

Illocutionary force indicating devices in spoken maritime communications

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Introduction

- Searle stated that „speaking a language is performing speech acts” which can be
 - Locutionary,
 - Illocutionary, and
 - Perlocutionary.
- Illocutionary force indicating devices (introduced by Searle – 1969) – forms which usually indicate a particular illocutionary force; can be explicit and implicit
- utterances which contain a device which makes clear in the surface structure of that utterance the intended illocutionary force

Corpus MarCom

- involves speakers in real, everyday situations producing unconstrained exchanges
- recordings for the corpus compilation were given by the Croatian Maritime Safety Directorate
- specific stages, from collection, transcription to anonymization due to GDPR requirements
- consists of about 93920 tokens, which roughly amounts to 500 VHF communications between different ships and VTS stations (ca. 12 hours of conversations)
- Regulated by international regulations – require explicit use of speech acts

Methodology

- a combination of quantitative and qualitative approach
- fifty exchanges were analyzed to identify possible IFIDs
- list of IFIDs identified based on small random sample from the corpus
- corpus analysis of the IFIDs identified in the previous stage

Results

- Interlocutors use IFIDs in various circumstances – information, advice, request, instruction, warning, greeting
- Explicit IFIDs are avoided or softened, particularly when the tone is authoritative
- Most IFIDs are used implicitly to save face and „soften” the power of authority
- The IFIDs with positive value (greeting and thanking) are explicit
- The less threatening tone – the more explicit the IFID (despite the regulations and the standard)

Conclusion

- Pragmatics and corpus linguistics have recently joined forces
- Corpus analysis needs to be complemented with a qualitative analysis (Biel: „qualitative-driven quantitaveness“)
- Identification of IFIDs can contribute to understanding maritime communications and the reasons why speakers use IFIDs despite standardized rules for communications at sea

References

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