# Genres Of The Institutional Discourse Of American Digital Diplomacy

**By**

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## Abstract

The article analyses the communicative features of the institutional discourse of digital diplomacy of the US State Department. Institutional discourse is a type communication in social institutions [1]. This is a specialized clichéd type of communication between people who may not know each other personally, but they should communicate in compliance with the norms of the given sphere of interaction [2]. Institutional discourse is contrasting with everyday informal communication, and is considered as a multifaceted phenomenon [3]. The article offers a list of relevant analysis parameters of various genres of digital diplomacy discourse. The article proposes a classification of genres used on the official website of the US Department of State as the one of the platforms to implement institutional diplomatic discourse in the media space. The results of the study showed that each of the genres and subgenres mentioned in the article has its own specific features within the website of the diplomatic department. The article describes the characteristics of each speech genre of the digital diplomacy discourse separately. The official website is a "hypergenre", that allows to distinguish the following speech genres: "press statement", "text of a public speech", "public schedules", "mission of the diplomatic department".

**Keywords:** digital diplomacy, speech genres theory, institutionalized discourse, communicative goal, political discourse.

## Introduction

In the digital world, all governments have faced an urgent need, partly due to the emergence of new technologies and social networks, to update their diplomatic tools. Foreign ministries around the world continue to expand their digital diplomatic ties, encouraging ambassadors to take an active action in the Internet space [4, 5, 6]. This research is determined by the trends of modern linguistics, which pays special attention to the study of new types of discourse that have emerged as a result of the development of information technologies, in particular, the Internet.

## Methods

Having considered the genre models developed by V. Dementiev [7] and T. Shmeleva [8], we have identified a list of relevant parameters for analyzing the genres used in the institutional digital diplomacy:

• communicative goal and applied communication strategies;
• the image of the author;
• the image of the addressee;
• lexical content;
• features of the syntactic structure;
• stylistic features;
• primary or secondary nature the a genre.

The given list of parameters allows us to distinguish different genres of the discourse and come up with the classification of the American institutional discourse of digital diplomacy.

## Results And Discussion

Consequently, the methods have allowed us to identify the following genres of institutional digital diplomacy.

Official press statements. On the website of the US Department of State, such messages are classified as "PRESS STATEMENT", "MEDIA NOTE", "REMARKS", or "NOTICE TO THE PRESS".

The communicative purpose of this genre is to convey to the media and the public information about the international situation in the world and to express the position of the United States regarding recent political events:

"The United States remains committed to facilitating negotiations between Lebanon and Israel to reach a decision on the delimitation of the maritime boundary. Progress towards a resolution can only be reached through negotiations between the parties."[9]

All press statements of the US State Department are compiled either by the office of the current US Secretary of State (Antony J. Blinken as of July, 2022), or by the office of the current Press Secretary of the State Department (Ned Price as of July, 2022). The linguistic embodiment of the author indicates that these messages express the position of the US State Department as an institution.

The text content of the official website of the US Department of State is intended for a wide audience, i.e. various society strata, including different age groups and different levels of competence in the field of international relations. They all can act as the addressee of the message. The vocabulary of press statements is dominated by diplomatic vocabulary and terms, colloquial expressions are rare.

It is also worth noting that in addition to statements to the press, which are purely informative in nature, we can find expressive messages, in particular statements of congratulations or condolences. Expressive statements are published in connection with current events in the world (national, cultural holidays, election results, tragic events, etc.):

"On behalf of the Government of the United States of America, I send my warm wishes to the people of France as they celebrate their national day." [9]

The next type of publications on the diplomatic department site is the transcripts of public speeches given by employees of the US State Department. These texts are classified as "SPECIAL BRIEFING", "DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING", "LIVEATSTATE", "Press Availability", and "Interview". In particular, the website regularly publishes press briefings by Press Secretary Ned Price on the current work of the US State Department, press conferences and interviews with Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken.

In the speeches of a diplomatic figure, we can distinguish various communicative goals depending on the format. For example, the primary purpose of press briefings is to inform the public about the current work of the State Department and express the US position on current international issues and events. In interviews, the main goal of State Secretary is to persuade and establish influence on the recipient, interpret and assess a specific situation or event. And in the texts of the diplomat's speech, intentions of establishing a positive image comes to the fore. In this genre, the primary addressee here is the direct recipient of the oral speech (the audience that is present at a particular event, journalists at a press conference /press briefing, or an interviewer).

The vocabulary used in public speeches by American diplomats can be very diverse. Regarding the vocabulary of the public speeches, the following are used:

- diplomatic terms and vocabulary (bilateral future, the Arctic Council, a violation of sanctions, etc.);
- commonly used vocabulary;
- colloquial, socially and (or) dialectically limited expressions (addresses "folks", "guys", Americanisms "heads up", "my bad", etc.);
- emotionally evaluative vocabulary (disgusting, condemn, horrible, marveled, etc.);
- clichéd phrases (greetings, messages about inaccuracies): "# # #", "Good to see you", "Greetings, everyone", "End text", "Begin text", "The briefing was concluded at …", "Correction: ...", etc.

At the syntactic level, the text content of public speeches uses both simple and short structures in reactive speech acts, and complex and complete structures in monologue speech. The style of public speaking of an American diplomat is characterized by expressiveness and accuracy of speech. However, at the same time an oral speech of a diplomat tends to simplify the style and have a significantly freer structure due to interaction with the audience. In the texts of oral speeches, we can notice ellipsis and inversion which are characteristic to colloquial speech.

Public event schedules of the heads of the bureaus of the US State Department are published daily on the website in a separate section (Public Schedules). The texts of this genre have a clear and rigid structure.

The communicative purpose of the texts of the schedule of public events is purely to inform. The author of these texts is the office of the spokesperson of the State Department. In the vocabulary, we can see clichéd unalterable expressions ("***THE DAILY PUBLIC SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE***" at the beginning and end of the document). The style of a public event schedule avoids any expressiveness and stands out with its formality of presentation.

The US State Department, like any other institution, has its own **mission**. Moreover, each office or bureau included in the structure of this diplomatic department (for example, Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance, Bureau of Counterterrorism, Office of Global Food Security) performs its function, i.e. performs its specific mission. The verbal expression of the mission is a statement that reveals the purpose and goal of the organization, distinguishing this organization from its counterparts. Fig. 1 shows what the State Department mission looks like ("To protect and promote U.S. security, prosperity, and democratic values and shape an international environment in which all Americans can thrive." [9]).



**Fig. 1.** Mission of the US State Department

First of all, the communicative purpose of the organization's mission is to inform about the goals of its activities. But it is also important to note that such texts may also contain a pervasive function, i.e. they are designed to convince the recipient and to create a positive image of the organization. Despite their brevity, such texts act as multifunctional messages, implementing several communicative intentions. The style of the texts of the mission of the diplomatic department is characterized by its conciseness (as a rule, the mission is no longer than 1-2 sentences), the accuracy of the statement, devoid of excessive expressiveness and emotionality.

At the syntactic level, the texts of the diplomatic mission use complete and complex syntactic constructions with numerous homogeneous parts of the sentence and homogeneous clauses. As an example, consider the mission of the Public Relations Bureau of the US State Department:

The mission of the Bureau of Global Public Affairs (GPA) is to serve the American people by effectively communicating U.S. foreign policy priorities and the importance of diplomacy to American audiences, and engaging foreign publics to enhance their understanding of and support for the values and policies of the United States [9].

It is fair to say the genre of "mission of the organization" can be regarded as a "hybrid" genre that combines informative and advertising genre characteristics on the basis of additional communicative goals of the texts (informative, persuasive and image goals).

## Summary

The list of parameters has allowed us to distinguish different genres of the discourse and come up with the classification of the American institutional discourse of digital diplomacy. The "hypergenre" of the official website of the department of foreign relations includes the following genres:

• genre of press statement (Press Statement; Media Note);
• genre of a public speech (LIVEATSTATE; Press Availability);
• genre of texts of the public event schedule (Public Schedule);
• the genre of the mission of the diplomatic department.

Each genre has its lexical, grammatical and stylistic characteristic features.

## Conclusions

The novelty of the study is presented with the classification of genres of the American digital diplomacy discourse and the description of these genres according to the parameters for distinguishing speech genres.

The findings of the study serve as the basis for further development of studies in discursive linguistic and the theory of speech acts that analyze the discourse of digital diplomacy.

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