

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Lexical-Semantic, Grammatical And Communicative-Pragmatic Organization Of Craft (Hunarmandchilik) Discourse: A Corpus-Based Study Of English And Uzbek Artisanal Speech

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Abstract

Craft (artisanal) discourse remains an under-documented type of professional-institutional discourse, despite its central role in transmitting technical knowledge, ethical values and cultural memory across generations. This article presents a corpus-informed linguo-cognitive and linguo-pragmatic description of craft discourse in English and Uzbek, focusing on three interconnected subsystems: the lexical-semantic layer, the grammatical-syntactic layer, and the level of communicative strategies. Using discourse analysis, componential-semantic analysis, contextual-pragmatic analysis and comparative-typological analysis, the study identifies five functional lexical layers (terminological, evaluative, metaphorical, culturally-coded, functional), establishes the dominance of imperative/volitive mood, present-tense verb forms, simple sentences and ellipsis as core grammatical resources, and classifies four recurrent communicative strategies (directive, explanatory, persuasive, evaluative) distributed asymmetrically across the master-apprentice and artisan-client dyads. The findings show that craft discourse is not a simple technical register but a multilayered socio-cultural communicative system in which lexis, grammar and pragmatics jointly encode professional identity, ethical legitimation and intergenerational continuity. The results have direct application in discourse analysis, text linguistics, cognitive and pragmalinguistics, comparative linguistics, translation studies, and in the design of teaching materials on professional communication.

Keywords: craft discourse, hunarmandchilik, institutional discourse, lexical-semantic layers, communicative strategies, linguo-pragmatics, linguo-cognitive analysis, corpus linguistics, master-apprentice communication, comparative linguistics.

1. INTRODUCTION

Research on professional and institutional discourses has become one of the most productive directions in contemporary world linguistics, as scholars increasingly recognize that speech connected with traditional forms of labour encodes not only terminology but entire cognitive and cultural models of a community (Van Dijk, 2008; Fairclough, 1995). Craft discourse — the discourse of

traditional artisanal activity, transmitted through master-apprentice interaction, product description and the social evaluation of skilled labour — occupies a special place among such discourses because it fuses professional knowledge with historically rooted cultural values. Unlike purely technical or bureaucratic registers, craft discourse is oriented simultaneously toward practical instruction, quality assessment, and the

reproduction of ethical and aesthetic norms specific to a given culture.

In European and American linguistics the communicative, semantic and pragmatic dimensions of discourse have been studied systematically by Halliday and Hasan (1976), Van Dijk (2008), Austin (1962), Searle (1969), Schiffrin (1994), Fairclough (1995), Cutting (2002) and Tannen (1989), among others, providing a robust theoretical apparatus for cohesion, speech acts and discourse strategies. In Uzbek linguistics, the communicative-pragmatic properties of text and discourse have been addressed by Mahmudov (2012), Safarov (2006), Raximov (2015) and other scholars, who emphasize the goal-directed, strategic nature of speech-unit selection. However, craft discourse as an independent institutional discourse type — with its own lexical-semantic system, grammatical preferences and communicative strategies — has not yet received a systematic, corpus-informed comparative description in either English or Uzbek linguistics.

This gap is significant for at least three reasons. First, craft discourse is a vehicle of intangible cultural heritage: as traditional trades decline or become mediated by digital platforms, the linguistic forms through which craft knowledge, mastery and ethics are expressed risk disappearing along with the practices themselves. Second, the systematic description of craft discourse contributes to general discourse theory by illustrating how institutional roles (master, apprentice, artisan, client) shape lexical choice, grammatical mood and pragmatic strategy in a non-bureaucratic, orally-grounded professional register. Third, a structured linguistic model of craft discourse creates the empirical basis required for

downstream applications such as translation practice, heritage digitization, and natural-language-processing systems capable of recognizing culturally and professionally specific communicative patterns — a direction developed further in the companion study to this article.

The aim of the present article is to identify and systematically describe the lexical-semantic, grammatical-syntactic and communicative-pragmatic organization of craft discourse on the basis of authentic English- and Uzbek-language material, and to establish how these three subsystems jointly construct the socio-cultural meaning of artisanal communication. The specific objectives are: (1) to classify the functional lexical-semantic layers operative in craft discourse; (2) to determine the dominant grammatical and syntactic means used to organize craft-related speech and to explain their discursive motivation; (3) to identify and classify the communicative strategies employed by master, apprentice, artisan and client, and to describe their distribution across institutional roles; and (4) to discuss the theoretical and applied implications of these findings for discourse analysis, pragmalinguistics, comparative linguistics and translation studies.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The material for this study consists of authentic written and oral texts representing craft (artisanal) discourse in English and Uzbek, drawn from media, journalistic, popular-scientific, everyday and literary discourse domains, together with their translations. The texts reflect craft activity proper, master-apprentice relations, traditional professional processes, product description and the socio-cultural interpretation of artisanal

labour. Two principal communicative dyads were distinguished within the material: master-apprentice interaction, oriented toward knowledge transfer and process control, and artisan-client interaction, oriented toward persuasion and evaluation of the finished product.

The study is descriptive-analytical in design and applies a complex of complementary methods: descriptive method, for the systematic inventory of lexical and grammatical units; discourse analysis, for identifying functional units above sentence level; componential and semantic analysis, for decomposing the meaning of evaluative and metaphorical lexis; contextual-pragmatic analysis, for interpreting communicative intention and illocutionary force; and comparative-typological analysis, for identifying convergent and divergent features between the English- and Uzbek-language material. Distributive analysis was used to establish the relative textual salience of lexical and grammatical units within the corpus; because the underlying corpus employs a three-band frequency classification (high / mid / low-mid), the quantitative figures in this article report relative salience on this qualitative scale rather than raw token counts, consistent with the exploratory, corpus-informed (rather than fully quantitative-statistical) design of the broader research programme.

Following established practice in discourse-analytic research (Schiffrin, 1994; Fairclough, 1995), each excerpt was

analysed at three levels: the lexical-semantic level (identification of terminological, evaluative, metaphorical, culturally-coded and functional units), the grammatical-syntactic level (mood, tense, sentence type, ellipsis), and the pragmatic level (speech-act type, communicative strategy, participant role). The results of this multi-level analysis are summarized in the tables and figures presented in Section 3.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Lexical-Semantic Layers of Craft Discourse

Analysis of the corpus material shows that the lexicon of craft discourse is not homogeneous but organized into five interacting functional layers, summarized in Table 1. Terminological units (e.g., mould, secret/technique, pattern, tool) ensure technological precision and the transmission of professional knowledge. Evaluative units (e.g., solid/sound, delicate, blessed/productive) express quality judgments and construct professional prestige. Metaphorical units (e.g., 'the soul of the craft', 'the fruit of labour') perform cognitive modelling, allowing abstract professional values to be conceptualized through concrete imagery. Culturally-coded units (e.g., 'the master's due', 'from generation to generation') transmit cultural memory and legitimize traditional norms. Functional units (e.g., first, then, pay attention) organize the sequential structure of instructional talk and manage the communicative process.

Lexical layer	Core units (illustrative)	Function in discourse
Terminological	mould, secret/technique, pattern, tool	Technological precision; transfer of professional knowledge

Lexical layer	Core units (illustrative)	Function in discourse
Evaluative	solid, delicate, productive/blessed	Expression of quality and professional prestige
Metaphorical	'soul of the craft', 'fruit of labour'	Cognitive modelling of professional values
Culturally-coded	'master's due', 'generation to generation'	Transmission of cultural memory
Functional	first, then, pay attention	Management of communicative process

Table 1. Lexical-semantic layers in craft discourse and their functions

These layers do not operate in isolation; in authentic craft speech they are mutually reinforcing, jointly constructing a unified semantic space in which technological, evaluative, cognitive and cultural meanings are expressed simultaneously. Figure 1 visualizes the

relative discourse salience of the five layers as observed in the analysed material, with terminological and culturally-coded/evaluative units showing the strongest presence, reflecting the dual technical-and-axiological character of craft communication.

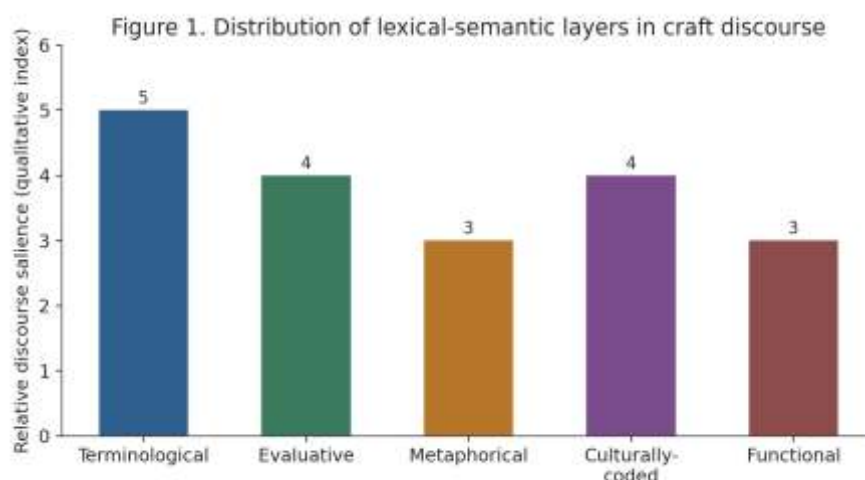


Figure 1. Distribution of lexical-semantic layers in craft discourse

A further characteristic of the lexical-semantic system is its dynamism: as market relations, technological development and mass communication increasingly intersect with traditional trades, established lexical units acquire new semantic load, and the discourse absorbs new terms, new evaluative expressions and new culturally-coded formulas, without losing its core axiological orientation

toward skilled, honest, tradition-bound labour.

3.2. Grammatical and Syntactic Organization

At the grammatical level, craft discourse displays a clearly interpersonal orientation: grammatical forms are selected primarily to regulate the relationship between master and apprentice, or between artisan and client, rather than to satisfy

purely descriptive needs. The imperative/volitive mood dominates instructional sequences, reflecting the master's guiding role in process management. Present-tense verb forms are preferred for describing ongoing action, in line with the general tendency of craft speech to accompany physical activity in real time. Simple sentences prevail over

complex constructions, since speech is produced in parallel with manual work and communicative economy is prioritized. Ellipsis functions as a systematic device of grammatical economy: the predicate or object is frequently omitted where the shared physical and situational context makes the referent recoverable, without loss of communicative content.

Grammatical / syntactic means	Primary discourse function	Typical role in speech situation
Imperative/volitive mood	Process management	Master's guiding role
Present-tense verb forms	Continuity of action	Description of ongoing work
Simple sentences	Rapid information transfer	Practical, task-oriented talk
Ellipsis	Grammatical economy	Context-dependent speech
Interrogative sentences	Knowledge-checking	Apprentice's position
Complex sentences	Generalization and explanation	Narration of experience

Table 2. Functional classification of grammatical and syntactic means in craft discourse

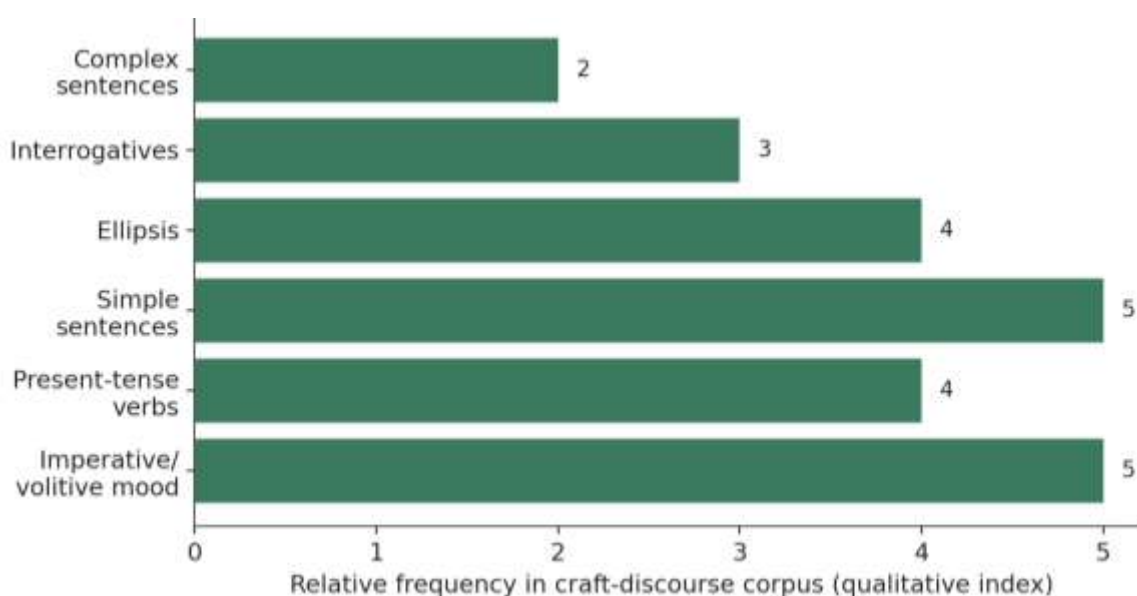


Figure 2. Frequency profile of grammatical-syntactic means in craft discourse

This distribution supports the view, articulated by Shaxmatov (1941) and

developed in the Uzbek tradition by Mahmudov (2012), that in naturally

occurring speech grammatical forms are subject to functional reinterpretation rather than rigid normative constraint. In craft discourse this communicative adaptability is especially pronounced: the verb, rather than merely naming an action, manages the sequencing, pacing and control of a shared physical task, which explains the discourse-internal prominence of imperative and present-tense forms.

3.3. Communicative Strategies

The pragmatic organization of craft discourse is structured around four recurrent communicative strategies, summarized in Table 3: the directive

strategy (managing the work process, typically deployed by the master, realized through imperative and simple sentences); the explanatory strategy (transmitting knowledge and experience, typically deployed by the master, realized through explanatory constructions); the persuasive strategy (justifying the value of the product, typically deployed by the artisan toward the client, realized through evaluative units and comparison); and the evaluative strategy (assessing the outcome of work, typically deployed by the master, frequently realized indirectly, through advice and encouragement rather than open criticism).

Strategy type	Main communicative goal	Typical linguistic means	Discourse participant
Directive	Managing the work process	Imperative sentences, simple sentences	Master
Explanatory	Transmitting knowledge/experience	Explanatory constructions	Master
Persuasive	Justifying product value	Evaluative units, comparison	Artisan
Evaluative	Assessing the work outcome	Indirect evaluation, advice	Master

Table 3. Communicative strategies in craft discourse and their characteristics

The distribution of these strategies is not uniform across communicative dyads. In master-apprentice interaction, explanatory and directive/controlling strategies dominate, consistent with the

primacy of knowledge transfer and professional socialization; in artisan-client interaction, evaluative and persuasive strategies dominate, reflecting the primacy of economic and reputational goals. Figure 3 visualizes this asymmetry.

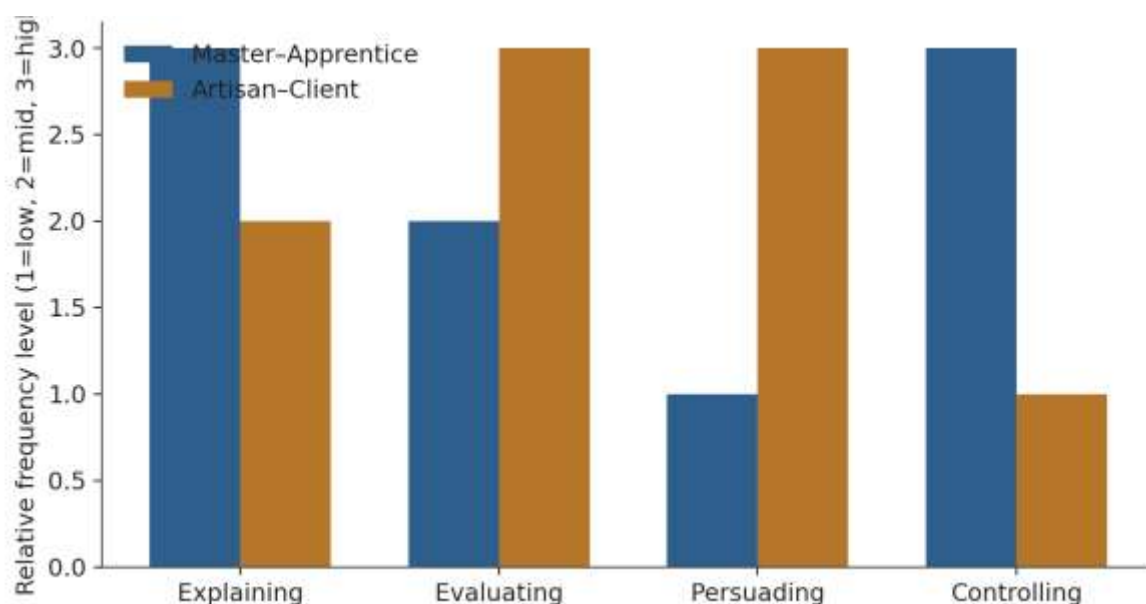


Figure 3. Communicative strategy distribution across participant roles (master-apprentice vs artisan-client)

Persuasive discourse, illustrated by expressions such as 'this is handmade, so it will be durable' or 'it costs more than the others, but it lasts a lifetime,' relies heavily on evaluative adjectives, comparative constructions and emphatic devices, and serves simultaneously to reinforce the artisan's social standing and to build client trust. Evaluative discourse, illustrated by expressions such as 'not bad, but this part needs smoothing again' or 'your hand has learned the craft, now you will work faster,' frequently avoids overt criticism in favour of indirect assessment combined with

advice and encouragement, thereby preserving social harmony between master and apprentice while still transmitting a corrective evaluation.

3.4. Comparative Overview: English and Uzbek Craft Discourse

A comparative reading of the English- and Uzbek-language material shows that the three subsystems described above are cross-linguistically stable at the level of function while diverging at the level of surface form. Table 4 summarizes the principal points of convergence and divergence identified in the corpus.

Parameter	English craft discourse	Uzbek craft discourse
Dominant lexical layer	Evaluative and terminological units prevail; culturally-coded units are comparatively sparse and often idiom-based	Culturally-coded and evaluative units are strongly represented, frequently drawing on proverbial and religiously inflected expressions
Grammatical preference	Imperative mood and simple sentences dominate instructional talk, similarly to Uzbek	Imperative/volitive mood, present tense and ellipsis are even more pronounced, reflecting a more oral-based communicative tradition

Parameter	English craft discourse	Uzbek craft discourse
Dominant strategy in master–apprentice talk	Explanatory strategy, often supported by explicit metalinguistic commentary	Explanatory and controlling/directive strategies are closely intertwined, reflecting a stronger hierarchical framing of the relationship
Dominant strategy in artisan–client talk	Persuasive strategy realized through product-history narratives and provenance claims	Persuasive strategy realized through moral-legitimation formulas (e.g., honest labour) alongside quality claims
Translation challenge	Loss of idiom-specific cultural resonance when translating from Uzbek	Loss of proverbial and religiously inflected connotation when translating into English

Table 4. Comparative overview of craft discourse features in English and Uzbek

The comparison indicates that the functional architecture of craft discourse — five lexical layers, a grammar oriented toward process management, and four role-sensitive communicative strategies — is not language-specific but appears to reflect a more general, cross-linguistically stable model of institutional discourse organized around manual, apprenticeship-based professional activity. What differs most sharply between the two languages is the density and cultural specificity of the culturally-coded lexical layer, which in Uzbek craft discourse draws heavily on proverbial, religious and folk-ethical formulas (e.g., *halol mehnat*, 'honest labour'), while in English material comparable cultural loading is expressed more often through narrative framing (references to provenance, family history, or craftsmanship traditions) than through fixed formulaic units. This asymmetry has direct consequences for translation practice, discussed further below.

4. DISCUSSION

The results confirm that craft discourse is not a simple technical sub-

register of professional communication but a strategically organized, multilayered system in which lexical, grammatical and pragmatic subsystems jointly perform social, cognitive and cultural work. The prominence of evaluative, metaphorical and culturally-coded lexis alongside strictly terminological units indicates that craft discourse routinely fuses technological description with moral and aesthetic judgment — a pattern that aligns with Van Dijk's (2008) sociocognitive view of discourse as a site where knowledge, experience and social identity are jointly verbalized, and with Fairclough's (1995) observation that professional discourses encode ideological and value-laden content beyond their referential function.

At the grammatical level, the dominance of imperative mood, present-tense forms, simple sentences and ellipsis demonstrates that craft discourse grammar is governed by functional rather than normative pressures, a conclusion consistent with Mahmudov's (2012) account of communicative economy in natural speech and with the general

discourse-grammar literature showing that grammatical choice is systematically responsive to communicative situation (Van Dijk, 2008). The high functional load of ellipsis in particular signals that craft discourse routinely relies on shared physical and situational context rather than explicit linguistic encoding — a property directly relevant to the automatic-detection modelling developed in the companion computational study.

At the pragmatic level, the identification of four distinct, role-sensitive communicative strategies supports the broader claim, developed by Searle (1969) and Cutting (2002) in speech-act theory and by Raximov (2015) in the Uzbek pragmalinguistic tradition, that strategic language use is not incidental but constitutive of discourse structure. The asymmetric distribution of strategies across the master-apprentice and artisan-client dyads shows that craft discourse is sensitive to institutional role in a way comparable to other professional discourses (e.g., medical or legal discourse), while its specific configuration — explanation and control oriented toward knowledge transfer, persuasion and evaluation oriented toward economic exchange — appears to be a distinguishing feature of artisanal communication as an institutional discourse type in its own right.

From a comparative perspective, English and Uzbek craft discourse display considerable structural convergence at the level of communicative strategy and pragmatic function, which is unsurprising given the shared universal logic of master-apprentice and seller-buyer interaction; divergence is more evident at the lexical-semantic level, where culturally-coded units draw on language-specific idiomatic and proverbial resources and therefore

resist direct translation. This has direct implications for translation studies: preserving the pragmatic force of persuasive or evaluative craft speech in translation may require compensatory strategies rather than literal lexical equivalence, since the culturally-coded layer carries meaning that is only partially recoverable through denotational translation.

The findings also carry clear pedagogical value. Because craft discourse instantiates, in compact and observable form, the interaction of lexis, grammar and pragmatics with social role and communicative goal, it offers a productive teaching resource for courses in discourse analysis, text linguistics, cognitive linguistics, pragmalinguistics, comparative linguistics and translation theory and practice, as well as for the design of professional-communication training materials for practising translators.

It is also worth situating these findings within the broader typology of institutional discourses. Medical, legal and educational discourses have each been shown to develop discourse-specific lexical registers, characteristic grammatical preferences and role-sensitive pragmatic strategies (Fairclough, 1995); craft discourse fits this general pattern while displaying two distinguishing features. First, its grammar is shaped as much by the physical, real-time nature of manual labour as by institutional hierarchy, which explains the unusually strong role of ellipsis and present-tense forms compared with, for instance, written legal discourse. Second, its lexical-semantic system is exceptionally dense with axiological and culturally-coded content relative to its technical vocabulary, suggesting that craft discourse functions simultaneously as a professional register

and as a vehicle of intangible cultural heritage — a dual function less pronounced in more bureaucratized institutional discourses.

A further point concerns discourse dynamism. Because craft activity is increasingly mediated by market relations, social media promotion and cross-border trade, the persuasive strategy identified in artisan-client interaction is likely to expand in relative weight, potentially at the expense of the more traditional directive and explanatory strategies associated with master-apprentice transmission. Longitudinal corpus work would be needed to confirm this trend, but the strategy typology proposed here offers a ready-made analytical frame for tracking such change over time, since it allows the relative proportion of directive, explanatory, persuasive and evaluative speech to be measured systematically across historical corpus samples.

5. CONCLUSION

This study has identified craft (hunarmandchilik) discourse as a structurally organized, multilayered institutional discourse type characterized by (1) a five-layer lexical-semantic system — terminological, evaluative, metaphorical, culturally-coded and functional — that jointly encodes technological precision, professional prestige, cognitive modelling and cultural memory; (2) a grammatical-syntactic system dominated by imperative/volitive mood, present-tense verb forms, simple sentences and functionally motivated

ellipsis, reflecting the process-bound, interpersonally oriented nature of craft communication; and (3) a pragmatic system of four communicative strategies — directive, explanatory, persuasive and evaluative — distributed asymmetrically across the master-apprentice and artisan-client dyads according to their differing communicative goals.

Taken together, these results demonstrate that craft discourse functions simultaneously as a technical, social and cultural communicative system, transmitting not only professional skill but also ethical norms, aesthetic standards and cultural identity across generations. The theoretical model developed here — the layered lexical-semantic system, the functional grammar profile, and the role-sensitive strategy typology — provides a replicable framework for describing other traditional professional discourses cross-linguistically, and establishes the empirical basis required for the corpus-based computational modelling of craft discourse presented in the companion article, which extends these findings toward automatic detection and natural-language-processing applications.

Future research would benefit from expanding the corpus base, incorporating quantitative frequency data at a finer grain, and extending the comparative scope to additional languages, so as to test the cross-linguistic stability of the lexical, grammatical and pragmatic patterns identified here.

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