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ВЕЖЛИВОСТЬ В МУЛЬТИКУЛЬТУРНОМ ОБЩЕСТВЕ: КАМНИ ПРЕТКНОВЕНИЯ

Изучение основных принципов вежливости в кросс-культурной среде позволяет избежать непонимания и неясности, тем самым обеспечивая эффективности коммуникации. Вежливость, будучи универсальной категорией, является одновременно и культурно-специфичной. В статье анализируются наиболее частотные способы минимизации коммуникативного давления, а также описываются основные препоны эффективной коммуникации, к которым можно отнести язык, невербалику, стереотипы, психологическое состояние говорящих, а также тенденции к быстрому принятию решений.

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Study of the main principles of politeness in cross-cultural communication enables to avoid misunderstanding and ambiguity thus providing effective communication. The phenomenon of politeness is universal and at the same time is culture-specific. The article discusses some frequent ways of minimizing communicative pressure and describes the main stumbling blocks to effective communication amongst which are language, non-verbal communication, preconceptions, anxiety, tendency to a quick evaluation.

Keywords and phrases: politeness; successful cross-cultural communication; culture-specific values; communication strategy; Maxims; illocutionary act; spatial distance.

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POLITENESS IN MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY: STUMBLING BLOCKS

Thorough language investigation and description cannot work without a lexical and grammatical set of rules aimed at showing the differences in social status, age, gender and sometimes level of education between the interlocutors. Communicative pressure is exerted upon a speaker in imperative speech acts. Due to reasons such as privacy and inadmissibility of communicative pressure, the English prefer to use indirect-interrogative speech acts to direct. Thus the aim is to discuss the main obstacles in perceiving politeness in English and Russian linguistic cultures.

Communication is mainly a source of showing attitudes towards each other, not only information interchange. Subject to intentions, we can subdivide intentions into interactional and transactional. Interactional communication aims at interpersonal contact establishment and maintenance. Here we can observe the tendency of interlocutors towards polite mutual understanding. This kind of communication is mainly Hearer-oriented. Transactional communication is mainly aimed at information interchange; interpersonal contact establishment is its secondary function. Transactional communication is aimed at 'what' not 'how'; that is, the content is far more important than the way the information is represented.

The phenomenon of politeness is universal and at the same time is culture-specific. Traditionally it is defined as respect and consideration for other people. However, in intercultural aspect this definition does not work, as the concepts of politeness, respect and consideration are understood differently, and even these words have different meaning. So, let us understand politeness as strategic behaviour, a system of culturally-specific and highly ritualized communicative strategies which functions are to maximize harmonious interaction and minimize the possibility of conflict [1].

Principles of politeness put certain obligations on the behavior of society members: the interlocutors think of the interests of other people, their wishes and needs, and possibly alleviate fulfilling tasks and responsibilities. Accepting the principle of politeness enables interlocutors to maximize efficiency of social interaction. It is thought that following the principle of politeness is more important than considering the principle of cooperation.

In oral communication the principle of politeness is understood as a specific strategy of oral behaviour, the purpose of which is conflict situation avoidance. The strategy is realized in communication by means of several rules, or Maxims. According to Geoffrey Leech [8], there are six Maxims: Tact, Generosity, Modesty, Agreement, Sympathy, and Approbation.

The Tact Maxim states: 'Minimize the expression of beliefs which imply cost to other; maximize the expression of beliefs which imply benefit to other.' [8, p. 175]. The first part of this Maxim fits in with Brown and Levinson's [5] negative politeness strategy of minimizing the imposition, and the second part reflects the positive politeness strategy of attending to the Hearer's interests, wants, and needs. The Generosity Maxim focuses on the Speaker, and says that others should be put first instead of the self. The Modesty Maxim states: 'Minimize the expression of praise of self; maximize the expression of dispraise of self' [8, p. 101], it is the Maxim of unacceptance of praise. Realistic self-appraisal is one of the criteria of a successful speech act. The Agreement Maxim runs as follows: 'Minimize the expression of disagreement between self and other; maximize the expression of agreement between self and other' [Ibidem]; instead of provoking conflicts and disagreements the Maxim recommends to search for an agreement that will lead to effective and productive communication results. The Sympathy Maxim refers to Brown and Levinson's positive politeness strategy of attending to the Hearer's interests, wants, and needs and includes a small group of speech acts such as congratulation, commiseration, and expressing condolences. The usage of the Approbation Maxim helps to avoid disagreement and intends to make other people feel good by showing solidarity.

Here some rules are needed to be formulated: 'don't impose yourself', 'don't force your partner to do anything', 'give your partner freedom to choose', 'don't invade', etc.

Indirect expression of intentions is closely connected with the usage of other speech acts; it is the case when a sentence having illocutive force of one type of an illocutionary act can be used for another illocutionary act.

There are many differences in intention expression across cultures. Intentions are usually expressed indirectly. It is proven that non-native speakers have behavioral differences in certain types of speech acts. This difference is due to the fact that non-native speakers have a different cultural background and are not able to adapt correctly to speech situations.

Traditionally, politeness is subdivided into two types – positive and negative [5, p. 113]. Positive politeness is aimed at keeping a positive image of a Speaker; the Speaker shows that he/she sympathizes and agrees with the Listener.

Attention, compliments, mutual submission – these are all examples of positive politeness. Negative politeness shows distance, personal independence, and privacy. Negative politeness is generally based on avoidance strategies that aim to show that the Speaker will not intrude into the Listener's life and personal territory. Negative politeness is expressed by tact and subordination. Conflict situations are solved with the help of apologies and topic change. Western cultures tend to practice negative politeness to a wider extent. This fact can be explained by an extremely sharp sense of personal distance and personal territory.

There is quite a number of effective methods by which the main principles of politeness are realized in interrogative speech acts. An interrogative speech act can be perceived as more polite with the help of additional components. One of the most frequent address patterns (28% of all the additional components in interrogative indirect speech acts):

Amanda, can I have a word with you [2, p. 70]?

Addresses help to avoid ambiguity and improve communication.

Parenthetical constructions help to suggest or ask in an unobtrusive way. To ask people to forget about a misunderstanding, the following construction is frequently used:

Well, let's forget about it [3, p. 32]?

Requests with interjections sound more emotional and emphatic:

Oh, but can't we sit somewhere more ... out of the public eye [Ibidem, p. 40]?

Informal style is characterized by a relative frequent usage of the word 'please', though this word doesn't have strong illocutionary force, being just a marker of request. In a novel by M. Atwood [3] the main character asks to be left alone:

Look, will you leave me alone, please [Ibidem, p. 190]?

The least polite English constructions are interrogative imperatives with speech predicates (e.g. *Tell me, I want you to tell me*). When inducements are expressed with imperatives we can clearly observe the break of non-interference principle; so imperatives are legitimized only in close relations of peer communicants or of senior to junior relations. In any case the imperative utterance will not sound polite. To alleviate the categorical tone one can use constructions of the type *Can/Could you tell me...?*; such constructions are considered to be polite variants of looking for information, particularly among people who are not familiar to the Speaker.

Request is traditionally considered to be a specific type of a speech act because it is a type of utterance where a Speaker tries to follow the main principles of politeness; otherwise he/she risks failing reaching his goal. The result is always directed to the Speaker, the person who requests: I want/ask you to do something for me. So, to make sure that the Speaker's request will be fulfilled, the Speaker needs to be polite and needs to choose the best variant for his/her request from all the forms the language has:

Mister, won't you throw us some coal [6, p. 127]?

The example taken from Th. Dreiser's novel *Jennie Gerhardt* [6] portrays children asking a man to give them some coal. Negation in indirect interrogative requests is quite widespread, as it makes a request sound unobtrusive. So, if we translate the request in Russian, we will get the following:

Дайте нам, пожалуйста, немного угля - Give us, please, some coal.

Here it is important to mention that in English requests expressed with imperatives and without any modifiers are rarely used. Even if the modifier is the word 'please', it will not be enough to make a request polite. To alleviate a speech act there are some other means (see above).

Nowadays final formatives *will you/ would you* do not necessarily show interrogation, but are used as politeness markers standing in for the word 'please':

Come with me, would you [2, p. 93]?

The main means of expressing request in Russian is imperative (cf. the example and translation – *Won't you throw us some coal? – Дайте нам, пожалуйста, немного угля*). It is important to notice that English and Russian imperatives have many differences. In the English culture the usage of imperatives will almost definitely worsen the communicative situation, while the Russians will perceive imperatives quite differently, depending on the communicative situation, linguistic, and extralinguistic factors.

The word *пожалуйста* can be used independently, making a speech act sound more polite. As well as *пожалуйста*, addresses are frequently used, as well. Imperative requests are also frequently used with affectionate diminutives (*доченька, мамочка, Оленька*, etc.).

English *please* and Russian *пожалуйста* have different meaning, though these two words are absolute lexical equivalents. Russian *пожалуйста* can transform an imperative command into a mild request; it can make an imperative sound less categorical. *Пожалуйста* has a stronger pragmatic force than *please*. It is no coincidence that the Russian marker of politeness *пожалуйста* has its second name – a *magic word* (*волшебное слово*).

Speaking about gender peculiarities of using this magic word, it is necessary to mention that requests with *пожалуйста* are more frequently used among men (64%) than women (36%). Almost the same situation exists in the English language. Men use the word *please* a bit more actively (52%) than women do (47.6%). This usage of politeness markers helps to alleviate FTAs (face-threatening acts).

Politeness is considered to be a relative notion in terms of both qualitative and quantitative characteristics. Quality shows utterances that are considered as polite, quantity shows the degree to which this or that formula is realized in language. Naturally, there do exist absolute markers of politeness (eg. *спасибо, пожалуйста, thank you, you are welcome, etc.*), but they are few. The majority of linguistic utterances become this or that quality (in our case, politeness) in a certain situation, with a specific context.

When thinking about politeness from a cross-cultural standpoint, the following examples may mislead us. Let us consider attitude toward the elderly people in Eastern countries, where they are deeply respected and the way the elderly people are treated in many European countries, where they are taken to nursing homes. To understand

the difference, consider the following example with one and the same pattern being polite in one culture and leads to misunderstanding and even aggressiveness in another. In Russia, the universal pattern for those who want to get off the public transport is *Извините, Вы выходите?* — *Excuse me, are you getting off?* Many people will definitely think of this question as an intrusion into the passenger's privacy and the reaction may be the following: *It's none of your business!* OR *But why should you know that?* So, the best alternative in the situation will be just to inform the passenger in the form of *Excuse me, I'm getting off.*

There is a point of view that there exist polite and impolite cultures and societies [10]. Some researchers claim that the Russian culture and language tend to be less polite in comparison with the English language and culture. We support the idea that there are no polite/impolite nations and cultures but there are different, culture-specific behavioral norms that are usually based on social and cultural relationships, cultural values and national peculiarities. Politeness is tied up with the most basic principles of socio-cultural organization and interpersonal relationships within social groups, and should be viewed in the context of social distance.

Even if a person has a good command in the learned language and is familiar with the acquired culture, nobody can be expected to be an expert in everyone else's culture. Sensitivity, listening, awareness, asking questions, patience, and tolerance will address the challenges.

We can identify factors that may act as stumbling blocks to successful cross-cultural communication [4]:

1) *Language*

- Sentence structure or emphasis on words in a sentence can change the meaning:

e.g. *This is a piece of the puzzle which reveals an important fact* [Ibidem].

Two interpretations of the sentence above can be given: one suggests that a piece of the puzzle reveals an important fact, and the other says that the whole puzzle reveals an important fact and I have but one piece of it.

- Tone, speed of speech, pacing and word meaning may be used in different ways:

e.g. – *It's funny*

– *Funny strange or funny ha-ha?*

- The way feelings and emotions are expressed vary from culture to culture.
- Expectations of politeness may differ:

cf. *please* and *пожалуйста* above.

Expectations of “thank you” may be confusing to people from different cultures where polite behaviour is expected, requiring no verbal acknowledgment.

2) *Non-verbal signs and symbols*

- Acceptable spatial distances

E.g. Compare the distance between Russian and English communicants (cited: [1, p. 92]).

Type of Distance	Russians	English
Intimate Distance	10 – 18 cm.	10 – 45 cm.
Personal Distance	15 – 25 cm.	45 – 120 cm.
Social Distance	30 cm. – 2 m.	1 – 4 m.
Public Distance	2.5 m. and more	3.5. m. and more

- Degree of eye contact during conversations is also culturally conditioned.
- Hand signals vary from culture to culture.
- In some cultures touching is an important aspect of communication, while in others public physical contact is unacceptable.

- Concept of time varies from culture to culture.

3) *Preconceptions and stereotypes*

• People have a tendency to perceive things in a constant way unless they make a conscious effort to view them differently. This results in stereotyping individuals within a group, often blocking communication. It must be remembered that differences *within* cultural groups also exist.

4) *Tendency to evaluate too quickly*

- Assumptions and judgments made quickly when working with other cultures often lead to miscommunication.

5) *Anxiety*

- Differences in communication, expectations and values may cause anxiety in all parties involved.

Being aware of the factors stated above means making communication easier, more comfortable and effective.

Culturally-specific politeness strategies form culturally distinct interactional communicative styles. So, coming back to English and Russian communication styles. In interpersonal communication the English style is indirect in comparison with the Russian one; it can be called Hearer-oriented. The main emphasis is put on the form of the utterance and on softening the imposition. Russian interlocutors are more concerned about the meaning rather than the form. They express their intention in a more direct way. The Russian style of interpersonal communication is direct and can be called message-oriented. The success of intercultural communication greatly depends on the understanding and appropriate use of politeness strategies. Although individuals may have their own personal styles of communication, personal values reflect group values to a great extent. The comparative analysis of English and Russian politeness systems demonstrates the fact that, despite stereotypes in the popular consciousness, it is not legitimate to classify one linguistic group as more or less polite than the other; each is equally polite in their own way. Differences in politeness systems reflect differences in social relationships and are determined by culture-specific values.

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ВЕЖЛИВОСТЬ В МУЛЬТИКУЛЬТУРНОМ ОБЩЕСТВЕ: КАМНИ ПРЕТКНОВЕНИЯ

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Изучение основных принципов вежливости в кросс-культурной среде позволяет избежать непонимания и неясности, тем самым обеспечивая эффективности коммуникации. Вежливость, будучи универсальной категорией, является одновременно и культурно-специфичной. В статье анализируются наиболее частотные способы минимизации коммуникативного давления, а также описываются основные препоны эффективной коммуникации, к которым можно отнести язык, невербалику, стереотипы, психологическое состояние говорящих, а также тенденции к быстрому принятию решений.

Ключевые слова и фразы: вежливость; успешная кросс-культурная коммуникация; культурно-специфичные ценности; коммуникативная стратегия; Максимумы; иллокутивный акт; дистанция.

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В статье рассматриваются субстратные (дославянские) топонимы Рязанской области пяти типов: с формантами -ус, -ос, -ис, -ес, -ас(-яс). Ареал каждого типа представлен на специальной карте. Лингвистические данные сопоставлены с данными археологии, на основе чего высказаны предположения об этнической принадлежности и времени формирования типов. В частности, области распространения топонимии на -ус на участке от Кишино до Пры, и в бассейне Пры соотношены с балтоязычным населением Средней Оки I тысячелетия н.э. или их предками эпохи бронзы, оставившими культуры шнуровой керамики. Формирование областей с топонимией на -ас(-яс) в центральной, восточной и юго-восточной частях Среднего Поочья отнесено ко второй половине I тысячелетия н.э. и связано с диалектными подгруппами одной этнической группы (предположительно мордвы).

Ключевые слова и фразы: топонимика; топонимический тип; топонимический ареал; субстратная топонимия; происхождение географических названий; сопоставление топонимических и археологических данных.

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**АРЕАЛЫ СУБСТРАТНОЙ ТОПОНИМИИ В РЯЗАНСКОЙ ОБЛАСТИ:
 НАЗВАНИЯ НА -УС, -ОС, -ИС, -ЕС, -АС(-ЯС)**

Настоящее исследование посвящено субстратной (дославянской) топонимии Рязанской области, которая является одной из областей Центральной России. Область расположена в центре Восточно-Европейской равнины, занимает площадь 39 605 км². Главная река региона – Ока (п.п. реки Волги) – течёт с северо-запада на северо-восток через центр области и условно делит её на две части: левобережную и правобережную. В левобережной части находится Мещёрская низменность, в правобережной – Среднерусская возвышенность и Окско-Донская равнина. И левобережное и правобережное Поочье является зоной присутствия или массового распространения субстратной топонимии. Ареалы многих типов продолжают в соседних регионах: в Московской (на северо-западе), Владимирской (на севере), Нижегородской (на северо-востоке), Пензенской (на юго-востоке), Тамбовской и Липецкой (на юге), Тульской (на юго-западе) областях и республике Мордовии (на востоке).