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HEDGING AS MEANS OF SOCIOLINGUISTIC IDENTIFICATION OF THE SPEAKER IN AMERICAN SPOKEN ACADEMIC DISCOURSE

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The article is devoted to the problem of sociolinguistic identification of speakers in Spoken American Academic Discourse. The article examines the existing approaches of humanitarian scientists to the concept of identification and personal identity, draws parallels between them, and outlines the distinctive characteristics of each of the concepts. The concept of social and personal identities is also characterized, the types and forms of identification are presented. Considerable attention is paid to consideration of the concept of gender and professional identity. The concepts of identity and discursive community are analyzed. In particular, statistical data are given on the use of hedging markers in academic discourse. The research was carried out on the material Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE – Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English). The results of statistical verification of the use of hedging markers are presented taking into account the gender of the speakers, the academic role of the communicators and the subject area in which the communication takes place. The publication presents the classification of hedging markers and their role in speech as a means of identifying speakers in academic discourse. The classification of hedging markers is developed with a division into classification groups, in particular, as the use of markers oriented on the speaker, on the listener, and markers oriented on the organization of discourse. Each of the three groups contains subgroups and examples of markers for reducing the categorization of speech, obtained by sampling from the transcript of academic classes conducted by the corresponding categories of speakers, located in the database of the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE - Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English).

Keywords: *identification, identity, hedging markers.*

ХЕДЖИНГ ЯК ЗАСІБ СОЦІОЛІНГВІСТИЧНОЇ ІДЕНТИФІКАЦІЇ МОВЦЯ В АМЕРИКАНСЬКОМУ УСНОМУ АКАДЕМІЧНОМУ ДИСКУРСІ

Комаренко В. В

Стаття присвячена проблемі соціолінгвістичної ідентифікації мовців в усному американському академічному дискурсі. Розглянуто підходи науковців-гуманітаріїв до поняття ідентифікації та ідентичності особистості, проведено паралелі між ними та окреслено дистинктивні характеристики кожного з понять. Водночас охарактеризовано

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поняття соціальної та особистісної ідентичностей, представлено види й форми ідентифікації. Значну увагу приділено розгляду поняття гендерної та професійної ідентичності. Проаналізовано поняття ідентитету та дискурсивної спільноти. Наведено статистичні дані щодо вживання маркерів для зниження категоричності мовлення як засобів ідентифікації та соціолінгвістичної характеристики комунікантів в академічному дискурсі. Дослідження виконано на матеріалі Мічиганського корпусу академічного мовлення (MICASE – Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English). Результати статистичної верифікації вживання маркерів для зниження категоричності мовлення подані з огляду на гендерну належність мовців, академічну роль комунікантів та предметну галузь, у якій відбувається комунікація. У публікації подано класифікацію маркерів для зниження категоричності мовлення та проаналізовано їх використання в мовленні як засобів ідентифікації мовців в академічному дискурсі. Класифікація маркерів зменшення категоричності мовлення розроблена з поділом на класифікаційні групи, зокрема як уживання маркерів, зорієнтованих на мовця, на слухача, та маркерів, зорієнтованих на організацію дискурсу. Кожна з трьох груп містить підгрупи та приклади маркерів для зниження категоричності мовлення, отримані шляхом вибірки з транскрипту академічних занять, проведених відповідними категоріями мовців. Матеріали розміщено в базі Мічиганського корпусу академічного мовлення (MICASE – Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English).

Ключові слова: *ідентифікація, ідентичність, маркери хеджингу.*

Defining the problem. The last decades of development of linguistics are marked by intense studies of discourse as a verbalized human activity that is carried out in different socio-cultural contexts, thereby concentrating attention on the analysis of communication participants who are a part of a certain social group and the circumstances of this communication in a broad socio-cultural context, the study of the social environment of speakers and the conditions under which there is professional communication. The relevance of this study is due to the fact that existing significant achievements in social modeling oriented spaces create a basis for studying the essence of the professional communication and its specific relationships with other areas of human activities in terms of activity and communicative-cognitive approaches.

In modern communicative linguistics, detecting the principles of interaction of different communicative codes within a single communicative space is gaining relevance. Taking into account that a human is a social being, it is clear that his/her social characteristics (age, level of education, profession, gender, social position determine the features of her speech, in some way distinguish her from others. In such circumstances, the problem of identification of the individual in the system of social coordinates becomes relevant.

Sociolinguistic discourse studies, which focus on the analysis of participants and circumstances of communication, are aimed at studying the social environment of speakers and the conditions in which professional communication takes place. Identification in social space appears and manifests itself in the process of speech communication. The communicator outlines "his circle", distinguishing himself/ herself by any "factor of identification – age, ethnicity, social or gender affiliation, professions, etc."

Within the sociolinguistic approach, discourse is interpreted as communication of people, viewed from the point of their belonging to one or another social group or in relation to one or another typical language environments. One of the types of typological classification of discourse is the academic type of discourse, defined as a complex formation, is a special socio-cultural type of speech interaction in which live communication takes place within a higher education institution between participants who have certain social roles (lecturer, teacher, student), and whose purpose is to transfer

information, knowledge necessary for getting higher education.

Analysis of previous research. The term "identity" was first introduced by the American sociologist E. Erickson (1968) [2]. He distinguished between the concepts of "identification" and "identity". The researcher considered the development of identity as synthesis of identification that arises in the process of socialization of the individual - first with individuals, and later - with small and large communities. In his research, the scientist focused on problems on the formation of human identity as such, which he saw in development as universal, above all adaptive structure, as a certain "process of organizing life experience into an individual self" [2: 219].

According to E. Erickson, identity appears as a process that takes place in a line not only with the individual but also with social culture, establishing a synthesis of two identities – social and personal, as integration of human experiences of their identity with certain social groups. So, for E. Erkinson, identification is a process based on emotional and cognitive connections with significant others, group, image and inclusion and adoption of norms, rules and values of significant others in own inner world; while identity is a dynamic formation, a sense of self-truth, fullness and awareness of personal involvement in the world of others [2: 220].

In our study, following W. Evans [3], we determine identity as a property of a person related to his sense of belonging to a certain group which includes ethnic, racial, gender aspects, etc. The category of identity is the object of analysis in many social sciences and humanities: philosophy (M. Kozlovets (2009), M. Stepyko (2011), N. Yakovenko (2012) and others), culturology (T. Voropaeva (2006), T. Vendina (2006), S. Kesling (2006), etc.), sociology (S. Makeev (1996), E. Bilenky (2006), E. Babosov (2013) and others), psychology (L. Schneider (2001), V. Brodovska (2007), K. Vryan (2007) and others), sociolinguistics (N. Mechkovskaya (2000), E. Golovko (2001), N. Vakhtin (2004) and others). Despite a large number of works devoted to the study of linguistic means of identity identification in different types of discourse still need further analysis.

The aim of the article is to implement the classification of hedges by means of constructing the identity of the speaker in Spoken American academic discourse. In order to reveal the influence of social actions on the peculiarities of language, it is extremely important to take into account all the factors that allow social differentiation of the speaker, including all language levels, elements, systems and sub-systems.

Results and Discussion. Identity is the result of identification and consists of internal self-determination personality, self-determination of its involvement in a particular social group on the basis reflection, self-knowledge, choice of "I" and external social determination of the individual, which occurs as a consequence of its recognition or non-recognition by various communities and individuals as well "own" or "foreign", or in general endowment of the individual with this or that social role, social status. Therefore, identity as the affiliation of an individual to a community forms stable recurring traits which are considered to be typical of this community group.

It should be noted that the statements of participants in academic discourse are due primarily to the status, representative function of the communicator. Based on the above, the position of the subject is determined as measurement of attitudes, and includes features that relate to the ways in which the authors present themselves and communicate their own judgments, opinions and commitment [5: 176].

Thus, the concept of the process of identification allows us to combine sociocentrism with anthropocentrism, which have their own characteristics. But identification can be considered through the individual: as one and the same person can be a representative at the same time many identities (family, teaching and

work team, class, etc.), while maintaining a certain individual autonomy.

Within this approach, the concept of identity means the definition of the individual himself/ herself through belonging to different communities. Priority, the role of the leading identity is changing. These changes occur under the influence of social, political, moral, ideological, cultural, educational and other factors. These determinants can be external, internal, objective and subjective.

The notion of "Identity" is a rather complex socio-psychological structure, which includes: first, a set of individual ideas about the individual's belonging to a particular social group. Therefore, conscious enrollment in any social community. Third, the use of certain symbols to indicate one's affiliation with a particular social community. Fourth, the knowledge of structure, traditions, moral norms and values characteristic of this social community. Fifth, the choice of stereotypes of behavior appropriate to the subculture of a particular community. Sixth, emotionally colored relations of solidarity with one's group and alienation or neutrality, tolerance towards others communities [1].

Considering the concept of identification and identity, the linguist Swales introduced the concept of "discursive community "(discourse community), which he interprets as a group of individuals with six determinants characteristics [10: 24] :

1) certain common, generally accepted goals;

2) the presence of a mechanism of communication between community members;

3) information exchange in its environment;

4) possession of certain genres for achievement of communicative goals;

5) the use of environment-specific vocabulary;

6) the presence of a relatively stable number of members of the community, which ensures its existence.

Scientific discursive communities can be considered as real and as virtual formations make up common, scientific goals and actions of common discourse and genres. Identification is understood as a mechanism of socialization through which the individual masters new social statuses and roles in the process of interaction with other people. One of the mechanisms of socialization is professional identity directly related to the process of growing an individual into a certain professional group, the result of which is the assimilation of various expectations regarding his language professional status and roles. Elements of professional identity are needs, interests, attitudes and other essential personalit characteristics, interests realized in the process of professional path. In the structure of professional identity we distinguish cognitive, motivational and value components, where the cognitive component is planned to be combined with the motivational one, because the personality of a professional comes first to assimilate certain norms of a certain professional group, and only then to implement them in interaction [7].

As the mechanism of formation of the professional self-concept is professional self-identification, at the same time it acts as a result of the professional development of the personality of the specialist. Professional development, under the time during which the transformation of the profession study into a professional is accompanied changing a person's perceptions of himself as a professional and leads to the acquisition of professional identity, which is, on the one hand, the result of the individual's mastery of new professional and functional roles, and the necessary requirements for successful professional activity. The process of becoming a professional identity for professionals of different professions has a single logic and structure, but each specialty (humanitarian, technical) has its own characteristics, the specifics of the formation and the final results, which and characterize a specific professional identity [12].

First of all, we note that the means of achieving professional identity are the

relevant knowledge and abilities that ensure the implementation of activities aimed at achieving professional identity. The indicators of the formation of professional identity include: leading type of professional thinking; independence in modeling an innovative professional situation; orientation in the space of interrelations of own activity with other professional and labor types; understanding one's own belonging to a certain professional community; self-image as organizing a self-developing personality[9].

The basic units of sociolinguistic analysis of social identification are sociolinguistic variables. Such variables in our work are socially marked language units, to which we include discursive markers, which identify the speaker in a communicative environment.

Discursive markers are units that, on the one hand, ensure the coherence of the text, and on the other – most directly reflect the process of interaction between the speaker and the listener, the position of the speaker: how the speaker interprets the facts he communicates to the listener, how he evaluates them in terms of importance, truthfulness, opportunities, etc. These units govern the process of communication: they express the truth and ethical assessments, presuppositions, opinions; correlate, compare and contrast different statements of the speaker or communication of speakers with each other. As far as the nature of discourse is social, the impact on use is significant discursive markers have such social factors as: socially-professional affiliation of communicators, gender and age differentiation, scope and situation of speech communication. Each of these factors affects the admissibility of the use of a discursive marker in a particular communicative situation. Discursive markers also act as elements of the text, which both help to clarify the transmitted information and make it non-categorical. Among such markers, we single out markers of reduction of categorical expression [11].

The concept of "modality", is defined as a reflection in the matter of the language of its anthropocentricity, connects the world of external phenomena and the inner world person. Therefore, the anthropocentric aspect of the category of modality lies in the fact that the subject is in the center of modality discursive activity field. Based on the foregoing, the position of the subject defined as a dimension of attitude and includes features that relate to ways in which authors present themselves and communicate their own judgments, thoughts and duties.

Let's consider the structure of the subject's position formulated by K. Hyland, which contains the evidentiality ('hedges', 'boosters'), which is determined by means of expressing certainty/uncertainty), affect or 'attitude markers', which point to emotional attitude to what was said, the transfer of surprise, consent, disappointments, etc.), and presence ('self mention'), which is expressed with through the use of first person pronouns, possessives, adjectives to emphasize one's own investment in the industry) [5: 176].

In the article we focus on the analysis of lexical and grammatical markers hedging as sociolinguistic identifiers of speakers. Nature of discourse is social. The significant influence on the emergence and functioning of speech markers of the subject's position posess social factors, namely: socio-professional stratification of society, gender and age differentiation, scope and situation of speech communication and social interaction of discourses. One of the important extra-linguistic factors that efefct the linguistic representation and positioning of the sociolinguistic essence of the speaker is gender and status, which a person gets automatically and that accompanies a person throughout his/her whole life.

K. Hyland defines hedges as linguistic means used to denote a) the lack of full clarification of the truth of the accompanying statement or b) the desire not to express coverage of the truth categorically. These markers are thus the means by which the speaker can present

the statement as an opinion rather than a fact [6].

Hedging in academic discourse in terms of interpersonal strategies is researched by: G. Myers, R. Markkanen/ H. Schröder, P. Simpson, R. Luukka, E. Valle, hedging as a means of expressing politeness by P. Brown and S. Levison and focusing on the expression hedging were considered by G. Myers and P. Simpson.

Their main purpose is to use intentionally evasive or ambiguous allegations, giving a statement of vagueness, avoiding a final answer on questions, uncertainty [4]. At the system-language level, markers of reduction of categorical utterances can be represented in different ways: lexical-grammatical units, syntactic structures, means of prosody.

There are different classifications of markers of expression of reduction of categoricalness statements by R. Quirk (1985), Hyland (1988), A. Prince, J. Frader, C. Bosk (1982), E. Musienko (2012), A. Yarkho (2004) and others). In the article we offer our own, carried out on the synthesis of existing in the linguistic literature, the classification of hedges that exist in the spoken academic discourse. In our classification we distinguish three groups of markers for reducing the categoricalness of the statement:

I. Hearer-oriented markers which are used to attract the attention of students by involving them in academic communication.

II. Speaker-oriented markers which are used to express the personal opinion and knowledge of the speaker, focusing it on the transfer information of the audience and at the same time to observe language etiquette.

III. Markers focused on the organization of discourse (discourse organizing), which are used to draw attention to certain parts of speech, avoiding categorical statements and categoricalness, accepting alternatives.

Hearer oriented markers are expressed by combinations of the pronoun you with verbs or modal verbs. For example: *you see/ think/ could/ might/ know/ (all) assume/ may, etc.*

Speaker-oriented markers, followed by Prince [8], are divided into **markers of personal evaluation (personal evaluation)**, which are used to convey one's own opinion and **approximate assumptions** about the listener in order to attract attention and **approximation expression markers** used to express approximate assumptions.

Markers of personal evaluation are divided into two subgroups: **attributive shields**, which are used to quote and transfer responsibility for what is said to another person. These include syntactic formations that consist of a personal pronoun of the second or third person singular with a verb, for example: *they say…, according to…, it is assumed… etc.*

The second subgroup personal evaluation markers are: **personal shields (plausibility shields),** used to convey personal opinions, assessments, assumptions. To this subgroup we include syntactic units, in the structure of which there is a personal pronoun of the first person singular with a full verb, and let's with a verb. For example: *I guess/ think/ hope/ would, let's say etc.*

Approximation expression markers (approximators) are divided into:

1) **adapter markers (adapters)**, which include units of expression of approximate statements, veiled evaluation nominations. To them we refer such adverbial compounds as, for example, *sort of, something/ look/ stuff/ things like that/ this/ say, (less) likely etc.*

2) **markers of expression of relative value (rounders)**, used to convey conventionality, uncertainty, etiquette, some bitterness, reducing confidence in the truth of the statement. They include:

• modal verbs: *would, could, might, may, should, etc.*

• adverbs: *maybe, well, sometime, probably, about, pretty, almost, around, adv+ enough, rather, quite, etc.*

• verbs: *tend to, seem to, to believe, think, to suggest, to argue, etc.*

• nouns: *thing, probability, a potential for, a few, a couple of, etc.*

• pronouns: *something, someone, anybody, somebody, etc.*
• adjectives: *any, possible, some (of these / of those/ things / way/ other), certain, etc.*

3) **diminishers**, which are used to reduce qualitative and quantitative indicators. These are adverbial compounds. For example: *more or less, at least, a little/ some bit of, a little, etc.*

4) **frequency markers,** which are used to avoid a clear expression of the time parameter. For example: *for (a little) while, occasionally, etc.*

The third group: **markers focused on the organization of discourse (discourse organizing)** expressed by:

- conjunctive adjuncts: *at least, to put it mildly, at some point, at some level, up to a certain point, so to speak, etc.*
- indefinite relatives: *whatever, whoever, wherever, whichever, whatever, whatsoever, etc.*
- *syntactic markers and depersonalized inflections, consisting of the indicative pronoun it with a full or modal verb: it's like, smb/ smth/ it would + Infinitive, it may + Infinitive, that would (not) + Infinitive, it seems, there/ it/ that/ this could be, it/ that/ this can be, it could be argued, etc.*

Conclusion. We believe that the developed classification of reduction of categorical utterance markers can serve to study the sociolinguistic identification of the speaker in academic discourse. We assume that the frequency of certain markers usage will depend on the gender of the speaker, academic role of communicators and subject area. We see the prospect of conducting further research on the selected issues in the verification of the assumption made with the involvement of material from the academic broadcasting corps, in particular the Michigan Corps of Academic Broadcasting (MICASE – Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English).

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