



POLITENESS AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE.

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Abstract. In order to maintain interpersonal relationships, it is necessary to understand culturally deep-rooted ways of politeness used within each society. It is one of the main elements of sociolinguistic competence and therefore the following chapter focuses on this subject.

Key words. Sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, target language, cultures and linguistic and non-linguistic politeness.

Xushmuomalalik va uning sotsiolingvistik kompetentsiya bilan aloqasi.

Annotatsiya. Shaxslararo munosabatlarni saqlab qolish uchun har bir jamiyatda qo'llaniladigan xushmuomalalikning madaniy jihatdan chuqur ildiz otgan usullarini tushunish kerak. Bu sotsiolingvistik kompetentsiyaning asosiy elementlaridan biridir va shuning uchun keyingi bobda ushbu mavzuga e'tibor qaratilgan.

Kalit so'zlar. Ijtimoiy lingvistik kompetentsiya, strategik kompetentsiya, maqsadli til, madaniyatlar va lingvistik va nolingvistik xushmuomalalik.

The ability to speak a language that is not one's own has become a vital skill, and the world's politics and economy ride on the ability of individuals to effectively communicate across cultural boundaries. The key to communication lies in successful expression of one's intended meaning, which is not always as easy as one would hope. All too often, students who have studied a foreign language for years will go to the country where that language is spoken only to find that despite years of study, they are still unable to express their meaning to native speakers. To make matters worse, the language learner may say a perfectly grammatical utterance that the native listener can understand, but the speaker might not know the normal social meaning communicated by such an utterance in the circumstance at hand in the target language culture .

Early in the twentieth century, language teaching focused primarily on grammar and translation of written text. The shift of focus to speaking competence in more recent years fostered the idea of communicative competence, that is, ability to speak a language proficiently. Canale and Swain in 1980 and 1983 respectively (cited in Omaggio Hadley, 1993, pp. 6-7) break down communicative competence into four parts: (1) linguistic competence, ability to use the linguistic code, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary correctly, (2) discourse competence, which is the ability to maintain cohesion between segments of discourse, (3) strategic competence, which is the learner's ability to repair communication breakdown and work around gaps in his or her knowledge of the target language, and finally (4) sociolinguistic competence, the learner's ability to use language appropriately in various social contexts. Canale and Swain's model for communicative competence serves to ensure

that non-linguistic aspects of language such as sociolinguistic competence would not be ignored in the understanding of communicative competence.

In a frame of social relations, non-native speakers want their status to be considered equal and therefore they are afraid to overstep social norms.(Kasper, 1990 p.1) The author claims that politeness needs to be viewed in a complex perspective of wide range of contexts - not only social, but also discoursal, cultural and historical (Kasper, 1990, p. 23). In addition to that, unmarked absence of politeness and marked opposite of rudeness point out those politeness forms and meanings mentioned by Kasper that indicate the fact that neither politeness nor rudeness can be considered independently by the virtue of the fact that they belong to a common continuum.

Comprehension of the politeness conception of the target language is one of the prerequisites of successful communication. Fraser (1990, p.219-236) refuses "normative perspective" of politeness, considering this category to be influenced by factors that are closely and specifically related to context and therefore it is not reasonable to form just a compilation of guidelines. Furthermore Fraser (1990, p. 219-236) advocates this phenomenon to be perceived as an interactive concept applicable to all cultures. Another point to be taken into account is reliability of the concept and as such Fraser (1990, p. 219-236) argues that conversational maxim point of view presented by Grice's Cooperative principle is not appropriate for the above-mentioned purpose because the maxims do not allow to assess influence in a more particular way.

And although, there is no definition to clearly identify the difference between linguistic and non-linguistic politeness, Fraser (1990, p. 219-236) is convinced about the fact that the responsible attitude of the speaker towards the hearer in the interaction influences the decision which linguistic form to use. This approach is shared in face-saving and conversational-contract perspectives and for this reason Fraser decided to compare and contrast these two conceptions. The finally chosen Brown and Levinson's face - saving view, however, needs to be tested to reach viable theory of politeness. One of Fraser's final remarks regarding the better understanding of the notion of politeness is that we must take into consideration "what factors influence a speaker's choice to be heard as polite." (Perspectives on politeness, 1990, 219-236)"

Another aspect to consider in respect to linguistic politeness is the choice of formal linguistic forms within the frame of alternatives with a different level of formality. It is the case of languages with honorifics, where politeness is based upon social conventions to conform to instead of the use of interactional strategies. This ability to distinguish and use these specific linguistic forms are designated as discernment. As a counterpart, Ide Sachiko in (Multilingua, 1989, p. 223, 245-246) mentions volitional use of verbal strategies given the face - saving concept of politeness. Ide mentions society with value-rational type of action or an affectual type of action of politeness. In the light of other possible types of linguistic politeness systems necessity to investigate arises.

With regard to the notion of sociolinguistic competences it is necessary to consider the social component in a form of social rules that determine on the one hand boundaries of acceptable behaviour and at the same time they show the other edge of politeness continuum. Lakoff (1989) mentions three types of politeness. Observance of politeness rules by interlocutor whether expected or not. The second case includes non-polite behaviour when compliance is not expected and a person does not follow the rules. The last manifestation belongs to

rudeness when politeness is expected but not expressed. Kasper (1990, p. 19) suggests to differentiate motivated and unmotivated rudeness which in general defines as transgression of "socially sanctioned norms of interaction" and is identified with a term of "politic behaviour" causing conflict on a social level. Unmotivated rudeness is caused by the absence of knowledge or misunderstanding designated as "pragmatic failure". Thomas (1983) Kasper (1990, p. 20) points out that unmotivated rudeness in children before the age of 8 as one of the examples is due to their undeveloped capacity to understand and produce "more polite hearer-oriented" speech acts. The opposite type of rudeness unequivocally represents speaker's intentions because of inability to cope with emotions and feelings "expressed as irony or tactic".

Influence of power and a distance on politeness as another aspect of its social component find reflection in apologising, complimenting, disapproval, refusing and requesting belonging to speech acts according Wolfson (Perspectives on Sociolinguistics and TESOL, 1989). Kasper corroborates prediction of Brown and Levinson that of cross-cultural distinction of the values and weightiness of the two above-mentioned elements.

Brown and Levinson's (1987, p. 311) conception of politeness is developed enough to provide a proper framework for sociolinguistic competences to be defined. The central term 'Face' represents 'the public self-image' of each competent person. It can be viewed as mental picture of personality that may be disrupted in a variety of ways during interactions and the particular interactant tends to attain integrity whenever it is eroded and maintains it inviolated. "Negative face" is the first of the two interrelated facets of the same notion. It is "the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction - i.e., to freedom of action and freedom from imposition. On the other hand, "positive face" accounts for the positive consistent self- image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self - image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by participants of interaction." (Brown, Levinson, 1987, p. 311) Maintaining face or public self-image is to be focused on and respected universally and on reciprocal basis. However, the content of face in terms of personal territories and their precise limits as well as the part of personality related to the public is diverse in each culture. (Brown, Levinson, 1987, p. 312)

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