

## PRAGMATIC FAILURES IN EXPRESSING RESPECT: EVIDENCE FROM ENGLISH-RUSSIAN CROSS- CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

<sup>1</sup>Yusupova Sabohatxon A'zamjonovna, Associate professor,  
PhD, English philology department, Fergana State University

<sup>2</sup>Pulatova Kamolaxon Shukurjon kizi, master's student,  
Fergana State University

## INGLIZ-RUS MADANIYATLARARO MULOQOTIDA HURMATNI IFODALASHDAGI PRAGMATIK MUVAFFAQIYATSIZLIKLAR

<sup>1</sup>Yusupova Sabohatxon A'zamjonovna, Farg'ona davlat  
universiteti ingliz filologiyasi kafedrasida dotsenti

<sup>2</sup>Po'latova Kamolaxon Shukurjon qizi, Farg'ona davlat  
universiteti magistranti

## ПРАГМАТИЧЕСКИЕ ФАКТОРЫ ИСКАЖЕНИЯ ВЫРАЖЕНИЯ УВАЖЕНИЯ В АНГЛО-РУССКОЙ МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНОЙ КОММУНИКАЦИИ

<sup>1</sup>Юсупова Сабохатхон Аъзамжоновна, доцент кафедры  
английской филологии Ферганского государственного  
университета, (PhD)

<sup>2</sup>Пулатова Камолaxon Шукуржон кызы, магистрант  
Ферганского государственного университета

**Abstract:** Respect plays a crucial role in successful interpersonal and intercultural communication. However, differences in linguistic norms and pragmatic conventions often lead to misunderstandings between speakers of different languages. This article examines pragmatic failures in expressing respect in English-Russian cross-cultural communication. The study aims to identify linguistic and cultural factors that cause misinterpretations of respect and to analyze how respect is pragmatically encoded in both languages. The findings suggest that pragmatic failures frequently arise from divergent politeness strategies, speech act realizations, and sociocultural expectations embedded in English and Russian communicative practices. The study emphasizes the importance of pragmatic awareness in developing intercultural communicative competence.

**Keywords:** respect, pragmatic failure, politeness strategies, intercultural communication, English, Russian, communicative competence

**Annotatsiya:** Hurmat shaxslararo va madaniyatlararo muloqotda muhim ahamiyat kasb etadi. Biroq, lingvistik me'yorlar va pragmatik konvensiyalardagi farqlar turli tillarda so'zlashuvchilar o'rtasida tushunmovchiliklarga olib kelishi mumkin. Ushbu maqolada ingliz-rus madaniyatlararo muloqotida hurmatni ifodalashda yuzaga keladigan pragmatik muvaffaqiyatsizliklar tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqot hurmatning noto'g'ri talqin qilinishiga olib keluvchi lingvistik va madaniy omillarni aniqlash hamda har ikki tilda hurmatning pragmatik ifodalanishini o'rganishni maqsad qiladi. Tadqiqot natijalari pragmatik muvaffaqiyatsizliklar asosan turli xil muloyimlik strategiyalari, nutq aktlarining bajarilishi va sotsiokultur



<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4883-076X>

e-mail:

s.a.yusupova@pf.fdu.  
uz



<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-6975-3820>

e-mail:

kamolapulatova12@g  
mail.com

*kutilmalar bilan bog'liq ekanligini ko'rsatadi. Tadqiqot madaniyatlararo kommunikativ kompetensiyani rivojlantirishda pragmatik xabardorlik muhimligini ta'kidlaydi.*

**Kalit so'zlar:** hurmat, pragmatik muvaffaqiyatsizlik, muloyimlik strategiyalari, madaniyatlararo muloqot, ingliz tili, rus tili, kommunikativ kompetensiya.

**Аннотация.** Уважение играет ключевую роль в успешной межличностной и межкультурной коммуникации. Однако различия в лингвистических нормах и прагматических конвенциях часто приводят к недопониманию между носителями разных языков. В данной статье рассматриваются прагматические неудачи в выражении уважения в англо-русской межкультурной коммуникации. Цель исследования — выявить лингвистические и культурные факторы, вызывающие неверную интерпретацию уважения, а также проанализировать прагматические способы его выражения в английском и русском языках. Результаты исследования показывают, что прагматические неудачи возникают вследствие различий в стратегиях вежливости, реализации речевых актов и социокультурных ожиданиях. Подчеркивается значимость прагматической компетенции для формирования межкультурной коммуникативной компетентности.

**Ключевые слова:** уважение, прагматическая неудача, стратегии вежливости, межкультурная коммуникация, английский язык, русский язык, коммуникативная компетентность

**Introduction.** In the context of globalization and intensified intercultural contacts, effective communication across languages and cultures has become increasingly significant [1]. Language functions not only as a system of grammatical and lexical units but also as a carrier of social values, norms, and attitudes [2]. One of the most fundamental values reflected in language is respect, which regulates interpersonal relations and communicative behavior within society.

In English-Russian communication, respect is expressed through culturally conditioned linguistic forms and pragmatic strategies. Even when speakers possess sufficient grammatical knowledge, communicative breakdowns may occur due to pragmatic failures [3]. Such failures arise when linguistically correct expressions are pragmatically inappropriate within a specific sociocultural context, leading to misinterpretation of intended respectful meanings.

The concept of respect in English and Russian is shaped by distinct historical and sociocultural traditions [4]. English communicative culture generally emphasizes indirectness, mitigation, and egalitarian interaction, whereas Russian communication often values directness, sincerity, and explicit recognition of social hierarchy. These differences make the study of pragmatic failures in expressing respect particularly relevant for cross-cultural linguistics.

The notion of pragmatic failure was introduced by Thomas (1983) to describe situations in which speakers fail to convey or interpret

intended meanings due to pragmatic differences rather than grammatical errors. Pragmatic failures are commonly classified into pragmalinguistic failures, related to inappropriate linguistic choices, and sociopragmatic failures, caused by mismatches in cultural norms and expectations. Respect is closely linked to politeness theory, particularly to the concepts of face and face-threatening acts proposed by Brown and Levinson. In English, respect is frequently expressed through negative politeness strategies, such as indirect requests, hedging, and modal verbs. In contrast, Russian communicative norms often employ positive politeness and explicit linguistic markers of social relations, including forms of address and direct speech acts [5].

From a cross-cultural perspective, respect is a value-laden concept shaped by social roles, power distance, and situational context [6]. In English-Russian interaction, behaviors perceived as polite in one culture may be seen as overly formal or insincere in the other. English speakers often use indirect expressions and hedging to convey respect while maintaining conversational egalitarianism, reflecting lower power distance norms. By contrast, Russian norms emphasize hierarchy and status, with respect expressed through formal address and deference to authority. Failure to recognize these cultural frameworks can turn routine exchanges into sources of misunderstanding or perceived rudeness.

Pragmatic failures in expressing respect are therefore more than linguistic errors; they reflect deeper divergences in social cognition and

interactional expectations [7]. Misinterpretations frequently occur in workplace, academic, or diplomatic contexts. For instance, an English speaker's casual tone may seem disrespectful to a Russian interlocutor, while a Russian speaker's formal style may appear stiff to an English counterpart. These mismatches underscore the importance of pragmatic competence—awareness of language, cultural norms, and situational appropriateness—for effective and respectful cross-cultural communication [8].

**Research method.** The research employed qualitative pragmatic analysis of English-Russian cross-cultural communication. Data were collected from authentic conversational examples, including everyday interactions, academic discourse, and institutional communication. Supplementary data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with bilingual speakers and advanced learners of English and Russian. The analysis focused on respect-related speech acts such as requests, apologies, expressions of gratitude, forms of address, and evaluative statements. Each example was examined to determine the type of pragmatic failure and its underlying linguistic or cultural cause.

**Results.** The findings indicate that pragmatic failures in expressing respect are frequent in English-Russian communication. One major source of failure is differing preferences for directness and indirectness. Russian speakers may use direct requests in English that are perceived as impolite, while English speakers' indirect strategies may be interpreted by Russian interlocutors as uncertainty or lack of sincerity. Another significant factor involves forms of address. English speakers often use first names to convey friendliness, whereas Russian speakers may perceive this as inappropriate in formal contexts. Conversely, the use of titles and patronymics may sound excessively formal or distant to English speakers. Differences in expressing disagreement and criticism also contribute to pragmatic failures, as English communication tends to favor mitigation, while Russian communication prioritizes clarity and directness.

**Discussion.** The results demonstrate that pragmatic failures reflect deeper cultural differences

in the conceptualization of respect. English communicative norms associate respect with personal autonomy and non-imposition, whereas Russian norms emphasize sincerity and social hierarchy.

These findings highlight the importance of integrating pragmatic and cultural instruction into language education. Developing learners' awareness of respect-related communication strategies can significantly reduce intercultural misunderstandings and improve communicative effectiveness.

**Conclusion.** The study confirms that pragmatic failures in expressing respect constitute a major challenge in English-Russian cross-cultural communication. Such failures stem from differences in politeness strategies, speech act realization, and sociocultural norms. The research underscores the role of pragmatic competence as an essential component of communicative competence. It is concluded that explicit instruction in pragmatics and intercultural communication can enhance learners' ability to express respect appropriately and effectively in multilingual contexts.

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