

FUNCTIONAL-LINGUISTIC PARAMETERS OF ENGLISH PROFESSIONAL DISCOURSE

Dmitry S. Khramchenko

*Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO University) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia (Moscow, Russia)
d.s.khramchenko@icloud.com*

This paper is devoted to basic functional-linguistic analysis of modern English professional and business discourse. The aim of this paper is to look at the phenomenon of modern English professional discourse from a functional-linguistic perspective to discuss key elements of verbal interaction that define rhetorical uniqueness of this type of communication and combine traditions, standards and conventional nature with enough freedom for speakers to express themselves and be creative in composing texts of their own. The author sums up different approaches to the definition of professional communication, singles out and describes major functional features of this type of verbal interaction: goal-setting, functional loading of professional communication, typical participants, chronotopos, forms of verbal behaviour, role and status relations, pragmatic conventions and standardization, etiquette, functional differences between official and semi-official professional discourse, peculiarities of written communication. All the above mentioned functional features of modern English professional discourse impose severe limitations on the speech arsenal available to people. Basic functional-linguistic analysis of discursive fragments reveals what aspects should be further elaborated on in terms of improving the process of strategic planning of speech, selecting proper linguistic means to cause appropriate pragmatic impact on listeners/ readers, work out ways to increase efficiency of rhetoric.

Key words: functional linguistics, discourse, professional discourse, business discourse, pragmatics.

1. INTRODUCTION

Complex integrative processes of modern society have become the major reason for dramatic transformational changes in the world of finance and big business. International cooperation is constantly growing and has never been as global as it is nowadays. Thus, professional communication is one of the most widely spread types of social interaction. That's why linguists are quite persistent in their research to increase effectiveness of business rhetoric, find ways to enhance speech manipulation and study specific functional properties of Business English which is universally embraced as a lingua franca for politics, diplomacy, economy and culture.

Modern linguistics has an extensive range of works on many problems connected with business and professional communication, e.g. strategies and principles of verbal behaviour in various job-related situations, descriptions of differences between national mentalities and their relevance to cross-cultural business cooperation, practical tips and guidelines for businessmen about important meetings, negotiations on key issues, presentations, verbal behaviour during job interviews as well as theory of business correspondence and its genres, compilation of orders, directives, instructions, regulations, CVs, advertisements, questionnaires, etc [Bargiela-Chiappini, 2009; Bargiela-Chiappini et.al., 2007; Gillaerts & Gotti, 2005; Garzone & Ilie, 2007; Malyuga & Orlova, 2018; Malyuga & Ponomarenko, 2012; Malyuga & Ponomarenko, 2015].

The goal of this article is to look at the phenomenon of modern English professional discourse from a functional-linguistic perspective to single out key elements of verbal interaction that define rhetorical uniqueness of this type of communication and combine

traditions, standards and conventional nature with enough freedom for speakers to express themselves and be creative in composing texts of their own.

2. THEORETICAL GROUNDING. PROFESSIONAL DISCOURSE: PROBLEMS OF ITS DEFINITION

To better understand functional properties of English professional communication it is necessary to consider the notion of professional discourse. There exist numerous definitions of discourse itself. This can be explained with the polysemantic nature of the term and a whole variety of approaches [Beaugrande, 1997]. On the one hand, discourse can be generally seen as a complex interconnectedness of several texts that function within one and the same communicative sphere. Discourse is an integral indivisible unit of information, determined by a combination of linguistic and extralinguistic parameters. Such unit is a collection of texts, structured and based on identical principles, i.e. the same pragmatic rules. This concept of discourse is close to the notion of genre.

On the other hand, in linguistic literature one can find a different, narrower approach to discourse as a communicative event [Dijk, 1981], taking place in a cognitively and typologically predetermined communicative field. For functional linguistics this approach is more suitable, because discourse is defined as

- a coherent text being an action in itself,
- speech as an intentional, goal-oriented process,
- important part of interaction among people and their minds.

Prof. E.V. Ponomarenko states that a text becomes a discourse when in the process of its production and comprehension it has acquired multiple semantic and pragmatic components due to peculiarities of

1. a particular communicative situation,
2. participants of communication,
3. reactions of speakers/ listeners/ readers,
4. necessity to adapt one's verbal behaviour to the circumstances, and many other factors.

Briefly speaking, this is how the functional field of discourse is being formed, with many extralinguistic factors of communication at play [Ponomarenko, 2016].

Analysis of linguistic literature on professional interaction shows divergence of theories on professional discourse. For example, the term "professional discourse" can be used as a synonym of business communication. Or it may be defined within strict boundaries of an institutional discourse as a well-focused deliberate status-role speech activity of a man who interacts with others in the professional area. One more view is that professional discourse means communication in the sphere of a particular profession. Some researchers believe professional communication and business communication are synonyms, others prove the notion of business discourse is broader and comprises professional discourse, it being a limited constituent.

Unlike their Russian colleagues, British and American linguists seem to be more interested in the linguomethodological aspect, by and large connected with studying and teaching English for specific purposes (ESP), Business English and language issues of particular registers (business presentations, negotiations, writing business letters), including research into oral and written forms of speech in companies, e.g. intercultural negotiations studies, language at work analysis, to find out more about the cooperation of linguistic and extralinguistic factors. One of the leading European specialists in business and professional interaction F. Bargiela-Chiappini thinks that the type of discourse under analysis is no more than oral or written communication between people interested in promoting their agenda and behaving in accordance with their status and roles in professional hierarchy [Bargiela-Chiappini, 2009].

3. GOAL-SETTING AS THE DRIVE OF PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

When speaking about English professional discourse it is crucial to single out its main specific properties and constitutive features. The most important of them is the communicative goal. Being able to achieve the goal determines effectiveness and efficiency of professional discourse [Ponomarenko, 2017]. What is communication? Basically speaking, it is a complex multiaspect process of establishing a contact between interlocutors, exchanging information and attitudes, working out a unified strategy and cooperating with the help of verbal and non-verbal means. Business and professional communication can be characterized with specific goal-setting and necessity to solve particular professional problems. Strict focus on purpose and efficiency is the most distinctive feature which makes it easy to differentiate professional discourse from personal or colloquial discourse.

In some theoretical works on business rhetoric, professional communication is defined as a special kind of interpersonal interaction. Its goal is to organize and optimize the so-called substantive activity, e.g. industrial, corporate, scientific, commercial, managing, etc. So participants of professional communication have to deal with certain key tasks. For example:

- facilitate constructive and fruitful cooperation,
- find ways to collectively solve emerging problems and eliminate barriers,
- modify current communicative situation to the speaker's/ writer's advantage,
- influence decision-making of interlocutors (who are officially considered to be partners),
- adapt speaker's point of view as far as the discussed issue is concerned.

4. FUNCTIONAL LOADING OF PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

In modern linguistics professional communication is understood not only as an informational process, but also as process of interaction of participants and the whole spectrum of relations between them, including their influence on each other. According to prof. E.N. Malyuga, professional communication is a complex process of establishing, sustaining and developing a contact between people in the professional sphere [Malyuga et al., 2018].

Analysis of theoretical grounding shows that traditionally there are 3 basic functions of business and professional communication:

1. phatic (establishing a contact),
2. informational,
3. the function of making a pragmatic impact.

These functions are universal for communication in any society and especially meaningful for professional discourse. Other functions, typical of this type of discourse, are:

4. stimulating, because the objective of discourse is to stimulate activity of interlocutors and make them do certain things;
5. coordinative;
6. emotive, responsible for igniting required emotions in the participants of professional discourse.

There are different viewpoints on the communicative and functional spheres of professional communication. Some linguists impose great limitations on the scope of extralinguistic situations, the discussed type of discourse being confined to just professional activities. Others, on the contrary, widen the scope of communicative situations to include business correspondence, negotiations, telephone conversations, making deals, getting employed or fired, advertizing, legal aspects and forms of business activity, politics, public relations, coverage of professional issues in mass-media, small talk and so on. Prof. E.N.

Malyuga highlights the fact, that professional speech functions in such spheres as law, politics, industry, trade, administration, social work, international affairs [Malyuga, 2015].

5. PARTICIPANTS AND CHRONOTOPOS OF PROFESSIONAL DISCOURSE

In cognitive linguistics there is some research carried out to elaborate on the global frame of business and professional discourse, which would represent the whole system of knowledge and data of the English-speaking business community around the world. In the core of this frame there are 3 terminals, or “slots”. They are systemic invariant categories of business and professional discourse – specific goals, participants, chronotopos (in other words, spacetime). The specific goal is mutually beneficial professional activity. Participants are all sorts of people that may get involved, e.g. managers, businessmen, traders, clients, scientists, amateurs who are interested in details of certain professions. Chronotopos is the social institution of business and professional community. These three parameters create cognitive dispositions, form knowledge and views in the minds of every participant of discourse, predetermine the use of language, make people choose strategies and tactics to interact within social groups and with individuals in the professional area.

Oddly, the word “business” has had a lot of influence on the notion of business communication. Throughout decades its lexical meaning has considerably changed. Originally “business” meant “work”. In modern English, though, it can denote “doing all kinds of things” and “getting things done”. That is why in the total majority of contexts phrases “business communication” and “professional communication” are legitimately synonymous, English professional discourse being the most widely-spread discursive type with multilayered versatile communicative functional field.

Professional discourse is a manifestation of speech communication, so it can be classified into different forms, e.g.:

- oral vs. written;
- dialogue vs. monologue;
- contact vs. distant (based on the position of interlocutors in space and time);
- interpersonal vs. public;
- direct vs. indirect;
- cooperative vs. conflicting.

One of the most distinctive features of “classical” English professional and business discourse is how conventional its communicative norm is. It is not supposed to change and is acceptable for everyone. The norm comprises multiple rules and strict limitations of verbal behaviour, coordinated and structured interaction of discourse participants, standardized expression of thoughts and ideas.

6. CONVENTIONAL REGULATION OF ENGLISH PROFESSIONAL DISCOURSE

English professional and business communication has always been considered one of the most regulated kinds of verbal interaction. Its standardized and conventional nature helps participants manage discourse and stay prepared for any possible turn and twist in the conversation due to predictability of informational exchange. Conventionality as a leading specific functional feature of the discourse means the existence of a system of pragmatic conventions which regulate interaction of interlocutors at all levels. Pragmatic conventions are norms and rules, encoded in fixed cognitive genre-defining scripts and role-status models of speech acts. Human ability to perform social engagement by means of a language depends on these sets of rules and norms [Leech, 1983].

The term “convention” is used in science to denote generally accepted rules, norms, traditions and rituals, possibility to regulate behaviour by disapproving any deviations. Conventionality of language has been studied since the times of Aristotle who believed that words had no correlation to the nature of things and had to result from an agreement of speakers. Later this problem was reflected upon in the works of many linguists. F. de Saussure stated that language is a system of randomly selected symbols imposed on people. Conventions are the framework of the language system, actualized in all aspects of speech.

In pragmatics conventions are rules that dictate how to use language units and speech elements. According to Ch.W. Morris, the use of language is regulated by the sets of syntactic, semantic and pragmatic rules [Morris, 1938].

Speech Act Theory contributed greatly to the concept of conventionality in languages. J. Searle classifies conventions into 2 large categories: 1) those that regulate forms of behaviour, e.g. business etiquette which coordinates interpersonal professional communication, and 2) those which determine new forms of behaviour or activity, logically dependent on these rules. Speaking of Speech Act Theory in the context of cross-cultural professional communication, it should be noted that chances of success in a speech act are high, if all interlocutors are equally competent at the matters of language and culture. If discourse participants belong to different cultures, there is a probability of misunderstanding and failure of adequate cooperation. Therefore, efficiency of professional communication directly depends on whether interlocutors possess sociocultural competence which presupposes knowledge and capability to appreciate and consider cultural values of interlocutors.

7. ETIQUETTE AND REGULATION OF VERBAL BEHAVIOUR IN PROFESSIONAL DISCOURSE

To avoid conflicts, connected with misunderstanding or increased tension, people have to obey long-existing rules and traditions of a certain genre of professional discourse and such parameters as the goal, tasks, form of contact, degree of formality, national mentality of speakers / listeners. High conventionality of English business and professional discourse manifests itself in fixed standard models of verbal behaviour, ritualized in some genres up to a clearly defined consequence of speech actions. Hence, speakers / writers are very often limited in their choice of verbal means, and this fact makes the problem of causing pragmatic impact on partners a very important premise to improve professional rhetoric.

Harmonization of verbal behaviour and making sure discourse participants strictly follow sociocultural and pragmatic conventions are called speech etiquette. Etiquette in its functional-linguistic meaning can be defined as conventional speech actions made by the speaker to the recipient's advantage in full compliance with interpersonal and status-role relationships of interlocutors, the communicative goal and other pragmatic factors of either phatic or informative speech. Etiquette is reflected in the existence of the generally accepted system of set phrases, clichés, ritualized speech means and formulas, each of them being attached to a certain type of communicative situations.

Regulation of English business and professional discourse doesn't only mean following speech etiquette to help people establish a contact, sustain conversation in a required key and tone in line with performed social roles. It also means following business etiquette, i.e. a code of behavioral rules, to break them would interfere with normal effective cooperation between the participants of discourse.

Compliance with business etiquette in the process of professional communication shows importance and meaningfulness of the recipient, creates a comfortable positive atmosphere, which enhances efficiency of cooperation. There are several principles of business etiquette, aimed at helping overcome possible conflicts:

- ability to perform one's work duties without making it difficult for others to perform theirs;
- principle of positivity, i.e. to be always open and friendly with one's colleagues and clients;
- predictability of (speech) behaviour in any situations;
- forgetting about the gender of interlocutors and keeping in mind their status differences;
- principle of appropriateness, i.e. following certain rules in appropriate places, at appropriate time and with appropriate people.

It is necessary to say how important it is to use speech formulas of politeness throughout the whole discourse, avoiding long pauses, one-word answers, categoric statements and topics which may cause a negative reaction from partners. Predictability of behaviour in professional communication is the symbol of participants' stability and reliability.

It is a well-known fact that people belonging to Western (English-speaking) culture are very persistent at planning and organizing events and meetings. Business speech etiquette is scrupulously followed to keep order and coordinate everyone's behaviour as well as get rid of potential communicative tension. For example:

Dearest Julia,

My assistant, Andrea, tells me that you're the sweetheart to whom I should address my most heartfelt appreciation. She has informed me that you are the single person capable of locating a couple of copies of this darling book for me tomorrow. I want you to know how much I appreciate your hard work and cleverness. Please know how happy you'll make my sweet daughters. And don't even hesitate to let me know if you need anything at all, for a fabulous girl like yourself.

XOXO,

Miranda Priestly.

[Weisberger, 2006]

Following norm and rules of business etiquette helps overcome less obvious problems of professional communication. Functional-linguistic research on speech etiquette reveals that using linguistic means and formulas of business etiquette in English conversations on professional topics gives an opportunity to smoothen the effect of pragmatic impact on the recipient, sustain contact, generate atmosphere of agreement and cooperation, ease perception of speech elements, sometimes elevate the role and status of the speaker, because every listener likes being paid attention to and see others' interest directed onto his/ her opinion, emotional state, attitudes. In certain cases, expression of gratitude or excuse really matters, and etiquette provides people with ways of how to do it properly. Repetition of clichés, ready-made expressions and formulas makes speech more automated, polishes professional rhetorical skills and eases the processes of production and perception of speech as the analyzed type of discourse unfolds.

Regulation of speech is expressed in the usage of typical standardized phrases from the etiquette arsenal due to the stereotypical nature of communicative situations and their repetitiveness. Here are some examples of constantly reproduced and frequently repeated formulas, phrases and constructions which become parts of utterances in business and professional sphere:

"We are delighted to know that you will be in Greece in October. This is to confirm our telephone conversation. We shall meet at Athens airport at 15.30."

"Well, that's all I have today for the moment, thank you for listening, now if there are any questions, I'll be happy to answer them..." [Lees & Thorne, 1996]

"...First, though, I believe Aunt Kathleen would like to say a few words as well. Thanks for listening." [Banks, 2007]

Clichés like these help better understand the whole spectrum of relationships in professional discourse and add clarity in complicated situations of cross-cultural communication.

8. WRITTEN PROFESSIONAL DISCOURSE: WHY IS IT SPECIAL?

One of the most regulated spheres of English business and professional discourse is its written form. Thanks to decades, if not centuries, of its gradual formation, written Business English has become extremely codified. It is characterized with high degree of standardization, and certain linguistic means are now expected to be used in certain typical situations. Nowadays there is a wide range of specialized reference books devoted to samples of typical business letters for any standardized situation possible – all you have to do is just fill in your personal relevant information like names and addresses, and the letter/ e-mail is ready to send. The more formal the letter is, the more clichéd it is supposed to be.

Dear Mrs Smith

We are pleased to confirm your reservation

Thank you very much for sending us details regarding your proposed stay. We are pleased to confirm the following reservation:

Guest: Mrs Jane Smith

Arrival date: 14 August 2009

Departure date: 16 August 2009

Number of rooms: 1

Room category: double room, non-smoking, first floor

Room rate: summer special as agreed, inc VAT

Reservation number: 007

Your credit card guarantees the room for you.

The room will be ready at 3.00 pm on the day of your arrival and remains at your disposal until 12.00 noon on the day of your departure. It is our policy to charge a 90% cancellation fee for no-show guests, but there is no charge where we receive your cancellation in writing within 24 hours before the date of your arrival.

We look forward to welcoming you to our hotel and hope you will have a very pleasant stay.

Yours sincerely,

Denis Paphides

General Manager

Hotel Beau Rivage

[Talbot, 2009]

In the letter above all norms of layout and structuring are closely complied with. The text is “decorated” verbally with necessary precision, and conventions are taken into consideration. It begins with addressing the recipient, the author formulates the reasons that made him write the letter. Partitioning of factual information into small paragraphs not only eases perception, but also accentuates key semantic elements, each paragraph containing exactly one complete idea or thought. The letter is finished with traditional etiquette phrases to express respect for the addressee and desire to continue cooperation in a constructive, mutually beneficial way.

Absence of direct contact between the author and the recipient leads to a bigger role of the text’s block style layout, with blocks of information arranged in a particular sequence. Other factors that correlate with efficiency of business and professional discourse are conciseness and brevity of statements without too long sentences or paragraphs, using predominantly formal style and corresponding lexical units, i.e. words, terms, expressions, and syntactical constructions.

Among the great number of clichéd phrases, typical of business English, one can single out the following basic groups:

- phrases used in the beginning of a letter (*Dear Sir/ Sirs, Mr/ Mrs..., We thank you for your letter of..., in reply to your letter of..., etc*);
- phrases used in the middle of a letter (*I thought you might be interested to hear that..., I was wondering if you could help us..., I am writing to inform/ inquire..., we are pleased/ we regret to inform/ confirm..., we express confidence that..., we would welcome the opportunity..., further to the above..., in connection with..., etc*);
- phrases used at the end of a letter (*Please give my regards to..., remember me to..., thank you for your time, we look forward to hearing from you, yours faithfully/ sincerely, best wishes, etc*).

Nevertheless, cognitive-pragmatic predisposition to structure letters according to the existing compositional models, thus fitting extralinguistic situation and the goal of professional communication, does not always mean that compositional layout and stylistic execution of the correspondence will never vary under the influence of pragmatic parameters and less official circumstances of text's production and perception. For example, there can be deviations from the traditional three-part compositional structure of a business letter (introduction – main contents – conclusion). Almost everything is possible these days, when the author strives towards achieving a desired linguopragmatic effect:

*Office Manager
Pixadiddle & McCormick, Inc.
34 Runter Road
Luckier, New Mexico 34321*

Dear Ms. Alexandria:

Have you ever wondered why every time your copy machine goes on the blink your copier service company's phone is busy or the repairperson won't be able to get to your business for at least a week?

If your company is like most, every lost day of your copying capabilities can spell headaches, delays, and increased expenses from having to send materials out to be copied.

Rest easy. Anderson Copy Repair guarantees you that when you use us as your copier service company, we'll be there when you need us with the solutions to your copier problems. Our trained staff of service repair people has years of experience, experience that gets your machine off the blink and back into A-1 condition.

What's more, there's no risk that you will be without a machine for long. While our service people are servicing your machine, we'll provide you with a temporary machine until yours is up and going. Most repairs will take less than an hour. But just in case, there will be a top-of-the-line machine at your disposal.

Anderson Copy Repair specializes in servicing small businesses like yours. I've enclosed a partial list of our current clients. Feel free to check our reputation with any of them. I think you'll find the response is unanimous praise.

As a special offer to new customers, we are offering a 6-month contract for copier repair service at our 3-month rates. But the offer's only good if you sign up by May 31. Simply fill out the enclosed postage-paid card, mail it back to us, and we'll get you started on worry-free copier service.

Act now to get the special introductory offer.

Sincerely,

Ralph L. Anderson

[Seglin, 2002]

9. ENGLISH PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION ON THE INTERNET

In recent decades fast development of the Internet and IT as well as their integration into all spheres of social life led to the rising amount of digital correspondence in business and professional areas. Writing emails is also regulated with communicative norms, pragmatic rules and the etiquette, but, speaking in terms of rhetoric and available linguistic means, participants of the discourse have a good deal more freedom. For instance, when exchanging letters via the Internet, people are allowed to use contractions, abbreviations, jargon, slang, questions which presuppose short one-word answers. The main requirement to such correspondence is to follow maxims of correctness, clarity, easiness to understand information, absence of dubiousness, total politeness. As far as the style is concerned, emails can be divided into two large categories:

- semi-official (1), close in style to traditional correspondence and typical of interacting with strangers and somebody you don't know really well;
- the style, similar to friendly unofficial communication (2) – for colleagues working in one company/ organization. E.g.:

(1) *Subject: Meeting in Berlin*

Dear James

You may remember we met at the Learntech fair in Kuala Lumpur last fall. You were interested in our company's automation equipment.

I am visiting Berlin at the end of next month and would like to visit you, if you are around. I will be there from 27-31 March.

Let me know if you have any time.

Best wishes

Alison

Alison McDermott

Product Manager

Has Bro Equipment Inc

Box 28

Chicago

[Cotton et al., 2014]

(2) *Subject: Meeting in Berlin*

Hi James

I'm over in Berlin from 6-8 November. Could we meet up some time? It would be great to see you!

Let me know when you're free.

Regards

Jenny

[Cotton et al., 2014]

10. OFFICIAL AND SEMI-OFFICIAL PROFESSIONAL DISCOURSE: FUNCTIONAL DIFFERENCES

Every genre of both written and oral English professional and business discourse has its own individual genre conventions, i.e. standardized norms, rules and forms of interaction between interlocutors. The more official the text is, the more and stricter it is regulated. Such types of business documents as contracts, power of attorney and invoices, rarely deviate from traditional framework and models in terms of language and contents. Less official genres, e.g. articles, analytical reports, editorials, internet posts on business and professional issues, provide authors with substantial freedom to choose language units, expressions, constructions to their liking to make enough pragmatic impact on recipients, though discourse conventions still dominate.

To sum it up, written English business and professional communication is highly regulated, because all its participants must obey traditions, etiquette norms, rules, principles, maxims and standards, imposing considerable limitations on the available arsenal of verbal means. Oral communication is additionally regulated with its own functional peculiarities, e.g. rituals, necessity to order conversation and speak in turns, sequencing communicative actions based on the current genre, etc.

Another specific functional feature of the discourse is adherence to status-role relations. Speech behavior depends on not just the communicative situation, but also the role that interlocutors choose to play in a professional conversation. It helps structure and stabilize the working process to make it more efficient. Linguists categorize communication into

1. horizontal, which is more suitable for partnership and equal relationships, e.g. colleagues talking to each other, being at the same level of the company hierarchy;
2. vertical, or relations of subordination.

Efficiency of vertical communication is understandably lower than that of horizontal interaction. It's worth mentioning that for English business discourse it is normal to imitate partnership during vertical conversations to express respect for interlocutors. Such speech habit optimizes communication and gives better professional results.

Major registers of oral discourse are business meetings, presentations, negotiating, socializing. Verbal interaction within each of them is regulated with individual sets of conventional rules, requirements and etiquette norms.

Some typical communicative situations of professional discourse presuppose clichéd phrases and speech formulas of politeness. For instance, during business talks people expect to hear expressions like *I'm delighted to meet you*, *would you like a drink (?)*, *I have enjoyed meeting you*, for telephone calls it can be *could you hold on (?)*, *can I leave a message (?)*, *I didn't catch that*, *sorry to keep you* and many others.

It is believed that effective professional communication is based on H.P. Grice's Cooperative Principle. It plays a pivotal role in choosing strategies of verbal behavior and consists of several important maxims: the maxim of quantity (speakers must be as informative, as possible), the maxim of quality (speakers must always stay truthful), the maxim of relation (speakers must say only what is relevant and pertinent to the discussion), the maxim of manner (speakers must be brief, clear and orderly in what they say or write). The maxims prescribe to treat interlocutors with respect and politeness. Depending on peculiarities of a certain communicative situation, the degree of the principle's influence may vary. According to prof. E.V. Ponomarenko, the maxims should guide participants as the discourse is unfolding, but the Cooperative Principle should not be regarded as obligatory and dogmatic. Success of professional discourse is defined with adequate perception of speech and its pragma-semantic components, their correct interpretation by all the participants and establishing relations of partnership.

English professional discourse can be referred to the so-called institutional type of communication. It means that this discourse is a variety of verbal interaction between people who don't necessarily know each other, but have to talk in accordance with the norms of the society. Institutional professional discourse also means that all parameters of communicative situations and roles are already defined and can't be modified. The only exception is complex discursive forms with a complete change of register in the process of verbal interaction, e.g. shift from official negotiations to interpersonal discussions and back to official talks. Participants of business and professional communication usually perform roles of representatives of companies/ organizations and are holders of certain easily identified social and professional status. That is why in their official speech everything individual and personal is minimized. In semi-official communication, though, regulations and rituals are less dominant, and fewer professional terms or clichés are used. At the same time the frequency of

colloquial or slang expressions, stylistically marked lexemes, irony, humour is rising thanks to interpersonal relations between interlocutors, thus leading to slow evolutionary transformations of the existing communicative norms [Khramchenko, 2019].

11. CONCLUSION

All the above mentioned functional features of modern English professional discourse impose severe limitations on the speech arsenal available to people, and modification of communicative situations and other extralinguistic parameters of interaction is a very difficult task. Basic functional-linguistic analysis of discursive fragments reveals what aspects should be further elaborated on in terms of improving the process of strategic planning of speech, selecting proper linguistic means to cause appropriate pragmatic impact on listeners/ readers, work out ways to increase efficiency of business and professional rhetoric. Functional perspective also sheds light onto key elements of communication, which should be explained to EFL and ESP non-native students in order for them to enhance their skills and be aware of constituents of successful professional cooperation in English.

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