

Conclusion. The research underscores the critical role of artificial intelligence (AI) in transforming educational practices, particularly in the context of foreign language teaching. In an era characterized by digitalization and globalization, it is evident that educational systems must adapt to meet the evolving needs of students from generations Alpha and Z, who demand more innovative and engaging learning experiences. This study has revealed both similarities and differences in the use of AI among foreign language educators in Belarus and developed countries. While there is a shared belief that AI serves as a complement to traditional teaching methods. Educators in developed countries demonstrate a higher frequency of AI usage (50 % compared to 35 % in Belarus) and a more favorable view of its influence on student engagement. In conclusion, educational stakeholders in Belarus should more fully embrace AI technologies by learning from successful strategies in developed countries. This shift can enhance teaching methods and student motivation, ensuring education remains relevant in the digital age. Future efforts should focus on professional development and addressing specific challenges within the Belarusian context.

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V. A. Pintusova, I. V. Piniuta

Institution of Education “Baranavichy State University”, Baranavichy, the Republic of Belarus

BELARUSIAN, BRITISH AND JAPANESE STUDENT SUBCULTURES

Introduction. Politeness is a fundamental aspect of human interaction that helps maintain harmonious relationships. In intercultural communication, especially in educational settings, understanding politeness conventions is crucial to foster positive interactions. With increasing globalization and student exchange programs between different countries and online communications, recognizing cultural differences in politeness is able to enhance cross-cultural understanding among students and educators, prevent conflicts arising from different interpretations of behaviour, strengthen the national identity by highlighting cultural uniqueness while promoting mutual respect.

This research is particularly relevant as the politeness norms of Belarusian, British and Japanese students in school settings have not been thoroughly compared in existing studies. Some aspects, such as how cultural values influence students' use of positive and negative politeness strategies, remain unclear.

The objectives of the study are: (1) to analyse the concept of politeness and reveal positive and negative politeness strategies; (2) to compare politeness strategies in Belarusian, British, and Japanese school environments; (3) to identify cultural differences in the ways students interact with peers and teachers. In this study, we used literature review, survey and content analysis as research methods.

Main part. The concept of positive face refers to the inherent desire of every speaker to have their needs recognized and valued by others during verbal interactions. Positive politeness, which is based on approach strategies, enhances the addressee's face by signaling the speaker's approval of the hearer's desires. As noted by Brown and Levinson, positive politeness serves as a corrective measure aimed at the addressee's positive face, reflecting their enduring wish for their wants to be regarded as worthy. This is underscored by the idea that “positive politeness is redress directed to the addressee's positive face, his perennial desire that his wants (or the actions/acquisitions/values resulting from them) should be thought of as desirable. The strategies of positive politeness involve three broad mechanisms: claiming common ground, conveying that the speaker and hearer are cooperators, and fulfilling the hearer's wants for some underlying goals like requests, questions, etc. [1]. Conversely, the theoretical concept of negative face pertains to the desire of every competent speaker to act without interference from others. Negative politeness, which is fundamentally avoidance-oriented, involves recognizing and respecting the addressee's negative face desires, ensuring that the speaker does not infringe upon the hearer's autonomy. Some of the ways we use negative politeness are: avoiding presumptions, by hedging, that is making your intention ambiguous; minimizing the imposition; showing deference; showing that you don't want to impinge on people; impersonalising yourself and your listener by avoiding any mention of either, etc. In other words, negative politeness is avoiding face-threatening behaviour (dogmatism, direct orders), expressing regret, apologizing for face-threatening behaviour (correction, contradiction, prohibitions), using hedges, etc. [2, p. 51].

In this study we hypothesized that: (a) Japanese students will use negative politeness strategies (formal appeals, indirect requests, avoiding direct refusals) more frequently; (b) British students will demonstrate a balance of positive and negative politeness by using formal constructions in formal situations and friendly formulas in informal ones; (c) Belarusians will apply both strategies, but with the predominance of positive politeness in communication with peers (direct requests, emotional reactions), preserving negative politeness in communication with teachers.

The study was done in a few stages. In the first stage, aimed to obtain the data about student subcultures, we analysed the opinions about Japanese students and school environment in five videos [3—7] Based on the obtained data, we prepared a list of questions to survey British (15 responders) and Belarusian (15 responders) students. In the sets of responses, we included both strategies of positive and negative politeness. The survey was done via Google Forms using the following questions:

- 1) How do you respond when a teacher praises you in front of the class?
 - a) Smile and say “Thank you”;
 - b) Look down and say “Not at all”;
 - c) Say “I couldn’t do it without everyone’s help”;
 - d) Avoid eye contact and stay silent.
- 2) How do you ask a classmate for help?
 - a) “Could you please help me with this?”;
 - b) “You’re so smart, can you help me out?”;
 - c) “I’d really appreciate your help if you have time”;
 - d) “You’re amazing at this—could you show me how to do it?”.
- 3) If you accidentally bump into someone in the hall, what do you do?
 - a) Say “Sorry” and move on;
 - b) Say “I’m so sorry, are you okay?”;
 - c) Say “Excuse me, I didn’t mean to bump into you”;
 - d) Say “I’m really sorry — let me help you with your things”.
- 4) If a classmate makes a mistake, how do you correct them?
 - a) Say, “I think you might have made a mistake here”;
 - b) Say, “Don’t worry, everyone makes mistakes!”;
 - c) You’re doing great, but I noticed a small mistake — let’s fix it together!;
 - d) Avoid correcting them not to embarrass them.
- 5) How do you address your teachers?
 - a) By their title and last name (e.g., Mr. Smith);
 - b) By a respectful title like “Sir” or “Madam”;
 - c) By a nickname if they allow it;
 - d) By name and patronymic.
- 6) If you’re running late to class, how do you explain it to your teacher?
 - a) Say, “I’m so sorry for being late—it won’t happen again”;
 - b) Say, “I had a rough morning, but I’m here now!”;
 - c) Go straight to the seat without saying anything;
 - d) Say, “I’m here now and ready to learn!”.
- 7) If you’re asked to do something you don’t want to do, how do you respond?
 - a) Say, “I’m sorry, but I can’t do that right now”;
 - b) Say, “I’d love to help, but I’m really busy at the moment”;
 - c) Say, “I’m not sure I’m the best person for this, but thanks for asking”;
 - d) Say, “I wish I could, but I’m already swamped with work”.
- 8) How do you ask a question in class if you don’t understand something?
 - a) Raise your hand and say, “Could you please explain that again?”;
 - b) Say, “I’m a bit confused — can you help me understand it?”;
 - c) Wait until after class to ask the teacher privately;
 - d) Say, “I didn’t get that — can you go over it one more time?”.
- 9) How do you keep eye contact when speaking to a teacher?
 - a) Avoid direct eye contact to show deference;
 - b) Keep eye contact and smile to show friendliness;
 - c) Keep eye contact only when the teacher is speaking;
 - d) Keep eye contact to build a connection and show engagement.
- 10) How does politeness affect relationships in school?
 - a) It creates a positive and friendly atmosphere;
 - b) It avoids conflicts and misunderstandings;
 - c) It makes people feel included and valued;
 - d) It can sometimes feel fake or insincere.

In the second stage of research, we compared the obtained data. We found out that the Japanese students showed the most pronounced preference for negative politeness (70 %), which is fully consistent with cultural norms emphasizing the importance of social harmony and the cultural value of harmony (“wa”), respect for hierarchy and avoidance of confrontation. Their communicative strategies were characterized by frequent use of indirect language, ritualized apologies, avoidance of direct refusals and corrections.

Meanwhile, the British students showed a balanced use of both strategies: 57 % of negative politeness strategies and 42 % of positive politeness strategies. They reflected a combination of formality in formal situations, friendliness in informal communication, characteristic British understatement (“I might be wrong, but...”), ritualized forms of politeness (standardized phrases “please/thank you”).

The Belarusian pupils used both strategies, but with a noticeable preponderance of positive politeness (58 % negative politeness strategies vs. 41 % positive politeness strategies). It was manifested in more direct and emotional communication with peers, maintaining elements of respect in communication with teachers, less ritualization compared to the Japanese and Britons.

Conclusion. The hypothesis was proved: the higher is the value of hierarchy (Japan > Belarus > Britain), the more often the strategies of negative politeness are used. The findings may be useful for the developing intercultural communication syllabi in school; designing learning materials; optimizing interaction in international school projects; preventing intercultural conflicts caused by different understandings of politeness.

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V. I. Tkalenko, T. A. Rogozhinskaya

Institution of Education "Baranavichy State University", Baranavichy, the Republic of Belarus

FEATURES OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING SERVICES

Introduction. The need to use different language services in teaching foreign languages is explained by the need for diversity and flexibility of the teaching process itself. Each person has their own unique learning style, and the use of multiple platforms allows for individual needs of learners, promotes improvement of speaking and writing skills, and helps to familiarize with the peculiarities of the culture of the language being studied. It also develops motivation and interest in learning. We find services “Duolingo”, “Memrise” and “HelloTalk” productive to be used in teaching foreign languages as they take into account all the above-mentioned features.

Main part. In order to determine the advantages and disadvantages of mentioned above foreign language learning services, we conducted a comparative analysis of these learning services according to the following parameters: teaching methods, available languages, course structure, lesson format, depth of study, adaptability, cost, community, additional functions.

“Duolingo” is a popular app that offers users a variety of lesson formats, including listening, writing practice, translations, speaking exercises and grammar tasks. This approach allows not only to master the language, but also to maintain interest in learning. The application supports a variety of languages, allowing users to choose the one they are interested in. The opportunity to use both on mobile devices and web platforms allows you to study anytime and anywhere. In addition, the application reminds users of the need to exercise every day, which helps to maintain the regularity of classes. However, “Duolingo” has its drawbacks. The study of grammar and speaking practice may not be thorough enough, and users may face difficulties in pronunciation that require additional practice. Some language courses may be less complete than others, which limits the possibilities of study. The application also offers memorizing certain phrases, which may hinder free expression of thoughts in the future. For experienced users who speak the language at a high level, the application may not provide new calls [1].

“Memrise” is an online platform and mobile application designed for learning foreign languages with cards that help you improve vocabulary. It is enough to choose a ready-made course and follow it, which makes the learning process accessible and comfortable. It is available in more than 20 languages, including English, Spanish, French and many others, allowing users to choose the language of their interest. The course structure is organized in levels that users pass as they progress. The depth of learning varies depending on the course, but the application focuses on the elementary level as well which is suitable for beginners. The Memrise community actively participates in the learning process, allowing users to share experiences, create their own courses and share resources. Additional features such as achievements and class reminders help to maintain motivation and regularity of learning. It should be noted that the number of languages available in “Memrise” is less than some other applications have. In addition, some features are only available in a paid version and the application may be limited to users with advanced level of knowledge. It is also worth considering that there are few exercises for listening and pronunciation [2].

“HelloTalk” is a unique service that allows you to find and communicate with native speakers, making the language learning process more engaging. It is available in more than 100 languages, including English, Spanish, Chinese and many others, which allows every user to find the language they want to learn. The course structure is not traditional; the application does not offer fixed lessons, but instead focuses on interaction with language speakers, which creates a flexible and dynamic educational environment. The format of the lessons includes text messages, voice memos and video calls, allowing users to choose a convenient way to communicate. The depth of study depends on the level of involvement of the user and the quality of communication with the partner. This allows you to adapt to individual needs and goals of language learning. The basic features of the application are free, but the Plus subscription provides additional features: no ads, translation and error correction. The HelloTalk community actively interacts, offering users the opportunity to share experiences, find new friends and learn from each other. Additional features, such as a built-in dictionary and the ability to translate messages, help users better understand the language and improve skills [3].