ОБЩЕЕ ЯЗЫКОЗНАНИЕ

INTERDISCOURSE COMMUNICATION:
THE LINGUISTIC RELATIVITY PERSPECTIVE

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The paper concerns the phenomenon of interdiscourse communication and views it from the perspective of Linguistic Relativity Theory. The goal of the paper is to analyse the linguistic behaviour of non-native language users, who apply the English language for instrumental purposes in interaction, which establishes in multinational discourse among interactants having different cultural backgrounds. The paper reports on some of the research results that were acquired in the period from 2011 to 2013 during the ERASMUS Intensive Programme project *Cross-Cultural Competence and Interaction*. The focus of the study was on analysing the linguistic and pragmatic strategies prioritised by the tertiary level Latvian and Lithuanian interactants for whom the English language served as the instrument of communication in the multinational discourse community, which was constructed of students from Latvia, Lithuania and Turkey. The research findings reveal that non-native language users having the cultural background of the Baltic States construct their own mode of interaction related to the linguistic behaviour, in which the interactants apply clarity and directness as the prevailing strategies of interdiscourse communication.

Key words: interdiscourse communication, linguistic relativity, pragmalinguistic failure, and miscommunication.

Linguistic behaviour is social behaviour. It was the German philosopher and ethnographer Alexander von Humbolt (1769—1859) who stated that a language cannot be taught; one can only create conditions for the language acquisition and use to take place.

From the present time perspective, we have to admit that a language is an expression of both culture and individuality of the language user. It is the language user who perceives the world through the language and who sees culture as a classified and comprehensive means of providing information.

Language is viewed as a linguistic, pragmatic and social practice. Thus, linguistic behaviour and cultural awareness of the language users become one of the core issues that affect language application in situational, cultural and interpersonal contexts that manifest the interactants' linguistic and pragmatic competences this way.

To characterise current interdiscourse communication, it should be noted that appropriate and relevant language application is not viewed only as a cognitive process any more. Interdiscourse communication is considered to be a social representation of the language use where foreign language users construct and negotiate their identities via the pragmatic norms and linguistic principles constructed by a particular discourse community. With regard to the English language use worldwide, marked present-time tendencies reveal that interdiscourse communication is not constructed only by native language users. Vice versa, it is constructed by pragmatically knowledgeable communication partners who demonstrate their linguistic and pragmatic competences in appropriate situational and cultural contexts.

Taking into account the above stated, the goal of this paper is to examine the linguo-pragmatic strategies that tend to be applied by the language users having the cultural background of the Baltic States. They use the English language as a lingua-franca to communicate in multinational settings. To reach the research goal, the following research question was posed:

What linguistic and pragmatic strategies underlying interdiscourse communication should be considered to avoid plausible reasons for cross-cultural miscommunication?

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In retrospect, the beginning of the 20th century was rich in sociolinguistic research. The first proponent of the idea that a language has a decisive impact on culture was Edward Sapir (1884—1939), a distinguished American anthropological linguist. His seminal work *Language* (1921) made the first attempt to reveal the interrelation between the content of *language* and *culture*. Sapir defined culture as 'the socially inherited assemblage of practices and beliefs that determine the texture of our lives' [8. P. 3]. He claimed that 'language has an even greater universality than religion or art' (ibid.). According to Sapir, the history of culture and the history of language move along parallel lines. Sapir's contributions were much related to the analysis of the importance of *word order* and *affixation* in the English language grammar. Besides, he studied how a language determines thought and perception of its speakers.

Benjamin Lee Whorf (1897—1941), a linguist and anthropologist, who was Sapir's student and follower, developed further Sapir's research. He argued that a language shapes the language user's world-views and behaviour towards others. It was Whorf who voiced the idea that 'people who use languages with very different grammars are led by these grammars to typically different observations' [13. P. 20]. Whorf called this view the *linguistic relativity principle* (known also as the *Sapir-Whorf hypothesis*).

It can be admitted that just as time, space and mass can be defined only in terms of a system of relationships, human knowledge similarly arises only in relation to the semantic and structural possibilities of natural languages. Besides, the contemporary theoretical and empirical studies of the display of the foreign language users' linguistic and pragmatic competences assert that non-native language users' target language proficiency means their ability to present their linguistic, pragmatic, sociolinguistic competences in relevant verbal performance and in appropriate contextual situations [5].

Therefore, in view of the increasing role of the English language being applied as an instrument of interdiscourse communication, it is evident that the target language users have to go beyond gaining only the linguistic competence; they have to develop a critical understanding of linguo-pragmatic markers of interdiscourse communication to avoid a potential for miscommunication.

The communication styles established in international contexts show that native language users shift the language style or vary it depending on:

— the context of language use;

— the speaker's sociolinguistic identity.

The research conducted on the linguistic and pragmatic strategies prioritised by non-native users when the communication is established in different social and cultural contexts demonstrates that the language users apply overly formal language [6]. Moreover, 'they seem to transfer their native language strategies onto the target language, which leads to pragmatic failure' (ibid: 63). In addition, non-native language learners have to be encouraged to observe how native-like language users apply the language in order to recognize how these interactions between language and society influence communication.

From the perspective of psycholinguistics, the acquisition of a foreign language is a diachronic process: it covers many years. The target language users are not born with innate foreign language abilities that help them to make sense of the alien linguistic environment. Psycholinguists have learned much more about the comprehension of foreign language than about its production. Many theoretical contributions which admit that foreign language application has four stages: conceptualisation, formulation, articulation and self-monitoring are considered [7].

Besides, it is commonly accepted that non-native users of the English language frequently commit language errors because they do not possess a full linguistic competence of the target language. They often seem to be unable to self-correct the errors made or/and self-monitor their utterances by guessing the correct language form and its appropriate use in context. Thus, considering the principles underlying the Linguistic Relativity Theory, it has to be noted that each language creates its own cognitive world because of its linguistic uniqueness, e.g. the Latvian or Lithuanian language users think differently from English language speakers because the languages are very different.

As to the latest contributions observed in the area of linguistic relativity, for example, Silberstein distinguishes linguistic relativity from linguistic determinism [9]. From the perspective of linguistic relativity, each individual language has a unique relationship to cognition and perception; language determinism holds a view that human language is related to thought.

The current research conducted on cross-cultural miscommunication studies communicative failures occasioned by the fact that seemingly equivalent languages can function differently in different cultures [11]. As a result, miscommunication can stem from different interrelated causes, i.e. from linguistic, societal or cognitive processes. Therefore, it is not always easy to determine whether a communicative failure is of a pragmalinguistic or sociopragmatic nature.

Thomas distinguishes between what she calls **pragmalinguistic** and **sociopragmatic** failure [12]. According to her, pragmalinguistic failure occurs when speakers fail to convey their idea not because they might have a limited word stock but because the pragmatic **force** of the message is misunderstood. It usually happens when target language users directly translate a message/text from their mother tongue into the target language without knowing that the communicative conventions of the target language are quite different. The scholar claims that 'an inappropriate transfer of a direct speech act in which a native speaker would use an off-record strategy or indirect assessment of the linguistic statement (e.g. the possible ways of expressing obligation using *must, ought to, should, have to*) represents the most frequent cases of pragmalinguistic failure' [1. P. 216]. Thomas holds a view that 'occurrences of involuntarily produced pragmatically inappropriate behaviour produce pragmatic failure' [12. P. 91]. In other words, pragmalinguistic failure is the language user's inability to understand what is meant by what is said.

As regards sociopragmatic failure, it stems from cross-culturally different perceptions of what constitutes appropriate linguistic behaviour. Providing that the predicted outcomes of linguistic nature, such as grammatical errors and pragmalinguistic failures are caused by ignoring fixed linguistic conventions, sociopragmatic failures are more difficult to redress: they originate from different societal values and cross-culturally different criteria for assessing contextual parameters. As a result, the boundaries between the two dimensions, i.e. pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failure, quite often appear to be indistinguishable.

In terms of interdiscourse communication, for example, unawareness of the speech acts of complimenting and compliment responses, the speech acts of requests especially when a request functions even as a prohibition may cause communicative failures. Research conducted on complimenting and compliment responses is among the richest in cross-cultural pragmatics (Holmes and Brown, 1987; Wolfson, 1984; Miles, 1994). Miles (1994) offers an excellent study on compliments and compliment responses. Taking into account his categories of compliment responses, the compliment, for example, *You know so much about linguistics!* could have the following responses:

— acceptance, e.g. *Thanks!*

— agreement, e.g. *I think so, too!*

— disagreement, e.g. *No, it was not really my best presentation/performance!*

— self-praise avoidance, e.g. *Anyone can know this!*

— return compliment, e.g. *You know much, too!*

— comment history, e.g. *My parents are professors of linguistics.*

Cultural preferences for compliment responses are different. The above-mentioned theoretical writings state, for example, that the American preference is to accept compliments. For non-native speakers of English who live in the Baltics, in Latvia, for example, acceptance or self-praise or returning a compliment might sound strange. Considering the terminology used by Miles (1994), the target language users

in Latvia, for example, tend to respond to compliments by a 'history comment' or 'disagreement':

A. *You look great today!*

B. *Yesterday I looked better!* (history comment).

A. *The soup is delicious!*

B. *No, it is not really the best soup I have ever made!* (disagreement).

The fact that the **semantic meaning** (i.e. the literal meaning of the utterance) and the **pragmatic meaning** (i.e. the intended meaning of the utterance) may not correspond is the central problem for the communicative failure or misunderstanding.

The speech act of requests is a very difficult area to master for non-native language users: especially, it refers to the requests or even prohibitions that are expressed in the form of thanks, for example, *Thank you for not smoking here!* (in a taxi); *Thank you for not stepping on the grass!* (in a park).

It is increasingly clear that the grammatical and/or lexical competence of the target language isolated from the socio-cultural context of its use may lead to the production of linguistic curiosities which, in their turn, may result in the failure of achieving the communicative purposes of interaction. Therefore, the awareness of the use of speech acts in the target language can facilitate gaining native-like linguo-pragmatic competence. Cohen states that it may take many years to master the appropriate application of speech acts in relevant situational, social, and cultural contexts [2]. He argues that five steps should be made:

— assessing differences in cross-cultural communication;

— focusing on creating and presenting dialogues, which highlight sociocultural factors affecting speech acts;

— evaluating the situations that might require a knowledge of positive/negative face;

— turn-taking and maintaining the floor;

— the uses of silence.

Besides, the scholar notes that the target language users have to be introduced not only to the classification of speech acts, their linguo-pragmatic meaning and application in the target language, but also to the distinction between the direct and indirect speech acts. According to Yule a direct speech act exhibits the direct relationship existing between the sentence structure and the communicative function of an utterance [14]. An indirect speech act implies indirect relationship between the linguistic form and the communicative function of an utterance. Yule points out the idea that the contrast between a direct and indirect illocution is identified by the related contrasts between on-record and off-record utterances. To put it another way, off-record utterances are addressed indirectly, while on-record utterances are addressed directly. Therefore, for instance, to avoid offence or to express disagreement in a polite way, according to the norms of the English language, mitigating linguistic devices, such as on-record forms followed by *please*, or the grammatical forms expressing a request *would you/could you* and alike are applied. It should be emphasised that the awareness of on-record and

off-record statement forms is vital for the target language users to avoid communicative misunderstandings or even social interaction/transaction breakdowns, especially, if the interlocutors belong to different cultures. According to Spencer-Oatey (2000), pragma-linguistic failure can be produced across at least three pragmatic domains, often intersecting one another:

— *illocution*: an utterance is perceived as face threatening due to the strategy the speaker employs, which might be either too direct or too indirect;

— *style*: an utterance is perceived as inappropriate as a result of the choice of lexis, syntax, terms of address, ritualised formulae, honorific language, etc;

— *discourse:* utterances are noticed because of an unexpected topic was chosen, or because of an unexpected variation in the procedural aspects of interchange, such as turn-taking, inclusion or exclusion of people present and alike [10. P. 19—20].

Regarding cases of miscommunication, we assume that they might occur as a consequence of the target language users' inadequate linguistic, sociolinguistic or pragmatic competence, where:

— by inadequate linguistic competence, we mean the cases when speakers transfer from their mother tongue syntactic structures or lexis that generate semantic ambiguity (e.g. ambiguous choices on phonologic, morphologic, syntactic levels, inappropriate selection of lexis that convey different semantic nuances, and alike);

— by inadequate sociopragmatic competence, we mean the cases when speakers fail to conform with the expected sociolinguistic norms; they transfer from their native language constructions, lexis or formulae, which are perceived as unnatural or inappropriate in the foreign language (e.g. unsuitable selection of speech acts, misunderstanding of culture-specific societal values, selection of taboo topic, and alike);

— by inappropriate pragmatic competence, we mean the cases when speakers operate relying exclusively on the pragmatic knowledge they hold, i.e. 'their vision of the world that contains culture-specific frames of mind that involve an existing disposition to think and to behave in a particular way' [15. P. 166—167].

As a consequence, miscommunication can arise either through a breakdown in communication, or in the cases when the meaning of an utterance is interpreted by the interactants in a way that was not intended by the message provider. Johnston (1985) contends that 'the interpretation of a message is essentially constructed by the perceiver; the message sent is not necessarily the message received' [5. P. 325]. Miscommunication can happen among people from the same social and cultural background; however, interaction becomes more difficult and the opportunity for miscommunication multiplies in case interactants come from different cultural backgrounds. House mentions several causes for miscommunication:

— inadequate perception;

— inappropriate comprehension;

— insufficient knowledge;

— uncooperativeness;

— production difficulties [4. P. 146].

In accord with House's statements, inadequate perception can be viewed as a hearer-based type of misunderstanding. Inadequate perception can be easily repaired, for example, through a request for repetition or clarification. As regards inappropriate comprehension, it can be located at various linguistic levels. This form of misunderstanding is much more difficult to resolve because the linguistic proficiency of a language user is involved. As language proficiency comprises and displays the knowledge of semantics, syntax and lexis, a lack of proficiency appears to be an obstacle for both the production and the understanding of the message.

Without any doubt, English is currently the most common language for communication between people worldwide. This supremacy of English gives native speakers of the language a considerable advantage. However, it comes with a responsibility not to abuse that advantage. It also gives a rise to a potential disadvantage that foreign speakers of English may sometimes demonstrate the linguistic superiority over non-native language users. It can result in accompanying bias towards an Anglo-Saxon cultural style, especially in business. Native speakers of English are sometimes consciously aware of this inequality. They exploit it skilfully to their own advantage. They do so, for example, by domineering in international communication, where national interests are often set against interlocutors' goals. More often, they are less conscious of the so-called 'language gap'. In particular, when native speakers deal with an apparently competent foreign language speaker of English, they proceed with widening this language gap unintentionally. Both actions give rise to resentment, the one justly, the other due to a misunderstanding on both sides.

The above discussion, in a way, might explain the communicative level difficulties or even potential for communication breakdowns, which non-native language users might experience when they attempt to succeed in getting the message across in interaction with the representatives of other cultures.

Possibly, two approaches should be considered:

— a modified form of English used by native speakers in interaction with foreign speakers of English;

— focus shifted from acquiring purely linguistic competence to gaining pragmalinguistic competence where pragmalinguistics puts emphasis on the sources of conveying communicative acts, such as directness and indirectness, linguistic forms used to mitigate unpleasant information, interpretation of implied meaning in social, situational or cultural aspects of language use.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

At an empirical level, the following research methodology was designed to approach the study from a qualitative research perspective. The investigation reported embodies a multi-case study research type done at a macro-level analysis of language use in contextual situations. Consistent with the qualitative-interpretative methodology, the study employed two research instruments:

1. Observational studies in order to investigate what linguistic and pragmatic strategies are prioritised by the non-native language users in specified situational and cultural contexts.

2. Role-play interaction as a communicative strategy to examine what linguistic and pragmatic choices are made by interlocutors, the project participants, in the foreign language setting to avoid pragmalinguistic failure or potential for communication breakdown.

RESEARCH DISCUSSION

As the theoretical framework of the present work was established considering the Linguistic Relativity Theory and other contributions related to the theory, the empirical part of the study focuses on the examining the reasons that explain why language users representing different cultures not only communicate in different ways, but they also perceive, and construct their realities differently. This, resulted in the following presupposition: words, concepts and notions, even those understood and translated with no apparent difficulty, offer the non-native language user only an illusion of expressing the idea clearly, completely and precisely. The communicative intentions of the native/non-native language users' interaction often seem to be hardly met.

It might seem paradoxical and provocative to assert, but it is sometimes more important *to be understood* in relevant interdiscourse communication rather than to understand every single idea, inasmuch as *understanding* depends on the mindset of the language user as well as on the object to be understood. What mere culture insiders say is often difficult to be understood by culture outsiders unless the non-native language users possess definite amount of the target language background, pragmalinguistic competences included. Thus, the native language being applied and being our main asset is the main cultural differentiator across different linguistic areas. In interdiscourse communication, our native language is usually ethnocentrically ignored because the spread of the English language has increasingly started to serve local (e.g. immigration), cultural and commercial needs.

In certain countries in which English has no official status, e.g. in Latvia and in Lithuania, it is the current situation that predisposes the English language dominance over the native languages in the areas where English is used as an instrument for interdiscourse communication (e.g. certain discourse communities, such as science, economics and alike). Besides, as regards the linguistic strategies applied in interdiscourse communication between native and non-native interlocutors, native language users do not always **implicitly** mean what they **explicitly** say. Therefore, the target language users are expected to possess the linguistic strategies of checking and confirming communication accuracy, especially when the stakes are high, e.g. contractual involvement, orders, and money transfers.

Above all, a part of the language that cannot be translated always exists. There is culture-specific meaning, which can be hardly conveyed in another language as it reflects the tendencies and values of the core culture itself (e.g. metaphors and idioms, professionalisms, specialist language, jargon). Consequently, the awareness of the linguistic instruments of how to avoid misunderstandings in intercultural contexts usually depends on advance preparation, and, unfortunately, it cannot be acquired in a short span

of time. Thus, an effort to help the other counterpart to understand one's own culture seems to be a prerequisite for gaining success in cross-cultural communication.

At the same time, language tends to shape the language users' world-views. Language contains pre-shaped images of the language users' experiences and expectations; language influences culture, shapes it and thereby exerts a powerful and far-reaching impact on the language users' behaviour. The structure of language has a significant impact on the perception and categorization of images; the appropriateness, accuracy and proficiency of the language applied reflect the culture of interlocutors.

The present study of interdiscourse communication being established among the interactants having different cultural backgrounds, demonstrates that the communication mechanism incorporates many elements, such as:

— exchange of information that is primarily verbal, but is selectively supported by the use of some paralinguistic mechanisms, body-language for example;

— entering into communication that integrates feedback mechanisms to reach the clarity, conciseness, relevance of messages, for example the linguistic strategies of explaining, clarifying requesting, complaining and alike,

— taking into account the pragmatic factors that establish communication, such as context of communication, who says what, when and where communication occurs.

To understand why the Latvian and Lithuanian interlocutors prioritize such communicative strategies as directness and clarity, we took into account Hall's 'low-high context culture' dichotomy for the purposes of this study [3]. It helped us understand why the representatives of the two countries being located in the North-East of Europe seem to refer to the mid-low context cultures and, thus can be characterised as a deal-focused and reserved culture affinity zones. Besides, Latvia and Lithuania being the members of the Baltic countries represent their own cultural values, traditions and, undeniably, their own styles and ways of communication.

Next, to examine how the interactants belonging to the above-mentioned context-cultures select the communicative strategies in the specified interdiscourse communication context, we analysed:

— how clarity and directness are applied as strategies of communication,

— how problem-solving and decision-making issues are addressed,

— which factors of pragmalinguistic nature might influence interaction in multi-national settings.

First, the analysis of the acquired research results reveals that *clarity* and *directness* are valued highly not only in communication but also in establishing relationships. The desire for directness and clarity appears to be particularly evident in the communication style in which 'beating about the bush' and being vague or ambiguous could likely be the reason for uneasiness or even for misunderstandings. According to the project participants, indirectness if selected as a strategy of communication was regarded as a trait of dishonesty, which might even result in a relative lack of respect.

The Latvians and Lithuanians were shy to disclose personal details to people whom they did not know very well. However, when it came to stating facts and/or issuing criticism, the Latvians and Lithuanians were generally more direct, which gave

them a reputation of being blatant 'know it alls'. The Latvians and Lithuanians were in favour of having great amount of detailed information, which, to a certain extent, seemed to give much rise to ambiguity in communication. The discussions that turned out as *confrontational* in their nature appeared to be one of the ways in which the Latvians and Lithuanians reflected their understanding of the world.

Second, as regards the communicative strategies selected to approach *problem solving* and *decision-making* issues**,** the Latvian and Lithuanian origin interlocutors were not in favour of taking 'approximate steps'. Their problem solving processes started with organizing teams to gather the necessary data and facts, followed by detailed discussions in order to come to a sufficient understanding of the nature of the problem. Long and often theoretical discussions were a trial for the project participants of the Turkish origin, especially when they were quite eager to solve problems as soon as they arose. Under these circumstances, a tendency of the Latvian and Lithuanian project participants to communicate less outside a formal team or group appeared, perhaps due to the implicit assumption that the decisions made at group meetings are binding.

Another issue that caused difficulties in interdiscourse communication with the Latvian and Lithuanian interactants was their 'love' for specialization. They were not in favour of making quick decisions; they preferred not to give quick responses to the issues raised before having consulted with their group or teammates, or tutors, for example.

Objectivity in a Latvian and Lithuanian communication style meant sticking to business; however, subjective opinions voiced or clear-cut decisions offered might be severely attacked, which could be often viewed as a forthright attack on a person: a person and an opinion are frequently considered to be one entity in Latvia, for example.

Third, the *pragmalinguistic factors* that can influence interaction in a multinational setting and that could result in miscommunication could be explained by the fact that the Latvian and Lithuanian origin interlocutors often take communication literally; they often miss cues and; thus, they do not perceive the intended meaning of the message. Small talk played a less significant role in building relationships than it does, for example, in Britain. The use of humour in cross-cultural interaction was seldom evident. Being fact-oriented cultures, the Latvian and Lithuanian origin speakers of English appreciated presenting lengthy factual information, and strange as it is, in a written form.

As regards the Latvian syntax and style of writing, it is convoluted, which makes the Latvians sound complicated when they communicate or construct text in the target language. Historically, this results from the fact that the Latvians have valued a complicated language. A sophisticated way of expressing ideas is still considered to be a sign of a high quality competence. From the point of the linguistic strategies used, the Latvian interlocutors use or even overuse direct statements that might seem awkward or at least strange for interlocutors of other nationalities. Often, this form of communication might sound offensive to foreign counterparts. The word *please* is often replaced in Latvian by a friendly tone and is implied in the conjunctive *could*. *Please* is, therefore, less frequently used in the Latvian language in comparison with the English language. The modal verb *must* is used much more frequently than in English; thus, indirect cul-

tures of such countries as Turkey might find such a way of communication to be undiplomatic or even offensive.

Besides, the Latvians and Lithuanians tend to use direct imperatives. The sentence *Bring me a cup of coffee* in a restaurant might be considered to be acceptable. In contrast, an English version of the same request would sound *May I have a cup of coffee?* What makes the Latvian or Lithuanian request sound even more offensive for foreigners is that the tone of voice does not need to be raised in the process of requesting. Due to the fact that the communication style of the Latvian and Lithuanian interlocutors seems to be less enthusiastic than, for example, a typical Turkish communication style, the Latvians or Lithuanians might be perceived as being pessimistic and not interested in the outcomes of the discussion, which is usually not the case.

Linguistic markers known as hedges to signal a speaker's attitude, such as, for example, *maybe, well, sort of,* and alike are used much less in Latvian or Lithuanian than, e.g., in English. On the contrary, when complaining or criticising, it is absolutely common in the Latvian and Lithuanian languages to use upgraders such as *absolutely, totally, definitely* and alike. Instead of being softened, criticism, therefore, sounds harsher.

The Latvian and Lithuanian origin English language users favoured structured discussions with precise objectives and detailed assignments. The discussions were analytical in nature and focused on problems. Thus, it must be admitted that the discussions as regards different subject matters were more focused on maintaining the quality, reputability and reliability of communication.

As a result of the macro-level analysis presented above, several conclusions can be drawn as regards some cultural diversity that might have an impact on the communicative strategies prioritized by non-native language users in interdiscourse communication:

1. As the target language users' background knowledge context relates to the language users' individual social and cultural backgrounds, the choice of the communicative strategies applied in interdiscourse communication depends on a number of variables used in the social, situational and cultural contexts of language use, such as the level of the linguistic and pragmatic competence, a degree of familiarity, and the ethnicity of the interlocutors.

2. Direct language strategies often prioritised by the Latvian and Lithuanian origin target language users are basically associated with the imperative form employed in declarative sentences. These strategies should be avoided in the discourse of interaction occurring in multinational settings because the application of direct linguistic strategies can have potential for misunderstanding in interdiscourse communication. Indirect structures being usually associated with the interrogative form to express a suggestion in order to avoid directness of the statement should be prioritised. Indirectness as a linguistic politeness strategy can be implemented linguistically through internal modification devices, such as tag questions, hedges, impersonalization, modality, politeness markers and appropriate address forms.

3. Selected pragmalinguistic means, such as an appropriate linguistic code to match the situational, social and cultural contexts of utterances, should be applied in interdiscourse communication to avoid pragmalinguistic failure.

4. The target language users' pragmalinguistic competence implies the ability to present their linguistic and pragmatic competences in relevant verbal actions and in relevant contextual situations. Any circumstance, in which language users deliberately or not, organize the linguistic action in such a way that the language is perceived as grammatical but conflicting with the harmonious flow of interaction, can be considered as pragmalinguistic failure.

5. Pragmalinguistic failure can be produced across three pragmatic domains: illocution, style and discourse. Pragmalinguistic failure, which usually results in miscommunication, can be generated involuntarily in interdiscourse communication as a consequence of an interlocutor's inadequate linguistic and/or pragmatic competences.

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ИНТЕРДИСКУРСИВНАЯ КОММУНИКАЦИЯ: ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ ИЗУЧЕНИЯ ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКОЙ ОТНОСИТЕЛЬНОСТИ

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В данной статье рассматривается понятие «интердискурсивная коммуникация» с точки зрения теории лингвистической относительности. Целью настоящего исследования является анализ речевого поведения индивидов, для которых английский язык является не родным, и которые используют его в практических целях в различных коммуникативных ситуациях. В статье используются результаты, полученные в ходе научно-исследовательской работы в рамках международной программы ERASMUS: «Межкультурные компетенции и коммуникация» за период с 2011 по 2013 г. В работе особое внимание уделяется анализу коммуникативно-прагматических стратегий, наиболее часто используемыми латвийскими, литовскими и турецкими студентами, для которых английский язык является основным средством общения в современном мультинациональном обществе.

Ключевые слова: интердискурсивная коммуникация, лингвистическая относительность, прагмалингвистическая и коммуникативная неудачи.