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Directive constructions in educational video blogs:
a study of cross-cultural features

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Abstract. As videoblogging has become a universal, personalized, and affordable form of communicating diverse content to a wider public, educational video blogs (vlogs) have been gaining popularity as a new medium for self-presentation, information sharing and creating a friendly learning environment. The aim of this research is to uncover cross-cultural features of the use of directive speech acts in educational vlogs in Russian and in English. Directive constructions have been actively studied before due to their complex multifunctional character revealed in different kinds of settings. It has been established that directive speech acts promote clarity and addressee's engagement in the information flow. To see how directive constructions are used in the analyzed videos, the transcripts of the videos chosen for the study were scrutinized by means of pragmatic and contextual methods. Then lexico-grammatical patterns of directive constructions, identified in these videos, were systematized, classified and statistically processed. It was discovered that the vloggers in both languages, as they become more experienced, tend to use more directives in their discourse. In Russian, explicit imperative constructions are more actively used. Whereas in English, less impositive and solidarity directives prevail. The conclusion is made that directive speech acts promote clarity and dialogue in educational vlogs, yet their types depend on cultural traditions of institutional communication.

Keywords: Educational video blog (vlog); Directive speech acts; Imperative constructions; Lexico-grammatical patters; Clarity and dialogicity

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Директивные конструкции в образовательных видеоблогах:
выявление кросс-культурных особенностей

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Аннотация. Так как видеоблогинг превратился в универсальную, персонализированную и общедоступную форму передачи разнообразного содержания широкой общественности, образовательные видеоблоги (влоги) активно набирают популярность как новая среда для самопрезентации, обмена информацией и формирования доброжелательного образовательного пространства. Цель представленного исследования – выявить кросс-культурные черты в реализации директивных речевых актов в образовательных влогах на русском и английском языках. Сложный и мультифункциональный характер директивных конструкций, раскрывающийся в различных видах дискурса, уже давно привлекает внимание лингвистов. Было определено, что директивные конструкции способствуют ясности и вовлеченности адресата в информационный поток. Чтобы понять, как директивы используются в избранных для изучения видео, их транскрипты были изучены с помощью прагматического и контекстуального анализа. Затем выявленные лексико-грамматические модели директивных конструкций были систематизированы, классифицированы и обработаны с помощью статистического метода. Исследование показало, что влогеры на русском и английском языках используют чаще директивные речевые акты по мере того, как они становятся более опытными. Для русскоязычного влога характерно присутствие эксплицитных императивных конструкций с очевидным значением долженствования. На английском языке более распространены косвенные конструкции выражения долженствования и директивы со значением солидарности. Сделан вывод о том, что директивные речевые акты способствуют ясности и установке диалога в образовательных влогах, но предпочтения в разновидностях этих речевых актов определяются культурными традициями институциональной коммуникации.

Ключевые слова: Образовательный видеоблог (влог); Директивные речевые акты; Императивные конструкции; Лексико-грамматические модели; Ясность и диалогичность

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Introduction

Directive speech acts are imperative constructions “in which the words are aimed at making the hearer do something” (Cutting, 2002: 17). They are used to command, request, invite, forbid, suggest and so on and are aimed at engaging the addressee into some kind of activities (behavior). Directives are often expressed by means of the imperative mood, however, they can vary in their imposition degree depending on what they aim to express – a command or a request. In this connection, Ronan observes: “some structures

are more, others are less impositive” (Ronan, 2022: 177).

The illocutionary meaning of the directive constructions, that is the communicative effect at which they are aimed, is to ask someone to do or not to do something. However, studies devoted to the analysis of the use of directives in different contexts, show that they can be used when constructing such discursive categories as politeness (Bern, 2012; Ronan, 2022), dialogicity (Hyland, 2009), and engagement (Swales et al., 1995; Thompson, 2001). In educational discourses, directives help to express guidance, instruction, and en-

couragement (Kia, 2021), interaction and organization (Zhao and Zhang, 2020). Hyland describes the use of directive constructions in academic discourse as a complex rhetorical feature capable of serving various strategic purposes (Hyland, 2002). These utterances allow authors to express their arguments clearly with a certain degree of authority and plausibility and at the same time toning down their criticism and display “a fitting, affective and disciplinary persona” (Hyland, 2002: 215). Having analyzed the use of directives in academic texts, Hyland identified three types of directive speech acts according to the function they perform in the text (textual, physical, cognitive). He claims that all the types of directives can guide readers’ attention and direct them towards understanding the information in the way intended by the author. By performing all these functions, directives help to engage the audience in the information flow and, thus, establish a dialogue between the reader (addressee) and the writer (addresser): “Directives are essentially interpersonal features that contribute to the dialogic dimension of academic genre. They explicitly signal the presence in the text of both the writer and a reader whose attention is being directly captured and focused” (Hyland, 2002: 227).

Directive constructions have been explored in a variety of contexts. In television advertising discourse, for instance, directive speech acts were viewed as means of suggestive persuasion which helps the addresser direct the addressees’ attention and, as a result, direct consumers’ behavior in the interests of the brand (Miroshnichenko, 2019). It was also observed that directive constructions in advertising and political slogans possess a strong persuasive power and transmit incentive modality. In advertising discourse, it is achieved by using predominantly verbs in the imperative mood forms of a second person singular. In political slogans, directive constructions often unite the sender and the receiver by merging commissive and directive constructions. When used in such a way, they help to construct a feeling of trust between the

addresser and the addressee (Vaulina and Kuksa, 2018).

Bern stresses the importance of directives when constructing clichés of politeness, for instance, with requests. Having studied the use of directives for expressing politeness in Finnish institutional discourse, Bern observes that they are expressed predominately by the subjunctive mood, which makes the directive less impositive (Bern, 2012). The role of directive speech acts in transmitting politeness has also been stressed by Ronan (2022), who analyzed their use in spoken Irish English. The linguist studied data from six different genres of spoken conversation and discovered that indirect imperative strategies are more prominent in “the more public and formal settings of ‘language of distance’ (Ronan, 2022: 175). However, in private settings, interlocutors seem to be less concerned about politeness and use the impositive strategies expressed by directives more often. Thus, the meaning of the directive is preserved in indirect constructions, which sound less pressing and express the politeness of distance.

The capacity of directive speech acts to guide the listener’s actions and at the same time express politeness, makes them a popular communication tool in education and academic discourse. Indeed, Zhao Q. and Zhang X. (2020) describe directives as integral to the language of instruction in which they introduce the tasks and direct their learners’ behavior. In this context, the directive can be regarded as a means of explanation of “the classroom implementation process” (Zhao and Zhang, 2020: 169). Moreover, directives as instruction convey teacher’s intention and thus can be perceived as “an interpretive and interactive speech act” (Ibid.: 169). Functions that directives can perform in educational classroom discourse are interactive and organizational.

Thompson and Thetela show that interaction is important not only in openly persuasive advertising texts (Thompson and Thetela, 1995), which “typically exploit many

of the features of spoken registers” (Thompson, 2001: 75), but in academic texts as well. Although academic texts are “less overtly dialogic” than advertising texts, the ability to engage the reader in the information flow is very important. It contributes to addressee’s paying attention to the information and promotes interest towards research. Directive speech acts can effectively fulfil these functions, because, as Thompson argues, engagement is typically achieved by those means that manage information flow and thus “serve to guide readers through the content of the text” (Thompson, 2001: 59).

Reinhardt studies the use of directive by international teaching assistants employed by North American universities. In particular, the use of directives was studied in office hour consultations in order to explore “a particular kind of language used in office hours contexts, directive language, as representative of ITA-student (international teaching assistant – I.K.) discourse in general” (Reinhardt, 2010: 94). The linguist used comparative and quantitative approaches, as well as qualitative data from surveys and interviews to profile three learners. Reinhardt relies on a social-functional politeness framework developed by Brown and Levinson (1987) that involves two types of politeness: independence (negative politeness) and inclusion (positive politeness) appeals (Scollon and Scollon, 1995). As a result, Reinhardt discovers that “the ITA group makes fewer uses of both independence and inclusion appeals than the practicing academics” (Reinhardt, 2010: 95). This shows that directive speech acts, besides clarification and engagement, are also used to transmit authority and assertiveness.

He A. (2000) analyzed the use of directives by teachers in Chinese Heritage Language Schools in the U.S. The analysis of 10 hours of audio/video-recorded classroom interactions between two teachers and about 20 students (aged 4.5-9 years) as well as from observations and interviews showed that directives help teachers transfer cultural values to their students. She observes that

“While the use of directives is prevalent across cultures and situations, they vary in form, function, and frequency. And this variation manifests itself in interaction with children” (He, 2000: 119).

The functions of directives in educational contexts have also been studied by Swales et al., who discovered that imperatives are essential for argument expression, though with disciplinary variations. The analysis of the functions of imperatives showed that they are used with multiple purposes, which include reader engagement, achieving text economy, and personal style manifestation (Swales et al., 1998).

As we can see, previous studies show that directive constructions besides making someone do something, perform other important functions in discourse: they engage the addressee in the information flow and help the addresser establish a dialogue with the addressee. However, there are some cultural traditions in how obligation can be expressed through directive speech acts in different contexts. Cross-cultural studies revealed that imperative constructions have a universal nature, but their means of expression used to transmit the meaning of obligation in different languages can differ greatly. In Azerbaijani, directives are predominantly expressed by the verb in the imperative mood and intonation. The meaning of the directive can be enhanced with imperative particles. Depending on the situation, markers of politeness accompany the use of imperative constructions. However, in English, directive speech acts can often be expressed indirectly, for instance in requests, and can be formulated as questions (Babaeva, 2020). Another cross-cultural study compares the use of directive speech acts in public signs in German-speaking cultures – Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. The research allows the linguists to uncover universal and variable features of directive constructions. The universality is represented by four main types of directives used in the slogans in the German-speaking cultures. These are such types as order, prohibition, request, and warning. The

variability feature is presented in the linguistic means that are used in these cultures to express directives: some of the most frequently used means of expressing order in German are very rarely used in Austria and Switzerland (Anishchenko and Larina, 2021).

Obviously, by understanding the multitude of functions that directives can perform, we can get important insights into how to enhance our communication and develop pragmatic awareness in all kinds of interactions. Moreover, a cross-cultural nature of this study provides a more comprehensive analysis of the features that are universal for directive constructions in certain contexts. This is what this study aims to achieve – to find out how directive speech acts are used in educational vlogs in Russian and in English. The contrastive nature of the research will unveil the cross-cultural specifics of the use of directive speech acts in educational vlogs.

Methodology

This particular research aims to study the use of directive constructions in educational vlogs in Russian and in English. The research is based on the perception of directive speech acts as dialogicity means used by addressers for clarity and engagement (Hyland, 2009). The Russian-language corpus is represented by three videos (from the years of 2020¹, 2021², 2022³) available on the educational vlog of Anastacia Kay⁴ and is

¹ Pitaemsa pravil'no proiznosit' anglijskie slova s odnoklassnikami! [Trying to learn with classmates how to pronounce English words correctly] (2020). URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P908qXTR1T0> (Accessed 24 January 2023).

² Super produktivnaja organizatsia vsego, chto ti chitaesh' i slushaesh'! [Highly effective organizing of everything that you read and listen to] (2021). URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRiOUWPHgR8&t=191s> (Accessed 24 January 2023).

³ Zabud' pro time management. Menedgi svoe vnimanie. [Forget about time management. Manage your attention] (2022). URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1-a_E8IN40I (Accessed 24 January 2023).

⁴ Stan' luchshei versiej sebja [Become a better version of yourself]. Anastacia Kay's video blog. URL: <https://www.youtube.com/@funastacia/about> (Accessed 24 January 2023).

devoted primarily to self-development and self-education. The English-language corpus comprises three videos featured on Chelsea Seburn's vlog "Smart Student"⁵ and devoted to different aspects of academic writing. These two vlogs were chosen for the study due to a number of common features: 1) the aim of these vlogs is to help their audience to acquire new knowledge; 2) both vlogs can be considered as successful as they have been tested by time and have numerous subscribers. Anastasia's vlog was founded in 2013 and has 653 000 subscribers. Chelsea's vlog appeared in the year of 2020 and currently has about 93 000 subscribers (the number of subscribers to both video blogs has been constantly increasing during the study period). The videos that were randomly selected for the analysis in both languages were released in the same consecutive years – 2020⁶, 2021⁷, 2022⁸.

By means of pragmatic analysis, the directive constructions with imperative meaning in the transcripts of the videos were identified. Contextual analysis helped to establish the exact meaning of the directives that the speaker intends to communicate in the context of the video. After all the directives were identified, they were systematized and classified according to their lexicogrammatical patterns. At the final stage of the research, the statistical analysis of the types of directive constructions was carried out. The results about the use of directive speech acts in the vlogs in Russian and in English then

⁵ Smart Student. Chelsea Seburn's video blog. URL: https://www.youtube.com/@smartstudent_official (Accessed 24 January 2023).

⁶ How to write essays and research papers faster and score high: Write the outline. (2020). URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tn1-u12GXDI> (Accessed 20 January 2023).

⁷ How to write a STRONG research question for research papers. (2021). URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IF2FQeP5wpl> (Accessed 21 January 2023).

⁸ How to Find Peer Reviewed Journal Articles on Google Scholar. (2022). URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3GC_6x_x1F8 (Accessed 22 January 2023).

were compared in each language and summarized in the conclusion.

Therefore, it is possible to say that this is a contrastive study that brings two languages into focus to identify differences and similarities in the use of directive speech acts. The study relies on the mixed method approach as it combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches to data collection and analysis.

Results

Directive speech acts in educational vlogs

Linguists who study academic discourse often mention directives in connection with their ability to make discourse clear and engaging. That is why directives together with reader mentions, questions, appeals to shared knowledge, and personal asides are considered to be a useful tool when establishing a dialogue with the reader/listener (Hyland, 2009; Zou and Hyland 2019; 2020a). The dialogicity theory stems from Bakhtin's works about the constant dialogue between the writer and the reader, about all the texts being shaped by their dialogic or extra linguistic relations with other utterances (Bakhtin, 1986; Makkonen-Craig, 2014). In contemporary understanding, the dialogicity is perceived as a discursive perspective, "other-orientation" (Makkonen-Craig, 2014). A variety of discursive means can construct the dialogue between the speaker (writer) and the listener (reader). Directive constructions are among these means (Hyland, 2002). The ability of directives to fulfil these functions was discovered in both written and oral academic discourse and in educational blogs (Zou and Hyland, 2020b). Before proceeding with the analysis of the directive constructions used in educational vlogs, it seems to be appropriate to start with the definition of what a vlog is.

According to Griffith and Papacharissi, "Vlogs are sites where authors post stories and/or information about themselves in the form of video, rather than text, as traditional blogs include. They are public spaces for self-expression where authors control the content

published" (2010). Audience receive information by "reading and viewing" vlogs as well as commenting on the information that they learn. Vlogging can be described as "an act of candidly recording videos on matters of interest and posting the content on the internet" (Madzlan et al., 2020: 94). Video blogs can be successfully applied for educational purposes, as they are "user-friendly, flexible in terms of content production, interactive..." (Ibid.: 94). It was established that vlogs can be effectively used for language education (Hsu, 2015), developing speaking interaction skills among ESL learners (Gokturk, 2016); alleviating public speaking anxiety among ESL learners (Madzlan et al., 2020). Baran (2007) notices that some educators are becoming video bloggers to make use of educational benefits offered by this medium. Its main advantage is the ability "to enhance educational settings by promoting active participation of learners in their learning process" (Baran, 2007). Pajchert et al. (2019), studying the role of educational vlogs in Poland, describe vlogs as a trendy means of science popularization and knowledge absorption. They state that: "Educational and science popularizing vlogs provide a good base for virtual learning environment (VLE) building" (2019: 10372).

For this study, two successful educational vlogs are chosen to illustrate how directive speech acts can be used by the speaker to engage with the audience. Let's see how directives are used by Anastasia Kay and Chelsea Seburn in their vlogs.

Directives in the Russian-language vlog

Anastasia uses the fewest number of directives in her 2020 video. She demonstrates the highest usage of directives in her 2022 video (see Table 1 for statistical information). There are several lexicosyntactic patterns of directive speech acts found in her speech.

Directives with imperative verbs (explicit directives). These are the straightforward directive speech acts with an explicative imperative meaning of making the

audience do something: ...**не думайте** ни секунды, потому что действительно это абсолютно того стоит (2021); **Учите. Сами настраивайте и учите** своих друзей (2021). ...если вы вдруг новичок, обязательно **попробуйте** выучить несколько песен на английском (2020). In these examples one can observe the use of verbs *don't think, learn, make others feel in tune for learning several songs in English* with an obvious imperative meaning – the request to engage in certain activities. We will describe this type of the directive as explicit.

Directives with *let's* + infinitive (solidarity directives). This pattern helps the speaker unite herself with her audience and enhance the feeling of solidarity: ... **давайте немножко уйдем в детали и поговорим** о том, как читать интернет-статьи, статьи просто через браузер (2021). We will call these speech acts as solidarity directives. This kind of the directive transmits the meaning of “let’s do something together”: **Давайте начнем со статей. Интересные статьи я обычно нахожу через Twitter** (2021). However, they are not frequent in the Russian-language videos.

Directives with a modal verb + infinitive (less impositive directives). These constructions are often impersonal and they moderate the degree of obligation by using various modal verbs. This type can be described as less impositive. For example, the phrase “очень важно **минимизировать** оповещение везде” (2022) does not address the audience directly and due to its structure, makes the meaning less strong. Another example of a less impositive directive speech act will be the construction with a modal verb *may* or *can*: ...**можно уходить** в библиотеку например или **резервировать** private room in office всего на пару часов. We will call these constructions “less impositive directives”.

As can be seen from the examples above, the speaker often enhances this type of directives with such words as *нужно – essential, очень важно – very important*: **Нужно пробовать** разные и со временем

выработать правила взаимодействия с коллегами... (2022). This possibility of adjusting the degree of obligation through various modalization choices was observed by Thompson (2002) in his study of engagement in academic writing. Such directive constructions seem to provide the audience with more choices to act (or not to act) in a way proposed by the speaker. However, as it can be seen from the contextual analysis, the meaning is the same – to instruct the audience to act in a certain way: **И опять же слова из субтитров можно не только переводить, но и добавлять в свой словарь** (2020).

Directives through narration. This is an interesting discursive technique. Anastasia narrates the situation using the verbs in the indicative mood. The directives expressed through narration are also classified as less impositive. It seems that she describes actions drawing a mental picture about how the situation should develop. However, the contextual meaning of these verbs is to instruct the audience to carry out a series of actions in a certain way.

The next phrase starts with an explicative directive speech act expressed by the imperative. It transfers the meaning of obligatory actions on the verbs in the indicative mood and instructs the audience about how the actions are expected to be fulfilled: **Помните – закрыли фотошоп, перегрузили симс. Закрыли симс, включили фотошоп** (2022).

Another example from one of the Anastasia’s videos also starts with a less impositive directive expressed with the construction “you may” which makes it sound as a suggestion. The verbs in the indicative mood continue this pragmatic meaning: ... **вы просто можете в Зуме засетапить встречу у себя на 3-5 человек и один из вас иэрит скрин с моим видео, проигрываете до того момента, пока я показываю слово, останавливаете, и по кругу каждый произносит; и ведете счет, кто больше правильно произнесёт** (2020). These examples describing real-life situations show how instruction can be conveyed through

storytelling. This kind of narrative-based instruction sets the problem for the recipients and provides them with a solution. Communicating information in such a manner is multifunctional: it's emotional, engaging and strives to "illustrate the causality of a linear series of events" (Andrews et al., 2009: 9).

The interconnection between speech acts and narrativity has been noticed before by a number of scholars. Smith, for instance, points out that speech acts "mediate the relationship between the 'word' and the 'world'" (N/A) and can be presented in a linear story through narrative. Relying on Cooren's (2001) classification of how speech acts can map onto narrative schema, Smith studies narrative fragments from the Czech daily sport sections dealing with football referees' malpractice. The scholar discovers new functions that speech acts can express through narrative. For instance, directives set up "the drama by assigning missions and obligations" or they refer back "to the 'illegitimate' directives that are the object of accusation" (Smith). Interestingly, Cooren observes that in narrative the meaning of directives can be expressed in different ways: "dialogically, when some specific courses of action can be democratically proposed and discussed, or imperatively, when an order is simply communicated without further discussion" (Cooren, 2001: 280). In terms of narrative theory, all kinds of attempts to communicate the meaning of someone doing something can be characterized as manipulation, for instance, when crying for help (Ibid., 2001). Anyway, using narrative to share knowledge by means of a story has been described as a successful educational strategy (Khoutyz, 2020) with a story being "a useful tool to share even more abstract forms of knowledge" (Gunter et al., 2018: 18). And this is what Anastasia does when she tries to teach her audience about something: she embeds narratives in her speech by making it less insistent and still preserving the meaning of imperative actions.

The statistical analysis of the directives that Anastasia uses in the videos chosen for the study shows that the vlogger increases the number of directives with each year. We can venture an explanation for this fact: as she feels more confident, she uses directives more actively. This idea correlates with the fact the she uses fewer less impositive directives in her videos. For instance, in the 2022 video, Anastasia uses 49 directive constructions and only 8 out of them are classified as less impositive with three solidarity directives (see Table 1). Therefore, 78% of directives are expressed by explicit imperatives. For comparison, let's notice that in her 2020 video, 21% of the directives are explicit imperative constructions. Therefore, it is possible to suppose as the vlog became more popular, the speaker started to use more explicit imperative constructions at the same time increasing the number of directives in her videos. The number of less impositive directives, which transmit the feeling of recommendation or advice, decreased with each video.

Directives in the English language vlog

Further, let's analyze the use of directive constructions used by Chelsea in her three videos available on her vlog "Smart Student". Similarly to her Russian-language counterpart, as the English-language vlogger becomes more experienced, she uses directives more actively in her speech.

Directives with imperative verbs (explicit directives). Chelsea uses this type of directive speech acts most actively in her 2021 video. Explicit directives are formed with the verb in the imperative: *Write your research question* (2021). Explicit directives are also expressed with the help of the modal verb *have to*, and constructions with the meaning of strong obligation. These are such constructions as *make sure + Inf.*, *it's important you + bare Inf.*: *As you can see here, all you **have to do** is **go** section by section plugging in the correct information...* (2020). In this sentence, the action expressed by the verb *go section by section* can be

described as an explicit directive enhanced by the modal verb *have to do*.

Directives with *let's* + infinitive (solidarity directives). As with the examples found in the Russian-language corpus, these directives in English help Chelsea express solidarity with her audience. The following example shows Chelsea's willingness to be engaged in the article search together with her audience: *So **let's go ahead and start** with a basic search because I want to show you the difference* (2022). The number of solidarity directives is increasing with each year in Chelsea's videos. In the 2020 video, solidarity directives accounted for just 7% from the total number of directives used in her video. However, in her 2022 video, Chelsea demonstrates 30% of solidarity directives of all the directives that she uses. It certainly enhances the feeling of Chelsea being united with her audience and involved in all the activities together with them.

Less impositive directives. This type of the directive speech act has more variability in the English language corpus. Interestingly, with each video Chelsea demonstrates more variety when constructing less impositive directives. In her 2020 video, Chelsea uses this type of directives after verbs *to suggest, suppose*: *I **suggest not paying too much attention** to the material of the assignment ...* (2020).

Using Infinitive in the function of an attribute or predicative, Chelsea manages to express the actions that are recommended for fulfilment. In the next example, *to move on* is an infinitive used in the function of an attribute: *Since we've located the objectives, it's time **to move on** to step four which is to copy and paste your objectives into your document* (2020). Grammatically, the infinitive modifies the noun "time" and therefore produces the meaning that there's no direct obligation for the audience to fulfill the action. However, as we can see from the context, Chelsea actually means – *move on to step four*. Another example of lexical means that she uses in 2020 video to create less impositive directives is the use of the modal

verb *should* + bare *Inf*. She also uses verbs in the present tense with the instructional meaning: *The first thing you do is **section your paper into level 1 headings*** (2020).

For comparison, in 2022 video, Chelsea demonstrates a greater variability of the linguistic means to construct a less impositive directive. These include the following patterns: after the verb *suggest*, infinitive as a predicative, after modal verbs *can, might, need, should, could*, after construction *to be going to*. As this last construction is used only in the 2022 video, let's see how it is featured in Chelsea's speech: *...you are **going to search** for the university you're attending here to see if it's coordinated with Google Scholar* (2022).

There is one more construction that is worth mentioning: *you want* + *Inf*. The verb *want* used with the pronoun *you* makes this directive sound as if it is the choice of the audience to fulfil or not to fulfil the action. This construction is present in all of the three videos in English: *... but the reason you **want to paste** your instructions word-for-word in your documents is because it ensures that ...* (2020); *... you now **want to start** asking questions about your niche* (2021); *You can search specifically for them and so before you do anything else, you **want to link** your university to Google Scholar* (2022). As we can see, the directives expressed in such a way are aimed at instruction. However, this construction creates the meaning that there is no direct obligation to carry out the actions.

Directive through narration. This type of a less impositive directive is absent in the English-language corpus. Probably, the lack of this discursive technique in Chelsea's videos is compensated with a rich variety of other means used to express less urgent imperatives.

The statistical analysis of the directives that Chelsea uses in the videos chosen for the study shows that she tends to increase the number of directives in her speech. Again, we can suppose that as she becomes a more experienced vlogger, she uses directives more actively. Unlike Anastasia, however, Chelsea

increases the number of directives not by using more explicit imperatives, but by increasing the use of less impositive directives. These become more varied with each year. The number of solidarity directives is also growing in her speech, however, not as

actively as the frequency of the less impositive directive speech acts. The statistical information about the use of various types of directives in the videos in English and in Russian is presented in Table.

Table. Directive constructions in educational video blogs in Russian and in English

Таблица. Директивные конструкции в обучающих видеоблогах на русском и английском языках

Directive constructions	Anastasia			Chelsea		
	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022
<i>total number</i>	24	29	49	29	52	64
<i>explicit imperative</i>	5	9	38	12	23	14
<i>solidarity directives</i>	1	5	3	2	7	19
<i>less impositive directives</i>	18	15	8	15	22	29

Conclusions

Directive speech acts are often described by linguists as dialogicity means that enhance audience's engagement in the information flow and promote clarity. With the help of directives, writers/speakers can also unite themselves with their audience constructing the feeling of solidarity between the addresser and addressee. Thus, directive speech acts are multifunctional and complex discursive means that can be applied by addressers in various types of discourse.

The comparative analysis of the videos posted in video blogs in Russian and in English shows that the number of directive constructions used by the vlogger begins to increase as the vlogger becomes more experienced and well-known. Supposedly, it happens because directives transmit the feeling of authority and assertiveness. This is the feature that was discovered in the both Russian- and English-language corpus. The differences are presented in the types of directive speech acts that Anastasia and Chelsea prefer to use.

Anastasia, the Russian vlogger, while increasing the number of explicit directives at the same time decreases the use of less impositive directive constructions. The number of solidarity directives that she uses

in her speech is minimal. Chelsea, the American vlogger, increases the number of directives at the expense of higher frequency of less impositive directives. The use of solidarity directives also increases in English, yet not as significantly as the use of less impositive directives. The means of expressing directives are more varied in the English language corpus.

To verify the results presented in this study, it is essential to increase the research corpus in both languages and at the same time include in the analysis educational video blogs of male vloggers. However, even at this stage we can conclude that directive speech acts promote clarity and engagement in educational vlogs, helping the speaker establish a dialogue with their audience. As the vloggers becomes more popular and experienced, they tend to increase the number of directives in their speech. However, the type of the directive constructions that the vloggers use depends on cultural traditions of communication.

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