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FACEBOOK COMMUNICATION ON TRAVEL: ANALYSIS OF COMMUNICATIVE INTENTIONS

Abstract: The research covers the communicative intentions of participants to Internet-communication on travel established by their values. A. Maslow's theory of human motivation claims that communicative intentions are based on human needs. Along with this, the theory of speech acts helps highlight language means which characterize a certain communicative intention. The results of the research provide a classification of communicative intentions and offer their detailed description.

Key words: communicative intentions; Internet communication; theory of human motivation; theory of speech acts; axiological map of the world.

As of today, the Internet is viewed as a complex informational, social, psychological and linguistic space which has dramatically changed human day-to-day interactions [3]. That is one of the reasons why human communication in social media networks is receiving increased attention from linguists.

The research covers the communicative intentions of participants to Internet-communication on travel and focuses on the linguistic means used to convey communicative intentions in Internet-users' linguistic behaviour.

Recent years have witnessed numerous interdisciplinary studies that are devoted to Internet-communication analysis in social science, politics, medicine, etc., and dwell on communicative intentions, speakers' purposes and behavior [2; 4; 7; 8]. Still, the thorough explanation of how these intentions function in the context of travel has not been offered yet, as there are still few studies covering Internet as a communication tool. Apart from this, communicative intentions are closely related to linguistic behaviour of an individual and determine language means which should be used in a particular context. Therefore, our purpose has been to research

into communicative intentions of participants to Internet-communication on travel and arrange them in a comprehensive system.

In pursuing this goal, we have collected Facebook users' comments on travel and analyzed the information obtained. The research data were collected with the help of such key words (hashtags) as *travel*, *trip*, *holiday*, *traveller*, *travelling*, *vacation*, *tourism*, *tourist* and their Russian equivalents. The process of sampling involved 3 steps as follows.

Step 1 was to enter a key word into a Facebook search box to see the matching users' public posts. **Step 2** was to select the photo section as Facebook users tend to frequently leave comments on their photos to describe the portrayed event, and thus reaching out to other Internet users. **Step 3** was to pick out the comment left under the photo for further analysis of language means which were used to verbalize a certain communicative intention. As a result, the sampling was made up of 500 comments in a form of detailed micro texts (250 comments in Russian, 250 comments in English).

The study was conducted relying on content-analysis which lets analyze the text's type and particular language means that help the author identify him/herself with other Internet users and reach out to the audience. **Firstly**, as it was already mentioned, we have collected 500 detailed comments on travel. **Secondly**, we divided the comments into two groups considering the language they were written in (Russian or English). **Thirdly**, we defined several groups of language means as follows: *Evaluative and Expressive Vocabulary*, *Addressing Other Users*, *Belonging to a Group*, *Performatives*, *Assertives*, *Directives*, *Commisives* and *Expressives*. Each vocabulary unit related to one of the groups was highlighted accordingly (for instance, performatives were highlighted in ***bold italics***). **Step 4** was to list all the language means in each group relying on the method of content-analysis. For instance, we found 107 performative verbs in English comments and 92 performative verbs in Russian comments, which totalled to 199 performatives in 500 comments. Apart from this, we summed up the total number of all used language means which accounts for 2491 units.

Finally, **Step 5** was to analyse the data obtained and define communicative intentions which these language means help achieve. For instance, participants to the Internet-communication on travel frequently rely on *directives* when advising other users what they should visit and attend, and try to win the audience with their recommendations. Thus, an

individual achieves the communicative intention *Give Advice*. Let us consider the example: *Try diving in the Maldives waters* in which the author relies on a directive to carry out the mentioned intention. Cf. another example: *Enjoying my last days in Cuba*. The verb *enjoying*, according to the theory of speech acts, can be considered as an expressive, i.e., the verb *enjoying* conveys feelings and emotions of an individual towards the given situation [5]. Therefore, through such a verb the author achieves the intention *Sharing Feelings and Emotions*.

As we can see, the research also addresses the method of defining speech acts which specifies the type of speech act used in a particular context and reveals what purpose and communicative intention an individual tried to achieve. It implies that both mentioned methods are interrelated and make it clear which language means represent particular communicative intentions.

Apart from this, the exploration of A. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs has unveiled interesting links between language means and value system of an individual. The hierarchy of needs implies that all needs are interrelated and could not function separately from one another [9], e.g., the *Belongingness and Love Needs* cannot be achieved until an individual satisfies the *Safety Needs* and *Physiological Needs* that are placed lower in the hierarchy than *Belongingness and Love Needs* (Figure 1).

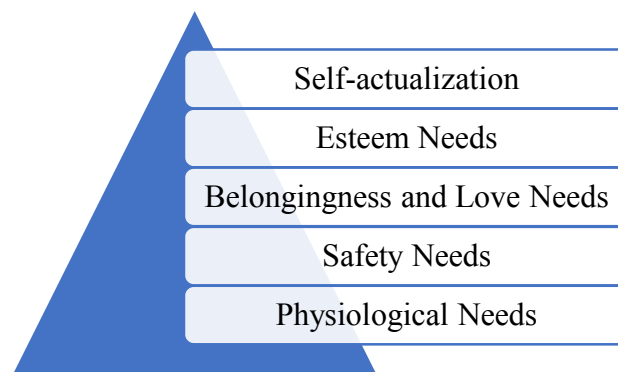


Figure 1 - A. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

In pursuing our goal we divided communicative intentions into 3 groups that correspond to 3 higher needs: *Belongingness and Love Needs*, *Esteem Needs* and *Self-actualization Needs* (as *Safe and Physiological Needs* are usually satisfied when an individual heads off to exotic locales). When speaking about *Self-actualization Needs* we should point out that at this particular level an individual is eager to meet certain values (currently, axiological map of the world and values receive increased attention from

linguists, specifically, within the framework of various discourses, ref. [1; 6]). We have found that Facebook users have frequently relied on *Evaluative and Expressive Vocabulary* to achieve these values. Let us consider the example to follow: *The bamboo forest in Arashimaya, Kyoto is **absolutely breathtaking***. The author used evaluative words *absolutely* and *breathtaking* which emphasize such a value as *Beauty*, and by addressing this value the Internet user implements the communicative intention *Describing Surroundings*.

The findings show that one comment might convey several communicative intentions. For instance: *Mt. Maunganui. There's a whole world out there, **don't be a tourist, be a traveler!! I'm going to miss this spectacular** country when I **have to return** home*. Through directive verbs *don't be a tourist, be a traveler* the author tried to reach out to the audience and boost their willingness to act. Thus, the Internet-user implements such a communicative intention as *Call for Action* which belongs to *Esteem Needs*. The collocation *I'm going to miss* includes an expressive verb *to miss* which implies the communicative intention *Sharing Emotions and Feelings* which also belongs to the group *Esteem Needs*. The collocation *I have to return* involves commissives that imply the communicative intention *Sharing Future Plans* from *Belongingness and Love Needs*. Finally, the adjective *spectacular* conveys the mentioned value *beauty* and introduces the communicative intention *Describing Surroundings*. As we can see, in the comment the Internet user addressed 3 levels of needs and used language means from these levels to identify him/herself with the audience.

Therefore, our findings help us morph a typology of communicative intentions on travel and describe them through language means that characterize these intentions. The research findings would contribute to the available theoretical data on communicative intentions in Internet-communication and boost its further development. The prospects imply that our findings might help morph a comprehensive typology of communicative intentions for other areas of Internet-communication and outline their characteristic language means.

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КОММУНИКАЦИЯ В FACEBOOK НА ТЕМУ ПУТЕШЕСТВИЙ: АНАЛИЗ КОММУНИКАТИВНЫХ ИНТЕНЦИЙ

Аннотация: в работе рассматриваются коммуникативные интенции участников Интернет-коммуникации на тему путешествий, определенные системой их ценностных ориентаций. Согласно теории человеческой мотивации А. Маслоу, предпосылки коммуникативных интенций заложены в основе человеческих потребностей. Теория речевых актов при этом позволяет выделить определенные языковые средства, характерные для определенного типа коммуникативных интенций. В качестве результатов исследования приводится типология коммуникативных интенций и их описание.

Ключевые слова: коммуникативные интенции; Интернет-коммуникация; теория человеческой мотивации; теория речевых актов; ценностная картина мира.

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