

LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE SPEECHES OF BRITISH AND CHINESE POLITICIANS

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Abstract

For efficient communication it is important to be aware of the cultural backgrounds of the interlocutors. Adequate understanding of the communicative intention is of particular importance in political discourse. The aim of this study is to reveal how linguistic and cultural identity of the speaker impacts the way this speaker uses the language. The study is based on political discourse mostly on the speakers in Chinese and British politicians. It focuses on the differences in using «I» and «We» pronouns in Britain and Chinese political discourse. The following research is completed on the grounds of Theresa May, David Cameron, Li Keqiang and Xi Jinping speeches. The given study was conducted with the implementation of Speech Act Theory (Searle 1969), Politeness Theory (Brown and Levinson 1987, Leech 1983, 2014, Larina and Leech 2014, Watts 2003), and the Theory of Cultural Scripts (Wierzbicka 2003). Complex, communicative and discourse analysis have been used to clarify language means in the process of implementing their linguistic and cultural identities as linguistic and cultural identity reflects the peculiarities of the national identity. The study explores how the cultural affiliation influences the use of personal pronouns and what is the illocution of using «I» and «We». In-depth research in the field of linguistic and cultural identity will contribute to the achievement of mutual understanding of representatives of different cultures. Practical application of the results is possible in the aspect of linguistics, cultural studies, discourse analysis, pragma-linguistics, psycho-linguistics as well as in everyday communication.

Keywords: culture, identity, political, discourse, chinese, english.

1. INTRODUCTION

Numerous changes are associated with the spread of the anthropocentric paradigm in the linguistics which took place at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st centuries. First of all, the fact that the interaction of language and men, as well as their mutual influence occurs constantly, became obvious to scientists. Thanks to the new scientific paradigm, the well-known Russian linguist Jan Baudouin de Courtenay formulated the idea that the language exists only in the brains, souls and psyches of an individual or a group of individuals belonging to the same language community [2, 20-25]. At the same time, the scientist emphasizes that identity is determined by the following characteristics, "social affiliation, worldview, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, education, religion, traditions, customs, language, physical and mental development, profession, age, class and civil affiliation" [2, 14]. After that it became clear that there are many cultures and these cultures are equal. They are not worse and not better, they

are just different. Representatives of other cultures are characterized by other mores, customs, traditions and behaviour. It was found that there is no single role according to which all people are divided into 'cultured' and 'uncultured', but there are many cultures, each of them is unique and follows its own laws.

According to Brown and Levinson 1987, Leech 1983, 2014 the expansion of contacts between representatives of different cultures in all spheres of human activity and the migration of people, globalization trends, the need to understand man-made disasters, social cataclysms, conflicts on different levels and severity gave rise to real multiculturalism of modern societies. All these factors have created the need to realize the importance of maintaining a continuous intra- and inter-cultural dialogue, the result of which should become the achievement of the most complete mutual understanding and penetration into each other's spiritual worlds, which is possible only if one treats the other as an equal. In any case, current issues are connected with the dialogue, Success is possible in in the event that mutual understanding, it will become a key in many fields of human activities. [3, 27; 4, 70]

The complex of issues related to the achievement of mutual understanding between interlocutors is quite complex, so that the outcome of the interaction is not predictable. On the one hand, in some cases mutual understanding does not occur with all the conditions which are necessary for a positive outcome of communication. On the other hand, mutual understanding can be achieved despite the conditions.

Since mutual understanding is determined by the cultural, historical, ethnic and civilizational framework, the achievement of mutual understanding is considered as the main problem of intercultural communication. Scientists nowadays pay attention on the phenomenon of mutual understanding, the conditions for successful interpersonal communication in various types of interaction, the conditions for the preservation of cultural identity and the permeability of cultures, taking into account the peculiarities of the cultural identity of communicants.

Communication takes place as an interaction of individuals, each of whom "shows" his/her culture in the process of inculturation, mastering the model of discursive activity with some measures of awareness. Therefore we consider it possible to explore the problem of reaching mutual understanding in intercultural communication examining the identity of the subject of intercultural communication.

It is especially important in politics. The success of speeches in the political arena depends directly on the ethical and cultural identity of the person and the surrounding culture. The correct interpretation of information in accordance with the standards adopted in this language and culture is one of the urgent tasks of cross-cultural communication, as it affects international and inter-ethnic relations between countries. Politicians' cultural and linguistic identity influences their speeches.

The purpose of this article is to highlight the distinctive features of linguo-cultural identity in the speeches of of Great Britain and Chinese politicians. The research is based on the speeches of President of the People's Republic of China Xi Jinping and British Prime Minister Theresa May. The subject of this research is the features of linguistic and cultural identity inherent to selected politicians.

1.1 The purpose of the study

The main aims of the present study were to investigate linguistic and cultural identity of political representatives in English and Chinese cultures. And also to examine if the cultural affiliation influences the use of personal pronouns and what is the illocution of using «I» and «We» used by English and Chinese politicians. Finally, the research is aimed at highlighting the distinctive features of linguo-cultural identity in the speech of politicians of Great Britain and China.

1.2 Research questions

In addition to the mentioned aim, the present research puts the following questions:

1. What are the linguistic and cultural differences in using "I" and "We" pronouns in English and Chinese?
2. What are the similarities and differences in the way of Theresa May and Xi Jinping speaking?
3. How do the cultures influence the speeches of the politicians in the chosen countries?

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This section deals with the literature review outlining the relevant issues regarding pragmatics in general and linguistic and cultural identity in particular. Accordingly, the researcher provides a review of theoretical research studies that investigated the the view on the linguistic and cultural identity in different languages.

Recently, the problem of identity in linguistic research presents when we mention referring to the concept of "speech portrait" - "socially marked ways of choosing and using language means and features of speech behaviour [8, 91]". This term is traditionally used in sociolinguistic studies for describing individual or typical speech behaviour of representatives in different social groups. Two classes of characteristics are considered as components of a speech portrait: linguistic and sociocultural. [8] Linguistic characteristics of speech include features of phonetic and lexico-semantic units. The sociocultural characteristics include the description of such features of speech behavior as the use of speech formulas and attention to the language game.

We are faced with the problem of studying personal identity in research, which is most often devoted to communicative behaviour in a foreign language environment, since the communicative behavior of a representative of another culture is governed by the communicative strategy of an individual's personality, which depends on perceived choice and ethnic identity. A communicative strategy is understood primarily as a conscious orientation of speech behavior towards one's own/someone else's.

The ideas of E. Sapir and B. Whorf about the domination of language over thinking, actions and world perception of people, have an influence on the position of L. Weisgerber, P. Hartmann, G. Goltz, G. Ipsen and others, that the thinking of every nation has specific national features, as a result of which its development is entirely determined by the immanent development of the national language. [10, 56-90]

Problems of mutual understanding in the course of intercultural interactions are in the focus of attention of foreign linguists, anthropologists, communication specialists who have an interest in issues of value orientations, ethno-cultural identity, a sense of alienation in a different culture environment, overcoming cultural shock and identity crisis [R. Benedict, M. Bennet, J. W. Bury, S. Bochner, M. Mead, E. Hall, J. Hofstede, and others]. The given study was mostly conducted with the implementation of Speech Act Theory [Searle 1969], Politeness Theory [Brown and Levinson 1987, Leech 1983, 2014, Larina and Leech 2014, Watts 2003], and the Theory of Cultural Scripts [14, 145-178].

It should be noted that from the linguistics' point of view, one of the ways to comprehend national/ethnic identity is to study the linguistic picture of the world. "The linguistic picture of the world is an idea of reality, reflected in linguistic signs and their meanings [8, 70]." It includes the information about the world, the ordering of objects and phenomena. The study of the linguistic picture of the world gives the key to the discovery the established type of identity, the characteristics of people of a particular culture. The coincidence of linguistic pictures of the world creates a sense of community, unity within one ethnos.

3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

In this part of the study we have explained first very briefly the data collection methods and the instruments which were used. Then, this part has been followed by the data analysis for which only a qualitative mode has been used. In the present study, the obtained data from the interviews of the English and Chinese politicians were analyzed and interpreted. That is, all ten situations were analyzed from the point of view of pragmatics.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

The conducted analysis has shown both some similarities and differences in the way the English and Chinese politicians of communication. It was revealed that Chinese and English speakers may use "I" and 'We' with a difference. The following markers of "our own" or the same identity the following should be highlighted characteristic of British and Chinese political discourse:

- inclusive "we" in English, which helps to include an audience in the circle of people close to the people's views (We are the change we need); inclusive "we" in Chinese is grammatically different and means that everybody the politician is talking about is in one room.
- compatibility lexemes (union, integrated, all, common, same, share something). T. May tried to achieve this effect by addressing the audience in some complicated situations. As for Chinese politicians, it is more common to use we almost every time they speak. In this case, individualism in the UK is opposed to collectivism in China. Responsibility for the actions committed in China is divided into all.
- formulas of involvement (So do I, like you): while Chinese politicians use phrases in the plural to convey the interlocutors' involvement in current events, British politicians prefer to compare themselves with the common people, make themselves involved.
- focus on the recipient (You, people): Poor people....

Situation 1 咱们都是 1974 年当上大队书记 [17]. (Zánmen dōu shì 1974 nián dāng shàng dàduì shūjì). All of us occupy major positions since 1974)). It should be noted that in Chinese there are several personal pronouns with the meaning "we". Political discourse predominantly uses 咱们 (zanmen) or 我们 (women). The frequent use of the pronouns "we" refers to the means of unity and rapprochement with the public, in front of which the politician speaks. In this case, 我们 (women) carries a more general meaning. "咱们" is more like a colloquial, for example "咱几个" (zanjige) means roughly "we several people" or just "several people including me".

'Women' and 'zanmen' indicate different people. Depending on the context, these pronouns may feature an additional connotation of meaning. Specifically, 'zanmen' includes the person who is talking with you. This word will let others feel closer with you in emotion. In contrast, 'women' usually exclude the person who is talking with you, and in rare cases, it also can be included. "咱哥俩" (we two brothers). While "我们" (women) is the general written/spoken form and is commonly used China. The morpheme used by Xi Jinping shows that "we" are all present at the time of the conversation in the hall. Using this very pronoun the orator makes it clear that the responsibility for political moves since 1974 is on everyone. As for Theresa May, she, on the contrary, often uses the personal pronoun of the first person singular in her speeches, which emphasizes the individualism of the inhabitants of Great Britain and creates a highly personalized discourse. For example:

Situation 2 "These decisions were not taken seriously. It was not easy to make these decisions, but I am sure that this is a decision that truly meets national interests"[4]. The use of a passive construction in this example emphasizes the formality of the appeal and conveys the pragmatic features of the utterance - the illocutionary goal is to shift the obligations from the speaker for the actions performed. Mental state transmits acceptance of responsibility taken, is an expert. The Prime Minister shares confidence based on the use of syntactic parallelism, in which words are repeated in successive parts of the statement these decisions. As a result of the difficult political situation in the UK due to the country's withdrawal from the European Union, the intentions in a speech by the Prime-Minister indicate the seriousness of the decisions made and their steadfastness.

Situation 3. Contrary, Xi Jinping's speeches are often made in such a way that it is clear for audience, who is responsible for the actions: 使我们的党永远不变质、我们的红色江山永远不变色((Shǐ wǒmen de dǎng yǒngyuǎn bù biànzhì, wǒmen de hóngsè jiāngshān yǒngyuǎn bù biànsè)[17]. Let our party never deteriorate, our red mountains will never change color). Chinese political discourse is not characterized by the use of passive structures, due to the need for politicians to demonstrate a strong will, as they are representatives of the people. Since ancient times, leaders in China have been considered "sons of heaven", the most important ones capable of taking responsibility.

Situation 4 Let us look at the T. May's way of taking responsibility. "It was a long time for a detailed discussion of the European Union. There have been meetings with our EU counterparts. Difficult days ahead. The Cabinet has just had a long, detailed, heated discussion about the draft exit agreement (UK) and a general political declaration on our partnership with the European Union. These documents are the result of many hours of intense negotiations between British officials and many meetings that I and other ministers had with our colleagues from the EU.... there are difficult days ahead"[12]. In addition to the function of informing the people and demonstrating the successes that T. May distinguishes, the Prime-Minister uses the reverse gradation, not reassuring the audience in his own words, but preparing for the upcoming difficult political and economic situation. In her statements, the Prime-Minister is straightforward. More than that, in this example we see manifestations of European individualism - I and other ministers, while in Chinese linguistic culture, in particular, in political discourse, the form "we are with..." or impersonal or indefinite-personal sentences prevail.

Situation 5 In the state policy of Great Britain, Teresa May emphasizes the image of a single state consisting of friendly nations: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (family of nations), while acting as a strong-willed political figure. She writes on her tweet dated November 5th, 2018, "This is personal for me. I've rely on the NHS every day. As prime minister, I intend to do everything possible to secure our healthcare system in the future so that it functions for all of us. I do it for myself. Like millions of people in our country, I rely on the healthcare system every day. [13].

In this example, personalization is used to bring T. May closer to their people. The goal is to show that the

Prime-Minister is an ordinary person, just like everyone else, influencing the addressee's emotions, using the approach tactics. Along with the listed tendencies, T. May sets up a common communicative contact with her audience. We are representatives of one country, we are concerned about similar problems, we are united, we belong to the same culture. Thus support is expressed.

Situation 6: "From my first day in the job, I knew I had a clear mission before me... Throughout the long and complex negotiations that have taken place over the last year and a half, I have never lost sight of that duty..." Here T. May use "I", "before me" deictic signs containing a non-distancing component. She put a stress that she is a part of this community, of her nation, using 'before me', "I".

Situation 7 In addition to the use of special pronouns, the Chinese leader actively uses metaphors and stable expressions in his speech, thereby demonstrating a deep knowledge of the history and culture of his own country. In the context of the current political situation, Russia regularly becomes the object of metaphorization in Chinese. For example, talking about Russia, Xi Jinping says that the key tendencies of relations with Russia are: 开放的发展、合作的发展、共赢的发展 ((Kāifàng de fā zhǎn, hézuò de fā zhǎn, gòng yíng de fā zhǎn))[18]. Openness, cooperation, and mutual benefit and the win-win principle [7] are, in other words, a benefit gained by both countries. The statement demonstrates a clear positive connotation for Russia.

Giving Russia a positive assessment, Xi Jinping does not violate one of the main concepts of Chinese perception of foreigners as "strangers", those, who are different, who are not Chinese. In British politicians, on the contrary, "strangers" can not be awarded a positive assessment. As an example, let us turn to the excerpt from the speech of David Cameron, in which the circle of "strangers" is well constructed. Strangers are above all, enemies, while merciless, sharing the hatred of terrorists to the West. They use the most terrible weapons and therefore pose a threat: It's not always a matter of course if you want it. This is the central threat of our time... global challenges to defeating it. Britons who join Islamic State are enemies of UK".

Situation 8 有些吃饱了没事干的外国人，对我们的事情指手画脚。中国一不输出革命，二不输出饥饿和贫困，三不去折腾你们，还有什么好说的 (Yǒuxiē chī bǎole méishì gān de wàiguó rén, duì wǒmen de shìqíng zhǐshǒuhuàjiǎo. Zhōngguó yī bù shūchū géming, èr bù shūchū jī'è hé pínkùn, sān bù qù zhētēng nǐmen, hái yǒu shé me hǎoshuō de. (There are some bored foreigners, with full stomachs, who have nothing better to do than point fingers at us... First, China doesn't export Revolution; second, China doesn't export hunger and poverty; third, China doesn't come and cause you headaches, what more is there to be said?))[19]. The given situation demonstrates the attitude to those who are different from Chinese. In addition, the statements of Chinese politicians are more metaphorical. While the British are straightforward, as we already mentioned.

5. CONCLUSION

Analysis of the material of this article allows us to verify the polarity of European and Eastern cultures. T. Mei uses the personal pronouns of the first person to express individuality, the uniqueness of the person, while Xi Jinping adheres to generalizations using "we" or impersonal and indefinite-personal sentences. The political discourse of Great Britain is more peculiar to the use of a passive voice, rather than in Chinese. Both politicians in their speeches regularly resort to morphemization. Non-verbal language T. May is more expressive, the chairman of the PRC is more constrained and strict. Both politicians formulate their statements in such a way as to convey ownership of the people using rapprochement tactics. In Chinese, for this there is a special pronoun "we". T. May's sayings are more expressive and emotional, as well as straightforward. Xi Jinping prefers to use more figurative speech.

In both English and Chinese political discourse, the concept "one's own" is understood as "own", "correct", "acceptable", "decent", "strong", "realizable". As for "others", they are marked as "unknown", "hostile", "entangled", "complex", "oppressive". As a rule, the implementation of the opposition involves deictic signs containing the semantic component "distance": "we" - "they". "We" is a political leader speaking either on his own behalf, but more often on behalf of the party, organization, social group. "They", "strangers", can be called by names (in English) or without any specific information (in Chinese).

From the conducted research, it follows that the linguistic and cultural identity reflects the peculiarities of the national identity and the cultural identity that has developed within the country, making it possible to understand the perception of the linguistic culture of the speakers of a particular language. In-depth research in the field of linguistic and cultural identity will contribute to the achievement of mutual understanding of representatives of different cultures. Practical application of the results is possible in the

aspect of linguistics, cultural studies, discourse analysis, pragmalinguistics, psycholinguistics, as well as in everyday communicative acts.

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