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POSTCROSSING PROJECT: POSTCARDS AS A NEW FORM OF SPEECH COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

Nowadays much attention in linguistics is paid to the study of construction types of non-literary texts. The article deals with the texts of Postcrossing project postcards as a full-featured and specific linguistic object, which is a new form of speech communication throughout the world. On the basis of the theory of speech genres the corpus of postcrossing postcards texts is subjected to the analysis on three basic principles of a genre, which are thematic, stylistic and compositional. Holding linguopragmatic analysis allowed us to determine the structural variability of the genre of the postcrossing postcard. The regularities of the functioning of illocutionary speech acts were determined in a small volume of messages of the studied genre of the texts. The content that the means of speech etiquette carry while salutation is an expression of the intentions of greeting on the addresser's part towards the addressee in the course of the etiquette situation, and while wish – it is farewell. The set of etiquette formulae is characterized by uniformity of grammatical constructions, static content of vocabulary and neutrality of its connotative meaning. The natural character of the postcards creating is proved by the thematic filling of the meaningful part of the compositional structure. It is characterized by four generalized directions: personal information, place, postcard, weather, which are present in the postcard text in different proportions and in different order. The conditions of the communicative situation determined the use of informative and emotive functions, which prevail in the meaningful part.

Keywords: Genre, intention, postcards, postcrossing, speech act, speech communication.

1. Introduction

Speech communication is a motivated living process, which is carried out by the participants of communication, including distantly, for which a person has different means like letters, phone, SMS, Internet, the texts of which have become the object of various linguistic studies (Barasa, 2010; Foltête & Litot, 2015; Granbon-Herranen, 2018; Herbland, Goldberg, Garric, & Lesieur, 2017; Wheetley, 2015). In contrast of these typical types of communication, postcards carry the element of pleasant surprise of receiving them. There are a lot of people who enjoy receiving real mail that's why in the linguistic culture of many countries there are different types of postcards. For example, greeting cards and postcards from travel/holiday, the texts of which have also become the object of linguistic research, are in the public domain (Zaitseva, 2012). At present, a new kind of written communication is spreading all over the world. Since 2005, the international project "Postcrossing" offers everyone to participate in the official exchange of postcards with representatives of any corner of the planet, where the main goal of the project is to connect the world via real mail (Postcrossing). The number of senders wishing to participate in the project is increasing every year (the dynamics is reflected on the project website, this fact suggests that the cards have taken a special place in the communicative traditions of many countries. The researchers note the ritual nature of a greeting card or a holiday card for a known recipient (Zaitseva, 2012). Postcrossing postcard texts are created in a specific communicative situation: the postcard is sent only at the request of the addresser to an unknown person (Baimuratova, 2015).

2. Problem Statement

In this study, we consider postcrossing postcard texts as a new type of speech activity with already formed speech event, speech situation and speech interaction, where all three of these components of speech communication determine the speech genre originality of this type of postcards. The importance of this study lies in the fact that it is necessary to study the texts of postcards, as the popularity of the Postcrossing project extends to 248 countries. The results of the study of certain lexical, grammatical and stylistic phenomena in the project postcards have already been obtained (Agarkova & Baimuratova, 2017; Baimuratova & Verzhinskaya, 2016; Belova & Baimuratova, 2015; Evstafiadi & Baimuratova, 2015; Lasitsa & Baimuratova, 2018).

The corpus of the current research consists of 550 texts of postcards, the owners of which are students and teachers of the Orenburg State University (Orenburg, Russia).

The modern theory of speech genres is a primary model for the description and explanation of the peculiar rules of human communication, structures and mechanisms of interaction within the language community. Along with this, it acts as a theory of language dialogue, "theory of verbal activity in social intercourse" (Prucha, 1983).

Pragmalinguistic concept of Bakhtin (1986) formulated in his work "The Problem of Speech Genres", has long remained unclaimed because the works of Austin (1962) and Searle (1969), developing a pragmatic theory of speech acts, in many ways similar to the theory of speech genres, were published somewhat earlier. However, speech genres have been increasingly studied since the end of the twentieth century, and now the study of speech genres is considered one of the most productive and popular

approaches to the study of speech (Antonova, Baimuratova, & Scherbina, 2016). Today, there are various models for determining the genre nature of the object, but they are based on the genre concept of Bakhtin (1986). In modern genre studies a variety of parameters describing the genre are offered. In particular, we can highlight Wierzbicka's (1997) approach to modeling speech genres, where the researcher describes each genre using a sequence of simple sentences expressing motives, intentions and other acts of the speaker. Model of the speech genre of Shmelyova (1997) is based on the understanding of the genre as a situational speech action and includes seven constitutive features. Also, the communicative-semiotic model of the natural written genres is formulated where student graffiti, marginal page notebooks, private notes, diary, business notebook, greetings are the complete and specific linguistic objects (Lebedeva, 2011). The results of our current work will be a genre study of postcrossing postcards on the main parameters of the genre description, which are recognized by most scientists. These parameters are thematic, stylistic and compositional.

3. Research Questions

Studying texts of postcrossing postcards from the standpoint of the basic principles of the genre in the linguopragmatic aspect allows to solve the following tasks:

- to characterize the structural variability of the postcrossing postcard genre;
- to determine the thematic content of significant parts of the composition structure;
- to find out the speech intentions and grammatical structures when creating a contact-opening formula;
- to provide a comprehensive description of the meaningful part with the release of the specific functions to this type of texts inherent;
- to determine the intentions and expressing them grammatical structures in the contact-closing formula.

4. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of our research is to identify the features of meaningful and writing-speech filling of the texts of postcrossing postcards according to their genre nature inherent to as a new form of speech communication.

5. Research Methods

We used the following linguistic methods and techniques in the work: the descriptive method implemented in the method of genre description, the method of structural and functional analysis, the method of semantic and contextual analysis, and the method of statistical analysis.

6. Findings

To systematize the model of speech genre of postcrossing postcard texts, we conducted several stages of research.

At the first stage of the study, we analyzed the composition of the postcrossing postcards texts and determined the stability of the composition, which allowed us to talk about the recognition of the genre and helped the recipients to understand the situation of communication. The composition of the postcrossing postcard text is not rigidly fixed, because the construction, or better to say the process of creating an integral postcard text is a creative process, where integrity is formed on the basis of the internal unity of all formative components. The text may lack certain elements of the compositional structure. However, in the majority as mandatory elements the following ones are included: contact-opening formula + meaningful part + contact-closing formula + signature + date.

The second stage of the study was a detailed analysis of the first three elements of the composition scheme. It was found that these very elements are responsible for speech interaction and are subjects to the following three characteristics: they have sense, integrity and are issued as a part of the speech act where language registration of the statement is the sentence.

Contact-opening etiquette formulae represent the initial speech etiquette statements used in the beginning of the communication. The text of the postcrossing postcard in most cases is preceded by the salutation that is the primary speech act, as the salutation controls the attention of communicants. In our case, the locative effect of addressing is the writing of the salutation, expressed by the proper name in the absolute absence of its replacement by the appellative: "*Hello Eseniya*", "*Hi Tatiana*", "*Dear Anastasia*". However, the name of the recipient is not always used as the salutation, the English-speaking sender may not distinguish the name and surname on the profile of an unfamiliar addressee (for example, "*Hi Gubanova*", "*Hey Patraeva*", "*Hello Smagina*"), which leads to a communicative failure, due to a violation of the etiquette norms of the salutation to a Russian-speaking communicant when trying to establish friendly relations. It was found that the illocutionary force of salutations in postcrossing postcards can only be represented by the vocational act – drawing attention of the interlocutor, as the communication is between strangers.

The illocutionary act of salutation, in our case directly related to the speech act of greeting, as there is no specification of kinship, position, etc., in postcrossing cards, is represented by the intention of the writer to establish contact, where neutral formulae are used for the most part. The vocative provides the reference to the addressee, but the inherent vocativity as illocutionary force does not imply the existence of an act of predication.

The most common construction is *Hello* + personal name, followed by a less formal *Hi* + name. The frequency of the construction of attributive *Dear* + personal name ranks third. Among the greeting formulae can be found also authentic, written in Latin (*Namaste, Privet, Ahoi, NiHao, Labas*) and hieroglyphs.

Now it is worth noticing the constructions *(Nice / Many / Rainy) greetings from…, Blessing from…, Sending my regards from…, Best wishes from…*, which can independently begin the message in a postcard or be the subsequent phrase of the greetings described above. It should be noted that the continuation of these formulae are toponyms of different scales, where the most common are the names of countries (*from France, Czech Republic, India, Lithuania, Germany, Indonesia, Finland, China, the Netherlands, Taiwan, Japan, Slovakia,* etc.). Not so often there are names of the cities and towns (*from Hong Kong, beautiful Salzburg, Edinburgh, …from Cape Town, South Africa, etc.*), and if it is a small

little-known town the addresser refers to the clarification of its location (*…from Lagos, an old city in the south of Portugal*, *...from Deggendorf in Bavaria, ...from Masku in South West Finland, ...from Cornell, Wisconsin USA*). Sometimes English-speaking communicants appeal to the appellatives (*...from my small hometown, ...from Beautiful Port Angeles, Washington, ...from the maintains of North Carolina in America*).

As for the perlocutionary act, which is manifested in the effect on the addressee, it is expressed indirectly in this kind of communication, but its presence is required. In the postcard text without salutation the principles of pragmatics are violated where the main one is effective communication. It is peculiar that these examples are available, the text can be opened just with a wish or contain only it: *Happy, happy Christmas! Happy Postcrossing!* Such a situation indicates the communicant's unwillingness to continue communication or influence the addressee in any way, as well as the formality of his/her communication.

The meaningful part contains a completely heterogeneous material in terms of topics, which confirms the natural character of the postcard use, and hence their relevance to the genre of natural written speech. Despite the heterogeneity of the content of this compositional part of the postcard text, the linguistic analysis of the thematic content revealed certain speech intentions, to which all the variety of texts can be reduced. Thus, the most common types of illocutionary goals, with which the addresser creates his/her statement in the framework of the Postcrossing project, can be defined as representative and expression (in accordance with the classification of speech acts of Borisova (2007). Representatives are responsible for handling a variety of information shared by postcrossers with an unknown recipient. Emotional and personal expressives show feelings, emotional assessments and emotionally colored relationships that arise in the process of creating the text of the postcard. In a particular text, these two speech intentions are combined in different proportions, while defining such text functions as informative and emotive, which allows us to determine the following thematic range of postcard texts, consisting of four large groups: personal information (38%), place (28%), postcard (20%), weather (10%). The fifth group which accounts for 4% differs on thematic content from the four designated ones.

The strongly marked function of postcrossing postcard text is informative when the sender transmits new knowledge to the addressee or informs him/her about something. This speech intention often remains clearly unspoken, in rare cases it can be indicated by the word (for example, when using performative verbs *tell, say, inform*, etc.). In most texts the addressee informs the recipient of new knowledge about himself/herself: name (*My name is ...; Our names are...*), age (*I'm ... years old*), profession (*I'm a/an ...*), place of residence (*I live in ...*), then the family circle may be described (*I have ... sister(s)/brother(s); ...daughter(s)/son(s); I live with my husband over 47 years* (Finland); *I live with my husband, 2 kids, 2 dogs, 2 cats and 5 chickens* (USA)), favorite animals (*I have a cat/...cats; a dog/...dogs*) or hobbies. At the same time, there are no lexemes supporting the information function, the speech intention is only implied. Everything is made in the form of simple sentences. Below we demonstrate the functioning of the designated elements on the examples (with preservation of spelling and punctuation of the addressee of the postcard).

My name is Pavel. I'm an architect. I live close to the Beskydy Mountains. I have 3 sons of 10? 13 and 16 years old (Czech Republic).

My name is Anna and I live in Wexford with my husband and our 2-years-old son. I'm looking forward to see Olympic Games (Ireland).

In the postcard texts informative and emotive functions are combined in different proportions, for example, a phrase that begins with *I've just done smth* can represent different emotions – for example, dissatisfaction, regret: *I've just got back from Spain where I took part of parabadminton European Championships I did not win any games but it was good experience* (Finland); or it may be joy of buying a new thing: *I've just bought a new smart phone today. I think this is not necessary, but I need to use it to work and contact with my friends* (Hong Kong).

The most common way to describe the circle of hobbies are the verbs *love, like* and *enjoy*, which have a wide compatibility, as well as using the lexeme (*favourite) hobby*.

The verb *love* can be combined with concrete and abstract nouns in singular and plural: *horses; music, (delicious) food, pizza, ice-cream, roses, the ocean*; with a gerund: *travelling; gardening, reading*, with an infinitive: *to ride horses; to crochet cute little animals, to drink coffee, to bake and cook, to knit and crochet*.

I'm a 27 year old female who loves books, music, travelling, food and writing (India)

I love books, languages sports, postcards and my cat (Germany).

I love walking the mountains and skiing (Poland).

I love diving and seeing sea animals (the Netherlands).

I love traveling, foreign languages, flying by plane, shopping etc. (Romania).

I love to go to the beach to relax – I walk, swim, snorkel and scuba dive (USA).

Autumn is here and I love to walk with my dog through the forest and to sit besides the warm oven and drink tea (Germany).

The verb *like* is most often combined with an infinitive and a gerund, less often with a noun: *I like collecting postcards to know more about different places* (the Philippines). *I like communicating with people in different countries* (China). *I like reading, writing and sipping on Darjeeling tea (India). I like to crochet and take photos, paint and draw* (Finland). *I like to make friends* (Taiwan). *I am a graphic artist and photographer who also likes to paint, knit and crochet* (USA). *I like summer, flowers, tea, yoga and laughing* (Belgium). *I like animals, working in my garden* (the Netherlands). *I like hiking and swimming in the lakes there* ☺ (Austria).

In the lexical environment of the verbs *love* and *like* to emphasize the strong degree of enthusiasm the adverb *really* is often used (sometimes capitalized): *I love writing, art of all types and ice cream. I REALLY love ice cream* (USA). *I really like snow and snowmen* (USA). *I am a nurse which I really like* (USA).

The verb *enjoy* and the lexeme *hobby* are less used to describe people's hobbies: *I enjoy trying the local food* (Belgium). *In my free time I enjoy traveling, reading, cooking and writing snail mail* (USA). *My hobby is baking cakes and cupcakes. I also like to swim with my 3-old son* (Spain). *One of my hobbies is watching movies* (Germany). *My hobbies are reading, collecting stamps, listening to music* (the Netherlands).

The informative function of the postcard text is also present in the next thematic group of the meaningful part of the composition structure, when the sender describes the geographical location in more detail.

It could be a country: *Welcome to my country. It's great and friendly for you* (Taiwan); *I live in Belgium, a small country in Europe but a lovely place to live and work* (Belgium); *I'm Jessica, from Taiwan. Taiwan is a beautiful island and people are friendly* (Taiwan);

a region: *North Carolina is in a region of the USA that is highly known for being Christian* (USA), *My name is Peter and I live with my wife+ son southeast of Munich, close to the Alps* (Germany);

a city/town/village: *I'm from Sao Paulo, Brazil. Sampa is very big and crazy but I love it!* (Brazil); *Many greetings from Berlin. Berlin is the capital of Germany* (Germany); *Uppsala is the 4th biggest town of Sweden but you get a feeling that it is small and cosy* (Sweden). *We live in a small town called Moletai. It is in a very nice region with beautiful nature, full of lakes, forests, mounds and streams* (Lithuania); *I live in a small village Pauvres in South Bohemian region, Czech Republic*.

A more detailed description can contain historical information about a geographic feature:

I live in West Hollywood, which is about 8 miles from the Santa Monica pier – our closest beach. The pier is very historic for L.A. – It was an old carousel inside a building where many movies and Television Shows have been filmed (USA). *Best wishes from Germany and my hometown of Potsdam. The city is over 1000 years old and was the summer residence of the Kings and queens of Prussia* (Germany).

Did you know that Munich was host city of the Olympic games in 1972? The Olympic center with stadium, sport hall, swim hall (see the picture) and cycling hall (Germany). At the same time this example is an excellent illustration of such communicative characteristics of the speech genre as a dialogue, as there is addressing, direct appeal of the statement to the addressee.

The sender can appeal to the facts that may be known to the addressee, to share the details of the current activities of the geographical object:

I live in Verona, Italy. This beautiful City was in scripted of UNESCO world heritage site. Verona is also Romeo & Juliet's city. It's really nice to stroll in the centre of the city, you can see many interesting buildings! (Italy).

The following example demonstrates the addresser's desire to explain the correct way of pronunciation of the town and the etymological roots of its name:

I live in Washington state in the US. My town, called Wenatchee (pronounced When –AT-chee), is on the banks of the Columbia river and framed all around by mountains. We're named for a local, ancient native-American tribe. Wenatchee is an agricultural area famous for fruit, particularly our apples (USA).

From an informative point of view, it is interesting to learn about another part of the world directly from its inhabitants. Therefore, postcrossers are happy to tell what their corner of the world is famous for:

I live in the city of Puer. Our city is famous for Puer Tea with a history of thousand years. Puer Tea is hot because it's habitable of high elevation and fogy growing environment, it's pollution-free in nature, it's mellow in taste and long in the aftertaste (China).

It's Sugaring season here in Vermont. A lot of farmers have breakfasts and top their pancakes and waffles with delicious maple syrup. We also have many covered bridges, museums, lakes, mountains and

bike paths. I love to kayak on our big Lake Champlain which is 101 miles long and borders the New York Adirondack Mountains. You can see many pretty sunsets over them. We are also known for our Ben Jerry`s Ice cream. My favorite is chocolate Therapy (USA).

Analyzing the texts of postcrossing postcards, we understand that we are talking about personal relationships between complete strangers, between whom there is a one-time unidirectional contact. Its main purpose is the transfer of the material carrier (postcard) with the establishment and possible maintenance of living human relations. Therefore, the third most popular theme in the meaningful part of the composition structure is the theme of the postcard itself, or rather its front side. There are also informative and emotive functions of the text, which either alternate or are combined in one message.

Attention to the material carrier is expressed in the hope that the postcard is liked. We have derived the formula of the most common phrase that expresses this, that is *(I) hope you (really) (will) like/enjoy the/this postcard*:

I hope you like the card I chose for you (Czech Republic). *I hope you like this card with the beautiful flowers which are typical Holland I think* (the Netherlands). *I really hope you like my postcard of Torre Agbar (a very famous skyscraper in Barcelona* (Spain). *Hope you enjoy this card and its stickers* (China).

The front side view can be represented by a combination of '*on the front*': *You can see a bit of the Bavarian landscape on the front, I hope you like it* (Germany). *On the front of this card a picture of the castle I really like! Muiderslot. I visited it at school, when I was 12 years old and later when I was 19. It is still my favourite castle in the Netherlands* (the Netherlands). *In fact, our town motto, as seen on the front of this card, is "Apple Capital of the World."* (USA).

The addresser can share information or an interesting fact about what is shown on the front side of the postcard: *Here is Colorado. I always visit Colorado to see my best friend! During winter, it is always popular because the mountains are high which is good for skiing!* (USA). *This card represents a typical landscape of my country, the Netherlands* (the Netherlands). *The stream pictured is about 100 km west of my house. When it rains the forest becomes alive with frogs and color* (USA). *Kind regards from the South-West of Germany. This part is called Palatinate. On the card you can see important places from Palatinate. I hope you will enjoy this card* (Germany).

If the sender shares a postcard with the place of interest, then most of the texts have a small description: *This is a card of view of the Corcovado. It's a monument of the Jesus Christ with 38 meters high that bless us* (Brazil). *This card shows you some of the famous landmarks of the city* (Austria). *This castle is over 600 years old and you can get even married there* (Germany). *I hope you'll like this postcard! It shows some symbol of Beijing. Most of them are must-seen spot in Beijing, like Summer Palace – courtyard dwellings and Shichahai. But besides those, there are soooo many delicious snacks in Beijing!* (China). *This card shows an old painting of Uppsala Castle, and it can be found within the collections of the university library* (Sweden). *In the postcard you can see a large tent to the left of the pier; that is the Cirque du Soleil which used to perform there each year* (USA) *As you can see at the postcard, it's the Queen Victoria Clock Tower. More information you can read from the below site* (Malaysia). *This card has the CNN center on it which broadcast news all over the country. Hope you can visit one day!* (USA).

The attraction of a particular area can be considered and events regularly held there: *I hope you like this pc that shows our biggest festival: carnival on this weekend* (Brazil).

For many postcrossers, the historical value of the postcard is important and interesting, on the one hand, as a material carrier (*This is a postcard from the GDR 1975* (Germany). *This is an old GDR-card from my collection, shows the nice town Glauchau in Saxonia. Hope you like it* (Germany)), on the other hand, what is depicted on the front side: *The card shows the historical costume of farmers 100 years ago. You can see, it was always a Wealthy region* (Germany). *There is a shoe and leather museum in the place where I live. This boot we have in our museum. Do you know this Russian house boot from the 19th century? I find it very beautiful* (the Netherlands). *Here are 3 young girls wearing traditional costumes from my beautiful region Bucovina. Hope you will like this card!* (Romania).

Addressers can also share the reason for choosing a postcard sent. It can be emotions: *I hope you like the Postcard. It made me smile* (USA). *I chose for you a view of my beloved city Prague. You can see tower of St. Vitus cathedral and typical red roofs what I love so much.* ☺ (Czech Republic). *I chose this card because I married my husband on the London Eye seven years ago. I love it there* (Great Britain). *From the photo of your PC, I think you're a cute, smart and nice teacher, so I choose this card to you, a beautiful traditional Chinese girl with pink skirt lovely like you* ☺ (China).

This may be some connection of thoughts and feelings of the addresser with the image on the front side: *This postcard shows a little village in Baden-Wurttemberg where our community walked by foot from our home (300 miles) in summer. It was a great experience and I wanted to shave it with you :)* (Germany). *I found a card from one of the cities I used to live and thought you might enjoy. I used to wander down to this area to sit and eat or just watch the boats. They would have fine work shows occasionally as well as parades and lots of bright lights* (USA). *On this card you can see the castle from Munster where I study biology* (Germany).

In addition to the informative and emotive functions of the postcard text the hedonistic function can be determined, the purpose of which is to please oneself and one's partner by the process of speech communication as such: *It shows the city of Essen, where I live with my boyfriend, two cats and about 580.000 others, in the middle of the "Ruhrgebiet"* (Germany). *The text on the front means' Buxtehude – the place where dogs bark with their tails. This dog is one of the mascots of my city, which is next to Hamburg* (Germany).

Sometimes the sender shares information about the purchase of a postcard: *This card was bought in the designers' exhibition. The colors are dark. But I think it is mystical. Hope you will like it!* (Taiwan). *This postcard is from China where I travelled last year* (Taiwan).

The fourth thematic group of the meaningful part is "Weather". We have determined that even in a purely informative at first glance message about the weather there is a more or less pronounced assessment of the reported and the emotions of the speaker about it. The emotional state of people is transmitted via the lexemes that they use to describe the weather. So it is possible to judge about the positive emotional expression because of the lexemes *great, happy, nice, sunny, spring*: *Today the weather is great. Spring is coming!* (Italy). *Now it is spring-time and I'm very happy about that* (Germany). *Here we have really nice and sunny autumn weather, I hope it will stay so a little bit longer before the cold will get here* (Finland). *Loving our Warm Sunny Weather*! (Australia).

Another set of lexemes indicates a depressed, dissatisfied expression of the author: *autumn, winter, rain, dark, cold, wet, burning*: *Autumn in Lithuania…p.s. rain* (Lithuania). *We are burning, it's 30 C here* (Lithuania). *It's raining, only water not snow yet. It's so dark outside, night and day* (Germany). *Now I am waiting for a snow. Now is so dark and wet!* (Finland). *Here winter just won't come. It's cold but not freezing and no snow* (the Netherlands).

However, in some texts, despite the connotatively negative vocabulary *rain, cold, cool, not so good* of the first part of the statement, in the second part we find a positive connotative vocabulary *of course, anyway, perfect day*, which indicates the optimistic mood of the addresser: *Regrettably this summer is a bit rains, so the water is quite cool – of course I jumped into anyway, but for a short time only ;)* (Austria). *Today is the first day in August this Year when the Weather is not so good. It's cold, it's rain and it's so windy… but perfect day to bake a cake, invite the family and sit together… so we do cake :)* (Germany).

Our highlighting of large thematic groups does not indicate the fact of their separated use. Often they are all present in the text in different proportions and in different order – personal information+place+postcard+weather: *Many warm regards from Prague with this popular view to the Prague Castle this winter season☺* (Czech Republic). *My name is Roseni Lopez. I'm a teacher too, but at the elementary school. I work in a country school. I live in a historical city Petropolis in Rio de Janeiro. I love to live here, because the weather isn't as hot as in Rio* (Brazil).

Contact-closing etiquette formulae are the final ones used to close the contact, after which the signature part and the date may or may not be available.

If you look at the combination of intentions of wishes and requests in the speech act of "farewell", it can be stated that in the postcard texts at farewell there is only the intention of wishes, although the intentions of the request are not excluded, but they are contained in the main part of the text.

At the end of the postcard text, the addressers resort to illocutionary speech acts of wishes and farewell. It can be stated that in the postcard texts wishes are only positive, as they are intended to regulate interpersonal relations of communicants.

Wishes as a certain grammatical type of utterance can be quite varied; however, the analysis of practical material allowed to deduce the following classification on the grammatical basis: firstly, it is the construction 'adjective + noun' (*Happy postcrossing; Best/Warm wishes; Good luck; Merry Christmas*); secondly, 'verb + noun/ pronoun', where the most frequent constructions are *have a…* and *wish you….* The fullness of the last constructions are wishes with the "time" seme, varying in its duration from one day to a certain time of the year – holiday – year – the general concept of "time", which is contained in the lexemes *day, holiday, Christmas, time*: *Have a nice/great/good/wonderful day/Christmas/summer; Have the nicest things always for you, not only today but all the year through; Wish you a good/very good time; Wish you a soon coming spring/a beautiful day with happy thoughts, etc*.

In the speech act of wishes the connotative meaning of farewell is widely used. Analysis of the situation of written communication with a stranger in the framework of the "Postcrossing" project has identified a set of etiquette formulae of wishes, which is characterized by specificity. The most frequent wish nowhere else used is *Happy Postcrossing*, generated by the direction of "Postcrossing" project activity by analogy with the existing *Happy New Year, Happy Birthday*. From the list of the connotatively

positive wishes of happiness, love and good luck, such a familiar set for a neutral greeting, we can note only the functioning of "good luck" in the wishes of *Good luck*, as well as generalized *Warm/Best wishes, All the best for you, All good to your life*.

A separate item should be noted wishes on the eve of well-known holidays, among which there are three: New Year, Christmas and birthday of the addressee, which the addresser can learn from the addressee's profile: *Happy New Year, Merry Christmas, Happy Birthday*.

In view of the fact that the speaker expresses some benevolence, it is worth noting that in the material under study it manifests itself both at the lexical and grammatical levels. The most frequent are several lexemes – it is the lexeme *good* as well as its comparative degree *better* and the superlative degree – *the best*; and the lexemes, the semantic value of which is pleasant for the perception of the recipient, they are *nice, great, wonderful*: *All the best! Have a nice year! Wish you a very good time! Have a wonderful day!* In our case, benevolence is also inherent in the formation of the grammatical construction with the help of imperative forms, such as: *Take care; Have a…*).

Usually, in the written communication of familiar people in the framework of farewell, the addresser completes contact with the addressee or establishes it, demonstrating that interrupts contact, but wants to maintain it in the future. The genre of the postcrossing postcards texts is characterized by the completion of contact with the addressee when the realization of the situation "farewell" uses the following set of formulae of farewell: 1) etiquette of expressions (*Bye! Cheers!*), among which the same situation with the greeting can be noted and authentic (e.g., *Ciao! Unriendelyke groeten* (=kind regards)) 2) a noun (*Love, Greetings, Smiles from…*); 3) preposition + noun (*with love; with all best wishes*); 4) pronoun (*Yours*); 5) adverb (*Sincerely*), which once again demonstrates the formality of communication.

Having considered the use of special language forms in the postcrossing postcard texts, we note that various paralinguistic means, in particular, graphic and iconic, associated with the way of writing the text and with the use of various pictorial components, are essential in the design of such text.

7. Conclusion

At the first stage, we have determined the composition structure of postcrossing postcard texts, which allows us to talk about the recognition of the genre. Formative components are: contact-opening formula, meaningful part, contact-closing formula, signature part and date.

At the second stage, we have conducted a linguistic and pragmatic analysis of the first three elements of the composition scheme, as they are responsible for speech interaction and as we have established, they have three characteristics: the presence of meaning, the possession of integrity and the formulation in the speech act.

The linguistic analysis of contact-opening and contact-closing etiquette formulae allows to conclude that in the genre of natural written speech, which includes postcards of the project "Postcrossing", salutation and farewell satisfy the definition of a speech act as a purposeful speech action, committed in accordance with the principles and rules of speech behavior adopted in this society. They have illocutionary force and are able to influence the mind of the recipient, causing a certain perlocutionary effect. In this case, there is a specific list of etiquette formulae of salutation in direct connection with the greeting and wishes in direct connection with the farewell. Formulae are

characterized by neutrality due to the establishment of contact in written communication between strangers, in contrast to a more diverse set of etiquette formulae when communicating with familiar with each other communicants, which is facilitated by the availability of information about the recipient.

The content of the composite structure of the postcrossing postcard text contains a heterogeneous material in terms of themes, which confirms the natural character of the creating of postcards. Despite this, all the variety of texts can be reduced to certain speech intentions. The most common types of illocutionary goals in the postcard texts are representative, responsible for operating with a variety of information, and emotional and personal expressions that express feelings arising in the process of creating the text of the postcard. In a particular text, these two speech intentions are combined in different proportions, while defining such text functions as informative and emotive, that allowed us to determine the following thematic range of postcard texts, consisting of four large groups: personal information (38%), place (28%), postcard (20%), weather (10%) and a small fifth group (4%), differing by thematic content from the four denoted.

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