

*Verbal communication functions in
the light of technological changes:
possible consequences* 📢

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Topics



- Impact of technology on relations between language functions in discourse
 - Informational
 - Interactional
 - Affective
 - Creative
- Role of expert knowledge
 - ways of creating and disseminating new knowledge in the human-computer interfaces.
- Changing approaches to information-handling
 - concept of authorship as opposed to ownership of knowledge.

Impact of Technology on Language Functions in Discourse

- Discourse – the process of communicating values and linguacultural models of a given discourse community
- A functional perspective which regards discourse as language in use and sees text and context as inextricably interwoven.
- Main discourse dimensions
 - Information-handling
 - Interactional (including Affective function)
 - Creative

Information-handling dimension of discourse

- Information-handling dimension deals with:
 - Contents
 - Authorship
 - Quality of information
 - Effectiveness
- Linguistic means include
 - Gricean Cooperative Principle
 - Discourse genres and their structure

Interactional dimension in the discourse

- Interactional dimension deals with:
 - Presentation of self
 - Distribution of talk, turn taking
 - Maintaining ‘harmony’ between participants based on sociocultural norms and universal principles
- Linguistic means include:
 - Politeness strategies used to mitigate Face Threatening Acts
 - Ways of address and other formulas
 - Discourse markers
 - Prosody

Public discourse – what is it ?



- Definitions of discourse based on:
 - Topics (religious, legal, gastronomic, political ...)
 - Spheres (common, official, academic, ...)
 - Participants and/or Beneficiaries (feminist, nationalist, ...)
 - Channels (written, oral, electronic, ...)
 - Tasks (persuasive, entertaining, ...)
- Defined by a cluster, not a set of binary features

Public discourse

- Open communication within a public sphere, often concerning public interests
 - Public sphere as opposed to private with central concepts of:
 - *civility, morality, politics, common good*

Electronic discourse

- Information-handling dimension
 - Pragmatically defined efficiency of information search
 - online request for information is a prevalent goal-oriented behavior => led to working out new politeness strategies
- Interactional dimension
 - Communication (=общение), sharing as an ultimate goal
 - Absence (=‘voidness’) of a prototypical Addressee
 - No means to build a model of his/her current cognition => a deficient ‘theory of mind’
 - Author’s ‘safety’ => high degree of **Pragmatic Control**

Conflict of discourse strategies



- Russian public discourse is highly hierarchical ('vertical'), deferential and formal
- E-discourse (blogs, forums, chats, social networks) demonstrates the opposite tendencies:
 - informality, negligence of written language grammar and spelling, disregard for sociocultural conventions
- There are linguistic consequences when the two overlap

Looking at communication situation in the new era

- SPEAKING model
 - Scene, or physical context
 - Participants => Multiple and undefinable addressee
 - Ends, or goals – mixture of functions in social networks:
 - Information: *sharing* as entertainment VS. *informing* as political behavior
 - Interaction as a goal
 - Posting and re-posting as forms of creative behavior
 - Acts, or act sequences
 - Key, or register (регистр, стиль)
 - Instruments
 - Norms
 - Genres

Role of expert knowledge in the new era

- Specialization of knowledge led to the peak of expert power in late XX century
- Expected decrease of the role of experts in the new technological era
 - Trust or lack of trust in expert communication
 - Role of crowdsourcing and other technologies
 - Amazon Mechanical Turk

Concept of authorship (as opposed to ownership) of knowledge

- Rise of individualism (since 18th century) and the concept of individual intellectual property
- The heyday of patent and copy right (late 19th-mid-20th century)
- Copyright wars for intellectual property ownership in the late 20th century
- Collective ownership of authorship in the new technological era

Thank you for your attention

