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## LINGUISTIC PECULIARITIES OF THE BRITISH EMOTIVE COMMUNICATION

**Summary.** This paper is devoted to the linguistic features of language means and techniques for achieving the intended goal of communication, which is the characteristic feature of emotional communication, as a consciously controlled demonstration of the emotional attitude of communicants toward each other.

Attention is focused on the functioning of strategic techniques of distancing, evasion and support of the interlocutor, designed to regulate responsibility for the power of speech action and the reliability of statements. Politeness, as a moral and ethical property of emotional communication, is widely manifested in situations that involve the expression of a personal attitude, intention, the possibility of verbal maneuvering and evasion of straightforwardness. To “maintain one’s face” (P. Brown, S. Levinson), or rather, one’s self-respect, the British strive to maintain the conversation within predetermined limits, controlled by prudence, tact, courtesy and compassion.

The authors investigate the linguistic means used, mainly, within the strategies of distancing, evasion and support for the interlocutor that involve several lexical and grammatical components related to the category of modality. These include time shift, conditional mood, interrogative constructions, modal verbs and modal modifiers, lexical and syntactic units, and units focused on the speaker or the listener. With their help, one can add a certain distance, as it seems, from reality to the statements (making them more polite). They also help to provide an abstract distance convenient for the interlocutors, which allows you to feel comfortable when communicating.

The analysis highlights the linguistic features of the English language as a means of emotional communicative behavior of the British, namely the shift of the temporal plan as a grammatical means of reducing the categorical nature of statements, giving instructions, orders or commands the impression of a polite request and a tactful form to addressing questions of a personal nature, expressions of intentions, various kinds of proposals, etc.

**Key words:** semantics, pragmatics, discourse, distance, politeness, emotive communicative behavior, politeness, strategy, social interaction, tactics.

**Introduction.** The concept of the communicative culture of the people covers all spheres of human activity. Therefore, our attention is drawn to the sphere of communicative relations. This sphere is so broad and important in the life of society that it is itself an integral part of the national culture. Communication in the sphere of people’s relations is regulated by historically established and sta-

ble norms. Therefore, we can talk about emotive communicative culture, which is the part of the communicative culture that consists of traditions and rules of behavior of its carriers in the process of communicative interaction. The British, as representatives of the active communicative culture, have the following psychological characteristics: introverts, equal, dispassionate, work-oriented and love solitude; when collecting and presenting information, they use statistics, directories, databases and strictly adhere to facts; in communication, they adhere to an official polite tone, restrained gestures, and facial expressions, rarely interrupt, and rely on logic in arguments [1, p. 123–125].

**Previous research.** The theoretical basis of the study was the scientific works of modern linguists (A. Бєлова (2003), P. Chilton and C. Schaffner (1997), B. Cho et al. (1999), B. Croft and S. Ting-Toomey (1994), T.A. Dijk van (2006), G. Fauconnier and M. Turner (2002), H. P. Grice (1975), A. Wierzbicka (1997), etc.) [2, c. 45; 3, p. 217; 4, p. 62–64; 5, p. 475; 6, p. 117; 7, p. 124–126; 8, p. 45; 9, p. 99–101], which present a multifaceted coverage of issues of linguoculturology, cognition and communication, intercultural and social interaction, verbal and nonverbal communication, communication systems, etc. According to E. Hall, the communicative culture of Great Britain is an example of a ‘low-context’ communicative culture. By ‘low-context’ communicative cultures, the author understands such cultures in which the intentions of the speakers and the meaning of messages are better expressed through explicit statements. In general, in ‘low-context’ communicative cultures, communicative models of a direct nature are more often used – a direct communicative approach, a desire for clarity of expression. The speaker is expected to create a clear, convincing statement that the listener can easily decode. Thus, the main characteristics of a ‘low-context’ communicative culture are: individualistic values; linear logic of interaction; direct style of communication; personality-oriented, often self-confident style of communication; the focus of interaction on the speaker; verbal interpretation of the statement [10, p. 131–135].

The **purpose** of the **paper** is to analyze the linguistic peculiarities of emotive communication, namely the strategic techniques of distancing, evasion and support of the interlocutor, as a controlled demonstration of the emotional attitude of communicants towards each other, based on the novel of the British writer John Fowles “The Collector”.

**Presentation of the main material.** In British communicative culture, there are no specialized speech acts of appeal, remark or advice in the form of indirect modification of the interlocutor's behavior and they are less common than in other communication cultures [11, p. 68; 12, p. 31–33]. Therefore, it would be fair to note that British communicative culture is less categorical than the others; it is distinguished by a high degree of politeness and mildness of communicative pressure. To achieve the set goal, i.e. to convince the addressee to change his point of view as a result of interaction, does not mean to conflict with the need for approval from the interlocutors; the British widely resort to various strategies and tactics. It is important to point out that the need to maintain a conflict and a free atmosphere of conversation, to show oneself in a favorable light and to earn a positive assessment of other participants, is often considered as the indispensable conditions for effective communication [13, p. 124–127].

The strategy of hinting is a characteristic feature of emotional communication. Interestingly, the disapproving attitude towards the open manifestation of emotions is traced at the linguistic level. For example, adjectives such as 'emotional', 'demonstrative' and 'excitable' have a negative connotation and most English verbs of emotion are verbs of state, not action. The practice of communication shows that true emotionality poses a threat to the smooth flow of a conversation and the conflict-free atmosphere, the preservation of which is the main goal in the strategic expression of emotions. At the linguistic level, it is reflected in the use of two strategic techniques, understatement and overstatement, designed to contribute to the verbal reduction or exaggeration of the significance of what is happening. The duality of the communicative behavior of the British that arises in this case, with their characteristic internal detachment during the external demonstration of emotions, only at first glance contains a contradiction. Both understatement and overstatement are based on a purely formal (ritual) appeal to a certain set of expressive language means, which as a result of frequent use have turned into mostly desensitized formulas [14, p. 148–154].

The strategy of hinting (understatement) is based on the use of the first technique. Various methods of reduction, traditionally associated with the rules of 'small talk', are 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.

Understatement usually occurs when exchanging thoughts and impressions, expressing a (critical) assessment or expressing one's attitude to the subject of discussion. To soften the sharpness of what is being said, English-speaking interlocutors use a large number of various assumptions and omissions, or 'white lies', thus keeping the conversation in line with generally accepted norms of emotionally neutral communication [15, p. 127–131].

In addition to the function of neutralizing the speaker's emotions regarding the statement, resorting to the strategy of hinting serves the same purpose: to place correctly the necessary accents to make the communication process polite and relaxed. It is worth noting that given the presence of an element of insincerity (since understatement is essentially a reduction in the significance or meaning of a message, when less is said than is meant), the semantic meaning of understatement differs from the pragmatic one. The appeal to this strategy is caused by the desire to demonstrate a careful and respectful attitude to the feelings of the interlocutor and communication as a whole, based on a completely sincere and common

desire of the communicants, 'I want you to think that everything was OK', therefore, in the pragmatic aspect, statements containing understatement cannot be considered erroneous [15, p. 148–151].

The main goal of this anti-conflict 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. Accordingly, the need to resort to this strategy arises when it comes to something purely personal, requiring delicate handling (such as the need to share one's experiences or impressions, reporting sad news), or something unpleasant (associated, for example, with the expression of a negative attitude, a complaint). In such situations, the goal is to maintain a friendly conversation, avoiding in every possible way some inconvenience and shocking effects potentially inherent in the message. At the language level, the desired result is achieved through the purposeful use of modal modifiers and several other lexical and syntactic structures [16, p. 144–147].

Speaking about the national-specific features of the communicative behavior of the British, one should pay attention to both verbal and non-verbal behavior, to which the category of distance belongs. Distance lies at the heart of the basic value orientations of the British. Personal space is an important non-verbal component of British culture. In the process of communication, distancing can serve as a powerful tool for influencing the 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 and in the abstract one, creating insurmountable obstacles to protect your territory if necessary.

So, the main strategies that the British resort to are the strategies of distancing and evasion. They reflect the characteristic features of English-language communication: highly developed possibilities of verbal maneuvering and evasion of straightforwardness of statements. They are most clearly manifested in situations that involve the expression of personal attitude and intention and allow you to regulate responsibility for the strength of the speech act and the reliability of the statement. Each of the communicative strategies has a characteristic linguistic design in English, reflecting the specifics of the sociocultural approach to communication.

Let us consider the strategy of distancing in more details. It helps to provide an abstract distance convenient for the interlocutors, which allows you to feel comfortable when communicating. The strategy of distancing involves the use of the following tactics: shifting the time frame and using modal verbs. Techniques of the distancing strategy can be classified as shifting to the past or future, using extended time, modal verbs in stable constructions and modal verbs in the conditional mood.

Shifting the time plan can be used as a grammatical means of reducing the categorical nature of the statement; giving instructions, orders, commands or polite requests; presenting with a tactful form to questions of a personal nature, expressions of intentions and various kinds of proposals, etc. When solving such language tasks, as a kind of 'distancing structure', it is more appropriate to use statements not in Present Simple, but in Past or Future, which assume a certain shift to the past or future about the moment of speech, which gives freedom of choice of responses [17, p. 167–169].

Downtoning, like softening, is usually observed when exchanging thoughts, expressing a (critical) assessment or one's attitude to the subject under discussion, when using emotionally neutral

phrases it is necessary to keep the conversation in line with generally accepted norms of polite communication. Let us illustrate the possibilities of implementing this tactic with the following examples from John Fowles's novel: *How much did you intend to spend on buying the collection of books on art, records and clothes for me?* [18, p. 118] – (polite enquiry); *I thought it might be nice to visit your parents on weekend* [18, p. 91] – (suggestion); *I wondered if I could have a bath in this house?* [18, p. 79]. The continuous tense is often used in questions and requests, giving them the tone of a casual remark, intentions or suggestions expressed in this form sound less intrusive. For example, if you need to find out about something that has already been decided or find out about someone's plans, you need to make it clear to the interlocutor that you are not going to interfere with his intentions or influence his decision. For example: *Mr. ..., will you be leaving this afternoon?* [18, p. 13]. The continuous tense is often found in commonly accepted formulas with modal modifiers when expressing the polite request or suggestion: *I was thinking – what about having a walk? I want daylight and some fresh air* [18, p. 49] – (suggestion); *I'm hoping you could find some time for me to discuss my forthcoming marriage?* [18, p. 20] – (request); *I'm hoping you tell no one over there that you have met me* [18, p. 137] – (request); *I'm sorry, I must be going. And you have a long walk* [18, p. 72] – (stating intentions); *Miss, what are you planning to do tomorrow?* [18, p. 46] – (polite enquiry).

English modal verbs, which convey a whole range of different shades of modality due to the specificity of their semantics, are indispensable 'politeness regulators'. They allow you to vary the degree of obligation, to follow advice, the desirability of fulfilling a request, the permissibility of performing an action, etc. Appeal to the subjunctive mood also gives expressions a certain amount of hypothetical meaning increasing the distance between its content and the pragmatic meaning. Below we will analyze the possibilities of using the modal verbs *could*, *would*, *might*, which, as parts of the most common grammatical constructions, are especially often used for these strategic purposes. The British distinguish interpersonal use as a special sphere of functioning of these verbs: with the help of *could*, *would*, *might*, various kinds of requests, questions, suggestions, thoughts, wishes, etc. are expressed, which at the same time acquire different shades of polite sounding. Acting as distancing means to allow avoiding the straightforwardness of the statements, that are included in several stable formulas of politeness in the form of stable constructions, interrogative, conditional, according to their inherent shades of meaning of probability, possibility, giving preference, desire, etc. Let us exemplify the communicative interaction from the novel by John Fowles: *Would you keep with me this evening?* [18, p. 110] – (invitation); *Might it be alright to talk to her this way?* [18, p. 172] – (opinion); *You wouldn't go to Mrs. ... by any chance?* [18, p. 134] – (inquiry); *You could reconsider his suggestion* [18, p. 142] – (criticism/advice); *You could have told me. You could have stopped me at the very beginning* [18, p. 102] – (criticism/advice); *I'd have thought he wished to keep the matter from Mrs. ...* [18, p. 151] – (opinion). Recommendations and wishes, personal questions and refusals of requests also sound more tactful in the conditional mood: *I wish you would put the business in his hands* [18, p. 116]; *I'd rather not answer that if you don't mind* [18, p. 107]; *I'd really like to say yes, but you know it's impossible* [18, p. 164]. *You could reconsider his suggestion* [18, p. 242] – (criticism/advice); *What could be making the biggest*

*mistake of your life!* [18, p. 244] – (polite enquiry); *They could have succeeded if they had worked harder* [18, p. 257] – (advice). As the following block of examples illustrates, modal verbs in the conditional mood are also used in constructions with the formulas for the polite question, suggestion, advice or order: *If I were you, I'd better leave* [18, p. 142] – (advice); *It would be better if you got it over man to man* [18, p. 174] – (suggestion/advice); *I wonder if you would like to spend this time with me?* [18, p. 107] – (polite enquiry). *I'd like to take some photographs* [18, p. 105]; *I'd think we might spend a night here* [18, p. 197]; *I'd say this is not the best way to treat her* [18, p. 165]; *I wonder if you might have wished to prolong an opportunity to hold my arm without impropriety* [18, p. 186] – (enquiry/offer); *Suppose we might place a charitable construction upon your conduct* [18, p. 160] – (offer/suggestion); *I'd have thought he wished to keep the matter from Mrs. ...* [18, p. 151] – (opinion).

The passive voice, which is found in instructions, orders and prohibitions, also implements a tactic of evasion, which allows you to get the addressee out of the situation, presenting the action expected of him not as his direct duty, but as a generally accepted rule, the necessity of which is obvious to the law-abiding British. This form is often used (for example, in constructions with *to be supposed to*) to soften the categorical nature of prohibitions and orders and to avoid direct pressure and observe decency.

By analogy with the language of space, any culture has its own unique language of time, with which it is possible to express the 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. Any violation of time zones (being late, untimely submitted documents, a long visit or conversation, interference in the conversation of strangers, unplanned change of scheduled dates) causes consequences similar to the violation of spatial zones and is regarded as an encroachment on free time, which is an equivalent to the invasion of personal territory. The desire to adhere to socially recognized time frames and a clear demarcation of their duration reflect the perception of time and space as a kind of property inherent in the British mentality. The correlation of the spatial-temporal organization of communication with the distance of people in society is also manifested at the level of communicative behavior. At the same time, one should not forget that the rules that are obvious for each specific culture and regulate the use of interpersonal space, which its representatives follow automatically (without questioning their universality), are not such, that serve as the main sources of mutual misunderstanding.

The strategy of 'distance' separating communication participants should be paid attention to when considering the national-specific norms of etiquette of the English-speaking society. 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 the language. This is the sphere of language and culture to which all members of society are involved, regardless of their social status. Violation of the formula indicates either a conscious change in status relations or the speaker's belonging to another cultural community of people. The British are acutely aware of their social status and therefore the relations of status inequality, the constant feeling of one's place on the social ladder, receive a variable and detailed expression in the English linguistic culture.



Thus, in British communicative culture, the strategy of 'distance' is very popular; there are regular discrepancies between semantic and pragmatic meanings, leading to a contradiction between what is said and what is actually meant.

**Conclusions and suggestions.** In the course of our research, it was noted that the basis of the pragmatic content of the intentions of the speakers of British culture, both when expressing motives and when expressing emotions, is the egocentric principle of volitional expression "*I want*". In order to achieve the set goal, that is, convincing the addressee to change his point of view as a result of interaction, the British widely resort to various strategies and tactics, in particular the strategy of evasion.

Thus, based on John Fowles's novel "The Collector", such features of the emotional communication of the British have been revealed as: the ability to maintain a conflict-free atmosphere of conversation, to show oneself in a favorable light and to earn the positive assessment of other participants, which are often considered the indispensable conditions for effective communication. This allows us to 'save face' – the positive image of oneself, which is created by a person and favorably perceived by the others.

We consider the study of knowledge in the field of culture, both native and foreign ones and the identification of the most characteristic features of English-speaking communication in the context of politeness, tolerance (indulgence) and restraint can be promising for further research.

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#### Галайбіда О., Матковська М. Лінгвістичні особливості емотивної комунікації британців

**Анотація.** Стаття присвячена лінгвістичним особливостям мовних засобів і прийомів для досягнення наміченої мети спілкування, характерної для емотивної комунікації, як свідомо контрольованої демонстрації емоційного ставлення комунікантів один до одного.

Увагу зосереджено на функціонуванні стратегічних прийомів дистанціювання, ухилення та підтримки співрозмовника, покликаних регулювати відповідальність за силу мовленнєвої дії й достовірність висловлювань. Ввічливість, як морально-етична властивість емотивної комунікації, широко проявляється в ситуаціях, що припускають вираження особистого відношення, наміру та можливості вербального маневрування й лавірування, ухилення від прямотинності та іносказання висловів. Для «підтримки власного обличчя» (П. Браун, С. Левінсон), а точніше – самоповаги, виступають прагнення британців підтримувати розмову в наперед передбачених ситуаціях, контрольованих з позицій розсудливості, тактовності, чемності й співчутливості.

Автори досліджують мовні засоби, які вживаються в основному при використанні стратегій дистанціювання, ухилення та підтримки співрозмовника, що передбачають використання цілого ряду лексико-граматичних засобів, пов'язаних із категорією модальності. До них відносяться: умовний спосіб, питальні конструкції, модальні дієслова, модальні модифікатори – лексико-синтаксичні одиниці, орієнтовані на того, хто говорить або слухає, що додає висловлюванням певну, як здається, віддаленість від реальності (роблячи їх тим самим ввічливішими). Мовні засоби також допомагають забезпечити зручну для співрозмовників абстрактну відстань, що дозволяє відчувати комфортність при спілкуванні.

В результаті аналізу висвітлено лінгвістичні особливості мовних засобів емотивної комунікативної поведінки британців, а саме зсув часового плану як граматичний засіб стосовно зниження категоричності висловлювань, для того, щоб додати інструкціям, розпорядженням або наказам виду ввічливого прохання і надати тактовної форми питанням особистого характеру, вираженню намірів, різного роду пропозиціям тощо.

**Ключові слова:** семантика, прагматика, дискурс, дистанційність, ввічливість, емотивна комунікативна поведінка, стратегія, тактика.