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CORPORATE STANDARD OF FLIGHT ATTENDANTS' COMMUNICATION: COMPLEX LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The given study is devoted to the theoretical and practical issues connected with the notion of corporate language culture as an important aspect of business world. In the theoretical part of the paper, we consider the corporate culture notion, an issue of intention, regarded as the main communication factor, the typologies of speech acts, namely the classification of speech acts by K. Bach and R. Harnish, the system of illocutionary acts by B. Fraser, and the psychological classification of speech acts by T. Ballmer. After detailed examination of the theory, in the practical part of the paper we examine the study material "Handout material for students of the course "Flight attendant retraining on the AC V 777. ORENBURG AIRLINES". Subject: "SERVICE ON THE BOARD OF THE AC" and analyze it, firstly, on the language level, i.e. vocabulary and syntax; secondly – according to the speech act classifications. The results have shown that the corporate standard of flight attendants presupposes the use of modal verbs to express polite requests, elliptical sentences to sound natural and instructive. Speech acts employed by flight attendants are mainly directive and epistemic to demonstrate professional qualities and provide the necessary service.

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1. Introduction

Nowadays in Russia there is a great change in employers' attitude to the staff as a source of organization prosperity. Moreover employers change the mentality of a worker to the mentality of a boss interested in real work, high technology and quality of life. As for corporation itself, it should enrich those people who are associated with it; people working there should be satisfied with the work they do. In general effectiveness of organizational communications mostly depends on objective and subjective factors – not only on proper planning, control and coordination of communications, but also on corporate culture. Corporate culture is one of the components of professional activity, and language is one of the most effective means of its expression. Language and culture are an indivisible whole in relations of bidirectional interconnection and interaction.

2. Problem Statement

Language is included in the system of business influence factors; under their impact business and corporate culture are being formed. Besides language is one of the fundamental principles of corporate culture analysis, because language is means of constructing its uniqueness and a way of its objectification. Language is materialized within the corporate culture, and it becomes the space of language phenomena functioning. In the case of corporate culture, we mean the language of corporations; hence there is a notion of "corporate language culture". It has become the focus of interest for a number of linguists in various domains (Dyagileva, 2012; Lychagina & Uljashina, 2009; Morozov & Muzhdabaeva, 2006; Romashova, 2010, 2011, 2014). The definition of the "corporate language culture" notion we have formulated in our work is as follows:

Corporate language culture is a certain level of language development, reflecting the adopted language standards of the company, correct and adequate use of language units, language means, the key principle of which is to unite people working in one company. There is nothing more important in business than successful communication, and it is known to be possible only through language (Valjavina, 2017).

3. Research Questions

Language culture is understood by most professionals as the use of a language organized in accordance with the norms. A person who has mastered the culture of language, variety of styles, uses native and foreign languages adequately. His or her speech coincides with the form of the corporate language in real time; he or she is able to communicate in the cultural space on any professional and non-professional topics. Thus, a modern specialist who knows the language culture in full and at the same time uses it as a powerful regulator, directing the main resources of business communication to achieve a specific professional result. Moreover, according to Soper (1997), the function of social regulation, which plays the most significant part in official communication, requires unambiguous reading of the relevant texts. In this regard, each text should be characterized by such accuracy of information presentation that would not allow the possibility of different interpretations (Soper, 1997).

3.1. Vocabulary of the business language

An official document will serve its purpose if its content is carefully thought out and the language design is impeccable. It is specially noted that their lexical composition has its own characteristics associated with the above-mentioned features. First of all, such texts use words and phrases of the literary language that have vividly expressed functional and stylistic colouring, for example: "Job Description", "Delivery", "Shipment", etc. A mention should be made, that among them there is a significant number of professional terms. So, many verbs imply instruction or obligation, for example: "deny", "allow", "direct", "assign" and the others (Lychagina & Uljashina, 2009).

Furthermore, in official communication there is the highest percentage of the infinitive use among consonant forms. This is connected with the imperative nature of official texts. Official style is characterized by a tendency to reduce the number of word meanings, simplification of their semantic structure, to unambiguity of lexical and complex terms, up to a narrow terminology (Lychagina & Uljashina, 2009). In this case, polysemy, metaphorical use of words, the use of words in figurative meanings are unacceptable; synonyms are used to a small extent and, as a rule, belong to the same style (Lychagina & Uljashina, 2009).

Due to the high scientific and technical level of industrial goods production, in business language there are special vocabulary speech formulas associated with the name of various products and their components, such as production terms; they are words and phrases, which, on the one hand, serve as the basis of the professional language, and on the other hand, terms are officially fixed names of special technical and technological concepts (Kuzin, 2008).

3.2. Syntax of the business language

Special attention is given to the syntax of business communication characterized by incomplete grammatical composition of sentences and by weakened syntactic connections forms in such sentences. In the colloquial speech specialists use mainly simple sentences, often incomplete (the absence of certain words is compensated by facial expression and gestures). The absence of conjunctions in this type of speech is compensated by intonation, which becomes crucial for various shades of semantic and syntactic relations expression (Kuzin, 2008).

4. Purpose of the Study

4.1. Examination of the study material on the language level

So, we have examined the study material, i.e. "Handout material for students of the course "Flight attendant retraining on the AC V 777. ORENBURG AIRLINES". Subject: "SERVICE ON THE BOARD OF THE AC" and have analyzed it on the language level (A. Vocabulary and B. Syntax). The examination has given us the following results:

A. Vocabulary

1. The presence in the material of professional words that are officially fixed names of special technical and technological concepts:

- Good morning, afternoon, evening, can I see your boarding pass, please...
- Your seat, aisle seat, to the left, to the right.

- Pass on to the cabin; please my colleges will help you
- Let me see your boarding pass, please. Thank you.
- Good afternoon! Welcome aboard! Your seat is 2A, a window seat. Pass on please.
- Let me help you. There is some room in the overhead bin. Shall I hang your coat in the wardrobe?
- Let me place your belongings on the overhead bin, in the wardrobe...
- Are you comfortable? The seat controls are on the armrest panel...

Aviation refers to the activities surrounding mechanical flight and the aircraft industry. That is why there is a use of special terminology and other words related to this industry.

2. Verbs that imply instruction, permission, offer or advice.

a. The presence of modal verbs:

a) Express possibility to do an action according to the rules:

- Good morning, afternoon, evening, can I see your boarding pass, please.

b) Give a piece of advice or instruction:

- Let me remind you that your mobile phone should be switched off during the flight. If it is in your pocket, you'd better turn it off right now.

c) Express polite request or offer:

- Let me remind you that your mobile phone should be switched off during the flight. If it is in your pocket, you'd better turn it off right now.
- What would you prefer for the aperitif? Thank you. I will serve it right after ascend.

d) Express possibility or probability:

- Do you have anything in your pocket that you may need during the flight?

e) Express polite offer to do something or help:

- Let me help you. There is some room in the overhead bin. Shall I hang your coat in the wardrobe?

b. The use of the verb "Let" for making, and giving permission.

- Let me see your boarding pass, please. Thank you.
- Let me help you. There is some room in the overhead bin. Shall I hang your coat in the wardrobe?
- Let me remind you that your mobile phone should be switched off during the flight. If it is in your pocket, you'd better turn it off right now.
- Let me place your belongings on the overhead bin, in the wardrobe.

After detailed examination of these verbs we conclude the following: all listed modals and verbs are neutral and express politeness. Verbs of obligation have not been found and it is explained by the character of our study material. It teaches flight attendants how to provide services and to be client-focused.

B. Syntax:

1. The analysis we have carried out reveals that there is a number of addresses in our study material:

- Good morning, afternoon, evening, can I see your boarding pass, please...

- Pass on to the cabin; please my colleges will help you;
- Good afternoon! Welcome aboard! Your seat is 2A, a window seat. Pass on please.

It is logical, because a flight attendant is to be polite, make a good impression on a passenger and ensure them a comfortable flight.

2. The study material also includes one member sentences and elliptical sentences:

- Your seat, aisle seat, to the left, to the right.
- Pass on to the cabin; please my colleges will help you;
- Let me see your boarding pass, please. Thank you.
- Good afternoon! Welcome aboard! Your seat is 2A, a window seat. Pass on please.
- Let me place your belongings on the overhead bin, in the wardrobe...

The use of such sentences makes flight attendants' speech more professional, instructive, containing certain settings.

All in all vocabulary and syntax of the handout material for students of the course "Flight attendant retraining on the AC V 777. ORENBURG AIRLINES" reflects specific features of aviation corporate language culture through language means that undoubtedly transfer the whole image of the aviation organization and its members.

It is a known fact that in the process of speaking a person performs a certain speech action: asks, informs, accuses, promises, orders, advises, approves, etc., pursues a certain non-linguistic goal. That is why in our study we examine such a notion as speech intention. With the development of science, the concept of "intention" was borrowed by many branches of scientific knowledge. In linguistics, intention is recognized as the main factor of communication and continues to be the central study object of many linguistic theories, whose task is to determine the mechanisms of communicative intentions recognition and expression. In the theory of speech acts the phenomenon of communicative intentions is considered by many researchers as the link between humans and language.

Definitely, intention is not taken "from anywhere", it is based on some motives that stimulate a person to achieve certain goals. Speech activity is no exception: in the basis of speech activity there are also certain motives, intention is aimed at achieving a certain goal (Antonova, 2011). Despite the fact that speech activity has been the object of scientists' attention since Antiquity, there is no satisfactory explanation and description of the speech communication mechanisms. However, studies of this problem, which began later at the interface of scientific disciplines, helped overcome this one-sidedness, as new scientific directions (sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, linguistic pragmatics, theory of speech acts, ethnic psycholinguistics), combining the facts of linguistic and extra-linguistic reality, made the participants of communication and the speech situation itself a simultaneous and common object of study (Antonova, 2011).

Today, there are a large number of speech act typologies, where speech actions are distinguished and classified in terms of various external formal and internal content features. Thus, the typology of speech acts is understood by Medvedeva (1989) as a model, a sample of a homogeneous group of speech acts, which are characterized by certain common features that reflect any aspect of verbal human communication.

4.2. Analysis of the study material upon speech acts

The peculiarity of some speech act typologies on the basis of their illocutive power is that the subclasses are also distinguished in large classes of illocutionary acts. The necessity to divide large groups of speech actions into smaller subgroups depends on the fact that the number of different performative verbs that can denote any speaker's intention is too large, and to mark the different "shades" of the expressed intention, some researchers build their taxonomies on the principle of classes and subclasses. One of these taxonomies is the classification of illocutive acts created by Bach and Harnish (1979). Four communicative relevant classes of speech actions are presented in their classification:

1. Constatives (confirmatives, informatives, assertives);
2. Directives (Requestives – ask, beg, beseech, implore, insist, invite, petition, plead, pray, request, solicit, summon, supplicate, tell, urge), (Questions – ask, inquire, interrogate, query, question, quiz), (Requirements – bid, charge, command, demand, dictate, direct, enjoin, instruct, order, prescribe, require), (Prohibitives – enjoin, forbid, prohibit, proscribe, restrict), (Permissives – agree to, allow, authorize, bless, consent to, dismiss, excuse, exempt, forgive, grant, license, pardon, release, sanction), (Advisories – admonish, advise, caution, counsel, propose, recommend, suggest, urge, warn);
3. Commissives (agreeing/ surrender- admit (constative) defeat and promises not to continue fighting, guaranteeing, inviting, offering, promising, swearing, volunteering);
4. Acknowledgments: (Apologize, Condole (commiserate, console), Congratulate: (compliment, congratulate, felicitate), Greet, Thank, Bid: (bid, wish), Accept-acknowledge and acknowledgment, Reject: (refuse, reject, spurn) (Bach & Harnish, 1979).

The next classification is represented by Fraser (1975). His system of illocutionary acts includes eight classes:

1. Acts of statement;
2. Acts of assessment;
3. Acts of stipulation;
4. Acts of exercising power;
5. Acts of obligation;
6. Acts reflecting speaker's attitude;
7. Acts of offering;
8. Acts of request (Antonova, 2011).

The basis for the psychological classification of speech acts is in the type of psychological impact that the speaker's statement has on the addressee's mental state. In comparison with the number of illocutive-performative classifications, the number of taxonomies built on this principle is rather small. One of these classifications belongs to Ballmer (1979), who divides the mental states of the speaker and the listener into two categories: the state of obligation and the state of belief. The first category of states, which Ballmer (1979) calls "deontic", includes emotions, motives, desires, intentions, plans, etc.; the second - "epistemic" States - hypotheses, postulates, judgments, memories, etc. Each speaker's speech action leads to a change in the context, which consists of information about some mental state of the speaker or listener (or both participants of speech interaction) (Antonova, 2011). Thus, speech acts are

divided into classes according to the type of this state and to the attribution direction of this state to the speaker or to the listener.

So, in our paper we have carried out the analysis of the study material upon speech act classifications. The investigation results are the following:

Upon a Taxonomy of Communicative Illocutionary Acts by Bach and Harnish (1979) we have found out such examples as:

1. Constatives (confirmatives, informatives, assertives):

- The seat numbers are indicated on...
- Pass on to the cabin; please my colleagues will help you;
- Are you comfortable? The seat controls are on the armrest panel...
- Here is a menu and a wine list. (List of beverages)... In a minute I will come to you to take your beverage order, we will serve beverages right after ascend.
- All the choice of dishes is represented in the menu...
- Here is today's menu.
- Are you ready to order beverages? We will serve them right after ascend. Thank you!
- What would you prefer for the aperitif? Thank you. I will serve it right after ascend.

The given examples express responsibility of a flight attendant to ensure a passenger with all necessary information, to provide all necessary services.

2. Directives :

a) Requestives: (ask, beg, beseech, implore, insist, invite, petition, plead, pray, request, solicit, summon, supplicate, tell, urge)

- Good morning, afternoon, evening, can I see your boarding pass, please...
- Let me see your boarding pass, please. Thank you.
- Let me place your belongings on the overhead bin, in the wardrobe.

b) Questions: (ask, inquire, interrogate, query, question, quiz):

- Haven't you forgotten to switch off your mobile phone?
- Haven't you forgotten your mobile phone in your pocket?
- Do you have anything in your pocket that you may need during the flight?
- Are you comfortable? The seat controls are on the armrest panel...
- Are you ready to order beverages? We will serve them right after ascend. Thank you!
- What would you prefer for the aperitif? Thank you. I will serve it right after ascend].

c) Requirements: (bid, charge, command, demand, dictate, direct, enjoin, instruct, order, prescribe, require):

- Pass on to the cabin; please my colleagues will help you;
- Good afternoon! Welcome aboard! Your seat is 2A, a window seat. Pass on please.

d) Advisories: (admonish, advise, caution, counsel, propose, recommend, suggest, urge, warn):

- Let me remind you that your mobile phone should be switched off during the flight. If it is in your pocket, you'd better turn it off right now.

3. Commissives (agreeing/ surrender- admit (constative) defeat and promises not to continue fighting, guaranteeing, inviting, offering, promising, swearing, volunteering):

- Pass on to the cabin; please my colleges will help you;
- Are you ready to order beverages? We will serve them right after ascend. Thank you!
- What would you prefer for the aperitif? Thank you. I will serve it right after ascend.

4. Acknowledgments: (Apologize, Condole (commiserate, console), Congratulate: (compliment, congratulate, felicitate), Greet, Thank, Bid: (bid, wish), Accept-acknowledge and acknowledgment, Reject: (refuse, reject, spurn):

- Good morning, afternoon, evening, can I see your boarding pass, please...
- Let me see your boarding pass, please. Thank you.
- Good afternoon! Welcome aboard! Your seat is 2A, a window seat. Pass on please.
- Are you ready to order beverages? We will serve them right after ascend. Thank you!
- What would you prefer for the aperitif? Thank you. I will serve it right after ascend.

All the examples of speech acts vividly transfer the service requirements of the aviation company to an employee in the face of flight attendant. As for directives, i.e. Prohibitives (enjoin, forbid, prohibit, proscribe, restrict) and Permissives (agree to, allow, authorize, bless, consent to, dismiss, excuse, exempt, forgive, grant, license, pardon, release, sanction), the examples of these speech acts are not found because of the essence of our study material, which is a so called study guide. Prohibitives and Permissives can be realized in real life, in real practice.

The next analysis is devoted to the system of illocutionary acts by Fraser (1975). We have the following results:

1. Acts of statement:

- Good morning, afternoon, evening, can I see your boarding pass, please...
- Your seat, aisle seat, to the left, to the right
- The seat numbers are indicated on...
- Good afternoon! Welcome aboard! Your seat is 2A, a window seat. Pass on please.
- Are you comfortable? The seat controls are on the armrest panel...
- All the choice of dishes is represented in the menu...
- Here is today's menu.
- Are you ready to order beverages? We will serve them right after ascend. Thank you!
- What would you prefer for the aperitif? Thank you. I will serve it right after ascend.

2. Acts reflecting speaker's attitude:

- Good morning, afternoon, evening, can I see your boarding pass, please...
- Pass on to the cabin; please my colleges will help you;
- Let me see your boarding pass, please. Thank you.
- Good afternoon! Welcome aboard! Your seat is 2A, a window seat. Pass on please.
- Let me place your belongings on the overhead bin, in the wardrobe...
- Are you comfortable? The seat controls are on the armrest panel...

3. Acts of offering:

- Your seat, aisle seat, to the left, to the right
- Let me place your belongings on the overhead bin, in the wardrobe...
- What would you prefer for the aperitif? Thank you. I will serve it right after ascend.

4. Acts of request:

- Good morning, afternoon, evening, can I see your boarding pass, please...
- Pass on to the cabin; please my colleagues will help you;
- Haven't you forgotten to switch off your mobile phone?
- Haven't you forgotten your mobile phone in your pocket?

According to the listed examples, we may conclude that all these speech acts are directed on providing services by flight attendant on the board, the kind of professional behaviour and official duties implementation. So, acts of stipulation, assessment, exercising power and obligation have not been found.

In the end of our detailed examination of the study material, we have considered the problem of psychological classification of speech acts created by Ballmer (1979). Upon his classification we have got the result as follows:

1. The state of obligation – "deontic", includes emotions, motives, desires, intentions, plans:

- Good afternoon! Welcome aboard! Your seat is 2A, a window seat. Pass on please.
- Pass on to the cabin; please my colleagues will help you;
- Let me place your belongings on the overhead bin, in the wardrobe...
- Are you ready to order beverages? We will serve them right after ascend. Thank you!

2. The state of belief – "epistemic", includes hypotheses, postulates, judgments, memories:

- The seat numbers are indicated on...
- Good afternoon! Welcome aboard! Your seat is 2A, a window seat. Pass on please.
- Are you comfortable? The seat controls are on the armrest panel...
- All the choice of dishes is represented in the menu.

5. Research Methods

In our work we have employed such research methods as analysis of scientific literature upon the problem of our paper; continuous sampling method that helped us during the processing of the practical material to determine conditions of language elements functioning, and linguistic description method to analyze and present the examples of the given material.

6. Findings

Thus, summing up aforesaid we have the following results. Firstly, we have investigated our study material, i.e. "Handout material for students of the course "Flight attendant retraining on the AC V 777. ORENBURG AIRLINES". Subject: "SERVICE ON THE BOARD OF THE AC" on the language level. It is represented through the certain vocabulary of the business language which includes, on the one hand, professional words and terms – 56,5% of our material, and, on the other hand, verbs that imply instructions, permission, offer or advice, such as modals and the verb "let" – 43,5% of the given examples. The result is quite obvious, because aviation is a branch of mechanical flight and aircraft industry and undoubtedly is abundant of definite terms and special words. According to the analysis, modals and verbs, as a rule, are neutral and express politeness, because the character of our material demands it. Then, we have carried out the observation of the business language syntax. We have found

out that among the examples there are addresses – 33,3% and one member or elliptical sentences – 66,7%. The given percentage show that the number of one member or elliptical sentences prevails over the number of addresses. We can explain it by the purpose of the handout material for flight attendant students to provide excellent service on the board. The use of one member or elliptical sentences makes flight attendant's speech more professional, informative and instructive.

Secondly, we have examined our study material on the speech act classifications. According to the classification of illocutive acts created by K. Bach and R. Harnish (1979) we conclude that 40% of the examples are Directives, 31,4% - Constatives, 17,1% is for Acknowledgments and 11,4% for Commissives. The highest percentage of Directives use is proved by the necessity of a flight attendant to ensure a client a comfortable and safe fly, and this type of speech acts vividly transfer service requirements of the aviation company to an employee.

The system of illocutionary acts represented by Fraser (1975) has given us the following results: the highest percentage is for two categories of speech acts, i.e. Acts of statement -32,4% and the similar number of examples refers to Acts of reflecting speaker's attitude – 32,4%. It can be explained by the necessity of flight attendants to be attentive to passengers, help them to take places, provide security and comfort on the board. So, Acts of offering have 18,9% of examples and Act of request – 16,2%.

In the end of our paper, we have investigated psychological classification of speech acts created by Ballmer (1979). In accordance with this classification the examples of speech acts upon the state of obligation – "deontic" make up 46,2%. The examples of speech acts upon the state of belief – "epistemic" are 53,8%. The prevailing number of the last classification is connected with the type of our material that teaches future flight attendant to give passengers of the aircraft all necessary information aboard, provide all necessary service and show professionalism.

7. Conclusion

To draw the conclusion, a mention should be made that in our scientific work we have studied the theoretical questions connected with the notion of corporate language culture. We have carried out analysis of the phenomenon of corporate language culture. Moreover, we have given a definition of the corporate language culture notion and revealed peculiarities of its representation through business vocabulary and syntax. Then we have studied an issue of intention and defined it as the main communication factor. This helped us deepen to examination of the typologies of speech acts by Bach and Harnish (1979), the system of illocutionary acts by Fraser (1975), and the psychological classification of speech acts by Ballmer (1979). After careful and accurate analysis of the theory upon our problem, we have examined the study material "Handout material for students of the course "Flight attendant retraining on the AC V 777. ORENBURG AIRLINES". Subject: "SERVICE ON THE BOARD OF THE AC" and have analyzed it on the language level (vocabulary and syntax) and on the speech act classifications. To sum up our investigation, in the end of the work, we have carried out the comparative analysis and the percentage of the examples.

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