of a will aims at achieving "sameness in meaning" (Blum-Kulka, 1981: 89). It is an extremely difficult task as a last will has to keep its illocutionary force for a required amount of time. In my view, the lack of concurrence in time and place, as well as in the amount of shared professional and world experience between the creator of a last will and testament and its interpreter, makes the interpretation difficult. It is obvious that the construction of a last will and testament requires a lot of professional knowledge as well as the time and energy for analysing the pragmatics of a legal message.

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Hidden Bias in the 2008 American Presidential Debates

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to analyse the use of hidden bias in the three televised presidential debates which took place before the 2008 election in the USA. Hidden bias is considered as a form of doublespeak and thus it is a means of using language in order to manipulate people's thoughts and influence their perception of reality. The paper focuses on positive and negative bias in adjectives, nouns, and verbs used by both presidential candidates – John McCain and Barack Obama. The results of this analysis show that while John McCain uses hidden bias relatively often in order to promote his viewpoints on a wide range of

issues, his opponent Barack Obama resorts to this form of doublespeak very rarely.

Keywords

Doublespeak, hidden bias, purr words, snarl words, John McCain, Barack Obama, presidential debates

1. Introduction

This paper deals with the use of hidden bias in the televised presidential debates before the 2008 election in the USA. Its main objective is to show how the choice of wording can influence the overall meaning of an utterance, and thus subconsciously manipulate the listeners' attitude towards a particular subject. This paper will compare the use of biased or loaded expressions as uttered by the two presidential candidates – Democrat Barack Obama and Republican John McCain.

Hidden bias is understood as a subclass of doublespeak, which can be briefly described as some special kind of language whose primary function is to manipulate, mystify and obfuscate people's thoughts instead of clearly communicating the speaker's ideas and opinions. Other subclasses include the use of euphemisms, jargon, inflated language, and several syntactic means such as passivisation or nominalisation. There are four basic reasons why communication is manipulated in such a way. The speaker can do it in order to: 1) intensify his/her own good; 2) intensify others' bad; 3) downplay his/her own bad; and 4) downplay others' good (Rank 1976:15). Rank designed a schema which takes into consideration "who is saying what to whom, with what intent, [and] with what result," and in the case of hidden bias, the schema looks like this:

↑ Intensify own good ↑	↑ Intensify others' bad ↑
Positive hidden bias	Negative hidden bias
↓ Downplay own bad ↓	↓ Downplay others' good ↓

Table 1

2. Theoretical Framework of the Analysis

Leech (1981) puts into opposition two basic kinds of meaning – conceptual (denotative, cognitive) meaning on the one hand, and associative meaning on the other. He uses the term associative meaning as a summary term for five separate kinds of meaning, namely connotative meaning, social meaning, affective meaning, reflected meaning and collocative meaning. This grouping is based on the features these five meanings share and by which they are distinguished from their opposite – conceptual meaning. According to

Leech, they "all have the same open-ended, variable character, and lend themselves to analysis in terms of scales of ranges, rather than in discrete either-this-or-that terms" (1981:18). Another very important distinction between conceptual and associative meaning is that associative meaning is less stable than conceptual meaning. While conceptual meaning is shared by users of the same language, associative meaning varies with each individual's experience (Leech 1981). This may lead to situations when the associative meaning of words is used for conveying attitudes and emotions. Leech (1981) mentions two such situations:

1. As associative meaning varies from one person to another, its use can cause miscommunication or misunderstanding;
2. Readers/listeners may be misled by associative meaning (in this case, especially affective meaning) which is predominant over conceptual meaning, and as a result, they may not be able to appraise the information properly.

Leech (1981) claims that the second situation may be dangerous as it can be misused in order to influence people's opinions and perception of reality, and favourable or unfavourable words can thus be chosen in order to manipulate people's views on certain topics or issues.

An example of such manipulation is hidden bias. Bolinger (1980) claims that hidden bias can be found in adjectives, nouns, and verbs. By that he means that these words can imply a positive or a negative attitude and evaluate reality in a particular way, and thus manipulate people's perception of reality.

Bolinger (1980) asserts that out of the three parts of speech mentioned above, **adjectives** are the most prone to hidden bias. This can be explained by one of the qualities of typical English adjectives – they are scaled. Each adjective represents some quality, but this quality is not always the same. There can be 'more' or 'less' of it and thus it can be perceived as 'better' or 'worse' (not necessarily respectively). Then, the adjective very easily loses its neutrality (Bolinger 1980). He demonstrates this assertion with several examples. The immediate associative meaning is indicated in the brackets: long (and tiresome), sweet (and lovely), tall (and handsome) (1980:76).

Nouns are supposed to be less prone to hidden bias than adjectives and when they are, it is usually when they are used in a function which resembles adjectives,

i.e. they can still be compared for degree as in the sentence, "I didn't think she was such a dumbbell!" (Bolinger 1980:77).

Bolinger claims that the most common kind of biased nouns is epithets. He explains the biased use of epithets with the sentence, "Did you see the idiot try to cross the street ahead of me?" (1980:77) In this sentence the speaker is speaking about a person, but by calling this person an idiot s/he is insinuating that the person is an idiot. After hearing such a sentence, it is almost impossible for the listener to defend the person. In the majority of cases (especially when the listener is not concerned enough), s/he tends to agree with the statement, and any kind of resistance is improbable (Bolinger 1980).

This theory can be transferred into the field of politics. When a politician utters a sentence like "The terrorist must be punished," everybody agrees with this statement, and it is unlikely that somebody will object to the person being a terrorist. This would have been different if the proposition had been more explicit: "The man has to be punished. He is a terrorist". In such a case, it would have been much easier to defend him by saying: "No, he's not a terrorist".

Similarly, in adjectives the associative meaning can be inferred from collocations which most often go with the noun. These collocations express the quality which is typical of the noun and often appears along with it. This was called 'salient feature copying' by linguist J. P. Maher (Bolinger 1980). Examples of salient feature copying are (stubborn) ox, (proud) father, or (dirty) tramp (Bolinger 1980:78).

As **verbs** designate a process and a process is usually not stable enough to be apt to be agreed or disagreed with or to develop positive or negative associations, verbs are less hospitable to bias than adjectives and nouns (Bolinger, 1980). However, Bolinger (1980) lists six groups of verbs that do encompass bias. Out of these six groups, only the first one seems to be relevant to the field of politics. These are verbs designating actions which are automatically viewed as positive or negative. The bias consists of the speaker's description of a fact as good or bad without giving the listener the option to decide about the goodness or badness him/herself (Bolinger 1980). The following pairs of verbs can be given as examples: improve - deteriorate, praise - blame, build - destroy, help - hinder, win - lose, and succeed - fail (Bolinger 1980:80).

3. Material

This paper explores the hidden bias used by the American presidential candidates Barack Obama and John McCain in three presidential debates which took place before the 2008 elections. They were held on September 26, October 7 and October 15 at the University of Mississippi in Oxford (Mississippi), at Belmont University in Nashville (Tennessee) and at Hofstra University in Hempstead (New York) respectively. The first debate was moderated by Jim Lehrer of PBS, the second was moderated by Tom Brokaw of NBC News and the last one by Bob Schieffer of CBS News. All debates were sponsored by the Commission on Presidential Debates and all of them were 90 minutes long.

The first and third presidential debates were divided into roughly nine-minute segments. Each candidate had two minutes to respond to a direct question, and then there were seven minutes for discussion and follow-up questions. The specific subjects and questions were chosen by the moderator and had not been shared or cleared with anyone on the campaigns or on the Commission. Only the second presidential debate was different. It employed the town hall format. In this debate, voters from the Nashville area could ask a

question of their choice; some of them were present during the debate and could ask in person, while others sent their questions by email and had them posed by the moderator. Each candidate had two minutes to respond to the question, and then there was a one-minute follow-up.

The debates covered various kinds of issues such as the ongoing financial crisis, foreign policy, national security, economy including energetic policy, and domestic policy including social issues such as abortion.

4. Corpus

Stubbs (1996:172) claims that the best way to find out the connotations of a word is by employing a large corpus. He asserts that the associations and connotations a word has are shown by characteristic collocations which occur with the word. For the purposes of this paper, the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) was used. This corpus is composed of more than 410 million words from spoken language, fiction, popular magazines, newspapers, and academic journals from the years 1990 - 2010. It is thus made up from various kinds of sources and is considered to be the largest currently available corpus of American English.

5. Analysis

5.1 John McCain

5.1.1 Positive Hidden Bias in Adjectives

There are four adjectives used by McCain very often which can be considered positively biased. These adjectives are 'brave', 'young', 'great', and 'new'. In most cases, these positive adjectives are used to describe people, the only exception being 'new strategy'. In three out of six cases, he combines two positive adjectives with one noun which strengthens the hidden bias. A common feature of all four adjectives is that they are very general and simple. The following table shows the additional qualities which very often go with the four above-mentioned adjectives according to the COCA:

brave	strong, courageous, smart, bold, proud, foolish, loyal, handsome, stupid
young	handsome, attractive, talented, ambitious, restless, inexperienced
great	good, important, major, significant
new	different, modern, fresh

Young

- (1) *So Sen. Obama, who has never traveled south of our border, opposes the Colombia Free Trade Agreement. The same country that's helping us try to stop the flow of drugs into our country that's killing young American.*

Putting stress on the fact that those who are dying are young (and handsome, attractive, talented, ambitious, restless, and inexperienced) makes people feel more sorry for them. In addition, McCain uses the phrase 'young Americans' instead of 'young people', for example. The word 'people' is rather neutral, whereas the word 'Americans' is itself also biased. It can be considered as an example of what Haykawa (1949:45) calls a 'purr word', which means that the word has such strong positive connotations for the citizens of the United States that its conceptual meaning is not relevant any more. The word 'American' certainly evokes positive patriotic feelings, unlike the neutral word 'people'. In this case, the use of hidden bias aims at intensifying McCain's opponent's bad, as McCain claims that Obama opposes the Colombia Free Trade

Agreement, Colombia being a country helping them to stop the flow of drugs into the USA. According to McCain, Obama is thus partly to blame for the death of young Americans.

Brave + young

- (2) *In Lebanon, I stood up to President Reagan, my hero, and said, if we send Marines in there, how can we possibly beneficially affect this situation? And said we shouldn't. Unfortunately, almost 300 brave young Marines were killed.*
- (3) *General Petraeus invited Senator Lindsey Graham and me to attend a ceremony where 688 brave young Americans, whose enlistment had expired, were reenlisting to stay and fight for Iraqi freedom and American freedom.*

These two examples are very similar to the previous one, but the use of hidden bias is even stronger.

By claiming that President Reagan was his hero, McCain insinuates that Reagan was good (see chapter 5.1.2.). However, McCain himself is even better, because in this case Reagan was mistaken and McCain was right. By using the two biased adjectives he makes it even truer that Reagan should have followed his advice. If the killed Marines were not brave and young, it would not be as serious as it is.

In the latter sentence, the noun 'Americans' is used again, but this time the Americans are not only 'young', but also 'brave' (and strong, courageous, smart, bold, proud, foolish, loyal, handsome, and stupid). This sentence is interesting as a whole, as another purr word, i.e. 'freedom', is employed in the sentence and emphasized by repetition. The overall meaning of the sentence is thus influenced by two biased adjectives and two purr words, one of which is repeated in order to enhance its effect.

Great + young

- (4) *It's not accidental that the presidents of Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, and Ukraine flew to Georgia, flew to Tbilisi, where I have spent significant amount of time with a great young president, Misha Saakashvili.*

In this case, McCain seems to be building his argument on the assumption that when somebody has all the features these two adjective imply, we will be more apt to like him/her. Throughout the presidential debates, McCain sides with Georgia whenever speaking about the Russian-Georgian conflict. The use of these two biased adjectives is one of the hidden ways of showing inclination towards Georgia.

New

- (5) *So the point is that we will prevail in Afghanistan, but we need the new strategy and we need it to succeed.*

The adjectives 'different', 'modern' and 'fresh' which very often go with the adjective 'new' show that something that is new is usually expected to be positive and better than the old one. The new strategy is thus automatically expected to be better than any previous strategy.

Great

- (6) *It was a stratagem. And that same strategy will be employed in Afghanistan by this great general.*

The fact that this general is 'great' (and thus also good, important, major, and significant) gives him more authority in what he is doing. People who trust McCain, then automatically trust the general, even though they do not know exactly what his qualities are and what exactly he is going to do in Afghanistan.

5.1.2 Positive Hidden Bias in Nouns

As far as nouns are concerned, McCain uses positive hidden bias mainly in relation to his fellow politicians from the Republican Party, particularly when speaking about former Republican presidents and about his running mate Sarah Palin. Former presidents are his 'heroes', while Palin is a 'reformer' and 'role model'.

My hero

- (7) *You know, my hero is a guy named Teddy Roosevelt. Teddy Roosevelt used to say walk softly -- talk softly, but carry a big stick. Senator Obama likes to talk loudly.*
- (8) *In Lebanon, I stood up to President Reagan, my hero, and said, if we send Marines in there, how can we possibly beneficially affect this situation? And said we shouldn't. Unfortunately, almost 300 brave young Marines were killed.*

The best way to explain the hidden meaning of these words is to try to find out how we should behave towards heroes. When looking for past participles in the COCA used with the word 'hero', the most relevant collocate is the word 'hailed'.

In the first sentence, the fact that Roosevelt was McCain's hero gives him more authority, and thus there is no doubt that what he said is true. The second sentence is more complex. By claiming that Reagan is a hero, McCain intimates that he deserves to be hailed, and thus in general is a good person, even though he was mistaken this time. However, McCain was right when he stood up to him and disagreed with him and that makes him even better than the hero President Reagan.

Role model and reformer

- (9) *Well, Americans have gotten to know Sarah Palin. They know that she's a role model to women and other -- and reformers all over America. She's a reformer.*

Both expressions, 'role model' as well as 'reformer', are themselves very empty words which could mean almost anything. When looking for the most common collocates in the COCA, we find the following qualities:

role model	young, positive, influential, excellent, ultimate, terrific, inspirational
reformer	progressive, efficient

All these qualities are very positive, and even though McCain does not say much about Sarah Palin, the voters feel that they should definitely vote for her and should want her to be the vice president.

5.1.3 Positive Hidden Bias in Verbs

There are a number of verbs which are used in a biased way. They are verbs which are automatically perceived as positive, and thus there is hidden bias in them. Such verbs used by McCain are 'succeed', 'win', 'do the honor', and 'be proud of'. The first two are used simply as opposites of 'fail' and 'lose'. It is interesting to note that McCain also uses whole phrases which could be easily substituted by the verb 'win'.

- (10) *This strategy has succeeded. And we are winning in Iraq.*
- (11) *We will succeed and we will bring our troops home with honor and victory and not in defeat.*
- (12) *And we will come home with victory and with honor.*
- (13) *And this strategy, and this general, they are winning. Senator Obama refuses to acknowledge that we are winning in Iraq.*

All these sentences are used in relation to Iraq, and the purpose of these biased verbs is to oppose Barack Obama's intention to withdraw the American troops posted there.

'Do the honor' and 'be proud of' are expressions used in order to suggest that the people he's speaking about are worth these essentially positive sensations (honor, pride).

(14) *And I'll tell you, I had a town hall meeting in Wolfeboro, New Hampshire, and a woman stood up and she said, 'Senator McCain, I want you to do me the honor of wearing a bracelet with my son's name on it'.*

(15) *She understands that better than almost any American that I know. I'm proud of her.*

The second sentence is about Sarah Palin, and the fact that he is proud of her should again make people believe that she would be a good vice president.

5.1.4 Negative Hidden Bias in Adjectives

McCain's favorite negatively biased adjective used in relation to Obama is the word 'extreme' in the contexts of environment and abortion.

(16) *Sen. Obama will tell you, in the -- as the extreme environmentalists do, it has to be safe.*

(17) *I don't know how you align yourself with the extreme aspect of the pro- abortion movement in America. And that's his record, and that's a matter of his record.*

(18) *That's the extreme pro-abortion position, quote, "health".*

According to the COCA, the connotations the word 'extreme' has are as follows:

extreme absurd, dangerous, outrageous,
antisocial, irrational, unreasonable

In the latter two sentences the adjective 'extreme' is used together with the word 'pro-abortion'. It is interesting to note that whenever McCain is speaking about Obama's attitude towards this issue, he uses the expression 'abortion'. However, when speaking about himself, he strives to avoid this term which apparently is perceived very negatively among his voters and prefers the use of euphemisms such as 'pro-life' instead of 'anti-abortion'. But Obama adopts the same strategy and uses the euphemism 'choice' and 'pro-choice' when speaking about his own opinions on the subject.

5.1.5 Negative Hidden Bias in Nouns

When speaking about Obama, McCain is not reluctant to imply that his opponent is somehow connected with terrorists, itself a 'snarl word', which is the opposite of a 'purr word' as explained above, and can be simply defined as a word which has such strong negative connotations that its conceptual meaning is no longer relevant. McCain puts emphasis on Obama's relationship with Bill Ayers and calls him an 'old washed-up terrorist':

(19) *Mr. Ayers, I don't care about an old washed-up terrorist. But as Sen. Clinton said in her debates with you, we need to know the full extent of that relationship.*

By claiming that a person who is in contact with Obama is a terrorist, McCain insinuates that Obama is also a terrorist or at least that he has a positive approach to terrorists.

A similarly biased noun can be found in the following example where McCain again makes a connection between Obama and terrorists:

(20) *Well, let me just said that that this is -- he -- Sen. Obama doesn't want a free trade agreement with our best ally in the region but*

wants to sit down across the table without precondition to -- with Hugo Chavez, the guy who has been helping FARC, the terrorist organization.

FARC is a terrorist organization, it is supported by Chavez, Obama wants to sit down at the table without precondition with him, and therefore Obama is helping terrorists.

5.1.6 Negative Hidden Bias in Verbs

McCain uses negative bias in verbs in opposition to his positive bias in verbs which is mentioned above. Again, he does not simply make do with verbs, but he employs phrases with verbal meaning. Words such as 'succeed', 'victory', and 'honor' are replaced by 'fail', 'defeat', and 'dishonor' respectively:

(21) *And it did and we will win this one and we won't come home in defeat and dishonor and probably have to go back if we fail.*

In relation to Obama, McCain uses the verb 'to fine' which in this case can be considered as biased, because he capitalizes on the negative meaning of the word. He does not explain what Obama will do exactly; he just claims he will fine people and puts stress on it by repeating it.

(22) *If you're a small business person and you don't insure your employees, Senator Obama will fine you. Will fine you. That's remarkable. If you're a parent and you're struggling to get health insurance for your children, Senator Obama will fine you.*

5.2 Barack Obama

Barack Obama uses hidden bias much less often than John McCain. Only cases of positive hidden bias in adjectives and negative hidden bias in nouns have been found.

5.2.1 Positive Hidden Bias in Adjectives

(23) *And that's why it's so important, as we solve this short-term problem, that we look at some of the underlying issues that have led to wages and incomes for ordinary Americans to go down, the -- a health care system that is broken, energy policies that are not working, because, you know, 10 days ago, John said that the fundamentals of the economy are sound.*

Even though it might seem that the word 'short-term' means something trivial, it is not so. The COCA shows the following results:

Short-term immediate, temporary, acute

By using this modifier Obama seems to put stress on the urgency of the problem and wants to imply that it must be solved as quickly as possible.

The second positively biased adjective is the word 'new' when speaking about the energy economy:

(24) *And it is absolutely critical that we understand this is not just a challenge, it's an opportunity, because if we create a new energy economy, we can create five million new jobs, easily, here in the United States.*

This use of 'new' is very similar to McCain's use of it when speaking about a new strategy. As has already been shown, the most immediate collocations this word has are 'different', 'modern', and 'fresh'. Obama is thus trying to persuade the people that the energy economy he is proposing will be better than the previous one or any other energy economy.

5.2.2 Negative Bias in Nouns

Obama uses negative hidden bias only in nouns. These nouns are 'terrorist organization' and 'dictator'. In the case of 'terrorist organization', he is reacting to McCain's claim that Obama did not support an amendment declaring the Republican Guard of Iran a sponsor of terror. By calling them a 'terrorist organization', Obama demonstrates that despite McCain's claim he is not in favor of this organization.

(25) *Well, let me just correct something very quickly. I believe the Republican Guard of Iran is a terrorist organization. I've consistently said so. What Senator McCain refers to is a measure in the Senate that would try to broaden the mandate inside of Iraq. To deal with Iran.*

As for the word 'dictator', Obama uses it when speaking about Pakistani president Pervez Musharraf. Calling him a 'dictator' helps Obama oppose George Bush's favorable approach towards Pakistan as the word 'dictator' has the following connotations:

dictator brutal, ruthless, evil, cruel

The word can be found in the following sentences:

(26) *So I agree that we have to speak responsibly and we have to act responsibly. And the reason Pakistan -- the popular opinion of America had diminished in Pakistan was because we were supporting a dictator, Musharraf, had given him \$10 billion over seven years, and he had suspended civil liberties. We were not promoting democracy.*

(27) *But I do believe that we have to change our policies with Pakistan. We can't coddle, as we*

did, a dictator, give him billions of dollars and then he's making peace treaties with the Taliban and militants.

6. Conclusion

This analysis has shown that hidden bias as a means of using language for manipulating people's thoughts and influencing their perception of reality is used almost exclusively by the Republican presidential candidate John McCain during the presidential debates. Democratic candidate Barack Obama resorts to the use of biased expressions very rarely. In the case of John McCain, it has been demonstrated how both positive and negative hidden bias in adjectives, nouns, and verbs can support somebody's argumentation or sometimes can even serve as an argument itself. McCain uses hidden bias in order to stress his position on various issues such as the future of American troops in Iraq, the conflict between Russia and Georgia, abortion, McCain's running mate Sarah Palin, as well as some other issues. It has been proved that in the majority of cases the use of hidden bias helps intensify the speaker's good and his opponent's bad or, on the contrary, downplay the speaker's bad and his opponent's good. In the case of Barack Obama, only positive hidden bias in adjectives and negative hidden bias in nouns has been found. Further research could show whether this means that Barack Obama and the Democratic Administration generally tends to misuse language for manipulation less often than the Republican Administration or whether this applies only to hidden bias but not to other forms of doublespeak such as euphemisms, inflated language or political jargon.

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Computer Assisted Translation/Machine Translation and its Role in Modern Translation Processes

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Abstract

The present paper deals with the use of computer assisted translation and machine translation tools in everyday situations. It analyzes modern translation as understood by contemporary translation industry. Furthermore, a short thought is devoted to the complexity of translation process and the interface between the theoretical approaches and their practical implementation using the CAT/MT tools. The paper also describes some basic attributes of modern translation and some fundamental predispositions for modern translators who wish to participate

in the translation process. The role of technology in the translation process is applied to practical implementation levels of CAT/MT software by summarizing its most common features and functionality.

Keywords

Computer assisted translation, CAT, modern translation

Introduction

Translation these days is no longer a language operation focusing on the surface level of language – it has become a phenomenon blending the social, cultural, political, ethical, philosophical, religious, linguistic and technical aspects. The aim of translation these days is to provide a **complex product** compliant not only from the viewpoint of its meaning, but also from the viewpoint of form, graphic layout and technological workmanship; translation has also become a technical operation. In this respect, it is vital to focus on the application of new technologies adopted by translatology over the past couple of years, resulting from profound linguistic and translation research, which started as early as the Cold War. The aim of my present paper is to summarize some approaches to 'modern translation' in light of the technological used available on the translation market and outline some basic functionality provided by CAT/MT software.

1. Statement of Terms

The tools for automated translation and computer assisted translation play a very important role in modern translation. A complex set of theoretical knowledge from the areas of theory of translation, cultural specifics, linguistic specifics (morphology, word stock, style, pragmatics etc.) and practical knowledge and skills, having to do with the mastery of individual translation tools, can be considered an ideal model guaranteeing that the final product – a translated text – will meet all the requirements and prerequisites imposed by today's translation industry. Translators working in commercial translation should reflect on the changes happening in the area of technology with respect to text processing and use of technological tools. It is sad that many translators are not equipped well enough in the area of technology; the translations are sent back to the source in inadequate format, they do not follow the formal criteria and they have to be forwarded to other professionals who are capable of making the text visually attractive and compliant with the respective technical and technological parameters. There is a number of barriers in the implementation process of the above tools, starting with mental and psychological barriers, and ending with technical ones. Translation is definitely one of the mental activities that has become subject to market changes - the demands on translators these days are substantially high in

terms of translated volumes and technologies used. Companies demand the usage of translation memories, terminology databases and similar tools. For example, as from 2006, the usage of translation memory tools is a must for all translators working for the European Parliament. The usage of CAT tools requires the translators undergo philosophical transformation, transformation of their work methods, file handling, thinking, use of terminology etc. Whereas in the past, all these processes depended on the translator's memory, nowadays, thanks to CAT tools, a great majority of the processes is performed by a computer, which gives the translators more freedom to focus on the meaning of the translated text, it gives them speed and reduces their memory-intensive brainwork. However, the adoption of CAT/MT tools is far from easy; it takes reasonable time and effort to master the software and its multiple functions.

2. Complexity of Translation Process

The complexity of the translation process goes down to the very variables translation operates with. Translation as a mental activity includes a plethora of overlapping phenomena and features, it is a true interdisciplinary and multitasking process. Among others, it has to do with the following variables: source and target language competence, culture and cultural categories, history, literature, text typology, comparative skills, "intelligence, sensitivity, intuition" (Newmark 1999), writing skills, knowledge of author's idiolect, strong inference skills, readership, setting, text functions (aesthetic, phatic, metalingual, informative, vocative, expressive), context, translation processes and procedures, decision making (Wills 1982), speed, reading skills, management of work, etc.

The above multifaceted nature of translation is also partly reflected in the varying approaches to translation theory. For example, the scientific approach (Bell 1991) proposes that "the linguist inevitably approaches translation from a scientific viewpoint, seeking to create some kind of objective description of the phenomenon..." This means translation is mostly a scientific activity, requiring scientific approaches. The equivalence approach (Hartman and Stork 1972) defines translation as a "replacement of a representation of a text in one language by a representation of an equivalent text in a second language." Translated text should be treated as an equivalent version of the original text. Deep level

analysis (Chomsky, 1957 and Nida, 1969) views translation as an analysis of deep level structure of text and its rendition in the target language. The analysis and rendition is, of course, performed with generative tools. Surface level analysis (Popović, 1983) views translation as a stylistic and textual process requiring a surface structure analysis and surface structure rendition in the target language. In the translation memes theory (Chesterman 1997), translation is viewed as a series of governing supermemes (source-target, equivalence, untranslatability, free vs. literal, all writing is translating). There exist many other theoretical approach to translation, each one focusing on different aspects of text, linguistics, context, culture etc. An obvious question at the end of this subchapter is: are computers able to capture and assist at least with some of the above problems?

3. Traditional vs. Modern Translation

Over the past few years, translation has undergone a major transformation. Translation is no longer primarily viewed as a theoretical operation, it has been influenced by the practical aspects of technology, market, speed etc. This also applies to translators – the people performing the process. The advent of technological tools has forever changed the nature of their job. “This means that the typical translator has also changed. Instead of a highly educated, often anti-social scholar sitting at his table for months struggling to find the right word to translate some valuable poetry, today’s translator is usually in front of a computer screen churning out thousands of words per day to translate documents whose timely translation may mean sumptuous sums of money in business to the client.” (Monteiro, 2006). **Modern translation is not primarily based on a solid translation theory – it is based on an efficient and streamlined process resulting in the delivery of a product/service.** The ‘modern age’ of translation can be readily described in the following points: (1) translation is a commercial product, not a piece of art, it is understood as a practical skill, (2) translation must meet certain formal criteria, (3) translator must be a multi-faceted personality (competences) with emphasis on practical skills and experience and not theoretical knowledge, (4) translator must be able to use a computer, (5) translation process is governed by money and time. The above characteristics impose a set of new requirements on the transition process and the translators themselves. The new requirements and skills can be grouped into the following categories: (1) **translator** – the requirements and predispositions of the person performing the process – theoretical knowledge, linguistic background, cultural background, practical computer skills, (2) **text** – knowledge and practical manipulation of various kinds of computer file formats, theoretical approach to texts, text analysis skills, reading skills, (3) **translation management process** – adequate knowledge of the transition process, management variables, social and legal aspects of translation, (4) **revision** – knowledge of revision, review, spellchecking other similar procedures, (4) **DTP**, technical aspects – knowledge of visual aspects of the translation process, formatting, translation of images, drawings, flowcharts, use of CAT tools, dictionaries etc., (5) **terminology** – terminological databases, termbases, (6) **legal and financial issues** – contracts, legal aspects, cooperation agreements etc. It follows from the above that the translators have to be proficient in a whole new area of expertise in order to comply with the modern requirements on translation.

4. Role of Technology

The common misconception, a belief that the computer translates, is probably the main reason why some translators are still reluctant to use computers in their work. It seems that they just do not want to hand over the control over the translation process to a machine they can hardly operate. The proposition “Humans can translate; computers only appear to translate”; they produce “pseudo-translations” (Wills 1996) summarizes the principal obstacle to MT – the computer/computer program does not understand ST, at least not in the human sense of the word (introduction of interlingua). Concepts such as novelty, incongruity, and complexity and many others are impossible to be handled by the computer in the translation process. This is why it is necessary to correctly understand the proper position of computers in the transition process.

Historical perspective

Similarly to translation theory, even the approaches to machine translation and computer-assisted translation differ. The history of machine translation and computer assisted translation is relatively young compared with the history of the theory of translation. Machine translation (MT) is understood as an autonomous translation process performed by the computer without the assistance of humans. On the other hand, computer assisted translation (CAT) is understood as translation performed by a human translator using computer software, usually memory based, whose role is to assist the translator in the process. Computer assisted translation and machine translation are themselves very difficult and complex operations because apart from the basic translation procedures, they involve programming procedures, application levels of theoretical linguistics (parsing, tagging, synthesis etc.), natural language processing, computer semantics, artificial intelligence, automated indexation and summarization, semantic analysis of text, information extraction, speech recognition, use of dictionaries and terminological databases, use and creation of bilingual and multilingual corpora, terminology extraction etc. Computer assisted translation and machine translation started to develop in 1950s. In 1954, a breakthrough public presentation of 49 Russian sentences translated into English using a machine translation engine had a material impact on launching research in this area. Research and development in MT and CAT gave way to the emergence of two basic approaches: (1) the **empirical approach** promoted direct translation and word-for-word, or phrase-for-phrase substitutions without an in-depth analysis of sentences and their structure, (2) the **theoretical approach** promoted a theoretical analysis of translated sentences, some sort of computational ‘understanding’ of sentences. These two approaches resulted in the emergence of two basic types of translation software: automated translation software (e.g. Systran) and assisted translation software (e.g. Trados). Unfortunately, the research in the area did not present expected results, which led to a major disillusion. The 1966 ALPAC (Automatic Language Processing Advisory Committee) report meant a virtual end to all scientific research in the area – the father of machine translation, MIT scientist Yehoshua Bar-Hillel presented the proverbial **semantic barrier** as a very basic and undeniable fact – computers are not able to understand the semantic difference between the individual words and terms used in the text. This means that from 1966 on, the role of computers was not primarily focused on the semantic understanding of terms and their translation; this process was reserved to humans. The incapacity of computers to perform a full translation process was later described by Wills: “Whereas in human translation intelligence and language use are manifestations of dynamic interplay

between a translator and the environment, a computer operates by breaking a task down into logical operations that can be carried out on binary numbers" (Wills 1982). In other words, Wills suggests that there is a definite interplay of the real-world translator and the environment which the computer just cannot replicate. The translator is aware of social, cultural, historical, religious, technical, historical etc. aspects of text, the computer just isn't. What is more, computers cannot plan their activities and evaluate the translation situation from a complex viewpoint. The planning element, or the translation strategy, is a key component of the transition process. The translator as a human being is able to decide what particular linguistic tools to use in a specific text to maintain a general strategy and uniformity. Since the computer usually translates a text on a segment-to-segment basis, it is not able to perform advanced planning. "Contrary to the human translator, a computer does not carry out plans (unless we regard a program as a kind of "plan"). To "teach" the computer to "think" as people think is futile, despite all statements to the contrary. Its field of operation is so limited that, strictly speaking, one cannot talk of comparable preconditions for human translation and MT." (Wills 1982, p. 214). The limitations of the MT/CAT technology are obvious: the computers are not able to perform advanced translation tasks. The question then is to what degree can the translation process be mechanized/automated? How can technology assist the translators?

5. Practical Assistance of CAT/MT Software

I have readily identified 13 basic areas where computers can perform partial tasks assisting the translators in their work. This identification is based on a long-term analysis and use of CAT/MT tools. The following list is by no means exhaustive, for example, it does not include the internet tools, speech recognition, software localization, OCR technology etc., yet it presents a concise overview of the basic CAT/MT functionality.

1. CAT software **displays text in a translator-friendly way**. It is probably a very strange realization, but standard text documents do not present sentences in a translator-friendly way. Text documents are optimized for reading, not for translating. The sentences are usually grouped together in paragraphs, and sometimes they cannot be easily distinguished. CAT tools present sentences to the translator in a convenient way, i.e. in the best possible way for the translator to visualize and contextualize the form and meaning of a sentence. Each sentence, irrespective to its original layout and design, is displayed from the left margin and it presents the original text and its translation side by side. The translator does not have to continually look for the sentence ends and beginnings in the original text.
2. CAT software can **embed terminology directly into the translated text**. Of course, apart from sentences, translators also deal with words (terms) as a nuclear unit of analysis. Words and terminology is usually presented in printed dictionaries. Dictionaries in their traditional form are usually very hard to handle from the viewpoint of time and general efficiency. CAT tools can effectively insert terminology units from previously assembled terminological databases directly into the translated text as the translator translates a particular translation segment. This is a huge advantage since the terms are

processed automatically by the machine and the process eliminates the human factor from the equation – the terms are inserted automatically.

3. CAT software decides what the **best size of the translation unit** is. The problem of length of the translation unit is something the translators deal with on a day-to-day basis. Advanced segmentation units in CAT software are able to present the translator with the best unit to translate from the viewpoint of its length. As stated above, the segments are presented in a way that the translated text can be inserted directly below the source text.
4. CAT software handles basic **formal quality control**. CAT tools are able to analyze the translated text from the viewpoint of its formal correctness. This means that if there is a material difference between the length of the original and translated segment, the CAT tool alerts the translator respectively. CAT software, however, cannot perform a true semantic analysis and analyze the correctness of the words and expressions used by the translator.
5. MT software can **translate texts autonomously** and automatically. This feature is used extensively by publishers, software companies, translators, the business sector, and other professionals. MT Software can automatically translate texts or hypertext links into and from all major work languages. The quality of the translation is questionable; this technology mainly proves itself effective as a pre-translation task. Another advantage of the technology is its speed - texts are translated literally on the fly.
6. Software can streamline **translation management**. Translation management is one of the key components of the whole translation process. The link between the customer, translation agency, translator, reviewer, editor, DTP technician, accountant, publisher etc. can be effectively managed by software mainly in terms of deadlines, individual tasks for the people involved in the process, file management and logistics and deliverables.
7. Software can **analyze text style**, topic, relatedness of concepts etc. Computer software can also perform a basic semantic and formal analysis of texts. This can be used by the translator to evaluate the incoming texts from the viewpoint of their complexity, form, meaning units, meaning relations and also their other formal characteristics. Semantic analysis is also a very effective way to understand what a particular text is about without necessarily reading it.
8. Software can **extract collocations and terminology**. Terminology extraction is one of the marginal tasks translators employ in their jobs; however, it can become crucial mainly in terminology loaded texts where the translator's job is to put together a terminology list while working on the text. Terminology is extracted from the text based on its statistical importance and relevance.
9. Software can **compare two texts**. This functionality is important mainly when comparing two almost identical texts and highlighting their differences. It happens very frequently that texts translated in the area of technology or legal texts are very similar and

the translators only need to spot the difference between the two texts without comparing them manually sentence by sentence.

10. Software can perform **spellchecking**. This function seems to be trivial, however, it is very important in the reviewing process.
11. CAT software **uses sentence fragments from past translations**. This is probably the most important functionality of CAT software. Mainly in technical, legal, business texts, manuals, brochures, web pages etc., the translated sentences and segments tend to partially or fully recur. In the old times, when a translator realized or remembered that he had translated a similar text before, he had to tediously look it up in his old (often printed) translations to find that precious segment or paragraph. One can imagine that this procedure must have been very time-consuming – it was probably easier to retranslate such segments, however with the risk of losing consistency with previous translations. The revolutionary approach in CAT is that all units translated with the software (original text and its translation) are stored in a database. When there is a similar (or identical) segment being translated in the current translation, the software can retrieve the past translation and insert it directly into the translated text. It is then up to the translator to accept, modify or completely discard such a segment. The search results are presented in a convenient way so that they can be fully re-used by the translator.
12. CAT software allows **concordance searching**. This function is important mainly when a particular expression or term must be studied in context. Translators often do not rely on the primary dictionary meaning of words, they rather consult their previous translations on how they used particular terminology units. Concordance searching also results in greater consistency since the translator is able to access his past translations from the viewpoint of terminology and use identical terms in the current translation.
13. CAT software **calculates detailed document statistics**. This functionality is mainly important in price calculation, or preparation of price quotes for original texts. Advanced functionality allows e.g. to subtract all numerals, text symbols or special document areas from the statistics. CAT can also calculate the price of a translated text based on the default or predefined criteria and print the invoice.

6. Conclusion

CAT and MT can by no means be interpreted as a complete solution to the general translation problem. Much work still rests (and will rest) on translators' shoulders. On the background of the above problems, computer assisted translation can be viewed as (1) task-oriented procedures helping the translator in the individual stages of the translation process, (2) processes to manage, organize and streamline translator's work mainly in terms of financial management, file management and deliverables, and (3) processes to economize translator's work. Many translators, however, are rather reluctant to adopt the new technology. Let me conclude my paper with an interview with **Mr. Jack Doughty**, a renowned Russian-English translator of professional texts of British provenience. This interview summarizes some prevalent mindsets and approaches to the use of technology in translation.

What tools did you use when you started working as a translator?

In 1965, when I started doing freelance work, I had a cheap old portable typewriter. No desk, no chair - I put the typewriter on a coffee table and sat on the floor. But it wasn't very long before I got a desk and a chair.

Did you ever provide translations in handwriting? Why?

No, though the firm for which I started working in 1965 would have accepted handwritten translations at that time and for many years after that.

When did you switch to a typewriter and/or a computer?

Typewriter from the beginning in 1965. Electric typewriter from about 1975, electronic one from about 1988. Computer from 1991.

Do you think there is any advantage in performing/providing handwritten translations? Please list a few.

No. I would never do this unless specifically asked to, and I cannot think of any reason why anyone would want me to do so.

Do you find it comfortable to use a computer to work?

Yes, though it took a bit of getting used to at first.

Do you prefer to use electronic or paperback dictionaries? Why?

Until fairly recently, I would have said dictionaries on paper (but properly bound ones, not paperbacks). But electronic ones have improved considerably and I am now happy with either. However, I cannot imagine abandoning my collection of dictionaries on paper.

Do you think computers have helped translators in their trade? In what way?

Yes. Obviously word processing has great advantages over just typing, in terms of producing a decent-looking document (which was what was usually wanted up to about 10-12 years ago) or file for sending to the client.

Do you have any colleagues who are refractory to technological advances? Why do you think they hold such an opinion?

No, but I am rather "refractory" myself, in that I do not use Trados or any other CAT software. I don't find it easy to master new technology and as long as I and my clients are happy with the way I do things now, I shall continue in the same way.

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Recenzie/Reviews

Organization of paragraphs and higher text units

(R. Pípalová Pedagogická fakulta, Univerzita Karlova v Praze, Praha 2008, ISBN 978-80-7290-346-7)

Review by Zuzana Kozáčíková

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The monograph *Thematic organization of paragraphs and higher text units* by Renáta Pípalová tries to present the outcomes of current research to the paragraph and higher text units in context. This extensive and detailed study is subdivided into five main chapters and several sub chapters which clearly develop the topic from various linguistic perspectives. Moreover, the study outlines a number of parameters which play a crucial role in paragraphing of British English texts. The paragraph is shown as the main aspect of text organization, as a multifaceted phenomenon centered on its textual theme and a crucial unit in text analysis.

The first chapter of the study links the topic to the previous research in this field, since its main focus- paragraph has attracted the attention of many linguists. Paragraph is viewed from different aspects as a unit in text organization and text varieties; moreover, the first chapter of this study deals with clause relationships in paragraphs and paragraph internal structure. This chapter is organized to sections, each of which deals with a particular aspect of paragraphing based on previous research e.g. paragraph and register, paragraph and discourse modes, paragraph and translation, paragraph in methodology,...etc.

The theoretical framework for the research is clearly explained in the second chapter where the author takes Daneš's approach to paragraph as the most crucial. His typology involves paragraphs where the P- theme is stable, where it is unfolded, where it has the character of content frame, and where it develops. All the presented theoretical concepts were illustrated on two pilot case studies which refer to overall corpus used in the body of the author's research. The first case study was explored on an authentic text sample illustrating children's fiction (a recent version of well-known fairy tale Cinderella) and the second one was an authentic journalistic text sample. Based on various theoretical aspects and authentic examples in case studies, Pípalová proposes to shift slightly the boundaries between the paragraphs where the P- theme is unfolded and where the P- theme is constructed as a content frame. In the closing lines of this chapter, she tries to explore the question of how the P- theme type is related to the U- themes featured in the paragraph. One of the main factors is the layer of the Theme, the elements of which are thematized in individual paragraph U-themes. The study tries to posit a hierarchy of hyperthemes in texts, differing in their scopes. Depending on the particular text type, the hierarchy includes the Global Theme (G-theme), Paragraph-Group Theme (PGr-Theme) and Paragraph Theme (P- theme).

The main body of the study deals with the research based on paragraphing tendencies in contemporary British English, more specifically the Narrow P-theme paragraph. The overall corpus consists of three corpora corresponding to distinct functional styles or registers, namely academic writing, journalism and fiction. The academic corpus consists of a subcorpus of samples dealing with the subject matter of humanities and natural sciences, the journalistic corpus is made up of newspaper and magazine subcorpora and the last one comprises children's as well as adult literature subcorpora. This extensive corpus, which includes 2070 paragraphs of contemporary British English, is precisely described and illustrated on sentence examples which make the author's work more procedural.

A very detailed research chapter takes a close look at all the groups of paragraph (as the research sample illustrated them) from various perspectives – paragraphs marked by portions of direct speech, central paragraphs with a stable P- Theme, transition and periphery of paragraphs featuring a stable P-theme, paragraphs where the P-theme is unfolded and finally gravitational field of paragraphs where the P- Theme is unfolded.

In the presented book Pípalová discusses the paragraph as the main unit in text organization and takes it as a starting point for other text work and text manipulation. Her approach is highly professional and valuable, since the author relies on numerous theoretical sources, but what is more she presents the result of her continuative research work in the field of FSP. The book is an excellent reading for linguists, since it outlines a number of parameters which enter into paragraphing.

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