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УДК 811

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National Identity in Business Correspondence

Деловая переписка является одним из наиболее традиционных способов взаимодействия партнеров друг с другом на протяжении не одного столетия. Деловая переписка, отличительной чертой которой является крайняя необходимость в предельной содержательности, не может обойтись без соблюдения формальностей, которые отражают доброжелательное и уважительное отношение к получателю. Тем не менее данные формальности в разных странах различны, что обуславливается множеством факторов, от языка до менталитета населения. Целью данной работы является выяснение особенностей деловых писем на русском и английском языках, их содержания, различий между ними и причин этих отличий.

Ключевые слова: деловая переписка, менталитет, лингвистика, структура, этикет, сравнение

Business correspondence has been one of the most traditional ways of interaction between partners for centuries. Business correspondence with the extreme need for utmost content as its distinctive feature cannot do without observing formalities that reflect a friendly and respectful attitude towards the recipient. However, these formalities are different in different countries which are determined by many factors, from the language to the mentality of the nation. The purpose of this paper is to clarify the features of business correspondence in Russian and English, their content, the differences between them and the reasons for these differences.

Keywords: business correspondence, mentality, linguistics, structure, etiquette, comparison

Modern business communication is a widespread type of social communication represented in the fields of commercial, administrative, legal, economic, and diplomatic relations. Written forms of business communication in Russia and other countries go back to ancient times and are associated with developing one of the basic literary styles of a language that make up the system of functional styles, namely the official business one. Modern business communication is expressed in such types of business communication as documentation, business, and official correspondence.

Business correspondence (which also goes as official correspondence, business letters) is a written form of communication having legal significance. Communicators

in business correspondence are organizations of different forms of ownership, as well as individuals.

Business letters (correspondence between organizations) are one of the important types of speech interaction in modern business communication. Business letters are a subject of linguistic researches: they are considered from lexicological [5] and grammatical viewpoints [4].

It is worth noting that business correspondence is one of the numerous forms of interaction between business entities, government bodies, scientific communities, etc., individuals and official organizations. So we can conclude that a business letter must be informative, i.e. it must contain the information useful to the recipient presented in an extremely clear form and conveying its entire essence to the reader. Otherwise, there may be such a situation in which the recipient and the sender do not understand each other, as a result of such circumstances erroneous decisions may be made on certain issues.

The concept of the national identity is multifaceted and brings about some difficulties to combine all its elements in one definition. There are several approaches to defining this concept; in this paper the following interpretation is used as a basic one.

National identity is the sense of “the nation as a coherent unit displayed in unique traditions, culture, and language” [1, p. 603].

It should also be said about such an integral feature of any nation as mentality. Initially, the very concept of mentality appeared and was used exclusively in the context of historical scientific research, but with the development of academic ideas it became a common one in sociology, psychology and ultimately in philosophy. The modern Philosophical Encyclopedic Dictionary interprets mentality as a way of thinking, the general spiritual disposition of a person or group [2]. An alternative definition of mentality is a set of stereotypes of worldview, thinking, activities and behavior of both individuals and various communities of people which are based on a system of values manifested in culture, determined by natural, geographical, historical, and genetic factors of development [3, p. 52]. The mentality of a nation is reflected in its traditions, art, culture, economic activities, business correspondence being an integral part of its economy.

Speaking about the Russian mentality, it as everything around the world is a reflection of internal historical events and transformations that the Russian society has undergone. In addition, the geographical position of the Russian lands had a significant impact on the mentality of the Russians. The most popular opinion among the scientific community regarding the degree of influence of certain historical events on the mentality of the Russian population is the emphasis on a rather long regime of serfdom. It lasted for centuries and ended relatively late and divided the life of a peasant into two periods: “working for the master” and “working for himself”, which is reflected in the general attitude towards work and labor relations. That is, if participation in any labor activity means that the entire result obtained directly relates to

the individual, then his/ her attitude to the labor activity and its perception will be more likely to be positive than in the case when the results of labor become the property of another person. In the second case, there is a decrease both in worker's motivation and his/ her responsibility, as Karl Marx once wrote about.

Describing the mentality of the British it is necessary to note firstly the fundamental generally recognized quality of the people of Foggy Albion, their conservatism. This conservatism is expressed in their devotion to the English crown, traditional breakfasts and tea parties, left side traffic, etc. Conservatism is at the forefront of the English mentality since it determines the stability and continuity of other unique national characteristics preventing a possible quick abandonment of British traditions. Other important features of the English mentality are uncompromising politeness and restraint. Politeness of the British consists in the frequent use of words of apology, compliments, respect for the personal space, etc. Restraint, in turn, introduces certain boundaries in the discussion of certain topics (person's income or his/ her personal life), as well as in a rather cold behavior that excludes emotions. Other unique features of the English people include: a high level of self-control, which does not allow emotional outbursts and impulsive actions; love for their homes and home comfort; love of gardening and pets; developed sense of specific humor [7].

Comparing the two mentalities described above the main conclusion is the predominance of "aristocratic" traits in the behavior of the British, i.e. comprehensive politeness with restraint, and general conservatism of the English people, surpass the mentality of the Russian in these indicators, who due to many changing factors (history, geography, climate) cannot be distinguished by clearly expressed fundamental qualities.

Driving to business correspondence and taking into consideration the above information we can assume that English business letters have been quite similar to each other for more than one century, and have characteristic features that are inherent to the entire English people: politeness, restraint, conservatism. Whereas the 100 years old model of a Russian business letter is quite different from a modern document having a lesser degree of polite phrases, and possibly a greater degree of vagueness in content.

As an illustrative example of business correspondence we can consider the letter from I. V. Stalin to W. Churchill with a request to accept gifts on the day of departure from Moscow, October 19, 1944, and W. Churchill's response letter to I. V. Stalin with gratitude for the gifts [4].

The first thing that should be noted when reading this correspondence is the pronounced laconicism of I. V. Stalin's letter in comparison with W. Churchill's response letter. This brevity is expressed in two aspects: firstly, the length of Stalin's letter is approximately 4 times shorter than the length of the response, and secondly, there are significant differences in the number of compliments and other "polite phrases". Stalin's letter sticks to the point, it is written with distinctive restraint and

brevity, while the response letter is characterized by a large number of epithets: “memorable visit”, “warm welcome”, “pleasant talks”, “glorious sunshine”. In addition there are noticeable differences in the salutations: the rather dry and official salutation “Dear Mr. Churchill” is contrasted with the other: “My dear Marshal Stalin.” At the end of the letter I. V. Stalin signs his letter with restraint and without any epithets, while W. Churchill declares himself as “Your friend and war-time comrade.” If we analyze the general meaning of the both letters, the general difference in the “moods” of the two approaches to the letter writing becomes obvious, which is expressed in the significant predominance of politeness, a certain affectation, and aristocracy of W. Churchill’s letter. All these epithets, as mentioned above, relate to the mentality of the British. Whereas Stalin’s letter is relatively dry, specific and brief, which is also characteristic of the more “severe” mentality of the Russian person.

In this particular example we can notice the influence of the personal qualities of the authors of the letters on their form and content. However, when talking about business correspondence, it should be understood that the authors of the letter should abstract as much as possible from their personal feelings and thoughts, and focus on the specific subject discussed in the correspondence expressing ideas in the most impersonal fashion. In addition, it is worth noting the historical importance of the personalities of the authors of the above correspondence and their social status at that time. It would be natural to assume that both of them had a highly developed ability to conduct business correspondence and we can observe in this example an illustration of excellent dialogue through the letter exchange. Thus we can conclude that we have an extremely evident example of business correspondence which confirms the theses put forward about the relationship between the mentality of a nation, national identity and the characteristics of business correspondence conducted by representatives of different cultures.

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УДК 821.134.2

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Жанровое своеобразие испанского театра XVII–XX вв.

В статье рассматриваются языковые реалии, которые составляют основу испанского театра в период XVIII–XX вв. Исследуются различные виды театров на материале произведений таких драматургов, как Исидоро Майкес, Х. Бенавенте, М. де Унамуно и Х. Грау, Р. Валье-Инклан, Р. де ла Крус и др. Раскрывается жанровое своеобразие испанской драматургии конца XIX в. в контексте творчества писателей-модернистов.

Ключевые слова: условный театр, коммерческий театр, национальный театр Фаланги, метатеатр, сайнет, тонадилля, сарсуэла

Изначально испанские театры были созданы в так называемом гостиничном дворике – «*corral, patio donde se representaban comedias*» [5], образованном соединением задних фасадов нескольких домов. Окна были словно театральные ложи, а прямо перед сценой стояли ряды скамей, отведенные для знати. В то же время большинство обычных зрителей теснилось внутри двора. Помост, служивший сценой, всегда был довольно широким. Балкон служил своего рода башней, окном или даже горным уступом.

Начало спектакля сопровождалось пением под звуки гитары, затем следовал пролог, который называли «*loa, en el teatro clásico español, prólogo, introito, discurso o diálogo al principio de la función, de carácter laudatorio*» [4]. После пролога разворачивалась сама комедия, наполненная страстными переживаниями и динамичным развитием событий. В перерывах между актами, которые всем известны как антракты, были представлены интермедии – «*intermedias, espacio de tiempo durante el cual queda interrumpida la ejecución de un espectáculo o programación*», сайнеты «*sainetes, piezas dramáticas en un acto, de carácter popular y burlesco, que se representaban como intermedio o al final de una función*» [4]. Спектакль заканчивался мохигангой – всеобщим танцем в масках: «*mojiganga, obra teatral muy breve, de carácter cómico, en la que participan figuras ridículas y extravagantes, y que antiguamente se representaba en los entreactos o al finalizar el tercer acto de las comedias*» [4]. Все зрители встают и аплодируют, однако есть специ-