

DOI: 10.7596/taksad.v9i2.2632

Citation: Khairullina, D. (2020). The Use of English, Russian and Tatar Etiquette Words and Expressions in Speech Situations of Greeting and Farewell. *Journal of History Culture and Art Research*, 9(2), 329-336. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.7596/taksad.v9i2.2632>

The Use of English, Russian and Tatar Etiquette Words and Expressions in Speech Situations of Greeting and Farewell

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Abstract

In the epoch of intercultural communication, professional foreign language proficiency and a high level of communicants' competence are of great significance. One of the aspects of communicative competence is the possession of skills of speech etiquette formulae application. In the present paper, the author compares some etiquette forms in English, Russian, and Tatar and discusses the use of etiquette formulae expressed in words and phrases corresponding to different communicative situations. The author came to the conclusion that despite the fact that communicative situations are universal, people's verbal behavior is characterized by national and cultural peculiarities. The choice of etiquette formulae may be conditioned by factors of demographic nature, contextual details, exact words of the actual conversations, habits, traditions, etc. The main communicative and relevant features of the Russian and Tatar languages are special attention and interest in the interlocutor, broad awareness, sincerity, and excessive curiosity. Relevant property of the English communication is individualism, non-interference to others' affairs, observance of privacy, positiveness, and phatic communication. British verbosity is merely a politeness strategy, that is, a demonstration of respect and attention to others, sincerity is not a necessary condition there. The choice of Tatar etiquette words and expressions in speech situations depends on the influence of religion and religious beliefs.

Keywords: Speech etiquette, Verbal behavior, Greetings, Farewell, English, Russian, Tatar.

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Introduction

One of the advantages of verbal behavior is the observance of the rules of speech etiquette, i.e. the ability to speak politely. Speech should be built correctly according to etiquette rules. There are certain speech formulae in every language to be used in different communicative situations. To use these rules in a foreign language properly means to know and understand the history and culture, traditions, way of life and the mentality of foreign people.

Speech etiquette is an integral part of etiquette, the rules of speech behavior depicted in the system of communicative formulas, recognized by society and used to establish verbal contact of interlocutors, giving the conversation an expressive tonality in accordance with their social parts and role position in formal and informal circumstances.

The objective of the present paper is to find out the similarities and differences in speech etiquette formulae of the British, Russian, and Tatars (in the speech situations of greeting and farewell).

Verbal behavior and speech etiquette seem to be the focus of many linguistic and cultural studies (Prokhorov, 2002; Sternin, 2001, 2002, 2003; Formanovskaya, 1987; Ovchinnikov, 2002; Gorodetskaya, 2009; Brown, 1987; Grice, 1975; Skinner, 1957; Leech, 1983; Deutschmann, 2003; etc.). Research papers performed by members of the Department of General Linguistics and Stylistics and the Center for Communication Studies of the Voronezh State University play a major role in systematic description of communicative behavior of different cultures. National features of verbal behavior are studied both on the material of individual languages and in their comparison: Russian and English (Brosnahan, 1998), Russian and Finnish (Sternin & Lysakova, 2001), Russian and French (Sternin & Yermakov, 2002; Fedorov, 2005), Russian and Chinese (Sternin, 2002; Liu Wei Jin, 2002), Russian and German (Sternin & Eckert, 2002), etc. A number of papers have been written on age communicative behavior (Sternin & Sedov, 2003; Chernyshova, 2004; Grischuk, 2003), gender communicative behavior (Gette, 2004; Belyaeva, 2002; Dobrynina, 2000) and professional communicative behavior (Salomatina, 2002; Bagryanskaya, 2004; Mruts, 1997). At present verbal behavior is investigated in conversational discourse (Dorofeeva, 2005), on the material of modern films (Terekhov, 2011), literary texts (Firsova, 2003; Sviridov, 2004), proverbs and sayings (Kugotova, 2013), etc.

The novelty of the present research lies in the fact that etiquette formulae of the three unrelated languages haven't been subject to detailed comparative linguistic analysis yet. The choice of languages is due to the fact that English is one of the most common and studied languages in the world, and Russian and Tatar are the official languages of Russia and Tatarstan (the region we are from). Therefore, issues of national-cultural identity of speech etiquette of these nations are of great interest to us and require further studies.

Materials and Methods

The paper presents the results of comparison of verbal behavior of the three nations within the context of a situational model, that is, communicative spheres and standard communicative situations (greetings and farewell).

The author used theoretical methods such as analysis, comparison and generalization, systematization and interpretation of facts when working with scientific sources on the problem of research; the descriptive method in the characterization of certain communicative situations; the comparative

method in comparing verbal behavior of speakers of different languages.

The research is divided into three stages:

1. Search and analysis. At this stage, the state of this problem was explored within the theory. As a result, the subject, methodology, and methods of the research were determined.
2. Data collection. The materials of the study were personal observations and observations of linguistic specialists working in this field, as well as examples selected from different types of authentic print, video and audio materials, fiction, linguo-cultural and translation dictionaries in the English, Russian and Tatar languages.
3. Making conclusions. It is connected with the systematization and processing of research results.

Results and Discussion

The situation of greeting in Russian is represented by the following expressions: *Здравствуй(-те)* (Hello), *Доброе утро* (Good morning), *Добрый день* (Good afternoon), *Добрый вечер* (Good evening), used more in formal communication or when referring to an unfamiliar person. Addressing a large audience, Russians may say: *Приветствую вас!* (I am greeting you!), *Позвольте (разрешите) вас поприветствовать!* (Let me greet you!), *Мое почтение* (My respects / My admiration), *Добро пожаловать* (You are welcome!), etc. More informal forms of Russian greetings are *Привет* (Hi), *Салют* (Salute), *Здорово* (Hi), *Кого я вижу!* (Who do I see?), *Сколько лет, сколько зим* (I haven't seen you for ages), etc. According to N.I. Formanovskaya and V.E. Goldin, "здорово" can be attributed to the purely masculine communication [Formanovskaya, 1987; Goldin, 1983]. The form "салют", which is almost out of use, is also known as a formula of saying goodbye. Young people can use *Хай* (borrowed from English *Hi*) under the influence of the English language. Sometimes you can hear *Легко на помине* (Speak of the devil), but this phrase contains a bit negative meaning, and is used when someone you were just talking about shows up.

The British greet more often than Russians do. English greetings depend mainly on the situation the speakers are, and on their relationship they have with the people they deal. Gender differences in greetings are not characteristic of English.

The most popular form of greeting in English (especially when greeting close friends) is *Hi*. As for *Hello*, it's relatively recent in its general use, starting with the invention of the phone. Another form of greeting is *Hey* or *Hey man* which is informal and used by young people. Although *hi* is suitable for use in any random situation, *hey* is only for people who have already met. If you say *hey* to a stranger, it might be confusing for this person because he or she will try to remember when you met before! You can also add the word "man" to the end of "hey" expression when greeting men. *Hey* can also be used to get someone's attention.

In official situations (business meetings, official receptions and conferences), greetings such as *Good Morning* (until 12 noon), *Good afternoon* (from 12 to 5 p.m.), and *Good evening* (from 5 to 11 p.m.) are used.

If you use them in casual situations it can cause a negative reaction. Less formal variations are their shortened forms *Morning*, *Afternoon*, *Evening*, which are used in informal or neutral communication

and are often accompanied by the name of the addressee: *Morning, Nick; Afternoon, Mary; Evening, Merlin, etc.*

Another greeting phrase *Good day* is used very seldom and sounds too formal or old fashioned. It can be used as long as it's still day, not just afternoon until five or six o'clock in the evening. The same expression is applicable when saying goodbye as a wish to have a good day. All these greetings represent an abbreviation of the now obsolete *God give you a good day (afternoon, etc.)*, which dates from about 1200 [Ammer 1997].

In the situation of English greetings, elements of *small talk* are also observed: *Lovely day, isn't it?* to continue the conversation about weather; or *Nice to see you!, Glad to hear you!*, etc., used with friends, colleagues or family members you have not seen for a long time, or if you meet them unexpectedly. The casual greetings *How are you?, How are you getting on?, How are you keeping?, How is life?, What is new?* can either accompany greetings or replace them. Answers to these questions will be brief and positive: *Fine, Well, All right*, regardless of the actual state of the speaker, which indicates the semantic emptiness of the questions. The greeting *How do you do?* is VERY formal, and quite unusual, but it may still be used by some older people or when getting acquainted. The correct answer is *"I'm doing well / fine"* or, oddly enough *"How do you do?"* right back as an answer. If you use it every day, you are more likely to cause surprise and bewilderment of your English-speaking partner.

As for Tatar greetings, on the one hand, they are similar to Russian ones. So in the Tatar language, the neutral way of greeting is *Исәнме(-сез)* (Hello), corresponding to Russian *Здравствуй(-те)*, both combined with two forms of the 2nd person singular pronoun *ты / син* (you) and *вы / сез* (you). In official communication Tatars use *Хәерле иртә* (good morning), *Хәерле көн* (good afternoon), *Хәерле кич* (good evening). Contrary to the English language these expressions can't be shortened. The greeting *Сәлам* (hello) is popular in colloquial speech; young people say *Салют* (salute) or *Привет* (hello) under the influence of the Russian language. The older generation (mainly men) use the old Muslim greeting *Әссәләмәгәләйкүм*, translated from Arabic as "peace to you" and non-equivalent in relation to Russian or English. A typical response to this greeting is *Вагәләйкумәссәләм* (in translation "and peace to you"), expressing mutual respect to the partner. These forms of greetings denote a lot: peace stands for "safety", "well-being", "health" and "prosperity".

Tatar greetings are similar to English too: the expressions *Нухәл?* (How are you?), *Саумы(-сыз)?* (lit. "Are you healthy?"), *Исәнлек-саулыкмы?* (lit. "How is your health?") can accompany the greeting, as well as replace it, without requiring any answers about the speaker's affairs and health. A popular reply to the question *Хәлләр(-егез) ничек?* (How are you?) is *Аллага шөкер* (lit. "Glory be to Allah (God)"), expressing the power of God and once again demonstrating the influence of Islam on verbal behavior of people.

As for Russian equivalents of English *How are you? Как дела?, Что нового?, Как жизнь?, Как поживаешь(-ете)?*, they always imply the need to answer them. The reply is often brief and neutral. Y. Richmond noted that Russians usually answer "How are you?" "Ничего" (Nothing) that means "nothing bad has happened" (translated into English as *not too bad*) [Richmond, 1995: 41] or "Нормально" (Normal(ly)). Too optimistic answers, like English *Great (Великолепно), Perfect*

(Замечательно), and *Fantastic* (Фантастически) are not common in Russian. When friends or people who know each other very well are communicating, this question is understood literally and is accompanied by detailed information, which makes the Russian greeting ceremony much longer than the English one. It is important to note that if conversations and questions about personal life are not acceptable for the British, for Russians it is a way of being closer, a means of expressing interest in interlocutor's life. At the same time, a Russian person will not just sincerely tell everything about himself, but also will be able to receive information about third parties. Questions such as: *А что слышно о N?* (What do you hear about N?) or *А ты не знаешь, как дела у N?* (Don't you know how N is getting on?) [Sternin, 2003: 121] are typical in greeting situations in Russian linguistic culture. By the way, excessive curiosity and the desire for broad awareness are also characteristic of Tatars, especially representatives of small villages.

The situation of FAREWELL is represented in Russian by neutral words *До свидания* (Goodbye) and *Прощай(-те)* (Farewell (to you)), the first being used for parting for a while (*До свидания* literally means that your meeting is postponed until you see each other again), and the second – for parting forever or for a very long time (*Прощай(-те)* literally means in Russian that you are asking for forgiveness for all that you possibly did wrong to that person). There are also alternative formulae of saying goodbye depending on the formality or informality of the situation, status and role positions of interlocutors, religion, etc.: *До встречи* (See you), *До скорой встречи* (See you soon), *Всего доброго* (All the best), *Всего хорошего* (All the best), *С Богом* (lit. "with God", in English *God be with you!*), etc. Such words as *Всего* (All the best), *Счастливо* (Good luck), and *Салют* (Salute) fall gradually out of use. In the speech of the older generation you can meet *Позвольте попрощаться* (lit. "Let me say goodbye" or It's time I was saying goodbye), *Разрешите откланяться* (lit. "May I leave?" or May I say goodbye?), *Счастливо оставаться* (Goodbye), etc. Young and middle-aged people use: *Пока* (a friendly form of saying goodbye, which literally means "until the current moment"), *Будь(-те) здоров(-ы)* (lit. "be healthy", in English *Take care*), *Давай* (literally it can be translated as "give" or "let's" or "come on", but in fact it means "bye" and is often used in colloquial speech instead of "bye") or the words borrowed from European languages: *Чао* (Chao), *Гудбай* (from English *Goodbye*), *Бай* (from English *Bye*), etc.

In Tatar, the most common phrase to say goodbye is *Сау бул(-ыгыз)* (goodbye), which is literally translated as "be healthy". Here we can note the similarity between the farewell formula in the Tatar language and the greeting formula in the Russian language: by Russian greeting *Здравствуй(-те)* and Tatar farewell *Сау бул(-ыгыз)* you actually wish a person good health. You can also hear the following words: *Хуш(-ыгыз)* (Farewell), *Аллага тапшырдык* (God be with you), and when parting forever *Бәхил бул(-ыгыз)* (Farewell). If you part for a certain period or expect you will see the other person again soon, the most common phrases are *Кичкә кадәр* (lit. "till the evening), *Иртәгәгә кадәр* (See you tomorrow), *Хуш хәзергә* (Bye), *Хәзергә* (Bye), *Яңа очрашуларга кадәр* (lit. "till we meet again"), etc. In everyday speech you can use *Хуш иттек* (lit. "We've said goodbye"), *Исэнлектә* (lit. "being healthy") and a popular *Пока* (Bye) borrowed from the Russian language. Farewell can be accompanied by different wishes: *Хәерле тән* (good night), *Онытып бетермәгез* (remember), *Кергәләгез* (drop in to see us), *Әниегезгә салам* (say hello to your mum), etc.

In English, the most stylistically neutral expression is *Goodbye*, etymologically derived from *God be with you*. The other common ways of saying goodbye are *Bye* (suitable for friends and family, as

well as colleagues and business partners), *Bye-Bye* (a sweet and childish expression commonly used when talking with children or occasionally between adults who try to be flirtatious or cute), and *so long* (used between friends or in informal situations). When parting at night you can say *Good night* instead of “goodbye”, while the Russian phrase *Спокойной ночи* (good night) is used only as a wish to someone before going to bed. If you’re saying goodbye to someone you might not see for long time, say *farewell*, which is close to the Russian word *Прощай(-те)* and means a wish of happiness or welfare at parting. But some people say that this word is too archaic, too British and never actually used by them in real life. In English it’s very important to end a conversation politely, that’s why use *Have a nice day, Have a good day, Good luck* as wish addressed to your partner to have all the best; *See you later, See you soon, Later, Catch you later* as hope to meet soon; *It was nice to see you!, I was glad to meet you!* – as assessment of the meeting; *Say hi (hello) to Mark, Remember me to your grandmother* – as attention to the third persons; *Take care, Look after yourself* – as care about partner; *Come again soon, Call in any time* – as invitation or offer, etc.

Results and Conclusion

1. Despite the fact that communicative situations are universal, people’s verbal behavior is characterized by national and cultural peculiarities.
2. The main communicative and relevant features of the Russian and Tatar languages are special attention and interest in the interlocutor, broad awareness, sincerity and excessive curiosity, which is reflected in the questions and detailed answers on health, work, personal affairs, etc. Relevant property of the English communication is individualism, non-interference to others’ affairs, observance of privacy, etc.
3. All the three nations try to be polite in the speech situations of greeting and farewell. But there are different ways of expressing a polite attitude towards the interlocutor due to the peculiarities of the languages. Thus, the Russian and Tatar languages are characterized by an individual approach to communication which depends on age, gender, status of interlocutors, formality or informality of the situation, etc. Politeness towards women, people older by age or status is practically absent in the English culture.
4. Russian greetings tend to gender difference, Tatar greetings depend on gender and age. Gender and age of the interlocutors are not relevant to the British for the choice of greetings.
5. In the English and Tatar languages, wishes of health are actively used in communicative situations of greetings and farewell. The basis of most Tatar wishes is an appeal to divine power.
6. Some features in Tatar verbal behavior of the older generation are explained by the influence of Islam, and the speech of the younger generation is influenced by the Russian language. Some etiquette words and expressions in Russian came from the influence of the English language.
10. A striking feature of the English communicative behavior is positiveness and phatic communication, that is, communication for the sake of communication or conversation about nothing, while this British verbosity is merely a politeness strategy, that is, a demonstration of respect and attention to others, sincerity is not a necessary condition there.

Thus, the present paper offers a contrastive analysis of English, Russian and Tatar etiquette words and expressions in speech situations of greeting and farewell and shows the influence of demographic nature (gender, age, education, and occupation), contextual details (where, when, who speaks to whom, and why) and culture on speech act performance.

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