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FACULTY OF ARTS**

*With the right of manuscript*

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**IMPLICATURE OF AN INTERVIEW AS A TEXT**

**10.02.04 – Germanic languages**

**AN ABSTRACT**

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## Introduction

**The research work** deals with the written interview as a linguistic sign and specifics of its implicature on the basis of intra –and extra linguistic problems which are noted while studying an interview as a specific genre.

The interview is chosen for analysis for two reasons:

1) Modern stage of civilization shows a progressive interest of society towards politics. Interview as a sample of political discourse has appeared in the centre of interest of linguistics;

2) Interview in the newspaper as a written explication of political discourse carries information with its specific linguistic thesaurus, structural appearance, functional aim and communicative power.

It has become interesting to study an interview in order to better analyze the communicants' intention in the discourse and the implications hidden behind the words. Taking into account that communicative linguistics studies not only the relationship among speakers, but also the speakers' attitude towards the language itself, it was decided to study an interview as a form of dialogue-speech.

The analysis of the case acknowledged that apart from an explicit meaning, an utterance has implicit, underlying meanings as well. Implication – in other words the underlying message can be seen through the meanings of the words and also through the relationship between context and linguistic situations. We studied the notion of an interview and the notion of implication to show that it is a new approach to language and its ability, to analyze an interview from linguistic points of view, and to give our own viewpoint on the linguistic notion of implicature and on its origin.

**The purpose of the research** is to a) show and generalize structural, lexical, grammatical and stylistic peculiarities of an interview unity of which forms genre-stylistic type of an interview; b) analyze and generalize linguistic, pragmatic and socio-cultural factors that condition the formation of implicature in the answer of a respondent; c) specify the linguistic notion of implicature based on the above mentioned studies.

**In accordance with the general purpose of the research the following tasks are settled:**

1. the conceptual apparatus is developed to carry out the research;

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2. the status of an interview as a linguistic text based on its semantic, syntactic and pragmatic aspects is determined;
3. an interview as one of the publicistic genres is described to show its specific type characteristics;
4. an interview is studied in contrast with ordinary dialogue to show its specific characteristics;
5. linguistic-pragmatic and socio-cultural factors that form the implicature are shown through three-dimensional lingo-semiotic analysis of an authentic materials.

**Methodology of the research** is based on lingo semiotic and anthropocentric-communicative methodology. That means to study an interview through semantic (referential), syntactic (inter-linguistic) and pragmatic aspects. On the other hand we determine interview as explication of inter-subjective and interactive discourse, that is why we take into account the communicative intention and strategy of both – an addressee and an addresser as we consider the relationship among them to be one of the factors that condition the formation of implicature.

To settle the following tasks we use the **concrete methods** such as **systemic-structural analysis** of linguistic units and their **context-semantic, socio-cultural and stylistic interpretation**. The method appeared to be very helpful in solving theoretical as well as practical problems set in the research.

**Research resources** are interviews taken from the following newspapers: "Asaval-Dasavali", "Kviris Qronika", "Prinetime", " Georgian Times", and e-material form the following websites; [www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004), [www.interview.com](http://www.interview.com).

**Actuality of the research** and necessity of the further theoretical research of the problem of implicature given in the paper are conditioned by the following factors:

1. Political discourse and the problems connected with it have become the subject of interdisciplinary research due to the special importance of political situations in the modern world. With this background knowledge the study of political interview has become very important as it belongs to a new trend of linguistics - political linguistics. Political linguistics arose because of the increasing interest to the study of political discourse.
2. Written interview as one of the ways of spreading information is a specific

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type of communication. The presented research work is actual as it studies political interviews as a text with their socially oriented function that means the power to influence on the **consciousness** of people.

3. Finally, the research is actual as it deals with the coincidence of the above mentioned questions. The correct interpretation of an utterance made by a politician is very important as it determines the relationships among people and countries and even the solution of socio - political problems depends on the correct interpretation of an utterance.

We think that the written interview analyzed in the work as a specific publicistic genre with its characteristics makes it clear how actual the work is. Even though the written interview is the mostly spread form of information it is not thoroughly studied.

**The scientific value and novelty of the research** can be determined by the lingo-semiotic and anthropocentric-communicative methodology of the research. On the one hand we determine the specific peculiarities of a written interview as a specific publicistic genre with the help of the methodology. On the other hand we determine the linguistic status of implicature and lingo-pragmatic and socio-cultural factors that form implicature.

This makes the research work more important as it deals with problem questions of journalism nowadays.

**The practical value of the research** lies in the fact that the results of the research could be interesting not only for those interested in linguistics but also for journalists in preparing interviews, or conducting interviews and make them ready for publication. The results of the research and the authentic material used in the work can also be used at higher educational institutions for theoretical courses and seminars on communicative linguistics, pragmatic-linguistics and socio-linguistics as well as for teaching press and text analyses to the English language students.

**The structure of the work** is determined by the objectives of the research. It consists of 162 computerized pages (without bibliography) and contains an introduction, 3 chapters and general conclusion. The list of acknowledgements, references, internet material and referred journals and magazines is attached. It also includes specially designed tables and illustrative material.

**In the Introduction** we give our arguments for the choice of the subject matter of our study, point out the scientific value and novelty and the sig-

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nificance of the research work, its theoretical and practical value and the history of the study of the question.

**In the First Chapter-“Communicative Notion of Implicit Contents of a Text”** we give a theoretical explanation of implicature as a linguistic phenomenon. The implicature is described in relation with such categories as informativeness and other types of its. That means that implicature could not be discovered through standard analytical procedure used to study the factual information given in the text explicitly. Consequently, the implicature is connected with other categories as well such as explicitness and implicitness. And finally, in the first chapter it is shown that the implicature could have hardly ever been formed spontaneously as it is usually caused by the communicative intention of a politician. That is why it is also clear that the implicature is connected with the category of intention.

**In the Second Chapter – “Theoretic basis of Studying an Interview”** we describe an interview and its characteristics from a linguistic points of view based on written interviews. Written interviews are described through text linguistics and “theory of discourse”. In spite of the traditional differentiative approach to these two branches of communicative linguistics written interview is studied as a verbal macro sign which is a syntheses of a text and discourse.

**In the Third Chapter – “Pragmatic Analysis of Political Interviews”** we deal with pragmatic analysis of authentic written interviews. The interviews are studied taking into account not only the socio-cultural context but also inter- subjectivity and the relationship of communicative intentions and strategies of both a respondent and correspondent with the background knowledge that they are to observe the cooperative principles.

**The conclusion** sums up theoretical results of the research.

The main points of the research have been reflected in the papers at different scientific seminars and scientific sessions of the English language department. The research work was discussed at the broaden meeting of the English Language Department at Akaki Tsereteli State University on December 18, 2009.

## MAIN CONTENT OF THE WORK

The introduction describes the main principles of modern communicative linguistics on the one hand and on the other hand it studies an interview as dialogic-speech and its implicature as a hidden message that could be read under the words with the help of pragmatic analysis and extra-linguistics situations.

Why have we chosen an interview for research as a linguistic sign?

Modern communicative linguistics means new approach to a linguistic sign. The main aim of semiotic linguistics is to study a complete linguistic sign. At the beginning of linguistic studies a word was considered to be a complete linguistic sign. Later a sentence was considered to be a complete linguistic sign and a word was considered to be its integrant or in other words its potential or real component. Nowadays a text is considered to be a complete linguistic sign. That means that theoretical reconstruction of linguistics implies movement from syntactics to pragmatics on the one hand and on the other hand from an incomplete sign to a complete sign such as a text.

In the present research work an interview is considered to be the highest linguistic sign through anthropocentric- communicative paradigm. That means studying an interview through syntactic, semantic and pragmatic aspects based on inter-subjective background. With the help of pragmatic aspect we managed to emphasize subjective cognition of an addressee and an addresser. The cognition is reflected not only through the information given in the interview but also through its stylistic, lexical, grammatical and structural appearance.

The research object of the work is a political interview and its linguistic implication. The structure of an interview is built on answers and questions. As the main purpose of our research is an interview and its implication we decided to choose an interview-dialogue as it best shows how the principles of co-operation are observed or violated while asking questions and answering them. During the interview a journalist is not limited just with the questions. S/he can use additional linguistic or non-linguistic means to get as detailed information as possible.

**Chapter I - Communicative Notion of Implicit Contents of a Text** shows that very often implicit contents of a text is used as a means communi-

cation. Every science has its own object and means. An object is an aspect of reality the science is aimed to study, and a means is a way the science studies the object. The notion of communicative linguistics means that a human being is to be considered as a participant of communication. Communication is an act, a process which is determined to be one of the components of activities a human being can perform.

The research shows that apart from explicit meaning an utterance also has an implicit meaning. The implicit contents of a text sometimes are more important than the explicit one. Implicature is a technical term in the linguistic branch of pragmatics. In order to study the communicative implicature it is necessary to go beyond linguistic situation and take into account the extralinguistic situation the utterance is connected with.

Implicit contents of an utterance consist of the same layers as the explicit contents – nominal or referential and implicative, in other words some additional information about referential situation described by the utterance or it can be some other thing connected to the situation. Communicative implicature is a proof of a communicative situation, in particular about the addresser.

To illustrate the theory described above let's study an extract from the interview between the USA ex-president Bill Clinton and Stiff Cop from his programme "60 minutes".

**Dan Rather:** "What do you consider the greatest failure of your presidency?"

**Bill Clinton:** "I'm sorry on the home front that we didn't get healthcare and that we didn't reform Social Security. And international affairs, I regret that I didn't succeed in getting Osama bin Laden. And equally, I'm sorry that I wasn't able enough to convince the Israelis and the Palestinians to make peace." [www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004)

We will never know the implication of the interview if we do not realize that Bill Clinton is emphasizing the fact he was mostly blamed for. This is an attempt to show that he regrets that he failed in some aspects of his presidency. That will help him to maintain his good image in public.

We are giving here one more example for illustration. This is an extract from the interview between ex-president of Georgia Mr. Eduard Shevardnadze and Prime Time journalist Ia Danelia. Here we can see an example of general implicature which is highlighting the whole interview which is consi-

dered to be a linguistic text.

**I.D. (journalist)** *If there is a dialogue between the opposition and President Saakashvili, who do you think will be the winner?*

**E. Sh. (ex-president)** *Nobody is against the dialogue. The question is how they see the dialogue. The opposition thinks that there is only question they can negotiate about – this is a question of resignation of the president. But the majority offers them tens of questions for negotiation. (Prime Times 4-10.04.09)*

The given example shows that it is impossible to talk about communicative implicature if we do not know who is talking to whom, why and where. In other words we can see the hidden message of the interview if we take into account the background political situation in Georgia in spring 2009 when there was a much tensed relationship between the government and the opposition. As for the answer we can see that Eduard Shevardnadze is violating the maxim of manner meaning to be precise and concrete.

As for the linguistic means of expressing the implicature there are no means or ways used just for expressing implicature or explicit information of the text. Any means used for explicit understanding of the text could be used for expressing implication. Although it is a fact that those means need to be additionally marked to express the implicature.

To make the case clearer we can say that there are two ways of expressing the underlying message:

1. Just linguistic means that are used in both cases;

Illustration:

*Some sportsmen smoke.*

The underlying message of the utterance means that not all the sportsmen smoke.

2. Additional markers to linguistic means. They are: diminutive morphemes, words with more than one meaning, deictic words, particles, repetition and etc.

To illustrate the theory we study the extract from the interview between the US former president Bill Clinton and Stiff Cop from his programme "60 minutes".

**Steve Kroft:** "You admit that you could never have become president without your wife's support. So why did you repeat the same mistake years

later with Lewinsky? "

**Bill Clinton:** "There is no explanation which is an excuse. I want to make that clear. I don't make any excuses for myself. But I think it is worth trying to figure out why. I was not thinking straight. It, when you ask a question that's a rational question and it's got, supposed to have a rational answer. There is no rational explanation for what I did." [www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004)

As we can see through the violating the logical coherence of the text and repetition, Bill Clinton tries to avoid the answer to the question. The means used by him is considered to be an additional marker.

From linguistic point of view an interview is an interesting phenomenon because it best shows what linguistic means and ways are used to avoid answering a question. People very often fail to answer a simple Wh or Yes/No question and use other means to keep their positive image in front of public. But their attempt could be noticed if we follow the maxims of cooperation and see whether they have been observed or violated.

**Chapter II - Theoretic bases of Studying an Interview** gives brief preconditioned history of development of text linguistics. A text is a language in use and all its components are influenced by the situation they occur in. That is why the meaning of words in the text differs from the meaning of the same word found in dictionaries or grammar books.

From structural point of view any sequence of coherent utterances is considered to be a text. That means at least two sentences that are logically connected with each other can make a text. As for the functional point of view not only logically connected utterances but also even a sentence or a word could be considered to be a text if it carries communication (Lebanidze, 1998:23).

In the present research work an interview is considered to be a linguistic text. It can be studied as a whole unit with its grammatical, lexical and stylistic peculiarities, also through inner structural elements and extra linguistic situations.

While analyzing an interview as a genre we have come across three differentiative characteristics. They are:

- a) The first characteristic feature of an interview is its form. It has a form of dialogue.
- b) The second characteristic feature of an interview is a classification of utterances made by an interviewer. Any remark made by an interviewer is

considered to be a question during the interview because they are provoking an interviewee to speak.

- c) The third characteristic feature of an interview is the relationship between an interviewer and an interviewee. The atmosphere created by an interviewer is usually contagious. The remarks made by an interviewer either help the interviewee to maintain his/her positive image in public or face the threat loosing his/her positive image in public (see the table 1).

Linguistic competence of communicants allows a speaker to make grammatically and lexically appropriate sentences to get an adequate reaction from a listener.

To make the case clearer we illustrate an extract from the UK former Prime Minister Tony Blair form his speech made in congress.

**The P. M. (Mr. Tony Blair):** We should be proud that, in Iraq today, we have a process under way that will allow the Iraqi people to achieve the freedom, democracy and the rule of the law that we take for granted. Yes, we will get protests, as we saw earlier today. In the end, the people of this country elect their Government. That is a fantastic thing, and it is an opportunity that is available for people in Iraq today. I know that people – some of them Labour Members – are worried about our alliance with the United States of America. However, I think that America now understands and believes that the best and ultimate guarantee of its security is the spread of the values of freedom, democracy and the rule of law. (Barcelona CDA Congress Valencia, May 2004)

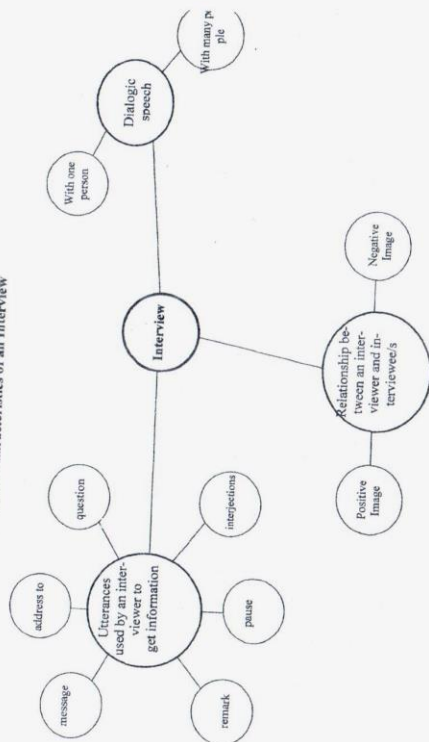
The extract shows how the former Prime Minister wants the House of Commons to support him in the war against Iraq. The extract shows that his speech is based on the thesaurus of communicants which form the implicature of a text. Mr. Blair knows that the majority of Commons are against the war. That is why he tries to use the appropriate utterances based on presuppositions. An extra-linguistic factor is added to the general context information which is common for both – the Commons and the Prime Minister. In this case it is a strike in the street against the war which definitely does not help the Prime Minister.

It is obvious that the former Prime Minister appreciates the situation well. He somehow tries to observe the principles of co-operation to make the conversation successful.

So some it up we can say that linguistic competence of communicants determines their speech competence.

Table №1

Genre Characteristics of an Interview



**Chapter III – Pragmatic Analysis of Political Interviews** conveys the pragmatic analyses of real-life interviews with the help of conversational principles introduced by Paul Grice (Grice 1975).

A pragmatic analysis of an interview is based on the following criteria:

- a. Speech acts
- b. Cooperative principles by P. Grice
- c. Image
- d. Duration of an utterance
- e. Specific usage of lexical units connected with ambiguity and esotericism of political discourse<sup>1</sup>

These are the criteria that help us see whether a speaker is trying to give some hidden information or not. In social science generally and linguistics specifically, the cooperative principle describes how people interact with one another.

These principles can be divided into four maxims, called the Gricean maxims, describing specific rational principles observed by people who obey the cooperative principle. These maxims could be simply stated as:

- a. Be short
- b. Be true
- c. Be appropriate
- d. Be clear

See Kirvalidze, N. "Political Discourse and Cognitive Metaphors". International Scientific Journal Intellect 8 (35). Georgian Foundation For Development of Science and Society, Tbilisi 2009. pg. 121-125

These principles enable effective communication. Any attempt of violation of those maxims is a precondition to form an underlying message.

To make the theory clearer we illustrate an extract for the interview with Bill Clinton. He fails to answer a simple question whether his relationship with Monika Lewinsky was the worst thing he has ever done.

**Dan Rather:** "Was the affair the worst thing you have ever done?"

**Bill Clinton:** "In my whole life? Oh, I don't know, I think I've talked about that a lot in the book. And I think I've said enough about my personal life. And I think I've honestly tried to say more about my life than I believe any public figure ever has. And probably more than anyone ever should. And

*I think I'll leave it at that.* [www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/)

Pragmatic analysis of the passage shows that the USA former president violates the maxim of co-operation that requires giving the information as you are asked. The failure in the case causes the violation of maxim of manner that requires being clear and precise to avoid ambiguity.

While analyzing an interview aiming at identifying conversational implication, a new term "Image" appeared meaning a speaker's linguistic and social behaviour. Any speech act might have an influence on the image and might create an atmosphere where a person could easily lose his/her image. According to analyses we have performed, we can say that a person needs to know and follow the maxims of politeness to be able not to lose his/her image. There are two ways of politeness: positive and negative.

- Positive Face in other words Solidarity Politeness which is very often characterized by Involvement Strategy. With this strategy a respondent emphasizes his involvement in the communication.
- Negative face in other words Negative Politeness which is often called Independent Strategy. With this strategy a respondent emphasizes his independence and shows the respect to a correspondent.

Each type of the discourse is characterized by the following strategies:

1. Positive face:
  - Showing strong interest towards a respondent (a correspondent takes into account a listener's interest);
  - Showing strong interest towards the activity of a respondent;
  - Emphasizing the membership of a common social group;
  - Showing familiarity with a help of being talkative and using a listener's language/dialect;
  - Using nick names;
  - Being optimistic.
2. Negative Politeness:
  - Emphasizing the individuality of communicants by not being talkative observing the general rules;
  - Showing preference of individual values over the group value;
  - Showing formality by using surnames, own language/dialect;
  - Being pessimistic.

As one can understand the terms "positive" and "negative" are used to show terminology opposition and do not have the meaning of being "good" or "bad".

We chose the interview with Tony Blair with the BBC journalist David Frost to illustrate the case.

**D.F** : *What do you think, will you be able to fulfill the plan by the end of your parliament?*

**T.B** : *I am not going to anticipate.* (Aston University, Aston Triangle, Birmingham B4 7ET, United Kingdom)

The attempt to avoid the answer to the question could have led Mr. Blair to lose his image in public. The answer he gave is an example of violating the maxim of manner but at least he manages to maintain his good image. He did not make a promise that could not have been kept by the parliament.

There are the following sub points in the strategy of politeness:

- Unvarnished style;
- Positive politeness;
- Negative politeness;
- Informal strategy.

The pragmatic analyses of interviews we have performed prove that there are certain categories that help us identify the underlying message of a text. They are: frequency of used pronouns, the length of utterance, background noise, phrase fillers, contagious reaction and types of questions. The following example shows how difficult the US former president finds to answer a simple question and how he manages to deal with.

*"I've thought about it a lot. And there are lots of more sophisticated explanations, more complicated psychological explanations. But none of them are an excuse. I have to say that over and over again, because I know that people will raise Cain about that. But only a fool does not look to explain his mistakes. People should try to understand why they did the things they did. shouldn't they?"* [www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/)

In this case the form of a tag question he uses is somehow a rhetoric question. We think a tag question is a good way to see a difference between a question and a statement. E.g. the tag question makes these two sentences different: "*He is stupid, isn't he?*" and "*Is he stupid?*" Pragmatic analysis

of these sentences shows that using the first sentence a speaker tries to give us some hidden information about N and make us agree with him.

A journalist with an appropriate knowledge and instruction can easily alter the way of the conversation, strengthen or weaken the influence on the speaker. The easiest and the most available way of manipulation used by journalists is just an interruption if an interviewee talks too much.

The analysis we performed once again proves that any utterance made by an interviewer could be considered to be a question. That means that during an interview not just a question is a question. An affirmative sentence or a statement could also provoke an answer or encourage an interviewee to speak. Sentences in terms of structure often overlap each other during an interview. A question can be considered to be a statement or vice versa.

## CONCLUSION

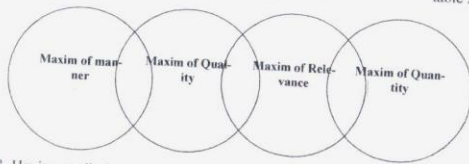
Having studied and analyzed an interview from a pragmatic point of view we have come to the following theoretical conclusions:

1. According to the research we have performed it can be said that an interview is an independent genre of journalism taking into account the difference between an interview and dialogic discourse. The difference is seen through their functional-semantic and pragmatic peculiarities as well as through their informational structure.
2. According to the research we have determined the different characteristics of an interview and a dialogic discourse. They are: during dialogic discourse the alternation of speech acts are followed by the changes of communicative roles of an addressee and an addresser. As for an interview even if communicants change their communicative roles the institutional role of a correspondent and a respondent will still remain the same. They never change.
3. Lingvo-culturologic analysis of an interview and its semantic (referential), syntactic (inner-linguistic) and pragmatic aspects has revealed its structural, lexical-grammatical and stylistic peculiarities. Combination of these features determines the type of an interview taking into account its genre and style.
4. According to the research we can determine the different means and ways a journalist uses to get information. They are:
  - Laying a statement under a question to form informational background;
  - Using plural pronouns
  - Mollification
5. The research also allows us to talk about communicative strategies of a respondent. In order to avoid the answer interviewees mainly attack the question including the source of information and appropriacy of a question.
6. According to the research we can conclude that communicative strategy of a politician respondent is mainly determined by intentional violation of Gricean maxims that form the ambiguity and esotericism of an utterance and its implicature.
7. The maxims of co-operation are violated with a certain frequency. Very often they overlap with each other. Graphically it can be expressed in the following way.



Frequency of violating maxims

table 2



8. Having studied a written interview with a help of three dimensional lingos-semiotic model we formed the linguistic notion of implicature according to which the implicature is believed to be a deep layer of information created by the simultaneous realization of semantic, syntactic and pragmatic aspects of a text. The correct inference of implicature needs creative interpretative approach to a text, in other words it could be studied through a broad socio-cultural context.

9. Pragmatic analyses of authentic interviews in both –English and Georgian languages allow us to talk about peculiarities of communicative strategies of a politician respondent. The violation of Gricean maxims is intended to:

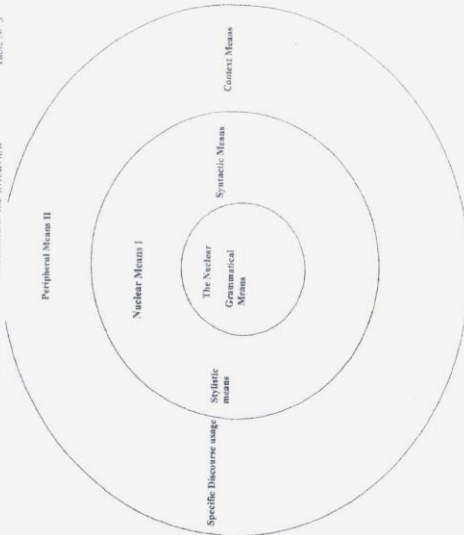
- neutralize the facts and hide the information;
- hide the truth to make people have different ideas;
- stay anonymous and support depersonalization to avoid responsibility;
- save personal rating;
- avoid conflicts during an interview.

10. In accordance with the research we can conclude that interviewers mostly use indefinite pronouns while interviewees tend to use the first person plural in most cases. Though we can say that during political interviews the choice of pronouns goes beyond their grammatical person, number and gender. They can be chosen for different reasons. They can be used to show the communicants' attitude, social status, gender, motivation and so on. ( see table 3).

11. Studying an interview in different languages ( in our case English and Georgia) substantiates the thesis that reality is a unity of subjective and objective ways of reflection. On the one hand the means of expressing reality in different languages indicates its invariance. On the other hand expressing an interview with the help of different linguistic means shows its variance.

Table N. 3

LINGUISTIC MEANS OF EXPRESSING IMPLICATURE IN THE INTERVIEW



THE MAIN CONCEPTS OF THE DISSERTATION  
ARE GIVEN IN THE FOLLOWING WORKS:

1. Alavidze, M. Interview as a Speech Genre. *The works of the Faculty of European Languages and Literature. vol. IV.* Kutaisi. Publisher "Kutaisi Akaki Tsereteli State University" 2004. pp: 29-32.
2. Alavidze, M. Some Remarks on Gricean Theory of Implicature. *Linguistic Papers XVIII*, Tbilisi. Publisher "Georgian Language" 2005. pp: 349-355
3. Alavidze, M. Implicature as a Linguistic Phenomenon. *Linguistic Papers XIX*, Tbilisi. Publisher "Georgian Language" 2005. pp: 16-23
4. Alavidze, M. Speech Genre and Situational Norms as Basis of Communicative Implicature. *Periodical Scientific Journal of the Faculty of Arts. vol. IX.* Publisher "Akaki Tsereteli State University", 2007, pp: 11-14.
5. Alavidze, M. Maxims of Politeness and the Necessity to Observe Them. "International Conference "Humanities in the Information Society"" Batumi, Shota Rustaveli State University, Faculty of Humanities, 2009, p. 18-25
6. Alavidze, M. Pragmatic Analysis of Political Interviews, "International Conference "Language – Intercultural Mediator", Kutaisi, Akaki Tsereteli State University, 2009, p.29-35