

SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF NETWORK MEDICAL DISCOURSE

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Abstract

The article analyses syntactic features of network medical discourse (NMD). It is shown that various forms of virtual interaction are successfully used in different NMD genres, including forums, personal websites, social networks, advertisements, banners, emails, Internet chats and many others, each of which is characterized by specific features, conceptualization and internal content. The authors state that the influence of the Internet environment leads to transformations of all the language system levels, conceptualizing the internal discourse content. The Internet has the most influence on professional medical communication within forums, which is reflected in syntactic constructions.

The syntactic side of a statement is one of the most effective tools for exerting speech influence: it has its own stylistic functionality and takes an active part in the process of implementing speech strategies and tactics. The syntactic side of NMD is characterized by the use of numerous constructions such as addresses, hortatory constructions, interrogative constructions, negative constructions, conditional sentences, and parcelling. These constructions function and interact in different ways within various NMDs, reflecting the goals and communicative intentions of communicants.

The analysis showed that the syntactic design of various NMD genres varies considerably. The above syntactic constructions affect the addressee in different ways and are aimed at the implementation of specific pragmatic functions set by the addresser.

The analysis of texts revealed a number of features that will help us to gain an insight into many aspects of professional communication in the modern business community. The materials of the article can be used for linguistic and methodological purposes: in the course of training future doctors in professional communication skills as well as in university courses in communication theory, speech communication theory, speech culture, discourse theory and text interpretation.

Keywords: network medical discourse, professional communication, syntactic features, genre features.

INTRODUCTION

Network medical discourse is a complex, multifaceted, multidimensional phenomenon, which includes a number of genres, certain communicative, structural-semantic, and social-role features that form the

specifics of communicative interaction. The following NMD genres are distinguished: academic, professional-practical, commercial, advertising, interpersonal, and network media discourse. Each NMD genre involves genres of virtual interaction, including forums, personal sites, social networks, advertisements, banners, emails, and Internet chat, each of which is characterized by specific features, conceptualization, and internal content. Consequently, the question arises: What are the specific features of syntactic constructions in various NMD genres?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Over the past sixty years, discourse has attracted attention of both foreign and domestic linguists. The emergence of new works on various aspects of discourse indicates attempts to explore it from all sides. In our opinion, it is particularly relevant to study discourse from institutional positions, i.e. when discourse is studied in terms of a particular social institution.

Taking into account the specifics of the professional functioning sphere, unique characteristics of medical discourse, distinguishing it from the variability of the results of human speech and thinking, should include: deontological orientation, persuasiveness, linguistic-therapeutical orientation, focus on "word treatment" [1], "the result of the integration of objective medical knowledge, expert opinion, personal judgement and communication strategies used by the doctor to verbalize them in order to exert the desired effect on the patient" [2]. It should be noted that the genre features and the influence of the Internet environment lead to transformations of all language system levels, conceptualizing the internal discourse content: phonetic-graphic, lexical, stylistic, syntactic, word-building, morphological, and textual. In this article we consider the main syntactic features in different NMD genres.

METHODS AND DATA

The study involved general scientific methods of observation, description and generalisation, statistical and linguistic analysis. Linguistic methods allowed us to distinguish text-building features at the syntactic level and analyse punctuation features. Statistical analysis was used to correlate verbal (word, phrase, sentence).

ANALYSIS

After analysing texts of medical websites, we identified the following features.

The syntactic side of a statement is one of the most effective speech impact tools: it has its own stylistic functionality and takes an active part in the process of implementing speech strategies and tactics. D. R. Drozdova states that the most common syntactic constructions are addresses, imperative constructions, interrogative constructions, negative constructions, conditional sentences, and parcelling [3].

In modern scientific literature, "address" is understood as the nomination of the person who is the addressee of speech. Some examples of these stylistic constructions are given below:

Здравствуйте Игорь. Рановато вам отменили тирозол, как правило отменяют не ранее 1,5 лет приема, даже на нормальных показателях. В каждом рецидивом шансы, что болезнь отступит все меньше. [Hello, Igor! It is too early for you to stop taking thyrozol. As a rule, it is not cancelled before 1.5 year of administration, even at normal values. With each recurrence, the chances that the disease will recede are less and less.]

Сергей Иванович, наверное вы правы и мне нужно возобновлять лечение с помощью АД [Sergey Ivanovich, you are probably right and I need to resume treatment with ADs]. ["Healthy Communication"]

Discussion Club. URL:

<http://forums.rusmedserv.com/showthread.php?p=1154164&highlight=%EA%EE%EB%EB%E5%E8#post1154164>

In the above examples, the addresses are stylistically neutral, aimed at concretising the addresser (addressee?) of the statement and to increasing the dialogization of speech within mass communication, which, in fact, is communication on a forum.

Due to the fact that forums for professional and practical interactions are intended to organize polylogues or collective discussions, addresses by name are quite rare: it is much more common to use collective addresses or formulas of politeness, for example:

Уважаемые Форумчане! Подскажите , пожалуйста ,что делать или к кому обратиться. Год назад обнаружили диффузный токсичный зоб 2 степени. + АИТ. Был тиреотоксикоз. Лечение тирозолом 30 мг, далее уменьшение дозы [Dear Forumerers! Tell me, please, what to do or who to contact. A year ago,

toxic diffuse goiter of the 2nd degree was found. + Hashimoto's thyroiditis. Thyrotoxicosis was diagnosed. Treatment with thyrozol 30 mg, with a further dose decline]

["Healthy Communication" Discussion Club. URL: <http://forums.rusmedserv.com/showthread.php?t=359001>];

Добрый день, уважаемые врачи. Прошло уже около пол года после моего последнего обращения к вам в этом форуме и я опять же хотел у вас проконсультироваться кое в чем. Если вкратце, то психо-эмоциональное состояние мое с того времени значительно улучшилось - я вообще не испытываю никаких проблем со сном, появились интересы, легко общаюсь с друзьями, людьми, люблю свою семью. [Good afternoon, dear doctors! About half a year has already passed since I last appealed to you in this forum, and again I need a bit of advice on a little something. In short, my psycho-emotional state has significantly improved since that time – I don't have any problems with sleep at all, interests have revived, I easily communicate with friends, people, I love my family.] ["Healthy Communication" Discussion Club. URL: <http://forums.rusmedserv.com/showthread.php?p=1154164&highlight=%EA%EE%EB%EB%E5%E8#post1154164>]

In other NMD genres (academic, corporate, advertising, regulatory), addresses, as a rule, are not presented. The focus on the reader in academic discourse is presented in passive syntactic constructions, for example:

Предлагаемая читателю работа посвящена психологическим аспектам ожогов [The paper proposed to the reader is devoted to the psychological aspects of burns.] ["Medical Psychology" Information Portal URL: <http://www.medpsy.ru/library/library203.pdf>].

In advertising, commercial and corporate discourses, addresses are not used due to the specificity of these resources: their main pragmatic goal is to represent products, goods or organizations; their focus is on the mass recipient; therefore, it makes no sense to implement strategies for intimization or dialogization involving addresses.

Hortatory constructions (imperative sentences) are aimed at representing the speaker's volition in relation to that which is happening, at giving reasons for the predicted behavioural strategy. These syntactic constructions are widely used in regulatory and educational discourses, for example:

- разработать и разместить планы работ по независимой оценке качества оказания медицинских услуг медицинскими организациями на своих официальных сайтах в информационно-телекоммуникационной сети «Интернет» [- to develop and post plans for independent assessment of the quality of medical services provided by medical organizations on their official websites on the Internet information and telecommunications network] [Order of the Ministry of Health of Russia No. 136 of March 3, 2016. Official Website of the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation];

Детальнее описывать обстоятельства травмы. 3. Тщательнее оценивать психический статус до ожога [To describe circumstances of injuries in more detail.3. Carefully evaluate mental status before a burn] ["Medical Psychology" Information Portal. URL: <http://www.medpsy.ru/library/library203.pdf>].

The use of hortatory constructions (imperative sentences) is determined by the discourse specifics, the obligatory execution of directives by the addressees, and the established work practice. In these discourses, hortatory constructions model the official text style aimed at eliminating the possibility of an erroneous or ambiguous interpretation of instructions. Instructions are stylistically neutral, exclamatory sentences are excluded.

Hortatory constructions are practically not used in informational and corporate discourses, which is due to the need for the most objective representation of informational data, the lack of intentions to encourage activities within the network reference literature, the need to implement an individual approach, and high intimization of doctor-patient interactions in corporate NMDs. It should be noted that the lack of motivation to act in corporate NMDs is due to the specificity of medical activity as a social institution, the inability to involve medical specialists in the activities of the institution using virtual space due to the lack of ability to check the level of professional competence formation via the Internet, and the inability to provide practical professional assistance in doctor-patient mode.

Negative constructions are used to represent what, in the addresser's opinion, is not worth doing, in order to prevent the addressee from implementing erroneous behavioural strategies and tactics that could harm his/her health:

Если говорить о детях после года, то самое главное - не вводить «вредные» продукты [If we talk about

children after a year, then the most important thing is not to introduce “harmful” products] [Obesity in children. Home Doctor, no. 2 (154), March 24, 2016, p.1 URL: http://gcmp.ru/template/uploads/2016/03/dd16_2.pdf] (medical media discourse);

Думаю, что не будет излишним передёргиванием сказать, что с таким же основанием при простуде надо идти к простудологу [Дискуссионный клуб «Здоровое общение». I think that it would not be excessive juggling to say that, if you have a cold, you might as well go to a cold specialist [“Healthy Communication” Discussion Club. URL:

<http://forums.rusmedserv.com/showthread.php?t=289334&highlight=%EA%EE%EB%EB%E5%E8>] – (professional-practical NMD);

У пациентов, которые своевременно обратились к врачу, гораздо больше шансов вернуться к нормальной жизни и уже никогда не столкнуться с рецидивом опухоли [Официальный сайт Лечебно-реабилитационного центра Росздрава. Patients who promptly went to a doctor are much more likely to return to normal life and never again experience a tumour recurrence [Official website of the Medical and Rehabilitation Centre of the Federal Agency of Health and Social Development. URL: <http://www.med-rf.ru/directions/22/>] – (corporate NMD);

Сами по себе эти “термины” не фиксируют болезненного состояния, они - не диагнозы [Дискуссионный клуб «Здоровое общение». By themselves, these “terms” do not fix the disease state, they are not diagnoses [“Healthy Communication” Discussion Club. URL: <http://forums.rusmedserv.com/showthread.php?t=289334&highlight=%EA%EE%EB%EB%E5%E8>] – (professional-practical NMD).

It should be noted that in advertising NMDs, negative constructions are minimized, since neither negation in itself nor the semantics of negative particles can promote the implementation of the pragmatic function of advertising messages, i.e. to create a favourable image of products or equipment. In advertising and information sources of texts, a negative particle is found mainly in the “not only, but ...” construction, thus indicating some additional advantages or characteristics of products, goods, etc.:

Стрессовая активация обладает не только отрицательными, но и положительными чертами [Информационный портал “Медицинская психология” URL: Stress activation has not only negative but also positive features [“Medical Psychology” Information Portal. URL: <http://www.medpsy.ru/library/library203.pdf>] (informational NMD).

У нас можно не только купить камеру по наиболее выгодной цене, но и получить бесплатную консультацию по любым вопросам ее эксплуатации [You can not only buy a camera at the best price but also get a free consultation on any issues related to its operation] [Official website of “ROSIMED” Company. URL:

http://www.rosimed.ru/products/medical/z1/cameri_dezinfekcionnie/kamera_dezinfekcionnaya_kpd_3r] – (advertising, commercial NMD).

Interrogative constructions in written language are most often aimed at involving the recipient in communication, enhancing dialogization and discourse interactivity, for example:

Зачем рисковать, если можно защититься? Why risk if you can defend yourself? [Obesity in children. Home Doctor, no. 2 (154), March 24, 2016, p.1 URL: http://gcmp.ru/template/uploads/2016/03/dd16_2.pdf] – (medical media discourse) – the question in the title of the article is aimed at motivating the recipient for further reading;

Есть ли какой-то шанс заранее узнать о предрасположенности к раку? [Is there any chance to learn in advance about the predisposition to cancer?] [Official website of the Medical and Rehabilitation Centre of the Federal Agency of Health and Social Development. URL: <http://www.med-rf.ru/directions/22/>] – (corporate NMD);

...вот потихонечку и стараюсь разбираться со здоровьем, сейчас появилось время! цитата с вашего форума о всд:” А что тогда со мной? [... so, little by little I’m trying to get on with my health, now I have time! a quote from your forum about angioneurosis: “And what about me?”] [“Healthy Communication” Discussion Club. URL: <http://forums.rusmedserv.com/showthread.php?t=289334&highlight=%EA%EE%EB%EB%E5%E8>] – (corporate NMD) – in this case, interrogative constructions are used to reflect the author’s internal dialogue, represent the internal emotional state and feelings, and enhance the dialogization of a monologic statement.

In information-reference literature, interrogative syntactic constructions are not used, since this NMD genre is designed to give answers rather than to ask questions. This technique is minimized in academic NMDs and not presented in regulatory documents.

Parcelling is not used in academic, regulatory, documentary (?), advertising, commercial SMD, and medical media discourse, but it functions widely in professional-practical interaction, bringing it as close as possible to colloquial language, for example:

А преподады не ругаются? Что вместо учебников планшеты? [And don't teachers swear? Because tablets are used instead of textbooks?] [[http://rsmu.org/forum/index.php? forums/universitetskaja-zhizn.14/](http://rsmu.org/forum/index.php?forums/universitetskaja-zhizn.14/)];

Действительно это про меня(...я как комок нервов,который лучше не трогать,все чаще испытываю такое состояние при котором мне нужно быть в собственных мыслях абсолютно без посторонних звуков,когда,например,читаю что-нибудь,крики ребенка и другое меня раздражают и не дают сосредоточиться...выбивают и коллеи...из моего собственного плана мыслей...Единственное он намекнул,что я конечно и сама понимала,оттого и тянула поход к психотерапевту,что никакая лекарственная терапия не вылечит мое состояние,если раздражители не уйдут из жизни!)кой какие уходить не собираются)(... Спасибо за ответы!) Indeed, this is about me (... I like a bundle of nerves, which is better not to touch, more and more often I experience such a state in which I need to be in my own thoughts with absolutely no extraneous sounds, for example, when I read something, child's cries and other things annoy me and do not allow me to concentrate ... knock off-balance ... off my own plan of thoughts The only thing he hinted was that I, of course, understood it myself, and that was why I was hesitating to see a psychotherapist that no drug therapy would cure my condition if the stimuli do not go away!) some are not going to leave) (... Thanks for your answers!) ["Healthy Communication" Discussion Club. URL: <http://forums.rusmedserv.com/showthread.php?t=289334&highlight=%EA%EE%EB%EB%E5%E8>].

RESULTS

Thus, the syntax of different NMD genres varies considerably. Based on the analysis of the selected criteria, the identified features can be presented in tabular form. These syntactic constructions affect the addressee in different ways and are aimed at the implementation of specific pragmatic functions set by the addresser.

Table 1. Syntactic features of different NMD genres

NMD genre	Syntactic constructions				
	Address	Hortatory constructions	Interrogative constructions	Negative constructions	Parcelling
Educational	None	Imperatives are widely used: they indicate the necessity of following instructions and are stylistically neutral	Strategy implementation minimized	Strategy implementation minimized	None
Information-reference	None	Strategy implementation minimized	Strategy implementation minimized	Strategy implementation minimized	None
Regulatory	None	Imperatives are widely used: they indicate the necessity of following instructions and are stylistically neutral	Strategy implementation minimized	Categorical prohibition representation	None
Documentary	Individual address is an integral	Emphasizing the addressee's emotional; encouraging the	Strategy implementation minimized	Categorical prohibition representation	None

	part of discourse	addressee to act; drawing attention			
Corporate	None	Strategy implementation minimized	Involving the addressee in communication , enhancing dialogization and discourse interactivity	Strategy implementation minimized	None
Professional-practical	Used as an individual address aimed at establishing contact with a specific communicant; Appealing to a mass audience	Emphasizing the addressee's emotional; encouraging the addressee to act; drawing attention	Involving the addressee in communication , enhancing dialogization and discourse interactivity	Warning the addressee against using erroneous behavioural strategies and tactics that can cause harm to his/her health	Brings NMD close to colloquial language
Media discourse	Appealing to a mass audience	Emphasizing the addressee's emotional; encouraging the addressee to act; drawing attention	Involving the addressee in communication , enhancing dialogization and discourse interactivity	Warning the addressee against using erroneous behavioural strategies and tactics that can cause harm to his/her health	None
Commercial , advertising	None	Emphasizing the addressee's emotional; encouraging the addressee to act; drawing attention	Involving the addressee in communication , enhancing dialogization and discourse interactivity	Strategy implementation minimized	None

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, it should be noted that the syntactic side of NMDs is characterized by the use of numerous constructions such as addresses, hortatory constructions, interrogative constructions, negative constructions, conditional sentences, and parcelling. These constructions function and interact in different ways in various NMDs, reflecting the goals, communicative intentions of the communicants.

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