

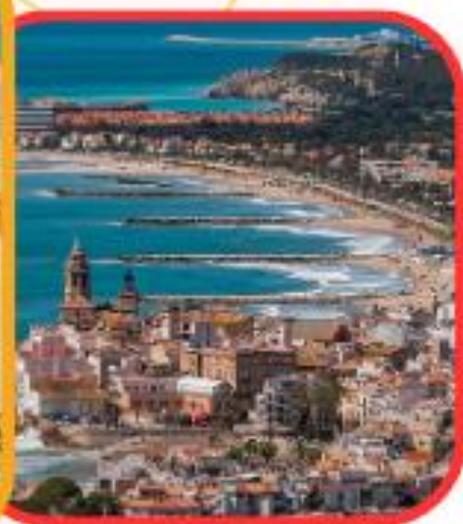


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CULTURAL SPECIFICITY OF COMMUNICATIVE ETIQUETTE**Yuldasheva Sabina Yusufovna**

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Abstract. This paper examines the cultural specificity of communicative etiquette as a multidimensional phenomenon that regulates interpersonal interaction across societies. The study highlights how culturally grounded norms of politeness, address forms, and interactional strategies shape communication behavior. Special emphasis is placed on sociolinguistic variation, pragmatic principles, and the challenges of intercultural communication in a globalized world. The analysis demonstrates that communicative etiquette is deeply embedded in cultural values, social structures, and collective worldviews, which define both the form and meaning of speech behavior.

Keywords: communicative etiquette, cultural specificity, sociolinguistics, politeness strategies, intercultural communication, pragmatics, cultural norms

Communicative etiquette is one of the most culturally sensitive components of human interaction. It represents a complex set of socially accepted norms that regulate verbal and non-verbal behavior in a given society. While certain patterns of politeness—such as greetings, expressions of gratitude, or apology formulas—are universal, their linguistic realization and pragmatic interpretation are strongly influenced by cultural traditions. As a result, communicative etiquette becomes a key indicator of cultural identity, determining how individuals perceive themselves and others in the process of communication.

Every culture develops its own communicative expectations, reflecting values such as hierarchy, collectivism, individualism, emotional expressiveness, or restraint. These values determine the preferred degrees of formality, the level of directness, the acceptable emotional tone, and even the appropriate physical distance between interlocutors. In cultures with hierarchical social structures, communicative etiquette highlights status differences through elaborate forms of address, honorifics, and ritualized politeness formulas. In more egalitarian cultures, by contrast, etiquette tends to favor informality and reduced social distance.

Non-verbal components of etiquette—gestures, eye contact, silence, and proxemics—are also culturally conditioned. A gesture considered respectful in one culture may be interpreted as inappropriate or even offensive in another. Similarly, silence may represent agreement, contemplation, politeness, or disapproval depending on cultural norms. Thus, communicative



etiquette operates not merely as a linguistic system but as a culturally embedded behavioral model.

Politeness represents one of the central components of communicative etiquette. Different cultures adopt different politeness strategies, which can be broadly characterized along the axes of directness versus indirectness and formality versus informality. For example, cultures oriented toward collectivism (many Asian societies) often value indirectness, mitigation, and avoidance of explicit disagreement. Western cultures, especially Anglo-Saxon ones, may interpret directness as sincerity and efficiency, while indirectness may be perceived as evasiveness.

These cross-cultural differences become especially visible in routine communicative acts such as requesting, refusing, complimenting, or expressing gratitude. Linguistic formulas used to perform these functions vary substantially in length, emotional intensity, and degree of explicitness. Misinterpretation of these formulas often leads to pragmatic misunderstandings in intercultural communication.

Globalization and increased mobility have intensified contact among speakers of different cultures, highlighting the importance of intercultural communicative competence. Failure to recognize cultural etiquette norms may result in communicative failure even when interlocutors share a common language. For example, excessive formality may be interpreted as distancing; insufficient formality may be seen as disrespectful. Similarly, different expectations regarding eye contact, turn-taking, or back-channeling cues can lead to misinterpretation of attitudes and intentions.

Intercultural competence therefore requires not only linguistic knowledge but also an understanding of cultural models of politeness, conversational rituals, and interactional strategies. This competence allows speakers to adjust their communicative behavior, demonstrate respect for cultural differences, and prevent unintended conflicts.

Digital communication adds another layer of cultural variability to etiquette norms. Although online discourse tends to reduce formality and rely on universalized symbols (emoji, abbreviations), cultural distinctions remain highly visible. Preferences for message length, tone, response time, and emoji interpretation differ across cultures. Some societies view delayed responses as impolite, while others consider immediate replies excessive. The degree of acceptable emotional expressiveness in digital messages is also culturally dependent.

Thus, digital discourse does not eliminate cultural differences but reshapes them, creating hybrid forms of communicative etiquette that combine traditional norms with new technological practices.

Communicative etiquette is a culturally specific system that integrates linguistic, social, and behavioral norms. Its study reveals profound



connections between language, culture, and social identity. In a globalized world, awareness of cultural variability in communicative etiquette becomes essential for effective and respectful interaction across cultural boundaries. Understanding these differences enhances intercultural competence, reduces communicative misunderstandings, and supports successful professional and social communication in multilingual environments.

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