Olga Dontcheva-Navratilova

# Interpersonal Meanings in the Genre of Diplomatic Addresses

**Abstract**
This article is concerned with the construction of interpersonal relations in a relatively neglected genre of political discourse – opening addresses delivered by Directors-General of UNESCO at international conferences and meetings – arguing that the genre-specific distribution of interpersonal cues in addresses enhances the perception of coherence. While exploring the communicative purpose and the rhetorical structure of addresses, the analysis relates the rhetorical moves of the genre to communicative functions of language conveying interpersonal meanings and considers their contribution to the perception of discourse coherence. The findings of the analysis show that owing to the ritualistic character of addresses, interpersonal meanings contributing to the perception of coherence convey a continuous appeal to the audience related to claiming common ground and shared ideology, and a consistent subjective evaluation of social actors, their actions and relations by the speaker.

**Key words**
*Interpersonal meaning; coherence; genre; rhetorical structure; evaluation; subjectivity; modality; political discourse*

## 1. Introduction

Opening addresses are a sub-genre of the genre-colony (Bhatia 2004: 7) of political speeches and thus share most of their characteristic features, including the macro-communicative purpose of persuading the audience to accept the speaker's understanding of reality and of supporting the ideologically biased views and policy he/she suggests (Dedaić 2006: 700). Owing to the specificity of the international context and their ritualistic character, however, they differ from the

majority of political speeches in that they do not have the ulterior aim of persuading the audience to vote for the speaker or the party he/she represents. Drawing on Donahue and Prosser (1997: 4), the rhetorical genre of diplomatic addresses can be defined as epideictic oratory for ceremonial occasions which may include deliberative aspects; opening addresses presuppose a high level of personal involvement, they focus on the present, though may refer to past events and to the future, and involve an evaluative treatment of people, actions and events by emphasising praise or blame. As a result the interpersonal meaning component, related to establishing contact, appealing to the audience and expressing feeling and judgements, comes to the fore, and on many occasions eclipses the informative value of the speech. Since the persuasive force of political talk depends on several aspects of coherence, namely discourse coherence, i.e. the interpretative perception of the semantic unity and purposefulness of discourse (cf. Bublitz 1997, Seidlhofer and Widdowson 1997, Povolná 2007 and Dontcheva-Navratilova 2007, 2009), "the audience's evaluation of the coherence of 'what has been said' and 'what has been meant'" (Fetzer 2002: 185), i.e. speaker's credibility, and existential coherence (Duranti 2006), i.e. the ability of the speaker to represent his/her behaviour and attitude to people, values, facts and ideas as consistent and continuous, the aim of this paper is to investigate how interpersonal meanings in addresses contribute to discourse coherence and to the integrity and credibility of the speakers, while helping them achieve their communicative intentions with regard to the situational, socio-cultural and pragmatic context in which the interaction takes place.

## 2. Interpersonal meanings and communicative functions

The interpersonal component of language (Halliday 1985) is concerned with the relations between the addressor and the addressee present in the communicative event, and can be related to the phatic, expressive and conative functions as defined in Jakobson's theory of language functions (1990). Since in agreement with Trosborg (2000) this analysis of interpersonal meanings in diplomatic addresses is based on a discussion of the communicative functions language performs to transmit meanings associated with the rhetorical moves which make part of the structure of the genre under investigation, the relevant language functions are briefly introduced here. It should be noted that the form-function correlations discussed below are considered to be genre specific; however, since language forms may perform different functions on different occasions or more than one function simultaneously, the full interpretation potential of a text can be revealed only taking in consideration the particular situational and socio-cultural context in which the interaction takes place.

   The phatic function is signalled by Urbanová (2008: 46) as the most important function in spoken language from a sociolinguistic point of view. It is related to the establishment of interpersonal relations by attracting the attention of the audi-

ence, ensuring that the channel of communication is open and creating an atmosphere of sharing and togetherness; the language devices realising this function are cliché phrases used in social rituals, greetings, polite formulae, terms of address, and the inherently polite speech acts of thanking and apologising (Brown and Levinson 1987).

Discourse which appeals directly to the audience with the aim of having a specific effect or influence on their opinions or behaviour is expressed by the conative function. While not involving an assessment of the truth value of the proposition, it presupposes a reaction and an uptake on the part of the addressee, who is expected to be persuaded, convinced, deterred or misled into sharing a particular opinion or undertaking action. The main devices associated with this type of interpersonal meanings are vocatives, questions and commands, which can be realised by direct or indirect speech acts.

The meanings that the expressive use of language conveys reveal the speaker's emotions and attitudes to the state of affairs at issue and therefore are inherently subjective. They are expressed by lexical items with connotative meaning, personal intrusions on the part of the speaker by means of self-reference personal pronouns, verbs of thinking and emotions, and the speech acts of apologising, congratulating, wishing and thanking (Searle 1991).

Subjectivity may also be expressed in utterances which perform primarily a representative function; by categorising events, social actors and their actions which make part of their representation of the world, the speakers evaluate the state of affairs from the point of view of their ideology as fair or unfair, desirable or undesirable etc. Such statements contribute to the persuasive effect of discourse and may be referred to as verdictives (Austin 1962: 150, Trosborg 2000: 124).

Concluding this brief review of communicative functions associated with the expression of interpersonal meanings, it should be stressed that it is not always possible to distinguish the functions clearly, since individual stretches of discourse may convey several communicative intentions.

## 3. Generic structure of opening addresses

Genre analysis as developed by Swales (1990, 2004) and Bhatia (1993) combines socio-cultural, cognitive and interactional considerations in order to explain socially constructed form-function correlations as manifested in different discourse forms used by members of various discourse communities in academic, professional and other institutionalised settings (Bhatia 2004: 123). Within this approach, genre is defined as a conventional communicative event recognized by a particular discourse community which is associated with particular types of social occasions, and which has a specific set of communicative purposes, imposing constraints on the choice of content and style (Swales 1990: 46-58). The most important criterion for genre delimitation is the communicative purpose(s) that

the users expect discourse to fulfil in a particular context; however, a genre may allow for internal variation, i.e. sub-genres, reflecting difference in specific communicative goal(s) and associated discourse strategies (Bhatia 1993: 21).

An analysis of generic structure deals with "the cognitive aspects of language organisation" (Bhatia 1993: 29). It aims at identifying the rhetorical move-structure present in texts representative of the genre which helps the speaker/writer fulfil his/her communicative purposes, and the rhetorical features used in constructing the text; however, since instances of genres differ in their prototypicality (Swales 1990: 49), there is flexibility in the realisation of the moves and rhetorical features used on particular occasions. While endeavouring to identify the move structure of the genre of opening addresses, this paper studies interpersonal meanings and related communicative functions expressed in individual moves and considers their contribution to the perception of discourse coherence.

As stated above, the material under investigation comprises addresses delivered by leaders of UNESCO, one of the international governmental organisations within the United Nations system. The research has been carried out on thirty speeches delivered by three politicians from different cultural backgrounds who were the last to hold the office of Director-General of UNESCO, namely Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow from Senegal, term of office: 1974–1987; Federico Mayor Zaragoza from Spain, term of office: 1987–1999; and Koïchiro Matsuura from Japan, term of office: 1999–2009. (The texts of all the speeches of the Directors-General of UNESCO are available at the following website address: http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/about-us/who-we-are/director-general/the-organization/the-directors-general/, where they can be accessed by choosing first the name of a Director-General, then the 'Speeches' options, and finally by indicating the specific occasion at which the speech was delivered.)

Opening addresses have primarily a symbolic and ceremonial function and serve the following communicative purposes:

1)   They draw the attention of the audience to the importance of the event and establish a social relationship.
2)   By asserting the interest and participation of UNESCO in the event, the speaker aims at enhancing the feeling of belonging to a community which shares the ideology supported by the organisation. The presence of the Director-General and the ceremonial address he/she delivers symbolises the involvement of UNESCO in the event and supports the audience's allegiance to its aims.
3)   Opening addresses offer an appraisal of a situation, process or event of regional or international importance from the point of view of the institutional ideology.
4)   When situations, processes or events may be interpreted as a problem, the speech offers a solution and suggests intervention pertaining to the scope of action of the organisation. In these cases, addresses have a persuasive func-

tion related to the necessity of urging the audience to support the suggested course of action.

5) An additional function of opening addresses is to encourage the audience to participate actively in the event and to persevere in their efforts to contribute to the realisation of common goals.

These communicative purposes are reflected in the structure of the genre. Since the focus of this paper is on interpersonal meanings, the rhetorical structure of opening addresses suggested below is restricted to typical moves and sub-moves available in the genre, without accounting for intra-generic variation:

1) Salutation – the opening section in which the speaker creates common ground with the audience by giving acknowledgements to his/her hosts and to the audience, such as gratitude for servicers received, or recognition of personal and/or professional association. It is frequently not related to the topic of the speech proper
   a) direct address to the audience, including congratulations to the current president of the proceedings, or a similar officer and, occasionally other members of the audience
   b) thanking the officials addressed for their support for the issue, event or activity central to the occasion and for their allegiance to UNESCO. This may often include personal involvement of the speaker with the person to whom he/she refers
2) Asserting centrality of the issue, event or programme to the UNESCO ideology and action plan
   a) claiming centrality of the issue, relating it to the programme and activities of UNESCO
   b) if another organisation/member-state is involved, the speaker stresses the importance of cooperation between this institution and UNESCO, thus reinforcing common ground
3) Introducing the situation
   a) evaluation of regional and world issues relevant to the event from the point of view of the UNESCO ideology
   b) evaluative description of facts relevant to the situation and related previous actions of UNESCO
4) Indicating a problem
   a) problem description, highlighting urgency
   b) problem evaluation, assuming that the audience shares the speaker's assessment
5) Suggesting a solution to the problem
   a) suggesting interventional measures
   b) motivating the necessity of the intervention and the necessity of urgent common action to achieve joint goals

6)  Evaluating the contribution of the event or suggested action plan from the point of view of UNESCO and the regional or international community
7)  Closure
    a)  wishing the event success
    b)  thanking the audience for its attention

It is obvious that moves 3 – 6 draw on the SPRE (situation-problem-response-evaluation) model suggested by Hoey (1983, 2001), which has been proved to be applicable in the analysis of rhetorical relations above clause level in different discourse types (cf. Edge and Wharton 2001, Flowerdew 2008). It should be mentioned that these moves are full-fledged in addresses which have a deliberative aspect.

## 4. Analysis

The analysis of interpersonal meanings in addresses generally follows the same sequence as rhetorical moves; however, when the same interpersonal device is used in several moves, its functions tend to be discussed by taking into consideration all the moves in which it is used.

   When opening his address a Director-General has first to attract the attention of the people in order to persuade them to listen. Therefore, in the salutation he exploits the phatic function to establish interpersonal relations with his audience; as Dontcheva-Navratilova (2008) points out, this involves both negative and positive politeness strategies related to showing respect and creating common ground. Since diplomatic discourse is highly ritualistic and formal, the terms of address used for direct appeal to the audience express deference and include titles (*Doctor, Professor* etc.) and honorifics (e.g. *Madam, Sir*), which indicate the relative status of the participants. For instance, in the salutation of Matsuura's speech delivered at UN headquarters (1) the president of the proceedings and other officials are addressed by honorific or title and surname, i.e. the unmarked forms for this context; the order of the listing reflects social and institutional rank, often signalled explicitly by appositives. The groups are referred to by contextually determined formulaic address terms; however, owing to the potential of linguistic selections to construct interpersonal relations, the choice of the label *colleagues* claims common ground and indicates in-group membership (Brown and Levinson 1987).

(1)     Mrs Anan,
        Dr Arima, representative of the Government of Japan for DESD Affairs,
        Mrs Rima Salah, Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF,
        Professor Rockefeller,
        Distinguished Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
        Colleagues from the UN system,

> Distinguished guests,
> Ladies and Gen*tlemen,*

The occurrence of the vocatives *Ladies and Gentlemen* and occasionally *Excellencies* is not restricted to the salutation part of the speech; they are also used as indicators of discourse structure at transitional points between rhetorical moves to check that the channel is open and enhance continuous interpersonal contact. This is illustrated in (2), where the vocative, the metadiscourse marker realised by the first-person imperative *Let me*, "common when the speaker/writer is signalling an upcoming aspect of the text" (Carter and McCarthy 2006: 288), and the direct address to the audience by the personal pronoun *you*, draw the attention of the listeners to the importance of cooperation and action in Africa to UNESCO's activities, thus explicitly marking a coherent transition to rhetorical move (2a) – 'claiming centrality of the issue, relating in to the programme and activities of UNESCO'.

(2)     Ladies and Gentlemen,
        Let me first of all briefly remind you of UNESCO's approach to the crucial question of cooperation and action in Africa.

The participants' interpersonal relations are not defined only by the terms of address the speaker uses; they are also constructed by the use of personal pronouns and other indexical expressions which, on the one hand, are sensitive to the social context and reflect interpersonal relations in terms of power and solidarity, and on the other, may be exploited to (re-)construct such relations via language. In the second move of the salutation which conveys both phatic and expressive meanings the Directors-General show personal involvement and pay credit to officials, thanking them for their allegiance to the ideas and aims of UNESCO. The explicit attribution of views and opinions to the speaker presents him as an active discourse participant, thus making the speech more interactive and contributing to greater speaker visibility (Gosden 1993: 62–67). This is typically associated with the discourse strategy of self-disclosure involving the frequent use of first-person structures (Donahue and Prosser 1997: 74), which contributes to the credibility and existential coherence of the speaker by making explicit his attitude to people, facts and ideas, thus allowing him to represent these as continuous. Taken from an address delivered by Mayor to a session of the International Narcotics Control Board, extract (3) shows how the strong personal presence of the speaker combined with direct appeal to the audience (indicated by the pronominal forms *you/your*) and the politeness strategies of showing deference towards the interlocutor (expressed by the use of title and honorifics and the act of thanking) and claiming common ground in a shared deictic centre (the session), gradually lead to the defining of commitments of social actors by the statement of an intention to undertake joint action against a common threat, thus transforming '*I* and you' into 'us' against 'them'. Approval of the beliefs and actions of others is enhanced by

politeness formulae containing strongly positive affective adjectives (*honoured* in this example; other adjectives used in the corpus are, e.g. *delighted, dedicated, happy*, *inspiring*) which evaluate speaker-audience relations.

(3)     I am very honoured by your invitation to address this 58th session of the International Narcotics Control Board and to discuss with you global issues of drug abuse and control and UNESCO's aim of reducing the demand for drugs through a preventive education programme. To Professor Hamid Ghodse, President of INCB, I offer my personal thanks for inviting me to speak, and I should like to thank you all for being here around this table. I hope to spend this morning with you finding ways and means of tackling what I consider to be one of the most serious global threats to society, to health and to the economy – the threat of drug abuse and drug trafficking.

Thus established, the continuity of the represented identities, roles and commitments of the social actors and their consistent evaluative treatment throughout the speech contribute to the perception of discourse coherence.

In the following moves of the rhetorical structure of opening addresses – asserting centrality, introducing the situation, indicating a problem, suggesting a solution, evaluation of the contribution of the event – the speakers exploit the expressive, conative and verdictive functions of language to express interpersonal meanings indicated primarily by subjectivity markers, persuasive strategies and evaluative judgements; these are typically conveyed by reference devices and related nominal categorisation, modality markers and evaluative lexical items.

The interpersonal potential of pronominal choice in addresses is related to the level of involvement of the speaker with the topic and the audience. Subjectivity indicated explicitly by personal intrusions for showing commitment and sincerity is not restricted to a particular rhetorical move. It is typically realised by finite clauses with mental-process verbs, such as *I think*, *I want, I trust, I know, I hope* and *I believe* (4a, b), which guide the audience towards an intended interpretation of the discourse. By inviting the listener's judgement and thus enhancing listener involvement, these expressions indicate interpersonal appeal, which is stressed by the shift to the inclusive *we* in (4a).

(4a)    I think that we must explore this approach of considering drug addicts as persons who need care and to whom such care should be provided in the same way as any other kind of medical assistance.

(4b)    And the greatest part of that challenge, I believe, is to learn the lessons of interdependence.

Owing to the opacity of pragmatic markers in spoken discourse, the use of *I think* and *I believe*, which are typically regarded as attenuation markers indicating a lesser degree of certainty (this concerns both matrix clauses termed hedges

by Brown and Levinson 1987: 164, and comment clauses with the function of opine markers as discussed by Povolná 2009: 74) to convey a personal attribution of judgement in (4a, b), may also be interpreted as an accentuation device expressing strong commitment on the part of the speaker (Urbanová 2003: 67). The persuasive force of such pragmatic markers stems from the fact that, drawing on the expertise and institutional authority of the Director-General, they put forward a strong position conforming to the shared values and views of the organisation.

The use of *we* referring to a group contributes to the construction of group identity by identifying and categorizing the members of the group and excluding others from membership in this group (Helmbrecht 2002: 31). While stating his and the institutions's membership of the group, typically in move 2, 'asserting the centrality of the issue', the Director-General defines his interpersonal relations with (members of) the audience by anchoring the group to his deictic centre, thus determining it as proximal in terms of the dimensions of space, time and modality; the establishment of a shared ideology and the continuity of in-group relations contributes to discourse coherence and to the perception of the existential coherence of the speaker and the institution he represents. Thus (5) shows that the categorisation of UNESCO as lead agency for promoting educational programmes enables the Director-General to reaffirm his institutional identity, and, by relating past action to future expectations, to enhance the existential coherence of the organisation which is presented as acting consistently towards a goal shared with a partner (ECOWAS). In fact, *our hope* suggests an implicit ambiguity, since it is possible to identify the referent of *our* as UNESCO only, or as UNESCO and ECOWAS sharing joint goals and aims; a further interpersonal dimension is added by the sentence initial adverbial appealing directly to the audience to claim shared knowledge.

(5)     As you are already aware, UNESCO has given priority to its work as lead agency for promoting Education for All (EFA) and the education-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In this regard, we have responded to the request of the Secretariat and member states for assistance in the formulation of the ECOWAS Education Protocol, which now serves as the basis for collaboration between ECOWAS member states in this important area. In addition, we have collaborated with the Secretariat in designing a regime for the recognition of higher education degrees across the sub-region. ECOWAS member states benefit here not only from UNESCO interventions in response to bilateral agreements with ECOWAS, but also directly by virtue of their membership of UNESCO. Our hope and expectation is that through ECOWAS sponsored networks, these benefits will be shared across West Africa.

Categorisation of social actors is exploited for persuasion purposes in the situation – problem – response moves of addresses with deliberative aspects, where the speaker typically expresses subjective evaluation of the state of affairs from

the point of view of the institutional ideology and conveys a strong commitment to a suggested plan of action. This interpersonal dimension of addresses is typically enhanced by epistemic and deontic modality markers; epistemic meanings frame the discourse in subjectivity by showing the feelings, beliefs and critical thought of the speaker, thus reflecting his/her ideology and position (Simon-Vandenbergen 1997: 342), while deontic meanings connected with the necessity or desirability of acts performed by morally responsible agents (Lyons 1977: 823), convey an ideologically biased representation of a discourse world in terms of 'right' and 'wrong'. Drawing on Chilton's (2004) approach to the analysis of political discourse, the discourse world of the speaker may be seen as constructed along three dimensions of deixis – space, time and modality – which position the speaker at the deictic centre, associated with "not only the origin of here and now, but also of epistemic true and deontic right" (Chilton 2004: 59). Since modality – similarly to spatial, temporal and social relations – is conceptualised in terms of remoteness, the modal scale may be claimed to represents the speaker's conceptualisation of reality ranging from confident prediction to near impossibility, and from true, right and desirable, located near to or co-located with the self, to false, wrong and undesirable located with the other(s). This conceptualisation of the discourse world in contrastive sets of values tries to provoke a response from the audience, the aim of the speaker being to convince the listeners to support his ideology and suggested plan of action.

Example (6a) shows the opening lines of Mayor's address to the 58th session of the United Nations International Narcotics Control Board. The Director-General uses a very interesting strategy – he gives a summary of the SPRE rhetorical moves in his speech before formally addressing the audience. Owing to this unexpected structural arrangement, the high level of certainty indicated by the presentation of the situation as a fact, and the expressive war metaphor enhanced by triple parallelism, the contrast between the negatively-assessed reality (*drugs; drunks; cancer; kills like war; addiction; shame*) and the desirable state of affairs (*personal and social security; health*) attracts the attention of the listeners and enhances the persuasiveness of the rhetoric. Obviously, the aim is to convince the audience of the necessity of undertaking action (*severe judicial sanctions; courageous; firm; innovative measures; radical measures; international measures*) to stop wrongdoing and to protect victims. The presupposed high degree of consensus and solidarity on the issue of drug addiction is reflected in the directive function of most modal meanings, which gives the whole speech a coherent frame, and the high degree of certainty in the necessity of undertaking action (*absolutely indispensable*). The authority of Mayor's expert knowledge as a biochemist is used to support his institutional authority as Director-General of UNESCO to impose obligations on the addressee, expressed by the modal *must*. The high degree of personal involvement on the part of the speaker is indicated by the use of first-person pronouns, which in the case of *we,* drawing on the pragmatic strategy over-inclusion (Bull and Fetzer 2006: 15), may be interpreted as referring to all institutions and individuals sharing the view that drugs should be eradicated.

However, in the extract taken from the 'suggesting a solution to the problem' move (6b), when referring to measures at international and national level, i.e. presupposing competences which are outside the scope of UNESCO, the speaker conveys a lesser degree of certainty (*I think it would be worth considering; to whom care should be provided; we could thereby contribute*) since he lacks the power to impose such measures.

(6a)   Drugs kill: they kill like war. Cars driven by drunks kill: they kill as in war. Lung cancer kills: it kills like war. As a brain biochemist, I must warn particularly against the damage produced by drug addiction. Irreversibility is the supreme criterion for action. It is a matter of the ethics of time. Courageous, firm, innovative measures must be adopted at international and national level alike if we really want to end this shame of many people, too often young, being trapped by an addiction harmful both for them and for their social entourage. There is a need to publicize and issue stern warnings concerning the effects of drugs on health, behaviour, and personal and social security. Swift and severe judicial sanctions are also necessary. We must prosecute the drug traffickers just as we must care for the health of the addicted. Both supply and demand must be reduced. This means adopting radical measures for preventing the laundering of money of unknown provenance. The adoption of international measures to this effect is absolutely indispensable if we wish to address the real problems and not merely the symptoms. […]

(6b)   I think it would be worth while considering an international agreement to allow, under medical control, a limited supply of drugs to drug addicts who need them and are unable to break with their habit. They should simultaneously benefit from social and medical care, and be helped in the same way as patients suffering from a curable disease. I think that we must explore this approach of considering drug addicts as persons who need care and to whom such care should be provided in the same way as any other kind of medical assistance. We could thereby contribute to the curing process while ensuring that the drug will be made available to those concerned without the need for recourse to the means they are presently forced to adopt.

The evaluation of the importance of the event has a conclusive function and may be closely interwoven with the closure move which follows. As extract (7) illustrates, this move is typically signalled by an explicit metadiscourse marker (*I should like to conclude*), which attracts the attention of the audience to the forthcoming end of the interaction and to the importance of the evaluative part of the speech, which is marked by a high level of subjectivity indicated by markers of personal involvement of the speaker (*I should like; I also wish; I wish; I am convinced*). By pointing to the contribution of the event to the realisation of the policy of the organisation, this move highlights the existential coherence of

UNESCO; furthermore, it indicates solidarity with the host country by expressing gratitude for the services provided.

(7)     I should like to conclude by underlining once more the importance of this present Conference for a better sharing of knowledge and for the strengthening and development of the ability of nations to innovate and shape their own infrastructure in such a vitally important area of research as the human genome. I also wish to express my gratitude to Chinese scientists and the Chinese authorities for having agreed to host the Conference and for all the facilities they have provided to the participants. I wish this Conference every success, and I am convinced that it marks the beginning of a new chapter in international co-operation in the biological sciences under UNESCO's auspices.
        Thank you.

Similarly to the salutation, the last rhetorical move in addresses – the closure – is primarily associated with interpersonal meanings related to the phatic and expressive functions, conveyed by pronominal reference and the polite acts of wishing success and thanking (8). The pronoun *you*, which is used in combination with the self-reference pronoun *I*, represents the addressee as sharing the deictic centre of the speaker. The act of thanking is a conventional indication of the end of a speech.

(8)     I wish you rich and fruitful deliberations.
        Thank you.

The highly ritualistic first and last moves of the opening addresses have a crucial role in the construction of interpersonal relations between the participants, since they open and close the channel of communication and, thanks to the personal involvement of the speaker and direct address to the audience, enhance continuity and coherence of interpersonal relations.


## 5. Conclusions

The findings of the analysis have shown that due to the ritualistic character of UNESCO opening addresses the interpersonal meanings expressed by the speakers convey a continuous appeal to the audience related to the claiming of common ground and shared ideology, and a consistent subjective evaluation of social actors, their actions and relations. Thus they contribute to discourse coherence and enhance the integrity and credibility of the speakers, while helping them achieve their communicative intentions with regard to the situational, socio-cultural and pragmatic context in which the interaction takes place.

The interpersonal meanings expressed in the rhetorical moves of the genre of opening addresses reflect the communicative intentions of the speaker. The salutation and the closure of the speeches, which aim at attracting attention, appealing to the audience and claiming common ground, convey phatic, conative and expressive meanings. The body of the address, which can be analysed using the SPRE model of rhetorical relations, concentrates on an evaluative treatment of people, actions and events and, in the case of addresses with a deliberative aspect, endeavours to persuade the audience to share a suggested view, policy and plan of action; it is therefore related primarily to the verdictive, conative and expressive functions of language.

Obviously, opening addresses show numerous features typical of spoken interaction and, in particular, of political speeches. The specificity of the genre resides in the ritualistic aspects of the rhetoric and the highly formal intergovernmental character of the communication, which should accommodate the interests of numerous institutional participants coming from different cultural backgrounds. Thus, while dealing with issues of regional and international importance, the speaker does not appeal directly to a large audience of voters, but to officials, who in most cases are not empowered to take immediate decisions. It follows that typical addresses convey a symbolic proclamation of moral values and an appraisal of social actors, actions and events, rather than a direct appeal for action.

In conclusion, it should be stated that the results of this investigation substantiate the view that the selection of interpersonal meanings expressed in a genre reflects the rhetorical structure of discourse and contributes decisively to the perception of discourse coherence. Further research may explore in greater detail differences in contextually motivated interpersonal choices in the genre colony of political speeches.

## Note

## References

Austin, John (1962) *How to Do Things with Words*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Bhatia, Vijay (1993) *Analysing Genre: Language Use in Professional Settings*. London: Longman.
Bhatia, Vijay (2004) *Worlds of Written Discourse. A Genre-Based View*. New York: Continuum.
Brown, Penelope and Steven Levinson (1987) *Politeness. Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Bublitz, Wolfram (1997) 'Introduction: Views on coherence'. In: Wolfram Bublitz, Uta Lenk and Elija Ventola (eds.) *Coherence in spoken and written discourse*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1–7.

Bull, Peter and Anita Fetzer (2006) 'Who are *we* and who are *you*? The strategic use of forms of address in political interviews'. *Text & Talk* 26-1, 3–37.

Carter, Ronald and Michael McCarthy (2006) *Cambridge Grammar of English.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chilton, Paul (2004) *Analysing Political Discourse.* London: Routledge.

Dedaić, Mirjana N. (2006) 'Political Speeches and Persuasive Argumentation'. In: Keith Brown (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics. Vol. 9.* Amsterdam: Elsevier, 700–707.

Donahue, Ray T. and Michael H. Prosser (1997) *Diplomatic Discourse: International Conflict at the United Nations – Addresses and Analysis*. London: Ablex.

Dontcheva-Navratilova, Olga (2007) 'On coherence in written discourse'. In: Schmied, Josef, Christoph Haase and Renata Povolná (eds.) *Complexity and Coherence: Approaches to Linguistic Research and Language Teaching.* Göttingen: Cuvillier Verlag, 127–145.

Dontcheva-Navratilova, Olga (2008) 'Forms of address and self-reference and other-reference in political speeches'. In: Grmelová, Anna, Libuše Dušková, Mark Farrell, and Renata Pípalová (eds.) *Plurality and Diversity in English Studies.* Univerzita Karlova v Praze, Pedagogická fakulta, 70–80.

Dontcheva-Navratilova, Olga (2009) 'Building up discourse coherence: Creating identities in political speeches'. In: Olga Dontcheva-Navratilova and Renata Povolná (eds.) *Coherence and Cohesion in Spoken and Written Discourse,* Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 97–119.

Duranti, Alessandro (2006) 'Narrating the political self in a campaign for U.S. Congress'. *Language in Society* 35, 467–497.

Edge, Julian and Sue Wharton (2001) 'Patterns of text in teacher education'. In: Scott, Michael and Thompson, Geoff (eds.) *Patterns of Text*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 255–286.

Fetzer, Anita (2002) '"Put bluntly, you have something of a credibility problem": Sincerity and credibility in political interviews'. In: Chilton, Paul and Christina Schäfner (eds.) *Politics as Text and Talk. Analytic Approaches to Political Discourse.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 173–202.

Flowerdew, Lynne (2008) *Corpus-Based Analysis of the Problem-Solution Pattern*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Gosden, Hugh (1993) 'Discourse Functions of Subject in Scientific Research Articles'. *Applied Linguistics* 14(1), 56–75.

Halliday, Michael A. K. (1985) *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. London: Edward Arnold.

Helmbrecht, Johannes (2002) 'Grammar and Function of *We*'. In: Duzsak, Anna (ed.) *Us and Others.* Amsterdam: John Bemjanins, 31–50.

Hoey, Michael (1983) *On the Surface of Discourse*. London: George Allen and Unwin.

Hoey, Michael (2001) *Textual Interaction: An Introduction to Written Discourse Analysis*. London, New York: Routledge.

Jakobson, Roman (1990) *On Language*. London, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Lyons, John (1977) *Semantics, vol. 2*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Povolná, Renata (2007) 'Aspects of coherence in spoken discourse'. In: Schmied, Josef, Christoph Haase and Renata Povolná (eds.) *Complexity and Coherence: Approaches to Linguistic Research and Language Teaching.* Göttingen: Cuvillier Verlag, 107–125.

Povolná, Renata (2009) 'Exploring interactive discourse markers in academic spoken discourse'. In: Dontcheva-Navratilova, Olga and Renata Povolná (eds.) *Coherence and Cohesion in Spoken and Written Discourse,* Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 60–80.

Searle, John (1991) 'Indirect Speech Acts'. In: Davis, Steven (ed.) *Pragmatics. A Reader*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 265–277.

Seidlhofer, Barbara and Henry Widdowson (1997) 'Coherence in summary: The contexts of appropriate discourse'. In: Bublitz, Wolfram, Uta Lenk and Elija Ventola (eds.) *Coherence in spoken and written discourse*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 205–219.

Simon-Vandenbergen, Anne-Marie (1997) 'Modal (un)certainty in political discourse: A functional account'. *Language Sciences* 19(4), 341–356.

Swales, John M. (1990) *Genre Analysis. English in Academic and Research Settings.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Swales, John M. (2004) *Research Genres. Exploration and Applications.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Trosborg, Anna (2000) 'The inaugural address'. In: *Analysing Professional Genres.* Amsterdam/ Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 212–145.

Urbanová, Ludmila (2003) *On Expressing Meaning in English Conversation.* Brno: Masarykova univerzita.

Urbanová, Ludmila (2008) *Stylistika anglického jazyka.* Brno: Barrister & Principal.

OLGA DONTCHEVA-NAVRATILOVA is Assistant Professor of English Linguistics at Masaryk University Brno, Czech Republic. She specialises in discourse analysis, stylistics and pragmatics, focusing on political and academic discourse, and is currently involved in the research project *Coherence and Cohesion in English Discourse*, the aim of which is to conceptualize coherence and cohesion as constitutive components of human communication and to explore features and strategies enhancing the perception of coherence and cohesion in different genres of spoken and written discourse. She co-edits the academic journal *Discourse and Interaction*.

Address: Mgr. Olga Dontcheva-Navratilova, Ph.D., Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Education, Masaryk University, Poříčí 9, Brno 603 00, Czech Republic. [e-mail: navratilova@ped.muni.cz]