



FORMS YOU ADDRESS IN FRENCH PROFESSIONAL ETIQUETTE

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Abstract: The article examines the features of the functioning of the address you in the corporate etiquette of French companies in the context of a polylogue of cultures of professional communication.

Key words: professional communication, national culture, corporate culture, status, communication distance, form of address, corporate values, corporate norms.

Traditionally, the choice in addressing you form marks the establishment and maintaining hierarchical relationships, reducing or increasing distance communication, expression of respect or disrespect for the interlocutor. The nuances of the relationship with the interlocutor, determined by this choice, have always been the subject of close attention from all segments of society. The very method of addressing an interlocutor in French was recorded independently lexical units - verbs tutoyer - address to you, vouvoyer - on you, and nouns tutoiement/vouvoiement. Dictionaries date the appearance of these verbs to the 14th century. [2]. Over the centuries, manuals for "Savoir vivre" have recorded traditions that succeeded each other, sometimes eradicating previously existing ones, sometimes adding new rules to those already accepted in society.

In French, it is the form of address to you that is called the form politeness (vous de politesse). The Encyclopedia of Diderot and D'Alembert emphasizes that the French language developed a special form of address based on synecdoche, allowing express respect for your interlocutor.

At the same time, it is noted that the form you can depending on the situation express both lesser respect and sincere attitude. Therefore it would be more correct to talk about the markedness/neutrality of the forms of address you [13. P.13]. The inaccuracy of the designation You as a form of politeness emphasizes logic explicit proposal to switch to "Tutoyons-nous!" and absurdity for the usual communicative situation of the sentence "Vouvoyons-nous!".

Such a proposal would indicate a communication failure and may turn out to be acceptable only when both interlocutors, accustomed to addressing each other in an informal situation, realize the need to switch on You are in an official setting.

Since the second half of the 20th century. French etiquette is focused on flexibility in choosing the form of address, which is completely determined by the given communicative situation. Thus, the manuals for "Savoir-vivre", citing the flexibility of norms and the lack of general rules, do not discuss the problem of choosing a form appeals you/you for the professional sphere. They are limited to only pointing out unacceptable situations [10. C. 126].

If, when addressing a male colleague, it is common to address you only by your surname "Dubois, apportez-mois ce dossier, s'il vous plaît", then a female colleague's surname is always preceded by Madame or Mademoiselle: "Madame Dubois, apportez-mois ce dossier,

s'il vous plaît." However, keeping your last name in circulation and addressing your male colleague on a personal level is no longer acceptable: - Dubois, apporte-mois ce dossier, s'il te plaît.

It is especially emphasized that the address Monsieur Dubois, often used in a professional context, is unacceptable for everyday communication. Today, often the normative requirement for choosing the you/you form is symmetry of address, regardless of which form is preferred, you or you. In certain communication situations, it is impolite to keep distance, continuing to address the interlocutor as you, and it is the form you that is the only acceptable [7. P. 253]. Addressing you will implement positive politeness strategies in accordance with the Brown & Levinson model, demonstrating not only a desire for cooperation, but also sympathy for the interlocutor [3. P. 156].

The field of professional communication has recently become much more more dynamic and multicultural. This area can be compared today to a kind of experimental laboratory in which processes are actively taking place neologization. Since most professional communication today takes place on the Internet, new, stylistically marked forms of communication appear, and, consequently, processes of codification of new ones take place. In the West, research into the pragmatic aspects of international professional communication has been going on for several decades (G. Fisher, E.T. Hall, J. Holmes, D. Hymes, H. Reed, G. Hofstede, R. Lewis, P. D'Iribarne, A. Wierzbicka), however, in Russia the experience of cross-cultural interaction in professional field is not so long-lasting, and research in this area concerns mainly English-language communication (T.V. Larina, I.A. Sternin, T.N. Persikova, V.A. Spivak, T.S. Samokhina, F.A. Kuzin, L. Visson, D.B. Gudkov, Yu.B. Kuzmenkova, O.A. Leontovich, A.V. Pavlovskaya). Questions related to comparison the peculiarities of communication in French and Russian business culture remain insufficiently studied.

One of the differences between French-speaking communication and English-speaking communication, with which representatives of Russian business culture face is a necessity choosing the form of addressing your interlocutor as "you" or "you". As noted by N.I. Formanovskaya, the appropriate use of the you/you form, adequate to the complex of situational and social-usual conditions, is determined by global rules communication, but at the same time specific to each national culture, since it is, first of all, a means of expressing social status [6. P. 79]. In the professional sphere of communication, status refers to one of the basic concepts, fixed, first of all, explicitly in the hierarchical structure of the organization. It is important to understand what traditions and norms determine the choice of the form of address to you or to you in Russian and French business cultures and what are the culturally determined differences in the understanding of these norms. Let us first dwell on the features of cross-cultural communication in French companies operating in the international market.

On the one hand, in the era of globalization, when the entire business world seemed would have to communicate in English, many French companies, having taken leading position in the international market, maintain the French language as the main language of professional communication (Renault, Michelin, L'Oréal, Auchan). But even those companies that have given preference in professional in the English language field (Total, BSG, AXA), they consider it necessary for their employees outside France to know the French language as an important factor in team consolidation and the formation of a corporate spirit (esprit de corps).



Consequently, in professional communication norms, stereotypes and ideas characteristic of three layers of culture will interact:

- French culture;
- corporate culture of the company;
- national culture of the employee.

For employees of these companies it would be quite reasonable to talk about polylogue of crops. However, for many companies the situation can become even more complicated if their field of activity is so unique that this profession has developed its own style of relationships, its own code professional honor. Professional culture understood this way will not be coincide with the corporate one, since in this situation we are talking about cultural self-identification in relation to a certain type of activity, and not the organization that is engaged in this activity [15. P. 53]. For such areas of activity as, for example, journalism or medicine, another, fourth cultural layer will appear in the polylogue of cultures, associated with professional culture.

Sociologist Geert Hofstede, who proposed criteria for analyzing cultural characteristics of different countries, formulated one of the possible definitions culture as a collective programming of thoughts that distinguishes one category of people from another [4. P. 50].

Based on this definition, it becomes clear that if three or four layers of culture interact in professional communication, this process of implicit programming becomes significantly more complicated. The French national stereotypes of ideas about status and leadership, about time, about methods of interaction are superimposed on stereotypes formed by corporate culture of each enterprise [4. C. 25; 9. P. 46]. In a corporate environment, the behavior of each employee becomes even more determined, since within the same national culture, different French companies consciously develop their own belief system (We are leaders in... / Our calling is... / The basis of our activities constitutes...), its value system (openness, speed of decision-making, relationships with clients). "Corporate culture develops over time like national or ethnic cultures and in the same way develops its values and behavioral norms" [5. P. 80].

Consequently, in various French companies, Russian employees, within the framework of a polylogue of cultures, are faced with different norms of behavior, explicit or implicit. And these norms will be realized by them through the prism of their national culture. That is, Russian employees will interpret corporate norms that determine the choice of addressing you or on you, based on the pragmatic meanings of you accepted in Russian culture and you. To judge how the choice between you and you is conditioned, having deep roots in French culture, are reflected in the corporate etiquette of French companies, you need to understand what the contribution of national French culture is to the polylogue of professional communication cultures.

The contribution of French culture to the polylogue of cultures British linguist and cross-cultural communication specialist R.D. Lewis, describing the peculiarities of the functioning and interaction of national business cultures in international business, begins the chapter on French business with the following observation: "The French people live in their own world, the center of which is France." Lewis goes on to talk about the unshakable French belief that it was their country that set the standards in many areas, in democracy, government and legislative administration, philosophy, science, and that other nations having their own norms, different from the French, "have to learn a lot, before these things are properly understood" [4. P. 281].



In order for other peoples to learn this correct understanding, in the middle of the 20th century. one of the directions of French foreign policy began the implementation of five-year plans to spread French cultural influence outside France - plan quinquennal de l'expansion de l'action culturelle à l'étranger [12. P. 318].

Such a high assessment of one's own culture in comparison with others, characteristic of France, suggests that French companies will be characterized to a significant degree by cultural ethnocentrism.

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