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POLITENESS: TOWARDS THE FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM

Abstract:The article is devoted to the formulation of the problem of politeness as an important aspect of interpersonal and intercultural communication. Politeness is considered as a socially conditioned category reflecting the norms, values and rules of behavior accepted in a particular culture. Particular attention is paid to the types of politeness - positive and negative, which determine the nature of interaction between communicants, and their manifestation in various cultural contexts is analyzed. Emphasis is placed on the cultural specificity of politeness, which can cause misunderstanding and conflict in intercultural communication. The study is aimed at identifying the key features and functions of politeness, which allows for a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of maintaining social relations and harmony in society. The work emphasizes the need for an integrated approach to the study of politeness, taking into account cultural, social and psychological factors.

Keywords:politeness, English linguaculture, intercultural communication, language strategies, politeness theories, face theory.

Politeness is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, which is an integral part of people's everyday life and permeates all human interaction. The continuing interest in studying this phenomenon on the part of representatives of various fields of knowledge indicates the importance of this issue in human relationships in general and, in particular, in intercultural interaction. Research in the field of politeness from the point of view of pragmatics was conducted already in the early 70s of the last century and goes back to the works [5;6]. Over the past decades, a large number of articles and monographs have appeared on this issue, including in different cultures.

However, despite numerous publications, an analysis of existing works in this area shows a lack of unity of views on what the phenomenon of politeness is and what should be understood by this category, what is its nature and what are the mechanisms of its action in different linguistic cultures.

Trying to describe the category of politeness as fully as possible, researchers offer various approaches, different models for studying politeness. Politeness is singled out as a separate problem, which is of interest to specialists in a number of humanities, such as linguistics, sociology, psychology, ethnography, cultural studies, social anthropology, linguopragmatics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, applied linguistics, etc. And this is not accidental, since the category of politeness as a multifaceted and multi-aspect phenomenon can only be considered at the interdisciplinary level, and only the joint efforts of scientists of related specialties can answer the question of what communication is in general, and, in particular, what politeness is as its integral and especially significant part.

The problem of politeness as a subject of scientific analysis is directly related to the culture of speech and speech etiquette, which traditionally receive much attention. Speech etiquette is an integral element of the culture of communication. Among the numerous manifestations of culture, the culture of communication occupies an important, if not leading, place in the life of society, since communication has a unifying, influencing function in the lives of people, in communication the

interaction of communication partners is realized to achieve both communicative and non-communicative goals. It is obvious that one should communicate with the addressee in such a way as not to harm him with one's speech. Politeness and etiquette fulfill precisely this mission.

In a specific act of communication, the desire of the interlocutors to inflict the least "damage" on each other manifests itself as a discrepancy between the communicative (expressed) and denotative (real) truth, with the former being more pleasant for the interlocutor. This is achieved by neutralizing or increasing the assessment of the denotative situation, which is formulated as the following rule of etiquette: «in a conversation, try to improve the interlocutor's position as much as possible in all respects» [2].

Etiquette is a philosophical and ethical concept. Etiquette is a certain system of norms, a set of rules of behavior concerning the external manifestation of attitude towards people. The philosophical and ethical interpretation of etiquette comes down to a system of prohibitions and permissions, including speech ones, existing in each given society, in a given environment, in a given team. According to N.I. Formanovskaya, «the norms of speech etiquette permeate any speech act. Etiquette determines our entire behavior. And what is understood by speech etiquette is used in the speech of each of us daily and many times. Perhaps, these are the most commonly used expressions: we address someone many times a day, greet our acquaintances and strangers, say goodbye to people, thank someone, apologize to someone, congratulate someone, wish someone good luck or compliment someone, sympathize with someone, sympathize with someone; we advise, ask, offer, invite, demand... Speech etiquette is a class of speech acts with their own specific functions and speech intentions, outside of which and without which communication threatens not to be successful» [3, c. 14].

The close connection between the category of politeness and speech etiquette is obvious. However, despite this, it is advisable to distinguish the category of politeness from the concept of "speech etiquette", since the category of politeness extends not only to stable, regularly repeated ritualized formulas such as greeting, farewell, gratitude, compliment, invitation, etc., but also to a wider range of diverse phenomena. Important for bringing clarity to this issue is the opinion expressed by V.S. Khrakovsky that the expression of politeness is an optional, non-obligatory addition to the obligatory etiquette address [4].

Researchers working within the framework of the theory of linguistic politeness approach various aspects of the category under study in different ways, but they are all unanimous in defining politeness as a line of behavior aimed at maintaining social harmony, and do not equate the concepts of "politeness" and "etiquette." [5, c. 51]. Although these two phenomena are directly related, they do not overlap, and the relationship between them can be defined as follows: not everything that is etiquette is polite, but everything that is not etiquette is impolite [3]. Etiquette behavior is considered in most works as a component of the phenomenon of politeness. As theorists of linguistic politeness point out, "manifestations of politeness are rooted in interpersonal ritual communication"; both politeness and ritual behavior are based on "the control of any social group over internal and external aggression" in relations with other social groups [5]. However, the concepts of "politeness", "respect", "deference", "tact" are at a much higher social level than just a set of rules. And if etiquette is a set of communicative norms and rules, then politeness is a system of communicative strategies and tactics used in real communication and aimed at achieving harmony and mutual understanding. «Politeness includes everything that contributes to harmonious, conflict-free communication, despite the fact that some of its elements may not be (at a certain stage or in a specific communication situation) a norm established by etiquette» [1].

According to N.I. Formanovskaya, the linguistic category of politeness refers to functional-semantic categories with pragmatic functions of expressing the speaker's attitude to the listener, to the

importance of the matter, to the situation as a whole. Acting as an ethical category, politeness can either demonstrate external norms of communication, decency of behavior, or signify a benevolent personal attitude to the addressee. Polite behavior can manifest itself as sincerity, or it can be a mask, especially in role-playing communication between unfamiliar partners [3].

There are a number of approaches to the problem under study in linguistic literature. Among the variety of concepts and interpretations of the category of politeness, the following most significant areas of research into this socio-pragmatic category can be conditionally identified: the social-norm view, the conversational-maxim view, the face-saving view (or face-management view), the conversational-contract view, as well as post-classical theories that consider the concept of impoliteness along with politeness and include the discursive approach, the sociological (or interactional) approach, the relational work theory, the rapport management theory, etc.

In conclusion, the study of politeness as a social and cultural category emphasizes its multifaceted nature and importance for understanding interpersonal and intercultural interactions. Politeness, as a complex phenomenon, includes not only compliance with the norms and rules of communication, but also a reflection of deep cultural values and social attitudes. The difference between positive and negative politeness demonstrates how different cultures regulate the distance and interaction between communicants, which can be a source of both harmony and conflict in intercultural communication. The analysis of politeness requires taking into account cultural specificity, social expectations and psychological aspects that influence communicative behavior. It is important to realize that the perception of politeness may vary depending on the cultural context, and therefore a comprehensive approach to research is needed that takes into account both universal and specific aspects of this phenomenon.

Thus, the formulation of the problem of politeness opens up prospects for further research aimed at improving intercultural communication, overcoming barriers and promoting better understanding between representatives of different cultures.

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