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Research article


**Digital business etiquette:
the influence of Internet communication**

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Abstract. Business communication has significantly expanded its arsenal of tools and begun to embrace technologies that were previously platforms for private informal communication: social networks and messengers. The relevance and novelty of our research are due to the fact that contemporary digital etiquette in business correspondence, not yet subjected to linguistic analysis, requires not only description and codification but also analysis of the transformations that influence changes in the communicative behavior of participants in business internet communication. The aim of the research is to analyze the elements of informal internet communication inherent in messengers and their influence on modern digital business correspondence. The hypothesis is that the shift of business communication to messengers leads to an increasingly oral-like nature of written business internet communication: it becomes more dynamic, more dialogical, and the norms of business communication are transformed, becoming less rigid. The main research method is a sociolinguistic survey in the form of an internet questionnaire. The research material includes data from mass internet surveys conducted from 2017 to 2024 in O.V. Lukinova's "Digital Etiquette" Telegram channel. Internet memes were sporadically used to illustrate and confirm assessments in the linguistic reflection of internet users. The authors conclude that business communication in messengers is simultaneously influenced by several factors: business epistolary tradition, email etiquette, and patterns of informal communication that were originally inherent in messengers. Under the influence of the latter, the role of politeness formulas changes in digital business correspondence, a balance between the synchronicity and asynchronicity of communication is sought, the role of graphical symbols changes, and the oral-written nature of internet communication is reconsidered. The research perspective is a comparative analysis of certain etiquette formulas, elements, and details of traditional and electronic business correspondence.

Keywords: epistolary etiquette, business correspondence, digital etiquette, messengers

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Introduction

Electronic communication was originally used for both personal and business purposes. Chat rooms, messengers, blogs, and forums have replaced face-to-face and telephone conversations, and emails have replaced paper correspondence.

In the XXI century many guides and manuals on business letter writing have appeared: some of them are textbooks and manuals on business correspondence (Il'yakhov, & Sarycheva, 2018; Severskaya, & Selezneva, 2019; Trofimova, & Kupchik, 2019; Kirsanova et al., 2022); some of them are collections of sample letters of different genres for different situations (Zagorskaya et al., 2006).

The widespread use of such manuals was in many respects a reincarnation of the genre of letter-books — collections of sample letters that were widespread in Russia in the late 18th–19th centuries (e.g., Kurganov, 1769; Nalivkin, 1847; Complete Russian Letterbook... 1887). The popularity of printed letter-books in the early 19th century (for example, N.G. Kurganov's book was reprinted 18 times) can be explained by the fact that the Russian epistolary genre was greatly transformed in comparison with previous eras, demanded precise wording and conformity to the accepted European standards.

Letters again started playing the active role in business communication in the XXI century. This actualized business correspondence skills and led to the emergence of modern analogues of letter-books — manuals on electronic correspondence, which describe in detail the standard formulas of greeting, gratitude, requests, business proposals, and end of communication.

Electronic business correspondence, despite the strong and multidimensional pressure of Internet communication, cannot ignore the accepted norms of business communication and speech etiquette, while being under the strong influence of those processes that occur in informal Internet communication, primarily in social networks and messengers.

These processes in informal written Internet communication have already become the subject of research (Internet Communication... 2018; Krongauz, 2013). However, linguists' attention used to focus more on such forms of Internet communication as chat rooms, forums, blogs existing outside the official business discourse. Researchers almost unanimously say that Internet communication forms a new hypostasis of language — oral-written: “With the increase of genre synchronicity, the oral-colloquial orientation of communication increases, and, accordingly, the

level of hybridization of language forms in Internet communication increases” (Lysenko, 2010: 6).

The attributes of oral-written communication are as follows: synchronicity, dialogicality, colloquiality, emotionality, high tempo, dominance of phatic function, simplification of syntax, phonetization of writing, and departure from normativity (Barysheva, 2021; Klushina, & Nikolaeva, 2019; Ivanova, & Klushina, 2021; Kolokoltseva, 2016; Khazova, 2023; Hanson, 2021; McCulloch, 2019).

Most of the studies before the mid-2010s when describing the oral-written nature of Internet communication (Internet Communication... 2018; Russian Language and New Technologies, 2014; Trofimova, 2011, etc.) attributed the language changes to the technical features of platforms where communication takes place in instant messaging formats: Internet chat rooms and programs like ICQ. Communication in such formats could take place only if all interlocutors were online, i.e., only in a synchronous format. In most Internet chat rooms, messages disappeared as soon as a participant left the network. Such synchronous communication required an increased pace of message exchange and a high degree of dialogicality. Almost immediately, messaging programs became online platforms for informal communication.

However, we must emphasize that since the early 2010s, there happened serious technical changes in the communication tools themselves, instant messaging programs of the new generation have been created and actively spread: WhatsApp appeared in 2009, Telegram in 2013. Nowadays, the lion's share of Internet communication takes place in messengers: according to the research company Mediascope, in 2023 in Russia 47% of the population uses Telegram and 67% uses WhatsApp daily¹.

These messengers have technical features that have significantly changed the format of instant messaging, characteristic of the Web 1.0 era. For example, messengers save the history of correspondence and even give the ability to send deferred messages, that is, allow users to exchange messages in an asynchronous format. Due to this, fast communication and instant reaction to the interlocutor's messages are no longer a mandatory feature of this kind of communication (Giurge & Bohns, 2021).

Subsequent development of messengers increasingly distanced them from the usual chat rooms and brought them closer to e-mail services in terms of technical characteristics and functions. For example, they introduced multifaceted message formatting, file attachment, and information search and structuring.

The convenient functionality of messengers has expanded the scope of their application and led to the fact that messengers are increasingly being used not only for personal, but also for business communication. At the height of the pandemic, in April 2020, the Digital Etiquette Telegram channel conducted a survey on communication tools “What is your preferred way of communicating for work in

¹ Mediascope: the share of Telegram users has reached almost half of the Russian population. *Kommersant*. 02/06/2024. Retrieved February 20, 2024, from <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/6493795>

self-isolation?”. 38% of the 2,664 respondents named email as the most convenient tool, while 70% named messengers². It seems that messengers are becoming so popular precisely because they allow us to find a balance between synchronous and asynchronous communication.

We must note that business correspondence manuals are beginning to give advice not only on how to write e-mails, but also on how to communicate in messengers. For example, the author of several business communication manuals, Sasha Karepina, in her book “Correspondence 2.0”³ (2019) teaches how to pragmatically build a message correctly in order to keep the addressee’s attention in messenger. Her book is subtitled “How to solve issues in chats, social networks and letters”, indicating that chats and social networks are now used to solve business issues, in business communication, and not only for private purposes. By the way, in the same book the author expands the meaning of the ancient term “business correspondence”: now it is “any correspondence on business.”

Thus, the technical improvement of messengers has led to the fact that modern business communication unfolds on those platforms that were originally considered the domain of informal personal communication only.

The aim of the study is to analyze the elements of informal Internet communication inherent in messengers and influencing modern electronic business correspondence.

Methods and materials

The main method of this study is a sociolinguistic survey in the form of an internet questionnaire. The paper analyzes the results of numerous surveys about online communication that were conducted in 2017–2024 in the author’s Telegram channel “Digital Etiquette” (@digitaletiquette), which covers the issues of ethical and effective digital communication. On March 1, 2024, the Telegram channel had over 22,000 subscribers; at least 3,000 people participate in regular polls. Survey data show the linguistic reflection of Internet users.

The surveys reveal, 1) the communication practices of users themselves (e.g., ways of expressing laughter in online correspondence, use of polite words in assignments to subordinates), 2) attitudes towards certain linguistic and communicative phenomena (e.g., the disappearance of the dot at the end of a line, voice messages), and 3) users’ ideas about the norms of digital communication (whether it is necessary to say hello in a chat room, answer “thank you” in messenger, etc.).

The main material of the analysis is data from the two-stage Internet survey “The Most Annoying Phrases in Business Correspondence” (autumn 2022), where 92 formulas and expressions (e.g., “good afternoon”, “hello”, “thank you in advance”, “sps”, address form “colleagues”, etc.) used in electronic correspondence were evaluated by 3,464 Internet users.

² What is your preferred method of work communication during self-isolation? Retrieved February 20, 2024, from <https://t.me/digitaletiquette/394>

³ Karepina, A.V. *Correspondence 2.0 : how to solve issues in chats, social networks and letters*. Moscow: SilaUma-Publisher, 2019. 320 pp.

A separate object of observation was memes (Smith & Hemsley, 2022) about aspects of Internet communication that are virally disseminated on social media.

As a rule, memes become superpopular only if they are in line with the experience of users who republish them. The mass nature of memes spread allows to explicate trends of Internet communication and attitudes of Internet users to certain linguistic phenomena.

Results

Since 2013 (the year Telegram was created), business communication has significantly expanded its arsenal of tools and uses channels, which were exclusively private, informal communication platforms. It is proved that modern official and semi-formal business communication in messengers (e.g., employees' correspondence or chats) is simultaneously influenced by several factors: (1) business epistolary tradition, (2) e-mail etiquette, and (3) patterns of informal communication that were originally inherent in messengers.

The active use of messengers in business communication leads to the fact that written business communication becomes more dynamic, gravitates towards a higher degree of dialogicality, and the norms of business communication themselves are transformed: they become less strict, and in some cases become closer to written informal conversation, losing the official *modus operandi*.

The choice of linguistic means in business communication is significantly influenced by extra-linguistic, namely technological factors: changes in messengers' functionality led to changes in the perception of communication norms.

The norms of modern business Internet communication are often regulated by digital etiquette — an unspoken set of rules of behavior in the digital space. Digital etiquette seeks to make Internet communication more convenient, predictable, and friendly — and therefore influences the choice of language means and forms of communication.

The formulas of politeness used in Internet communication become a part of digital etiquette. The specifics of communication in messengers significantly transforms these formulas and leads to a new format of their use. It is revealed that under the influence of messengers in digital business correspondence the role of addresses and greetings is changing, the balance between synchronous and asynchronous communication is being sought, the role of graphic symbols is changing, and the oral and written nature of Internet communication is being rethought.

Thus, business electronic communication is undergoing changes due to its transition to messengers. However, messengers are no longer the territory of only conversational and informal communication, as it was thought before.

Discussion

Changes in business writing with the shift to messengers

Increased dialogicality is the key change entailed by the shift of correspondence from email to messengers.

An email, like a classic, paper letter, was never supposed to be answered instantly: for example, different business etiquette guides give recommendations to answer emails within a few hours to 1 week, the average and most frequent recommendation being within a day (Business Etiquette... 2021: 314). However, messengers assume a greater speed of communication, and therefore the message is constructed considering possibility to conduct communication as synchronously as possible. For example, in messengers a greeting is frequently sent as a separate message, after the addressee responds to the greeting (demonstrates that he/she is ready for synchronous communication), the interlocutor sends the next message. This brings messengers closer to oral conversation, although it certainly violates such a basic postulate of G.P. Grice as informativeness.

Sometimes the request for synchronous communication is more explicit: “Are you here?”, “Can I ask you some questions?”, “Can I bother you?”. These lines do not carry any information (the same Grice's postulate is violated), but are intended to attract the interlocutor's attention, realizing an exclusively phatic function.

The desire for dialogicality in messenger can also manifest itself in the fact that one message is divided into several replicas, although it could have been sent in one message. Some experts on digital communications explain this by the convenience of building a dialog: the interlocutor will be able to respond to a separate replica without creating confusion in the dialog⁴.

Replica 1: *Natalia, good afternoon, I have a few questions about your upcoming presentation.*

Replica 2: *Do you have a presentation?*

Replica 3: *Will you need a flipchart and a marker?*

In general, however, this solution is rather counterproductive: text fragmented into several messages provokes a negative rather than positive reaction from the average Internet user.

Messengers have traditionally been used for informal communication, so the degree of normativity and formality of vocabulary and language means in modern business Internet communication is also decreasing. Of course, the degree of formality depends on the relationship between the interlocutors. If it is communication between strangers or people who are in a hierarchical relationship, the speech will be formal with minimal deviations from the literary norm. If it is communication between colleagues who are in constant interaction, the degree of formality will be reduced.

Reduction of formality is expressed primarily in slangisms (‘acan’ ‘urgently’), office phraseology (‘deadline is yesterday’), abbreviations (‘ДД’ instead of ‘Good day’, etc.).

The spelling of the personal pronoun ‘you’ deserves special attention. The rule to write “you” with a capital letter when addressing one person (Rules... 2022: 166) does not usually work in electronic correspondence. The analysis of native speakers’ linguistic reflection convinces that more and more people perceive the spelling

⁴ How to communicate in instant messengers: a manifesto of normal people. Retrieved February 20, 2024, from <https://kinzhal.media/howto-messenger/>

“You” as inappropriate or outdated. Thus, in a survey on the most annoying phrases in business correspondence⁵, 58% of the 3,464 participants recognized the spelling “You” as inappropriate. At the same time, only 18% of respondents said that writing “you” with a small letter when addressing one person was annoying. Such answers prove that excessive formalism and redundancy of language means are gradually disappearing from informal business correspondence (“Doesn’t addressing someone as *vy* ‘you’ already imply respect? Why emphasize it so much?” — the remark of a discussion participant). So, today in messengers and e-mails, writing “you” with a capital letter more and more often marks messages of a more formal style. Writing “you” in relation to one addressee is more common in dialogs between people who interact constantly, know each other well and are at the same level of the official hierarchy.

Business correspondence unfolds in messengers and social networks, so traditional attributes of informal communication — graphic symbols used for non-verbal transmission of intonation or the writer’s attitude to the subject of discussion — are penetrating it. It is possible to build a kind of gradation of these symbols according to their degree of formality.

For example, in the least formal work chats you can find stickers — large graphic images that users send in separate messages (Fig. 1).

As a rule, stickers have a lot of emotional load, and a vivid picture, which is more characteristic of informal communication.

Emojis (😄, 😞, 😔, 😡, 🙋, 👍, 🙏, 🤝, 🍷, 🙌, etc.) are pictograms depicting either facial or gesture or other emotion, or objects or characters: they draw the reader’s attention and prepare him for visual perception (Busareva, 2022: 88). Emojis are typically used together with the verbal part. The graphical nature of the emoji correlates it with informal communication, but the perfect combination of graphical symbols with the main text allows them to penetrate semi-formal correspondence (Siever, 2019). At the same time, it should be noted that in general, in Western business correspondence, the attitude to emoji is rapidly improving (Riordan & Glikson, 2020).

The most successful was the integration in business communication of graphic symbols consisting of the usual punctuation marks: colon and brackets. The Internet users of the younger generation call the closing bracket at the end of the replica a “polite dot”: its function is to show benevolence: “I will be glad to cooperate with you)” or “Thank you.”

Today, graphic images with a minimum number of symbols are becoming appropriate for business correspondence, which is especially evident in the results of the survey on the most annoying elements⁶. Thus, negative evaluations of the use of different numbers of closing brackets to express emotions in business correspondence were distributed as follows:

⁵ The most annoying phrases in correspondence. Retrieved February 20, 2024, from <https://digitaletiquette.ru/badwords>

⁶ Idid.

- 53% negatively evaluated “)))))))).”.
- 20% were against “)))”.
- 19% called even “))” inappropriate in business correspondence.

In other words, most users find excessive emotions inappropriate in business correspondence. This is confirmed by the negative attitude of survey participants to the use of excessive punctuation marks: 89% of users called such graphic elements as “???????” and “!!!!!!!!!” inappropriate and annoying.



Fig. 1. Examples of stickers
 Source: Telegram sticker packs. URL : <https://tigrm.ru/stickers>

83% of respondents found the use of capitalization or caps lock (writing words or sentences in full capital letters) annoying. The negative attitude to caps lock is also confirmed by such memes as: “Don’t caps lock on me!” and ‘Don’t capitalize on me!’ In these cases, “caps lock” becomes a synonym for the verb “shout”, and “raising the font” correlates with talking in a raised tone.

Of course, this attitude to caps lock and redundant punctuation / graphical means is observed not only in business, but also in private correspondence.

Digital etiquette of business correspondence and messengers

Digital etiquette regulates user interaction and calls for adherence to norms of socially approved Internet behavior. In the first work on digital etiquette, the collection *Netiquette* (Shea, 1994) Virginia Shea offered a set of rules about how one should behave on the Internet. For the most part, they governed informal communication in chat rooms and forums.

Modern digital etiquette has become quite complex and fixes norms of behavior on different digital platforms and in different communicative situations (see, for example, (Cebollero-Salinas et al., 2022) on the problem of phubbing). Due to time constraints and the overabundance of information that Internet users consume daily, one of the maxims of digital etiquette is to take care of the interlocutor's comfort and to conserve the resource of attention. Modern digital etiquette calls for minimizing those communication practices in messengers that lead to the loss of the interlocutor's time. It is noteworthy that this primarily concerns those forms and methods of communication that were inherited by messengers from synchronous chats. Among such recommendations, two basic ones can be emphasized:

- Do not split messages into parts, as in the following message (Fig. 2).

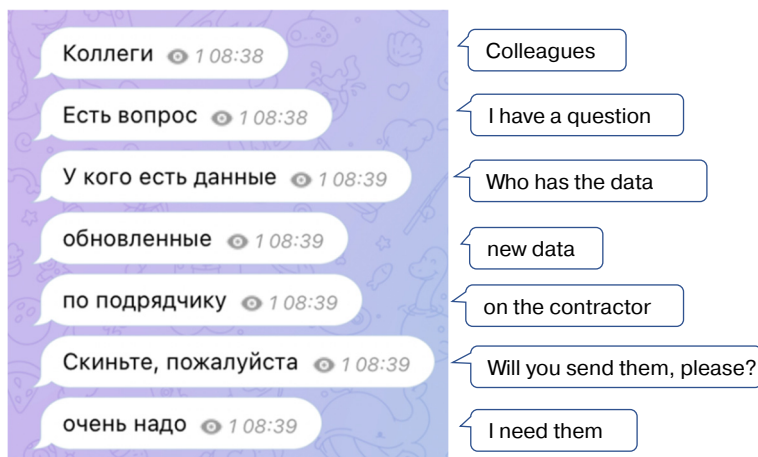


Fig. 2. Example of a business Internet message
Source: Efremov V.A. and Lukinova O.V.' personal archive

It is appropriate in synchronous communication to keep the interlocutor's attention, but it is inconvenient if the messenger is used for business communication in a situation where the interlocutors may have other tasks at the same time.

- Do not send separate messages for greetings and meta-questions such as “Can I ask you some questions?”, “Can I disturb you?”, “Do you have a minute?”. This practice draws the interlocutor into synchronous communication and forces uninformative messages to be exchanged. In other words, modern business etiquette seeks to reduce the role of the phatic function in Internet communication.

Such recommendations of digital etiquette for business correspondence in messengers do not only minimize the efforts of the recipient, but also in some way try to “subdue” the conversational nature of communication in chat rooms.

The same goals are pursued by recommendations to write literately. In the past, researchers have recorded almost conventionality of errors and misprints in chat communication: “This is a reflection of a kind of unspoken convention of Internet users: in the Internet environment (at least in the mode of synchronous communication) it is quite appropriate to write the way you speak; it is positively perceived by the Internet community” (Kolokoltseva, 2016: 101).

Modern etiquette strongly recommends avoiding mistakes and misprints: “Everyone is annoyed when a letter is written carelessly: without punctuation marks, with mistakes due to inattention, without a greeting and signature” (Il’yakhov, Sarycheva, 2018: 10). The change in attitudes towards this kind of “carelessness” is due to at least two reasons: first, the scope of messengers has expanded to business, and second, messengers have new tools for dealing with errors: (1) built-in editors that point out errors, (2) predictive typing that suggests the spelling, (3) the ability to edit a message even after sending it. Consequently, as technology advances, the reputational cost of error increases. In addition, the auto-replacement of misspelled words with other, sometimes inappropriate, words encourages responsible users to at least pay more attention to what is written and reread the message before sending it.

The idea that digital etiquette tries to moderate the spoken element of communication and make it more restrained, literate, predictable, and orderly is also confirmed by digital etiquette’s special attitude to voice messages as a direct transplantation of oral speech into hybrid Internet communication (for more on this, see: (Lukinova, 2020: 106–115).

Thus, the continuing formation of digital etiquette plays a special role in the choice of language means when communicating in messengers. One of the goals of this etiquette is to organize the natural element of spoken language, which is penetrating written Internet communication. How the recommendations of digital etiquette are applied in practice deserves a separate study. However, it is already obvious that business communication in messengers somehow takes into account the norms of actual, transforming etiquette. “Network etiquette differs from traditional etiquette, and it is impossible to say unequivocally that one is good and the other is bad. Each of these etiquettes has gradually developed / is developing its own norms and rules of communication. Against this background, ethical norms are changing” (Evseeva, 2012: 184).

Transformations of politeness formulas: from semi-official to business formulas

Politeness formulas play a special role in digital speech etiquette. On the one hand, traditional etiquette prescribes their active use. On the other hand, the format of dynamic, almost synchronous digital communication leads to the opposite tendency — economy of linguistic means. In this regard, we can identify several processes in the transformation of etiquette formulas in semi-formal communication in messengers that affect or may affect the business etiquette of digital correspondence in general.

• **Abbreviations.** Units of speech etiquette that are used repeatedly in online correspondence are often abbreviated. Instead of “thank you” one writes “спс”, instead of “please” — “пжл”, “пжлст”. In the already mentioned study, 43% of respondents said that “спс” annoys them. This irritation is verbalized, for example, in the meme: “People who write ‘спс’ instead of ‘Thank you’ what do you do with all that free time?”⁷. As a rule, such abbreviations are used in an informal communicative situation with small requests: “Send me Natasha’s number, пжлст” — “891534350...” — “спс.”

Sometimes abbreviations are used in greetings — “ДД” (“good day”), “ДУ” (“good morning”), “ДВ” (“good evening”) — or in congratulations: “Happy ДР!” (“Happy Birthday”) and “Happy НГ!” (“Happy New Year!”). Of course, they are still used in informal or semi-formal correspondence.

• **Vulgarisms** (Russified English words of politeness): “плиз”, “сори”, “ок(и)” in sentences like: “Сори, I’m late”; “Write the exact address плиз”. The spread of these units in semi-official business communication (for example, employee chat in one or another messenger) is caused, in addition to language fashion and problems with linguistic taste, by the economy of linguistic means: English words are shorter than Russian words “пожалуйста”, “извини”, “хорошо”. Vulgarisms are used in a situation of a small request or little fault.

• **Rejection of traditional formulas of politeness.** One of the most interesting features of modern (semi-)formal business communication in messengers is that it practically does not use the phrase “you are welcome” in response to “thank you”. On May 13, 2021, a question was asked in the “Digital Etiquette” Telegram channel, “You wrote ‘thank you’ in messenger. Do you expect some kind of response from your interlocutor”⁸. Of the 4,606 respondents, 75% believe that it is not necessary to reply to “thank you”; 12% would like to see a smiley or sticker in response; 11% would like to receive something like “I was glad to help you”, “Please contact me”. And only 2% expect “you are welcome” in response to “thank you”. At the same time, classical speech etiquette suggests that gratitude should be followed by some reaction.

• **Strengthening the role of greeting as an element of oral communication.** The classical epistolary tradition did not assume that it was necessary to greet the addressee in a letter, it was enough to address him/her by name: “The greeting appeared in the electronic letter and has not yet affected the letter in an envelope: only the address remains in it, which corresponds to the laws of the epistolary genre” (Severskaya, Selezneva, 2019: 288).

At the same time, in electronic correspondence greetings are used constantly: virtual contact comes closer to a real meeting when it is necessary to say hello to the interlocutor. That is why greetings occur in both emails and chats. Today, Internet users argue about whether it is necessary to say hello in messenger, and if so, then

⁷ Anekdotov.net. Retrieved February 20, 2024, from <https://anekdotov.net/anekdot/all/chsvbdvshgsvrnmn.htm>

⁸ You wrote “thank you” in the messenger. Are you expecting some kind of message from your interlocutor in response? Retrieved February 20, 2024, from <https://t.me/digitaletiquette/539>

how many times in a day. The shift in attitude is probably because Internet usage practices have changed: in the days when one had to be connected to the Internet, entering a chat room was perceived as entering a room where one had to say hello to everyone. Today, most participants in (business) electronic communication are online all the time, and therefore greeting a person whom you have recently corresponded with is no longer necessary, just as, for example, it is not necessary to say hello every time you start a conversation with a person who is sitting in the same office.

There was a survey among Internet users, where they were asked to answer the question: “Whose behavior seems less polite: the person who did not say hello or the one who paid attention to it?”

Interviewee 1: Andrey, could you send me information about the project, please?

Interviewee 2: First of all, hello. I’ll send it to you now.

There were 5,190 participants in this survey, 90% of them thought that the person who drew attention to the absence of a greeting in the correspondence was wrong. Only 10% consider the behavior of the person who did not say hello to be incorrect.

The disappearance of goodbye formulas is one of the differences between messengers and chat rooms, where it was customary to say goodbye to indicate that the user was going to leave the chat room and would not be available online. In messengers, there is no need in it: it is assumed a priori that users are online all the time. Instead of goodbye, gratitude or confirmation of agreement is more often used: “Okay, I’ll be there tomorrow”, “See you at the meeting”, “I’ll wait for the results”.

Dialogue can even end with a consistent reduction in the length and informativeness of the lines:

- *Here is the document you asked for*
- *Oh, thank you, just in time*
- *Get in touch*
- 🙋

In this context, the emoji becomes a signal that the communicative situation is finished.

- **Avoiding standard elements of business correspondence.** Business etiquette dictates that every e-mail should include a signature indicating the addressee’s position, company, and contacts, regardless of whether the writer introduces himself or herself at the beginning of the e-mail⁹. In business correspondence in messengers, this component (information about the sender) disappears: first, in messengers it is impossible to include this requisite automatically in a message, and second, it is always clear who exactly is sending this or that message.

- **Replacing etiquette formulas with emoji.** The set of emoji in messengers offers vivid visual images for a variety of situations. For example, the 🙋 emoji

⁹ Ilyakhov, M.O. (2022). *Text on shelves: Short manual on business correspondence* (p. 170). Moscow: Alpinan Publisher.

is multivalent: it is used both to reinforce a request, in the range of meanings from “please” to “I beg”, and to thank, and to convey hope for something (in the sense of “I wish it would happen”). It is no coincidence that in 2023 this pictogram ranked fourth in the world in popularity among all other emoji¹⁰. In Russia, 42% of Russians named this icon as their favorite¹¹. It can be used in several variants: as a duplication of a verbally expressed thought (“Thank you 🙏”, “Please help 🙏”), as a substitute for words of politeness (“You helped me a lot 🙏”, “Reset 🙏 presentation”) or as an independent message consisting of one symbol only (“I’m sending you a presentation” — “🙏”).

Sometimes emoji with flowers or a gift (🎁) can also have the meaning of gratitude. In this case emoji can be used to harmonize communication.

Special formulas of politeness. In messengers, politeness formulas that contain incorrect word usage are spreading. For example, “thank you in advance” and “good time of the day.”

The adverb “in advance” is incorrectly combined with the interjection “thank you”. Although the adverb could be combined with a short adjective or a verb (“I am grateful in advance”, “I thank you in advance”), this formula is negatively perceived by native speakers, as it demonstrates that the addressee is sure of the interlocutor's positive response in advance and does not even assume the possibility of refusal. In other words, the phrase “thank you in advance” is pragmatically defective, as it crosses out the meaning of the question and request. It is noteworthy that “thank you in advance” is used only in written speech and cannot be used in oral speech: in oral conversation, gratitude would follow only after the answer. In written communication, “Thank you in advance” seems to be ahead of the conversation and, in a sense, breaks the communication synchronization.

The greeting “good time of the day” is also used exclusively in written speech. For a verbal conversation, it is too cumbersome and makes no sense, because truly synchronous communication assumes a clear time reference, and thus gives the opportunity to name a specific part of the day: “good day”, “good morning” or “good evening”. Besides, there is a grammatical error in this formula: the nominative case is usually used in greetings, while the genitive case is more often characteristic of the formulas of conversation completion and farewell (“good night”, “have a good night”, “good luck”, “have a good trip”). The stylistic inaccuracy is also realized by native speakers. It is no coincidence that out of 3,500 respondents 64% call the phrase “good time of the day” annoying¹².

So, etiquette formulas of politeness undergo various changes in semi-official Internet communication in messengers.

¹⁰ Face with Tears of Joy emoji became the most popular in 2023. Retrieved February 20, 2024, from <https://www.rbc.ru/life/news/64b79f179a794736e44e31a9>

¹¹ The Russians named their favorite emoji. Infographics. Retrieved February 20, 2024, from <https://iom.anketolog.ru/2023/06/15/populyarnye-emoji>

¹² The most annoying phrases in correspondence. Retrieved February 20, 2024, from <https://digitaletiquette.ru/badwords>

Conclusion

Messengers as a communication platform are constantly transforming, which entails the formation of new communication norms and practices. These norms are reflected in digital etiquette, which makes online communication more efficient, welcoming, predictable.

An important technical difference between email and messenger is that corporate email is often tied to a corporate domain, which means that it can belong to a group of individuals rather than one person and can automatically forward messages to other recipients. All of this makes email correspondence more status-oriented: the email is sent not to a person, but to the performer of a function. At the same time, correspondence in messenger is personal-oriented, because, as a rule, it is tied to a personal phone number.

So, the development of Internet technologies and the evolution of Internet communication have led to the fact that modern digital etiquette, especially determining the rules of behavior in business communication, is inevitably transformed.

One of the most important factors influencing the formation of the new netiquette is communication in messengers, which are increasingly (especially in business structures) used to solve business issues. The historically semi-official nature of communication in messengers leads to the fact that under their influence, communicative practices, graphic means, and formulas of politeness, which did not exist before, appear in modern business correspondence.

A comparative analysis of a wide range of etiquette formulas, elements and requisites of traditional and electronic business correspondence can be outlined as a research perspective. The comparison of recommendations of business letter-books of the 19th century and manuals on business correspondence of the 21st century may become worthy of scientific attention.

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¹³ On March 21, 2022, the Tverskoy District Court of Moscow upheld the claim of the Prosecutor General's Office of the Russian Federation and recognized the activities of Meta, which owns the social networks Instagram and Facebook, as extremist, banning its work in Russia.

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Научная статья

Этикет русской электронной деловой переписки: влияние интернет-коммуникации

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Аннотация. Деловая коммуникация значительно расширила арсенал используемых инструментов и начала осваивать те технологии, которые раньше были площадками для частного неформального общения: социальные сети и мессенджеры. Актуальность и новизна темы исследования обусловлены тем, что до сих пор не подвергнутый собственно лингвистическому анализу современный цифровой этикет деловой переписки требует не просто описания и кодификации, но и анализа тех трансформаций, которые приводят к изменениям коммуникативного поведения участников делового интернет-общения. Цель исследования — проанализировать элементы неформальной интернет-коммуникации, присущие мессенджерам и оказывающие влияние на современную электронную деловую переписку. Рабочая гипотеза заключается в том, что переход бизнес-коммуникации в мессенджеры приводит к тому, что письменное деловое интернет-общение все больше приобретает черты устной речи: оно становится более динамичным, степень диалогичности возрастает, а сами нормы деловой коммуникации трансформируются, утрачивая строгость. Основным методом исследования — социолингвистический опрос в форме интернет-анкетирования. В качестве материала исследования использованы данные массовых интернет-опросов, проведенных с 2017 по

2024 г. в авторском телеграм-канале О.В. Лукиновой «Цифровой этикет». Для иллюстрации и подтверждения аксиологических оценок в языковой рефлексии интернет-пользователей спорадически использовали интернет-мемы. Доказано, что деловая коммуникация в мессенджерах одновременно испытывает влияние нескольких факторов: деловой эпистолярной традиции, этикета электронных писем и паттернов неформального общения, которые изначально были присущи мессенджерам. Выявлено, что под влиянием последних в цифровой деловой переписке изменяется роль формул вежливости, происходит поиск баланса между синхронностью и асинхронностью коммуникации, изменяется роль графических символов, переосмысливается устно-письменный характер интернет-общения. Перспективным направлением исследования может стать сопоставительный анализ использования тех или иных этикетных формул, элементов и реквизитов традиционной (бумажной) и электронной деловой переписки.

Ключевые слова: интернет-общение, эпистолярный этикет, деловая коммуникация, цифровой этикет, мессенджеры, русский язык

Вклад авторов: *Ефремов В.А.* — концепция исследования, научное консультирование, общая концепция статьи, обработка результатов исследования, написание и редактирование статьи; *Лукинова О.В.* — анализ литературы, подбор первичного материала, обобщение опыта исследователей, сбор данных, анализ данных и полученных результатов, обработка материала, написание статьи.

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