

## COMPLIMENTS AS A FORM OF COMMUNICATION ETIQUETTE

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**Abstract.** This paper examines the role of compliments in communication etiquette, emphasizing their importance in fostering positive interactions and strengthening relationships. The article draws on the perspectives of scholars such as J.Holmes and A.P.Sadokhin, highlighting both the positive and potentially manipulative aspects of compliments and demonstrating their versatility in social and cultural contexts. By analyzing their multifunctionality, the study underscores the importance of understanding and applying compliment strategies to develop effective communication and enhance interpersonal competence.

**Key words:** compliment, etiquette, communication, politeness, admiration, solidarity, interaction.

Effective communication enables to maintain a good relationship with people. But it depends on “the set of rules or customs that control accepted behaviour in particular social groups or social situations”, so-called “etiquette”<sup>1</sup>. The rules that dictate appropriate, courteous, and productive communication between people are known as communication etiquette. While there might be significant cultural and contextual variations in these rules, they all aim to promote polite and transparent communication. Following the communication etiquette while interacting with people can bring numerous benefits, including fostering positive relationships, establishing credibility and trust, enhancing clarity, mitigating conflict and miscommunication, avoiding misunderstandings<sup>2</sup>.

One of the important speech etiquettes that facilitates successful communication is compliments. Despite various norms and rules in different

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<sup>1</sup> Cambridge dictionary online. ETIQUETTE | English meaning - Cambridge Dictionary (retrieved on 25.09.2024)

<sup>2</sup> Z.X. Uteshova. Speech etiquette for effective communication. XXI century renaissance in the paradigm of science, education and technology innovations. UDC: 372.881.111.1 (575.172). – pp.514-517.

cultures, compliments are considered to be polite devices that reflect admiration and respect and “build solidarity between the complimenter and the complimentee<sup>3</sup>. Expressing compliments is a form of politeness that creates a pleasant atmosphere between people and allows them to become closer to one another. Therefore, learning compliment strategies and applying them appropriately helps to become a skilled conversationalist in communication culture<sup>4</sup>.

Moreover, A.P. Sadokhin (cited in L. Brutian, 2016) claims that compliments serve as a rhetorical tool, enabling a smooth initiation of interaction during the initial stage of a conversation and shaping the overall trajectory of the communicative process... People are likely to give compliments for various reasons, one of which is to capture the listener's attention and establish a foundation for prolonged and meaningful communication. Nevertheless, along with positive intentions, F.Laroshfuko (cited in L. Brutian, 2016) notes that people tend to give compliments when they want to hear positive opinions about themselves in return or on the contrary, people sometimes praise other's positive features with the intention of belittling someone else<sup>5</sup>.

However, according to N.Ishihara and A.Cohen (2010), numerous scholars such as J.Manes, N.Wolfson, P.Brown and etc. identified the following primary functions of compliments in communication<sup>6</sup>:

- expressing admiration or approval of someone's work, appearance, or taste.
- establishing, confirming, or maintaining solidarity between interlocutors.
- serving as an alternative to greetings, gratitude, apologies, or congratulations.
- softening face-threatening acts, such as apologies, requests, or criticism.

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<sup>3</sup> J. Holmes. Women, men, and politeness. Longman publishing: London, 1995. In N.Sun. Gender-based differences in complimenting behaviour: a critical literature review. The ANU undergraduate research journal, Vol.5, ANU Press, 2014. – p.214.

<sup>4</sup> A.N.Fajri, E.Sudarwati. A comparative analysis of compliments in celebrities' Instagram and Tiktok comments. Language Literacy: Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Language Teaching, Vol.8, №1, 2024. – p.290.

<sup>5</sup> L.Brutian. Compliment to a compliment: an analysis of the speech act of a compliment. Journal of Wisdom, Vol.2, №7, 2016. – pp.28-34.

<sup>6</sup> N. Ishihara, A. D. Cohen. Teaching and learning pragmatics: Where language and culture meet. Pearson education limited, 2010. – pp.57-58.

- opening and sustaining conversations as part of a conversational strategy.
- reinforcing desired behavior to encourage repetition of positive actions.

In conclusion, compliments have a major role in successful interpersonal interactions as a fundamental component of communication etiquette. They accomplish strategic goals including building unity, reducing conflict, and influencing conversational dynamics, going beyond simple displays of adoration. Although the usage of compliments varies depending on context and culture, their universal value in improving communication and relationships cannot be emphasized. Through comprehension and skillful application of complement tactics, people can enhance social ties, foster meaningful conversation, and establish trust. The intricacy and significance of compliments in communication are emphasized by acknowledging their dual character, which includes both their pleasant intentions and their capacity for strategic manipulation.

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