

SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE COMMUNICATION STYLE OF USERS OF SOCIAL NETWORKS AND MESSENGERS

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INTRODUCTION

In modern sociolinguistic practice, it is quite interesting to analyze the network communication practices in particular groups of social networks or messengers users, while groups can be formed both by interests and by professional orientation. At the same time, it is remarkable to compare the usual online information exchanges in Viber and the communication that occurs against the background of a particular emergency situation. In these situations, the group's language practices are undergoing changes (ANDROUTSOPOULOS, 2014).

Alongside social networks, communication of subjects using messengers is quite common in modern society. On the one hand, their technical environment is similar to traditional social media platforms, as it allows participants to interact in groups of different sizes, usually less publicly than on platforms such as.

On the other hand, it is considered more private than other social networks, because the user must provide his mobile phone number in order to be able to interact with other people in individual and group communication. In particular, Viber allows you to create chat groups with friends, relatives or just members of a particular community. The appeal to the

exchange of information in Viber differs from the more common concept of "constant contact" on mobile devices, since many chat groups in Viber are very dynamic and constantly active, and participants share irrelevant content in terms of propositional load, mainly to maintain sociability and group unity. The purpose of the work is to conduct a sociolinguistic analysis of the communication style of users of social networks and messengers.

MATERIALS AND METHODS OF RESEARCH

This work is written on the basis of a study of various materials and publications within the framework of the research topic. When writing, comparative and comparative research methods are used.

RESULTS

After social networks and messengers have become an important communication channel, research in modern sociolinguistics now usually includes written conversations as a source of data for analysis (VORONIN, KOVALEVA, CHEPOVSKIY, 2020). Interaction in the instant messaging system has attracted considerable attention of scientists due to the collaborative nature of the conversation through this technical environment, when speakers constantly adjust, refine and hone their "online speech", trying to communicate in a way that, in their opinion, stylistically corresponds to the conversational situation (AVANESYAN, SOLOVEV, TIKHOMIROVA, CHEPOVSKIY, 2020).

Strategic modeling is often carried out in online discourse with the help of creative linguistic resources, which are often used in the search for coordination. Among these resources, special attention has recently been paid to the phenomenon of language mixing as powerful resources for strengthening intimacy, coherence and group solidarity. The function of

strengthening solidarity is defined as the establishment of an affective connection or convergence. On the other hand, closeness or coherence in interpersonal relationships is understood from the point of view of social distance (Lavrentyev, Solovev, Suvorova, Fokina, CHEPOVSKIY, 2018)

Scientists emphasize the fact that online communication helps to erase the boundaries between styles and genres. The phenomena of multilingualism and language mixing are only one aspect of the general heteroglossal nature of online communication, and, together with other semiotic resources, language mixing is a discursive resource that authors can use to create the meaning of any statement (LAVRENTIEV, SMIRNOV, SOLOVEV, SUVOROVA, FOKINA, CHEPOVSKIY, 2019).

In this direction, the study of Viber messages exchanged by a certain group of communicators can shed some light on the process of informatization of current discursive practices. Work contexts - an area that lacks computer communications and the phenomena of mixing languages. Accordingly, it is necessary to find out the relationship between linguistic style and communicative intention in social networks, when extreme external events affect members of a particular group, and also to determine how formality in the language style is the preferred tool of solidarity and intimacy in special moments of communication (SOLOV'EV, 2020).

The researchers note that when conducting a sociolinguistic analysis of users' communication in social networks and messengers, a very important role is assigned to instant analysis. The authors criticize the fact that modern linguistics is mainly focused on "universal principles", such as structured models of variations or general maxims, in linguistic actions or "linguistic patterns". Instant analysis, in turn, seeks to take into account the critical and creative moments of people's actions. This is a period of time that is of outstanding importance for a group or an individual and has an impact on subsequent events or events (BOU-FRANCH, 2011)

The researchers suggest using this analytical framework to study the practice of translating languages in translation spaces. The mentioned spaces are not just physical places or historical contexts, but networks of real or virtual social relations for a multilingual user, used to generate new identities, values and practices. The authors note that language translation is closely related to globalization, since the strengthening of contacts between people from different social strata contributes to greater creativity in the language. This is also related to the construction of identity, because people consciously construct and change their socio-cultural identity through social practices, such as language translation.

Also, when evaluating communication in social networks and messengers, it is very important to pay attention to the term "sharing". The authors describe "sharing" as a term that describes our participation in Web 2.0, while sharing is synonymous with participation in communication or monologue in social networks. At the same time, the authors define communication through social networks as full-volume online communication, and communication through messengers is carried out on an on-going basis. When studying the practices of social networks, a number of authors attribute "moments" to:

[...] single communicative acts that embody an event that is important for the participant and his network of "friends". These conversation practices at important moments should be addressed to a "knowledgeable audience" (CRUZ-MOYA, SÁNCHEZ-MOYA, 2021)

The audience plays an important role in making decisions about what is published and the style in which it is done, because the basic knowledge of the audience and linguistic resources are necessary to understand such moments. This concept goes back to the "design of the audience", which can form the semantic content and style of the communicator's speech. The concept of communication style is described by researchers from the position of different approaches. So, some authors describe the style as a way to convey something to the interlocutor or a certain manner of speech. Other authors define style as a way of mobilizing semiotic resources for entextualization.

In computer-mediated communication, there are many studies linking digital discourses with a clear degree of informality, as is the case with attempts to form informal ways of speech. As a rule, informal conversations demonstrate the use of first-person, colloquial forms of address, fragmentary or simplified sentences, humor and repetitive idioms, among other characteristics that are also widespread in informal computer contacts. On the other hand, more formal conversations are usually associated with elements typical for the written language, such as terms of formal addressing, third-person pronouns, formal division into paragraphs or the absence of spelling errors (FINA, 2007).

Third, basic knowledge and linguistic resources lead to another concept - the linguistic repertoire. The researchers note that the concept of repertoire should be revised in digital communication. There should be a shift from its original meaning, in which the repertoire only refers to the entire set of languages, dialects or styles used in the speech community, to the idea of separate repertoires, which should include the study of how technology changes the communicative spaces in which resources from the repertoire can be deployed.

These resources include ways of using the language, types of situations, the degree of synchronicity and publicity. The repertoires are reconfigured by the pathways of the speakers and the flow of their communicative exchanges in time and space (GARRISON, REMLEY, THOMAS, WIERSZEWSKI, 2011). If we turn to the research of the literature in the Viber discourse, it can be noted that scientists studying the digital discourse of these messages have addressed this exchange using various approaches, many of which are based on pragmatics. For example, one of the studies included quantitative and qualitative studies of the pragmlinguistic features of Viber requests made by Mexican, Spanish users.

Other authors studied the pragmatic functions of emoticons and their role in online exchanges in German chat groups and came to the conclusion that the linguistic construction of group identity in the university classmates' community is built through mixing languages and code switching (HINRICHS, 2016). Also, some authors studied the mechanism of conflict management in a family chat (LEE, 2016), observed a multimodal expression of humor in a group of elderly users, analyzed reactions on humor of emotional self-presentation in the status of the Viber user profile.

These are a few examples from many interesting scientific studies concerning Viber. However, despite recent academic interest in this technical environment, there are no publications on multinational workplace exchanges written by multilingual participants. Let's consider the features of the language communication. The participants are from one of the groups in Viber. This group implements communication between the participants of the volunteer movement and includes participants from such countries as Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine. The group consists of 15 people aged from 45 to 65 years. They form an online community that demonstrates certain characteristics for online communities. These characteristics are based on the following criteria:

- (1) active, independent participation; core of permanent participants;
- (2) common past, purpose, culture, norms and values;
- (3) solidarity, support, reciprocity;
- (4) criticism, conflict, ways to resolve the conflict;
- (5) self-awareness of the group as an entity different from other groups;
- (6) the emergence of roles, hierarchies, rituals.

However, these criteria can be interpreted by the authors in different ways. For example, solidarity can be measured by humor, positive politeness and reciprocity, etc. The following moments of communication in this group were studied:

- "choice" of moments for exchange;
- "style", which refers to the form of expression of what was said;

- "negotiations".

The analysis focuses on the style of opinions exchange in these common moments. In sociolinguistics, style is often closely related to how speakers construct a way of being or identity, combining social and linguistic resources available in a community in a noticeable way. The study of discourse concerns the formality and informality observed in interactions occurring at certain moments, which may entail the use of textual language strategies or characteristics of oral written texts. The adaptation and building of group solidarity with the help of language style is also analyzed.

This methodology was also applied to the analysis of communication, which was connected with the coverage of events connected with critical situation with the spread of coronavirus infection, and the participation of group members in these conversations was also evaluated.

DISCUSSION

Viber is a tool for organizing offline moments. It functions as a public bulletin board of the group, a continuation of face-to-face meetings when partners relax having dinner and communicate. It is a tool used to connect the group and maximize sociability, used with a clear purpose of the relationship. Text messages are primarily a social tool. This is the reason that emotional vocabulary, emojis and expressive punctuation are numerous in the language practices observed in these common moments. Friends and community members usually set local stylistic norms of interaction, although they can change their stylistic decision depending on the message. Therefore, a participant in the study group often uses fragmentary sentences without subjects, for example, "hope", "stuck" and "it's about to start". Research shows that one of the strategies used by users of instant messengers and social networks to reduce the time required for writing is a simplified syntax, such as subject or modal deletion.

Often, the final element is used in statements, a laugh or an image with an emoji, which contextualizes the messages as playful or joking. Emoticons and emojis have become traditional markers of the communicative intention of the author of the message. When they are inserted into the final positions, they usually indicate the tone of the message or its illocutionary force. Inserting images with captions to illustrate the message being sent is another strategy that allows you to enhance the humorous nature of the moments. In Viber chats, humor and cheerful vocabulary strengthen solidarity and social unity.

Also, statements are usually made in one language, common to everyone within the group, but sometimes lexical words in other languages are inserted into the texts. The literature on the phenomenon of language mixing has illustrated the use of code switching in social networks for gratitude, greeting, sending good wishes, as well as a template language expressing common speech acts and emotions within a certain group.

In general, we can say that all the above features illustrate usually playful, relaxed and friendly tone of the group's messages on Viber at typical exchange (chat) moments. This tone is created by including the features of the text language, graphic elements and language game by switching the code and selecting the language. In addition to languages and linguistic features, authors can fully engage the capabilities of the environment, a lot of paralinguistic and multimodal elements to convey their message, thereby emphasizing the cheerful tone of conversations. The results add weight to the observation that social networks encourage creativity, allowing users to easily mix different types of semiotic and linguistic resources available to them only when writing.

However, critical situations discussed in messengers or social networks require formality in communication. At the same time, during the communication process we don't mention the subject of messages as such (establishing the well-being of group members), but about a situation outside the network that affects some of the participants, which seems to cause certain communicative actions and the acceptance of a more formal style.

Accordingly, the analysis of communication moments is closely related to the choice, style and negotiations. As for the style, you can see examples of fairly formal writing in Viber. This highlights that the principles of online communication genres depend more on the communicative "intention" than on the sociolinguistic conventions that have arisen within the

technological limitations of this environment. Accordingly, we should talk about some structural and stylistic formalities in messages, exchanged at critical moments, observed in the use of greetings, goodbyes, separation into paragraphs and the absence of emojis, in contrast to the less formal style observed in most typical exchanges of communication in any chat. Accordingly, the gravity of the moment affects the style of writing. It is also necessary to emphasize the connection between the language repertoire and communicative practices. In particular, the results show that code switching is mainly used to send good wishes and strengthen solidarity at critical moments for the group.

Accordingly, case studies in the behavior of linguistic analysis may be limited, because the results of one study cannot always be summarized in another. However, what is interesting for online communication research is that limitations of research lead to a detailed, comprehensive understanding of what is being studied in order to record accurately the wide variety of group practices that characterize the computer-mediated environment.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, the combination of thematic studies and the study of key moments when relevant offline moments affect the linguistic practices of a particular community can affect the understanding of current semi-social online communication. Accordingly, stylistic and linguistic practices of communication in social networks and messengers bear the imprint of the communication process and are directly related to the topic of the issues discussed. Being out of critical situation, such communication will bear the imprint of ease and be confirmed by the presence of colloquial words, impulsive abbreviations, nominative sentences and a significant number of emojis used. In case when a critical or any other serious situation occurs, the communication style of the group members will change, and this will happen under the influence of the gravity of the situation and the change in the tone and style of communication of the participants of a particular group in social networks or messengers.

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Sociolinguistic analysis of the communication style of users of social networks and messengers

Análise sociolinguística do estilo de comunicação dos usuários de redes sociais e mensagens

Análisis sociolingüístico del estilo de comunicación de los usuarios de redes sociales y mensajes

Resumo

O artigo apresenta uma análise sociolinguística do estilo de comunicação dos usuários nas redes sociais e mensageiros. A partir dos métodos de sociolinguística e métodos de análise indireta do discurso, os momentos habituais de troca de mensagens entre usuários de um determinado grupo social em Viber são comparados com suas interações utilizando o mesmo ambiente nas redes sociais durante a ocorrência de situações fora do padrão. A combinação de estudos de caso e o estudo de momentos-chave em que momentos offline relevantes afetam as práticas linguísticas de uma determinada comunidade podem influenciar a compreensão da comunicação online semi-social atual. Assim, as práticas estilísticas e linguísticas de comunicação nas redes sociais e mensageiros carregam a marca do processo de comunicação e estão diretamente relacionadas ao tema das questões discutidas. Se, fora de uma situação crítica, tal comunicação receberá uma impressão de facilidade e será confirmada pelo uso de palavras coloquiais, abreviaturas impulsivas, frases nomeadas e um número significativo de emojis.

Palavras-chave: Redes sociais. Mensagens. Estilo de comunicação. Análise sociolinguística.

Abstract

The article presents a sociolinguistic analysis of the communication style of users in social networks and messengers. Based on the methods of sociolinguistics and indirect analysis methods of discourse, the usual moments of exchanging messages between users of a certain social group in Viber are compared with their interactions using the same environment in social networks during the occurrence of non-standard situations. The combination of case studies and the study of key moments when relevant offline moments affect the linguistic practices of a particular community can influence the understanding of current semi-social online communication. Accordingly, stylistic and linguistic practices of communication in social networks and messengers bear the imprint of the communication process and are directly related to the topic of the issues discussed. If, outside of a critical situation, such communication will receive an impression of ease and be confirmed by the usage of colloquial words, impulsive abbreviations, named sentences and a significant number of emojis.

Keywords: Social networks. Messengers. Communication style. Sociolinguistic analysis.

Resumen

El artículo presenta un análisis sociolingüístico del estilo de comunicación de los usuarios en redes sociales y mensajeros. Basado en los métodos de sociolingüística y de análisis indirecto del discurso, los momentos habituales de intercambio de mensajes entre usuarios de un determinado grupo social en Viber se comparan con sus interacciones utilizando el mismo entorno en las redes sociales durante la ocurrencia de situaciones no estándar. La combinación de estudios de casos y el estudio de momentos clave en los que los momentos relevantes fuera de línea afectan las prácticas lingüísticas de una comunidad en particular puede influir en la comprensión de la comunicación en línea semisocial actual. En consecuencia, las prácticas estilísticas y lingüísticas de comunicación en redes sociales y mensajeros llevan la impronta del proceso de comunicación y están directamente relacionadas con el tema de los temas discutidos. Si, fuera de una situación crítica, dicha comunicación recibirá una impresión de facilidad y se confirmará mediante el uso de palabras coloquiales, abreviaturas impulsivas, oraciones con nombre y un número significativo de emojis.

Palabras-clave: Redes sociales. Mensajes. Estilo de comunicación. Análisis sociolingüístico.