

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS OF ENGLISH COMMUNICATION IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERCULTURAL AND SOCIAL INTERACTION

СТРАТЕГІЙ ТА ТАКТИКІ АНГЛОМОВНОГО СПІЛКУВАННЯ В КОНТЕКСТІ МІЖКУЛЬТУРНОЇ ТА СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ ВЗАЄМОДІЇ

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The article is devoted to the structural and semantic peculiarities of English-language communication strategies and tactics in the context of intercultural and social interaction. In particular, attention is focused on the study of the communicative personality, which has its own peculiarities of actualization at different levels and in different types of communication, the most important of which are motivational, cognitive and functional parameters; the characterization of the features of national communication in the process of intercultural exchange, the systematization of methods of everyday communication aimed at achieving mutual understanding, as well as the definition and systematization of the principles of preserving national and cultural color in this process, such as the principle of unity of formal and dynamic equivalence, the principles of holistic perception, convention, selective attitude, etc.

The authors investigate the intercultural and social interaction of communicators, which is a manifestation of adequate communicative behavior in the process of mutual understanding and establishing relationships, as well as the ability to adequately interpret and accept the national and cultural diversity of communication partners. As a result, the current problem of English-language communication is highlighted at the interdisciplinary level, involving information from ethnopsychology, sociology, intercultural pragmatics, linguoculturology, linguistics and other related areas on the basis of an integrated approach that allows considering the type of culture, the structure of social relations, basic cultural values and accepted norms. Language and culture are interrelated and generally recognized concepts, but how exactly models of communicative behavior correlate with the system of culture is of great interest both for the general theory of communication and for the description and analysis of communication within a separate language community.

The idea is postulated that based on the results of a systematic analysis of the value orientations of the British, it is possible to identify a hierarchy of socially desirable qualities of the British nation. As a result, it is proven that successful intercultural and social interaction is a manifestation of adequate communicative behavior in the process of mutual understanding and establishing relationships between communication partners.

Key words: semantics, pragmatics, linguistic culturology, communicative behavior, concept, strategy, tactics, frame.

Стаття присвячена структурному аналізу семантичних особливостей стратегій і тактик англомовного спілкування в контексті міжкультурної та соціальної взаємодії. Зокрема, увага приділяється вивченю комунікативної особистості, яка має свої особливості, актуалізуючись на різних рівнях та різних типах комунікації, домінуючими з яких є мотиваційні, когнітивні та функціональні параметри; характеристиці національних комунікативних особливостей у процесі міжкультурного обміну; систематизації засобів повсякденного спілкування з метою досягнення взаєморозуміння, а також визначення та систематизації збереження національного культурного колориту в цьому процесі, таких як принцип єдності формальної та динамічної еквівалентності, принцип інтегрального сприйняття, обумовленості та електоральної позиції тощо.

Автори розглядають міжкультурну та соціальну взаємодію комунікантів, яка може бути проявом адекватної комунікативної поведінки в процесі взаєморозуміння та встановлення взаємовідносин; а також здатність адекватно інтерпретувати та сприймати національне та культурне розмаїття партнерів по комунікації. Актуальна проблема англомовної комунікації розглядається на міждисциплінарному рівні із застосуванням етнopsихології, соціології, міжкультурної прагматики, лінгвістики та інших суміжних дисциплін на основі комплексного підходу, що дозволяють розглянути культурний тип, структуру соціальних відносин, основні культурні цінності, прийняті стандарти та норми. Мова та культура є загальнозвінними поняттями, і те, як ці моделі комунікативної поведінки можуть співвідноситися з системою культури, становить великий інтерес як для загальної теорії комунікації, так і для аналізу комунікації в межах окремої мовної спільноти.

В результаті аналізу висвітлено домінантні стратегії і тактики комунікативної поведінки британців, набір так званих «неписаних правил» у спілкуванні, яких необхідно дотримуватись з метою взаєморозуміння та встановлення ефективних взаємовідносин між партнерами по спілкуванню.

Ключові слова: семантика, прагматика, лінгвокультурологія, комунікативна поведінка, концепт, стратегія, тактика, фрейм.

Introduction. The study of national character as well as the language of the people, through linguistic consciousness and communicative behaviour, will be incomplete if we do not take into account the data obtained in related sciences – ethnopsychology, ethnosociology, social history. Considering the communicative behavior of the British in standard communicative situations, to which they attribute situations of establishing contact, maintaining it, ending it, and conducting an argument, we can talk about communicative imperatives, that is, the so-called ‘unwritten rules’ that must be observed in certain communicative situations. It is not typical for the bearers of British culture to resort to emotions – according to ‘unwritten rules’, but it is usual to hide their own feelings, switching attention to the feelings of others [1, p. 15–19; 2, p. 384–386].

For English-speaking communication, such a dominant can be defined as conventionality, which reflects the pragmatic attitudes of the individualist, which are based on the principle of non-interference: ‘mind your own business’ [3, p. 71–77].

This principle correlates with the key concept of ‘privacy’ for the Anglo-American tradition, which emphasizes the desirability of isolation from others, the outside world and the freedom to go about one’s business without restrictions. Based on the priority of personal interests and the right of complete personal control over them, the laws of ‘privacy’ assume the independence and self-sufficiency of the individual and, accordingly, freedom, which is expressed in his external independence from others and in the inadmissibility of third-party interference in personal life.

Recent research and publications. In the modern English-speaking communicative space, research on English-speaking communication in the context of intercultural and social interaction is of particular interest (works by P. Brown and S. Levinson, D. Crystal, T.A. van Dijk and W Kintch, G. Fauconnier and M. Turner, G.N. Leech, A. Miall, F. Smith and G.A. Miller, A. Wierzbicka, etc.) [4; 5; 6; 7; 8; 9; 10; 11; 12].

Speaking about the nationally-specific features of the communicative behavior of the British, it is worth paying attention to non-verbal behavior, to which the communicative category of distance belongs. Distance lies at the heart of the basic value orientations of the British – in relation to space and time, person and power. In the process of communication, distance can serve as a powerful tool for influencing others; it is a kind of art that allows you to regulate the degree of closeness or remoteness of the interlocutors both in the literal sense of the word and in the abstract,

creating, if necessary, insurmountable obstacles to protect your territory. Personal space is an important non-verbal component of British culture [4, p. 96]. The British have much larger personal space than the Ukrainians, and it is much better protected. Not knowing that the British tend to be reserved about physical contact when communicating can be a cause of communicative failure. In general, knowledge of the laws of nonverbal communication in another culture helps to avoid various incidents that arise due to such illiteracy. By analogy with the language of space, any culture has its own unique language of time, with which one can express one’s attitude towards a person, indicating his place in the social hierarchy. ‘Time distancing’ in such forms as forced waiting, lack of advance notification of upcoming events can be perceived by the British as a serious insult [4, p. 115–117; 6, p. 38–39].

The **purpose of the article** is to analyze the structural and semantic features of English-language communication strategies and tactics in the context of intercultural and social interaction, based on the systematization of factors that determine the national-specific style of communication.

Presentation of the main material. Historically, in the English-language communicative culture, politeness belonged to the moral and ethical sphere: a person, as a rule, was accepted as he is (if necessary, sympathized, criticized, helped to improve); the desire to seem better was usually interpreted negatively – as hypocrisy. To ‘maintain one’s face’ (as modern scientists express it), or rather – self-respect (which is more common in the terms of domestic culture), a person did not have enough beautiful words alone, it was customary to ‘judge by actions’, and for this reason, politeness was often considered insincerity, a waste of time, and no special importance was attached to it [4, p. 45–49; 5, p. 211; 7, p. 53]. Politeness in our tradition is unthinkable without such components as intuition and tact, politeness and sympathy, spontaneity of expression of emotions and unfeigned interest, and the very concept of communication is one of the key ones. The desire of the British and Americans to keep the conversation within predetermined limits, controlled from the standpoint of prudence, is not popular in our country, where sociability, based on sincere human affection and attention to the interlocutor, is highly valued. It is not for nothing that the impression of being a guest is often assessed in terms of communication, and dissatisfaction is expressed with the words ‘we talked purely formally’. The high degree of openness of Ukrainians is manifested in the widespread form of intimate conversations and indicates the priority

of contacts based on mutual trust and free expression of personal attitudes. Due to the traditional attention to essential moments (in the world around us and in people), we are characterized by a shift in emphasis to the informative side of communication and an individual approach, in which the rules of communicative behavior depend on the ‘human factor’ and the context of the situation.

In speakers of British culture, emotional behavior is associated, first of all, with strategies of evasion and distancing, as well as irrationality and subjectivity. The evasion strategy is a logical continuation of the distancing strategy and is highlighted (as well as the components of its tactics) solely for the convenience of analysis and for the purposes of its practical application. It involves the use of a certain set of structures – devices, which soften the sharpness of the statement and make it less straightforward. These include introductory phrases, impersonal sentences (including those with a touch of probability), formulas of polite questions and answers, statements in the form of questions, etc. Within the framework of this strategy, it is possible – rather conditionally – to distinguish two tactics: evasion of responsibility for the objectivity of thoughts and the use of questions in order to soften the categoricalness or sharpness of the statement. Softening statements is one of the indispensable conditions of evasive polite communication: the expressed opinion or critical remark, attitude or advice, which otherwise sounding too categorical or seem too instructive, must be wrapped in an appropriate shell so as not to offend the English-speaking interlocutor, who is anxiously guarding his ‘face’ [4, p. 96–99]. This is achieved by evading responsibility for the objectivity of what is expressed in two ways. First, one can emphasize the importance of one’s own opinion – the speaker, in this case, seems to take responsibility for his words (personalizing), subjectifying his point of view using means of subjective modality that emphasize a personal attitude. Or, conversely, one can shift the emphasis to the generally accepted opinion – using, for example, modal modifiers oriented towards the listener, passive constructions that seem to take the addressee out of the situation, impersonal and indefinite-personal sentences of a generalizing and probabilistic nature, designed to hide the speaker’s attitude.

We will illustrate the possibilities of implementing this tactic using the following examples from the works of J. Fowles: *My dear Miss Charming, I'll have to ask you to leave this place. ... We have to correct those problems soon or the project will fail. ... Will you please leave your hiding place?*

[13, p. 123] – (order/instruction); *Will you not take them?* [13, p. 265] – (suggestion/offer); *I thought you could let me go out to breathe fresh air* [13, p. 267] – (request); *I shall be happy to provide a home for such a person* [14, p. 137] – (suggestion/offer); *Shall we go out for a meal somewhere downtown?* [14, p. 63] – (suggestion/offer); *How much did you intend to spend on buying the collection of books on art, records and clothes for me?* [15, p. 118] – (polite enquiry).

Thus, the shift of the temporal plan can be used as a grammatical means of reducing the categorical nature of the statement, in order to give instructions, orders or commands the appearance of a polite request and to give a tactful form to questions of a personal nature, the expression of intentions, various kinds of proposals, etc. When solving such language tasks, as a kind of ‘distancing structures’, it is more appropriate to use statements not in Present Simple, but in Past or Future, which assume a certain shift into the past or future relative to the moment of speech, which gives freedom of choice of responses. A person’s ideas about the surrounding objective reality and the way in which one classifies the world are expressed in his language; on the other hand, language is the only means that will help us penetrate the sphere of mentality hidden from us, since it determines the way the world is divided in a particular culture [11, p. 37–39].

First, one can emphasize the importance of one’s own opinion – the speaker, as if taking responsibility for his words (personalizing), subjectivizing his point of view using means of subjective modality that emphasize personal attitude. Or, conversely, one can shift the emphasis to the generally accepted opinion – using, for example, modal modifiers oriented towards the listener, passive constructions that seem to remove the addressee from the situation, impersonal and indefinite-personal sentences of a generalizing and probabilistic nature, designed to hide the speaker’s attitude. As a rule, the dominant features of the national character are formed in representatives of other cultures into a certain stereotype [11, p. 147–149]. Subjectivity in this kind of research is simply inevitable. After all, even what we can tell about ourselves is also subjective. In general, the problem of describing the communicative behavior of another people is much more complicated [12, p. 68].

The maneuvering strategy is a characteristic feature of emotional English-language communication. Emotionality is considered as a conscious controlled demonstration of an emotional attitude [12, p. 94]. The emotional restraint of the British is rooted in the traditions of Protestant upbringing. In the bearers of

British culture, emotional behavior is associated, first of all, with irrationality and subjectivity [11, p. 92; 12, p. 138].

The practice of communication shows that true emotionality is a threat to the smooth flow of the conversation and a conflict-free atmosphere. The duality of the communicative behavior of the British, which arises in this case, only at first glance contains a contradiction. Various methods of reduction, traditionally associated with the rules of 'small talk', are widely popular among the British. To soften the harshness of what is being said, English-speaking interlocutors use a large number of various kinds of assumptions and omissions, 'white lies.' The main goal of the maneuvering technique is to regulate the degree of emotional impact on the interlocutor, especially in emotional speech acts, using various kinds of assumptions and predictions [16, p. 147–149].

The maneuvering strategy is based on the use of the technique traditionally associated with the rules of 'small talk' and widely popular among the British and quite limited among Americans, who are more purposeful and tend to perceive 'small talk' as an empty formality and a waste of time. Reduction usually occurs when exchanging thoughts and impressions, expressing a (critical) assessment or one's attitude to the subject of discussion. To soften the sharpness of what is said, English-speaking interlocutors use a large number of various kinds of assumptions and omissions, 'white lies', thus keeping the conversation in line with generally accepted norms of emotionally neutral communication [17, p. 161–164].

The main goal of the maneuvering strategy is to regulate the degree of emotional impact on the interlocutor, smoothing out 'sharp corners' by reducing the significance of the statement, especially in emotional speech acts, using various kinds of assumptions and predictions [18, p. 68]. At the language level, the desired result is achieved through the targeted use of modal modifiers and a number of other lexical-syntactic structures. Let us consider some common means of reducing the meaning of an expression using the following examples: ... *they think I'm a bit peculiar* [15, p. 170] – (criticizing); *Could I make a very brief announcement?* [15, p. 346] – (request); *Just a minute. I must go and get some things first. I'll be back in a moment* [14, p. 132] – (excuse); *It was just a slip of tongue* [14, p. 216] – (apology); *Alison! You said next week! Your visit somewhat shocked me* [14, p. 213] – (attitude).

The weight of a phrase, the degree of its effect on the listener, can be regulated with the help of minimizing adverbs: *just, only, a bit/a little, very*, as

well as various modifiers of degree (assertive words) such as *somewhat, somewhat*, which help to nullify unwanted emotions. This technique is often used in the context of informal time designation in combination with names of minimal time intervals such as *a second, a moment*, etc., thus creating the effect of additional reduction. Similar means are also available in the Ukrainian language, but, as a rule, they are used when it is necessary to give explanations, justify or apologize and relatively rarely – when expressing a critical assessment.

The technique of reducing certainty allows the speaker to achieve a high degree of ambiguity in expressing intention through various verbal assumptions and conjectures; at the same time, indispensable 'regulators' of the meaning of utterances are the so-called order words – fillers of the type kind of, sort of, so to speak, more or less, etc., which make the language less definite and less harsh and, if necessary, additionally soften the (negative) attitude.

Negation is also one of the means of reducing the significance of a statement and is found mainly in three types of constructions: direct, implicit and double. Direct negation, as a rule, refers to a verb or is transferred to a verb of thought (transferred negation), or is expressed in words of uncertain meaning (non-assertive words). Implicit negation occurs in affirmative sentences with adverbs of negative or minimizing meaning, or verbs and participles of the corresponding meaning. Double negation occurs when words of negative meaning are used in a negative sentence. Negation as a tactic of reducing the significance (softening) is usually resorted to when it is necessary to weaken the emotional impact of stylistically colored words that express (critical) attitude, disagreement, hostility, etc. [19, p. 141–144].

The same purpose can be served by modifiers with verbs of intention such as *to be inclined, to tend, to intend*, which are also used in combination with verbs of thinking and significantly reduce the sharpness of the expressed thought, transferring the conversation to a less real plane of tendencies and inclinations. For example: ... *I'm inclined* to think that your behaviour is somewhat flagrant [13, p. 195]; *You tend to say things very far from true* [13, p. 361]; *Mrs. ... intends to write to Mr. Forsyth to inform her that Sarah is a public scandal* [15, p. 196], cf.: 'My dear aunt, you criticise everyone lately. Your behaviour is flagrant. You never tell the truth. Mrs. Poultney will to write to Mr. Forsyth to inform her that Sarah is a public scandal'.

Thus, the above-mentioned strategies and techniques, separating communication participants, should be taken into account when considering the

nationally specific norms of etiquette of the English-speaking society. Etiquette consists of formal models-formulae of behavior. These formulas are not created in the process of speech, but are reproduced in typical communicative situations, which facilitate communication. Despite the stereotyped nature of etiquette phrases and the partly ritualistic nature of their use, speech etiquette is of great importance for the functioning of language. It is in it that the state of language culture, spiritual values, ethical orientations of society, and the nature of relationships between people are most noticeably manifested.

Conclusions and prospects of the study. This is the sphere of language and culture to which all members of society are involved, regardless of their social status. Addressing by name is associated with intimate or personal distance and addressing by surname or official title is associated with social distance. Addressing by surname or position means that the speaker either does not consider the addressee to be his equal, or demonstrates his negative attitude towards the partner. Using a position or title without a surname as an address is a signal that the speaker belongs to another social group of

people, in particular to support personnel. Using a surname without a title in a situation where the addressee is somewhat lower in status than the speaker reinforces status inequality. Using a name in an official formula (instead of Mister Smithson – Mister Charles Smithson or even Mister Charles) is characteristic of an insufficiently educated part of the population. The English are acutely aware of their social status, and therefore the relations of status inequality, a constant sense of one's place on the social ladder receive a variable and detailed expression in English linguistic culture [7, p. 86; 8, p. 148, 19, p. 177].

Thus, the emotional restraint of the British, as is known, is rooted in the traditions of Protestant upbringing, which prescribes refraining from open display of emotions in almost all life situations.

Research in the field of English-language communication in the context of intercultural and social interaction in modern linguistics is a relevant direction, since the communicative sphere, as an important part of national culture, is represented in the linguistic picture of the world and is conceptualized in a special way in the national consciousness.

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