

## LINGUISTIC ASPECT OF INTERCULTURAL CONFLICT COMMUNICATION

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*The article reveals the linguistic aspect of intercultural conflict communication with the help of a specially prepared linguistic experiment on "Interlingual homonyms" (conducted with English- and Ukrainian-speaking students of Vasyl' Stus Donetsk National University), as well as through scientific observation (interesting conflict-generating communication situations during the educational process, the subject of which was the contradictory use of certain morphological forms and phraseological units, were identified). Intercultural communication is positioned as a process of verbal and non-verbal communication between people belonging to different national and cultural communities. Conflict in intercultural communication (i.e., intercultural conflict communication) is presented as a cultural phenomenon, the content of which is determined by cultural factors, and the process of emergence and development of conflicts is regulated by cultural norms, which under certain circumstances lead to the emergence of special cultural rituals that affect the process of conflict interaction between participants. The analysis of the linguistic aspect of intercultural conflict communication is to identify verbal and non-verbal markers of cultural information in order to achieve communicative interaction between representatives of different cultures and prevent the emergence of communicative conflicts. Specific examples demonstrate that intercultural conflict communication can be realized at several linguistic levels: lexical, phraseological, morphological, and syntactic. It is proved that the most effective way to regulate intercultural conflict communication is to develop intercultural communication competence in its real and potential participants as the ability to adequately use culturally significant language tools, concepts and behavioral stereotypes.*

**Key words:** *communicative conflict, English language, intercultural communicative competence, intercultural conflict communication, interlingual homonym, linguistic aspect, Ukrainian language.*

### **Гарбера Ірина. Лінгвістичний аспект міжкультурної конфліктної комунікації**

*У статті розкрито лінгвістичний аспект міжкультурної конфліктної комунікації за допомогою спеціально підготовленого лінгвістичного експерименту на тему «Міжмовні омоніми» (проведеного англійсько- та українськомовними студентами Донецького національного університету імені Василя Стуса), а також шляхом наукового спостереження (виокремлено цікаві конфліктогенні комунікативні ситуації під час навчального процесу, предметом яких стало суперечливе вживання певних морфологічних форм і фразеологічних одиниць). Міжкультурну комунікацію позиціоновано як процес вербального та невербального спілкування між людьми, які належать до різних національних і культурних спільнот. Конфлікт під час міжкультурної комунікації (тобто міжкультурну конфліктну комунікацію) репрезентовано як культурний феномен, зміст якого визначується культурними чинниками, а процес виникнення й розвитку конфліктів регульований культурними нормами, які за певних обставин призводять до появи особливих культурних ритуалів, що впливають на процес конфліктної взаємодії між учасниками. Аналіз лінгвістичного аспекту міжкультурної конфліктної комунікації полягає у виявленні вербальних і невербальних маркерів культурної інформації з метою досягнення комунікативної взаємодії представників різних культур і запобігання появи комунікативних конфліктів. На конкретних прикладах продемонстровано, що міжкультурна конфліктна комунікація здатна реалізовуватися на кількох мовних рівнях – лексичному, фразеологічному, морфологічному, синтаксичному. Доведено, що найефективніший спосіб регулювати міжкультурну конфліктну комунікацію – формування у її реальних і потенційних учасників міжкультурної комунікативної компетенції як здатності адекватно використовувати культурно значущі мовні засоби, концепти й поведінкові стереотипи.*

**Ключові слова:** *комунікативний конфлікт, англійська мова, міжкультурна комунікативна компетенція, міжкультурна конфліктна комунікація, міжмовний омонім, лінгвістичний аспект, українська мова.*

**Introduction.** The problem of intercultural conflict communication is especially relevant today in connection with the active process of globalization and the need to form new connections in various spheres of practical activity: educational, scientific, business, economic, private, etc. Many people (particularly students) encounter problems of intercultural misunderstanding due to differences in culturally specific communication norms. This misunderstanding leads not only to uncertainty and fear of communication fails, but also often to the emergence of intercultural communication conflicts.

The problem of intercultural conflict communication is the subject of research in many humanities: philosophy, anthropology, history, ethnography, psychology, sociology,

communication theory, linguistics. And we believe that the linguistic aspect of intercultural communication is one of the most important, which can be influenced in order to increase its effectiveness, avoiding potential misunderstandings and communicative conflicts [1].

Intercultural communication is the process of verbal and non-verbal communication between people belonging to different national and cultural communities. It is always an interpersonal communication in which the cultural environment in which the communicators were formed is very important [2]. At the same time, it is important to explore ways to avoid cultural misunderstandings in communication with foreigners. Linguistic aspect of intercultural communication consists in identifying verbal and non-verbal

markers of cultural information in order to achieve communicative cooperation of representatives of different cultures and prevent communicative conflict. Conflict is a cultural phenomenon, the content of which is determined by cultural factors, and the process of emergence and development of conflicts is regulated by cultural norms, which under certain circumstances lead to the emergence of special cultural rituals that affect the process of conflict interaction between participants [3].

**Materials and methods.** We want to share our experience of capturing sometimes partially simulated, sometimes real intercultural conflict communication. Our Department of General and Applied Linguistics and Slavic Philology of Vasyl' Stus Donetsk National University works with foreign students of the preparatory department, to whom we teach Ukrainian as a foreign language.

In order to represent the potential conflict of intercultural communication, we conducted a small linguistic experiment (used in our study as the main method, along with the additional method of scientific observation).

**Discussion.** The topic of the linguistic experiment: Interlingual homonyms (English – Ukrainian). Respondents: 10 English-speaking and 10 Ukrainian-speaking students, whose conversational level of the Ukrainian and English languages, is A1-A2. Linguistic experiment algorithm: 1) the student receives a list of 16 interlingual homonyms, giving each a brief interpretation; 2) based on his/her own understanding of the interlingual homonym, the student suggests a possible context of its use.

As a result, we recorded the following interesting cases of potentially conflict intercultural communication caused by ignorance of the semantic content of a homonym in the language the student is studying (see tables 1–16):

Table 1

Interlingual homonym ADEPT	
Meaning in English	Meaning in Ukrainian
'expert'	'fan'
Conflictogenic contextual use of the Ukr. Lexeme "адепт" from an English speaker	Conflictogenic contextual use of the Eng. lexeme "adept" from a Ukrainian speaker
Ти не адепт кулінарії, бо не масш диплом про це.	Don't talk to her, she's an adept of hard rock, tattoos and parties.

Table 2

Interlingual homonym ARTIST	
Meaning in English	Meaning in Ukrainian
'painter'	'performer'
Conflictogenic contextual use of the Ukr. lexeme "артист" from an English speaker	Conflictogenic contextual use of the Eng. lexeme "artist" from a Ukrainian speaker
Я бачив картини Малевича, але не люблю цього артиста.	I think the most famous artists in America now are Taylor Swift, Ariana Grande, Selena Gomez.

Table 3

Interlingual homonym BEHEMOTH	
Meaning in English	Meaning in Ukrainian
'monster'	'hippo'
Conflictogenic contextual use of the Ukr. lexeme "бегемот" from an English speaker	Conflictogenic contextual use of the Eng. lexeme "behemoth" from a Ukrainian speaker
У сучасній політиці є дуже багато бегемотів.	I think all behemoths should live in nature and be free.

Table 4

Interlingual homonym BRA	
Meaning in English	Meaning in Ukrainian
'underwear'	'sconce'
Conflictogenic contextual use of the Ukr. lexeme "бра" from an English speaker	Conflictogenic contextual use of the Eng. lexeme "bra" from a Ukrainian speaker
Не показуй свої бра нікому! Це інтимно!	I hung beautiful white bras throughout the bedroom.

Table 5

Interlingual homonym BUCKET	
Meaning in English	Meaning in Ukrainian
'container'	'bouquet'
Conflictogenic contextual use of the Ukr. lexeme "букет" from an English speaker	Conflictogenic contextual use of the Eng. lexeme "bucket" from a Ukrainian speaker
Візьму твій букет, щоб помити підлогу!	I'll give my mother a bucket of roses for her birthday – I think she'll like it.

Table 6

Interlingual homonym CABINET	
Meaning in English	Meaning in Ukrainian
'furniture'	'office'
Conflictogenic contextual use of the Ukr. lexeme "кабінет" from an English speaker	Conflictogenic contextual use of the Eng. lexeme "cabinet" from a Ukrainian speaker
Сховай в цей кабінет всі непотрібні речі, сміття.	You're the boss, you have to sit and work in the cabinet and not stick out.

Table 7

Interlingual homonym FOCUS	
Meaning in English	Meaning in Ukrainian
'attention'	'trick'
Conflictogenic contextual use of the Ukr. lexeme "фокус" from an English speaker	Conflictogenic contextual use of the Eng. lexeme "focus" from a Ukrainian speaker
Я відповідальний, тому завжди показую фокус на роботі.	Focus isn't needed in education, it's inappropriate.

Table 8

Interlingual homonym INSULT	
Meaning in English	Meaning in Ukrainian
'rude remark'	'stroke'
Conflictogenic contextual use of the Ukr. lexeme "інсульт" from an English speaker	Conflictogenic contextual use of the Eng. lexeme "insult" from a Ukrainian speaker
Я хороший друг, рідко роблю друзям інсульт.	Don't do that! You don't want me to have an insult.

Table 9

Interlingual homonym INVALID	
Meaning in English	Meaning in Ukrainian
'not acceptable'	'disabled person'
Conflictogenic contextual use of the Ukr. lexeme "інвалід" from an English speaker	Conflictogenic contextual use of the Eng. lexeme "invalid" from a Ukrainian speaker
Ти ведеш себе неправильно, як інвалід.	Invalid is forever, for life.

Table 10

Interlingual homonym LUNATIC	
Meaning in English	Meaning in Ukrainian
'foolish or crazy person'	'sleepwalker'
Conflictogenic contextual use of the Ukr. lexeme "лунатик" from an English speaker	Conflictogenic contextual use of the Eng. lexeme "lunatic" from a Ukrainian speaker
Лунатик має бути окремо від психічно здорових людей.	My sister is a lunatic since childhood, but it's even cute.

Table 11

Interlingual homonym MARSH	
Meaning in English	Meaning in Ukrainian
'wet land'	'march'
Conflictogenic contextual use of the Ukr. lexeme "марш" from an English speaker	Conflictogenic contextual use of the Eng. lexeme "marsh" from a Ukrainian speaker
За лісом починається марш, я не хочу втопитися, тому не піду туди.	There was a marsh of gymnasts at the City Day parade.

Table 12

Interlingual homonym MILITIA	
Meaning in English	Meaning in Ukrainian
'military force'	'police'
Conflictogenic contextual use of the Ukr. lexeme "міліція" from an English speaker	Conflictogenic contextual use of the Eng. lexeme "militia" from a Ukrainian speaker
Міліція не робить порядок, вона теж воює.	Previously, the police in Ukraine was a militia.

Table 13

Interlingual homonym PATHETIC	
Meaning in English	Meaning in Ukrainian
'lack of respect'	'grand'
Conflictogenic contextual use of the Ukr. lexeme "патетичний" from an English speaker	Conflictogenic contextual use of the Eng. lexeme "pathetic" from a Ukrainian speaker
Не кричи так, бо виглядаєш патетичною.	I adore the work of this pathetic Ukrainian poet.

Table 14

Interlingual homonym SCHOLAR	
Meaning in English	Meaning in Ukrainian
'specialist'	'pupil'
Conflictogenic contextual use of the Ukr. lexeme "школяр" from an English speaker	Conflictogenic contextual use of the Eng. lexeme "scholar" from a Ukrainian speaker
Мій батько – справжній школяр медицини, працює вже двадцять років.	I don't like tutoring scholars, they aren't yet very responsible and diligent.

Table 15

Interlingual homonym SERVANT	
Meaning in English	Meaning in Ukrainian
'assistant'	'cupboard'
Conflictogenic contextual use of the Ukr. lexeme "сервант" from an English speaker	Conflictogenic contextual use of the Eng. lexeme "servant" from a Ukrainian speaker
Я буду багато заробляти, але не найматиму серванта.	Put this dish directly on the servant.

Table 16

Interlingual homonym TROOP	
Meaning in English	Meaning in Ukrainian
'soldier'	'corpse'
Conflictogenic contextual use of the Ukr. lexeme "групи" from an English speaker	Conflictogenic contextual use of the Eng. lexeme "troops" from a Ukrainian speaker
Вашу країну охороняють групи.	Troops are of no use in war.

It should be noted that the conflictogenic of intercultural communication is not limited to the purely lexical level of the language being studied. For example, we recorded potentially conflict communicative situations representing the morphological level of language.

Conflictogenic contextual use of the pronoun "ти / ви" ("you") from an English speaker:

Student: *Привіт, Лідія! Ти – мій новий викладач?*

Teacher: *Так, Алекс, я – **ваш** новий викладач. Звертайтеся до мене на «**ви**»!*

Conflictogenic contextual use of the pronoun "anybody" (means "somebody") from a Ukrainian speaker:

*I'm very happy for her! She'll definitely become **anybody**!*

No less interest is caused by the problem of idioms (as precisely those figurative language means that most vividly express national and cultural specificity [4]). So, for example, students, just beginning to study the language, try to operate in the process of communication with idioms known to them, trying to establish contact with the interlocutor, make a compliment, etc., but fail due to the inability to choose an adequate equivalent.

Below you can see several interesting communicative situations we recorded, which could potentially lead to conflict due to the incorrect use of idioms.

English-speaking students:

*Ого! Вона одягнена, щоб убити!* ("dressed to kill" means 'beautifully dressed')

*Я бажаю тобі бути коробкою з птахами!* ("be a box of birds" means 'very happy')

Ukrainian-speaking students:

*You know a lot of interesting historical facts! A real **shot sparrow**!*

*You are so beautiful that I can **drink water from your face**!*

**Results.** We can conclude that the linguistic aspect of intercultural communication is one of the priorities, by effectively influencing it, we can avoid potentially conflict communicative situations.

It is the difference between cultural-linguistic concepts and cultural-linguistic standards that is often the root cause

of intercultural conflict communication, since for most people the native cultural-linguistic standard is perceived as the only possible and correct one. Since interlocutors are far from always being able and willing to give up their cultural-linguistic biases related to their cultural-linguistic standards, mutual misunderstanding arises, leading to conflictual intercultural communication. Besides, it can also arise due to insufficient cultural preparedness of communicators, even with all their desire to go towards each other. The solution to this complex issue is the formation of intercultural communicative competence, which is not just an extension of linguistic communicative competence as such, but a fundamental construction of it on an extra-linguistic basis.

It means that a person should build his/her communication with other people, natives of other cultures, based on the knowledge of the specifics of these cultures. The purpose of this approach to the formation of communicative competence is to prevent possible misunderstandings, discrimination and the emergence of cultural and linguistic stereotypes and conflicts.

In the future we plan to thoroughly investigate the main conflictogenic language markers at phonetic, lexical, morphological, syntactic and discursive levels in the process of intercultural Ukrainian-English interpersonal communication, developing in parallel strategies for their constructive use in order to prevent communicative conflict.

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