

Politeness is Dead

A Socio-Linguistic study by Marta II and Marta III

Introduction

Politeness theory was proposed by P. Brown and S. Levinson in the late 70s. It focuses on the original notion of politeness, which Mary Henningesen describes as „efforts on redressing the affronts to a person's self-esteem of effectively claiming positive social values .“ The central concept of the theory is based on the idea of the face, understood in terms of sociology. `Face´ is something that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced. "Every person lives in a world of social encounters, involving him either in face-to-face or mediated contact with other participants [...]. The term face may be defined as the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact". It is generally in every participant's interest to maintain each others' "face": "The combined effect of the rule of self-respect and the rule of the considerateness is that the person tends to conduct himself during an encounter to maintain both his face and the face of other participants." The actions by means of which people cooperate in maintaining a face are called "face-work."

Brown and Levinson, inspired by Goffman's work, especially the part dedicated to the „face-work,“ developed their own theory that one's face is categorized into

two forms: positive and negative. "Positive face" refers to the positive, consistent "self-image" or personality claimed by interactants, including the desire that others appreciate and approve of this image. "Negative face," on the other hand, refers to any speaker's right not to be imposed upon and the right to be independent of the social world. To quote Brown and Levinson, "negative face: the want of every "competent adult member" that his actions be unimpeded by others. Positive face: the want of every member to be desirable to at least some others".

"Face" can be defined as the self-image during the action of speaking. During any interaction, the faces of both interlocutors are threatened or can even be damaged. Because of that, Brown and Levinson are forging the term „face-threatening act," FTA. As Anna Żurek points out, „to be polite does not only mean respecting other people's rights; politeness should also protect the message's sender, to be specific - their social image". We can divide the FTAs into negative FTAs and positive FTAs.

It goes without saying that speakers who want to reach their aims cannot do without FTAs. Politeness, as Brown and Levinson define it, consists of a set of strategies that serve to minimize the risks to "face" or "self-esteem" whenever a speaker commits a "face-threatening act." They argue that politeness strategies follow from the human ability to reason and find means to achieve one's ends. The question is how to perform the FTAs. There are various ways, depending on the context of interaction, the speakers' social relationship, and the amount of

imposition that the FTA entails. To carry out an FTA, a speaker may select one of the four following strategies (here very shortly about strategies)

Motivation

We have chosen this topic thanks to its close ties to sociolinguistics. We explored other options before pursuing this research, which resulted in weak connections to the course. We think Politeness Theory is a fascinating topic. It helps us look closer into everyday conversations and appreciate all the linguistic techniques applied by every person. We do not talk explicitly about it, as it is usually considered “common sense” and something built off intuition. This inspection will allow us to grasp the foundation of human communication and language as a sharp instrument.

Dead Souls

To showcase the application and usefulness of the Politeness Theory, we must choose an appropriate case study to base our research on. For that purpose, we decided Nikolai Gogol's satirical masterpiece - *Dead Souls*. This exemplar of 19th-century Russian literature takes place in at the time, contemporary Russia. Chichikov, a mysterious man, visits a small provincial town with a single goal of acquiring the souls of the dead surfs. He displays the most extraordinary moral rot, yet through many of his shady exchanges, we discover his incredible skill at communication and getting the sweet end of a deal. Thanks to its satirical style, *Dead*

Souls is a perfect example of how politeness can be wielded in a multitude of ways and across social hierarchies.

Politeness in Russian

In this chapter, we shall discover how *Dead Souls* explores the applications of politeness theory in social situations of 19th-century Russia. To efficiently illustrate the usage of face theory, we will go over ten examples of conversations selected from the novel using qualitative and quantitative reasoning. Firstly, we will analyze each excerpt individually, explicitly focusing on context, sentence structure, word choice, dialogue construction, and speech patterns. This first approach should give us a better in-depth understanding of self-esteem dynamics in conversations and how social values are presented. This would apply to such concepts as “losing face” or “saving face.” Secondly, we will take a numerical approach by giving each selected passage an absolute score of one to ten. One would signify complete impoliteness, and ten would indicate an extraordinary application of the politeness theory. This methodology will help us compare the same passages from different languages objectively. In this paper, we are only focusing on comparing Russian and Polish. Let us start exploring the excerpts.

First passage. Chapter II.

- Сделайте милость, не беспокойтесь так для меня, я пройду после, – говорил Чичиков.
- Нет, Павел Иванович, нет, вы гость, – говорил Манилов, показывая ему рукою на дверь.
- Не затрудняйтесь, пожалуйста, не затрудняйтесь. Пожалуйста, проходите, – говорил Чичиков.
- Нет уж извините, не допущу пройти позади такому приятному, образованному гостю.
- Почему ж образованному?.. Пожалуйста, проходите.

In this hilarious passage, we see how Chichikov and Manilov argue about who will be entering through the door first. The term arguing might be even too extreme to use in this case. They are blockading each other by letting the other one pass through first as a sign of friendly courtesy. Chichikov aims to get in Manilov's good grace to close a deal with dead souls further, whereas Manilov is a sentimental man by nature. This scene is funny by how overly polite they are, which makes analyzing this excerpt even more enjoyable.

Chichikov starts by asking Manilov to indulge him by not worrying about him. In this first section, Chichikov immediately performs a negative face-threatening act, such as making a request, therefore dealing damage to the hearer, Manilov. Even though negative face-threatening acts are defined as obstructing the interlocutor's freedom of action, Chichikov uses the request to perform a positive face-threatening act, where he takes damage by bringing the status of his well-being down.

Manilov takes an offensive response on the counter by stating that Chichikov is his guest; therefore, he must go through the door first. Notice that Manilov also used Chichikov's full address – Pavel Ivanovich, indicating that he wishes to bring serious attention to his statement. We just witnessed an exchange of negative face-

threatening acts, which is expected in this case, where both are attempting to request something from each other, like going first. Manilov also performed a non-verbal gesture, such as pointing toward the door, which only exemplifies his intent on letting Chichikov pass first. We must notice that this exchange by Manilov, even recognized as forward, is still perceived as polite.

It follows Pavel Ivanovich taking damage to himself in his positive face by apologizing and then dealing damage to Manilov's negative face by stating he would not let such an intelligent and pleasant man walk behind him. His description of Manilov is an act of kindness, as saving face and bringing Manilov up in the exchange's hierarchy. In Russian, Chichikov not only describes Manilov but preprends it with "такomy," which acts as an amplifier to the following adjectives.

Manilov recounts Chichikov's description of him by asking why he called him educated, which could be seen as his positive face-threatening act, where he damages himself by losing face. Finally, this passage showed a great example of mutual exchanges of face-threatening actions, where both sides consistently take damage to respond to their interactor's advances. Numerically, this passage receives a score of nine out of ten.

Second passage. Chapter II.

- А вице-губернатор, не правда ли, какой милый человек? — сказал Манилов, опять несколько прищулив глаза.
- Очень, очень достойный человек, — отвечал Чичиков.
- Ну, позвольте, а как вам показался полицеймейстер? Не правда ли, что очень приятный человек?
- Чрезвычайно приятный, и какой умный, какой начитанный человек! Мы у него проиграли в вист вместе с прокурором и председателем палаты до самых поздних петухов; очень, очень достойный человек.
- Ну, а какого вы мнения о жене полицеймейстера? — прибавила Манилова. — Не правда ли, прелюбезная женщина?
- О, это одна из достойнейших женщин, каких только я знаю, — отвечал Чичиков.

This passage follows swiftly the first one. Manilov and Chichikov are currently in the former's residence, having supper with tea and discussing the town's government figures and municipalities. The whole conversation does not seem to involve any direct damage to either the hearer or the speaker; instead, it follows a lengthy yet flattering description of each person they mention. However, it does indirectly save the face of each interlocutor. By praising another person for their qualities and characteristics, one can keep their face by associating with such a figure, also showing their abilities to recognize characters' qualities.

Interestingly enough, none of them even thought of criticizing any people mentioned. When Manilov wants to hear Chichikov's opinion on someone, he asks him about them in a positive affirmation, "isn't he a lovely person," which leaves Pavel Ivanovich no choice but to agree and contribute the qualities expressed. This is a necessary exchange, as it is how Chichikov is personally acquainted with the most critical figures in town, which only grants him more credibility and status by association.

The way that Chichikov describes those people is the most exaggerated. For example, talking about the chief of police, he describes him as “очень, очень достойный человек,” by using the double “очень.” It is usually only used once and in cases to show extreme affection toward something. Repeated amplifier usage might seem childish, yet it works *very, very* well in this case. Not only do they describe people by their qualities, but they also note them as the best they ever had the pleasure to meet, such as “достойнейших женщин, каких только я знаю.” Only for the lack of direct politeness actions, this excerpt receives a six out of ten.

Third passage. Chapter IV.

- Ну, послушай, чтоб доказать тебе, что я вовсе не какой-нибудь скалдырник, я не возьму за них ничего. Купи у меня жеребца, я тебе дам их в придачу.
- Помилуй, на что ж мне жеребец? — сказал Чичиков, изумленный в самом деле таким предложением.
- Как на что? да ведь я за него заплатил десять тысяч, а тебе отдаю за четыре.
- Да на что мне жеребец? завода я не держу.
- Да послушай, ты не понимаешь: ведь я с тебя возьму теперь всего только три тысячи, а остальную тысячу ты можешь заплатить мне после. — Да не нужен мне жеребец, Бог с ним!

The context for the third passage differs dramatically from the ones before with Manilov. In this chapter, Chichikov is dealing with another soul owner – Nozdrev. He is a rash man and a bully; precisely for those reasons, it is a true struggle for Chichikov to advance in his shady business. In comparison with Manilov, Nozdrev is a much more irrational man.

Nozdrev is no gambler to miss an opportunity if he smells one appearing right before him. While Chichikov is trying to close his deal, the unreasonable soul owner swiftly pushes his value onto Chichikov in attempting to sell him a stallion with dead souls. It's directly damaging Chichikov's negative face, as he is almost forced to purchase a stallion that he doesn't need or want. One could reply with a straightforward "no" or similar; however, it might shut down the dead souls' purchase, so Chichikov asks him why he would need to get a stallion. In his repertoire, Nozdrev pushes forward the offer by outlining the financial profit for Chichikov, as he bought it for ten thousand and is ready to sell it for four thousand instead. It's an act of losing one face to score a profit.

Chichikov stays firm to his statement regarding the necessity of a stallion for him instead of refusing the offer as his agenda hangs on the weird machinations put forward by Nozdrev. Nozdrev offers him to pay the first three thousand in advance and later pay the remaining thousand to sweeten the deal. This passage is an excellent example of applying the politeness theory and face strategies to save or salvage a bargain, especially with incoherent and pushy entrepreneurs. This passage will receive a score of eight out of ten.

Fourth passage. Chapter IV.

- Экой ты, право, такой! с тобой, как я вижу, нельзя, как водится между хорошими друзьями и товарищами, такой, право!.. Сейчас видно, что двуличный человек!
- Да что же я, дурак, что ли? ты посуди сам: зачем же приобретать вещь, решительно для меня ненужную?
- Ну уж, пожалуйста, не говори. Теперь я очень хорошо тебя знаю. Такая, право, ракалия! Ну, послушай, хочешь метнем банчик? Я поставлю всех умерших на карту, шарманку тоже.

In a concise amount of time, an already strained duologue between Nozdrev and Chichikov heats up even further. The impatient soul owner blows up by accusing our protagonist of his untrustworthiness and double-faced nature. However, this kind of treatment is not called for, all resulting from polite refusals from Chichikov to buy his horses and stallions. Even with his face strategies, our shady dealer uses a bald on-record technique of asking whether Nozdrev takes him for a fool to buy something he has no interest in nor use for. To smoothen the interaction, we see how Chichikov attempts to minimize the threat to the hearer's positive face by setting his direct annoyance with received offers in the form of a question. Nozdrev realizes that this leads to the end of any deal; to save it in any way possible, he soothes it over by proposing another deal – gambling it away. There isn't much politeness involved, except for attempting to save both faces from a value that will never happen. Therefore, it gets a score of three out of ten.

Fifth passage. Chapter V.

- У губернатора, однако ж, недурен стол, – сказал Чичиков.
- Да знаете ли, из чего это все готовится? вы есть не станете, когда узнаете.
- Не знаю, как готовится, об этом я не могу судить, но свиные котлеты и разварная рыба были превосходны.

- Это вам так показалось. Ведь я знаю, что они на рынке покупают. Купит вон тот каналья повар, что выучился у француза, кота, обдерет его, да и подает на стол вместо зайца.
- Фу! какую ты неприятность говоришь, – сказала супруга Собакевича.

After an irritating interaction with Nozdrev, Chichikov visits a new soul owner – Sobakevich, a strong, silent, and economical man. Compared with Manilov, he would inquire deeper into Pavel Ivanovich’s underlying motives and angles, making closing the deal more complicated. He would also be more sensible and battle-trained in sales than Nozdrev. This calls for new strategies.

This excerpt is similar to the second passage, where we are in the middle of supper. However, even though the setups and topics are similar, the flow of the conversation is entirely different. Chichikov attempts to save face by indirectly raising his status and credibility by bringing up and discussing his acquaintances with the town’s elite. To his surprise, Sobakevich is not of a high opinion of all the people that Chichikov uses as examples, which results in an inverse effect that he was expecting. We also must notice that our protagonist realizes he has to be more reserved with Sobakevich; instead of describing the governor’s reception as “the best I have ever had the pleasure to receive” or something similar that he would use on Manilov, he states that “it’s not bad.”

Even for the reserved praise that Chichikov gave to the town’s representatives, Sobakevich does not hold back on calling all of them thieves and liars. Even going as far as claiming all their dishes are prepared using second- or third-rate ingredients,

which completely nullifies any praise Chichikov tried to extend. Throughout this conversation, even with our shady hero applying all the courtesy strategies to let the landowner warm up toward him, it results in the opposite effect. It is an excellent example of using politeness theory when the interlocutor does not reciprocate. Sobakevich is so uncooperative that even his wife reprimands him for his nasty allegations. This passage gets a score of five out of ten.

Sixth passage. Chapter V.

- Что ж, разве это для вас дорого? — произнес Собакевич и потом прибавил: — А какая бы, однако ж, ваша цена?
- Моя цена! Мы, верно, как-нибудь ошиблись или не понимаем друг друга, позабыли, в чем состоит предмет. Я полагаю с своей стороны, положила руку на сердце: по восьми гривен за душу, это самая красная цена!
- Эх куда хватили — по восьми гривенок!

Succeeding in a sale with Sobakevich might take everything Chichikov can offer. As expected, the stern soul owner starts aggressively haggling and raising the prices to the roof, therefore testing how much money Chichikov is willing to put on the table. This is a prime example of a negative face-threatening act, as our dead souls' trader is getting forced to get into a deal that is not beneficial to him. A confrontation follows, where the two of them start arguing regarding the pricing and whether it is justified by the underlying product, the souls of the dead serfs. Chichikov attempts to smoothen the interaction by minimizing the imposition, implying he would not go lower than eight hryvnias for a soul. This is an example of

positive politeness, where he emphasizes his goal of avoiding imposition on the hearer, Sobakevich. This passage gets a five out of ten.

Seventh passage. Chapter VI.

- Это бы еще слава Богу, – сказал Плюшкин, – да лих-то, что с того времени до ста двадцати наберется.
- Вправду? Целых сто двадцать? – воскликнул Чичиков и даже разинул несколько рот от изумления.
- Стар я, батюшка, чтобы лгать: седьмой десяток живу! – сказал Плюшкин. Он, казалось, обиделся таким почти радостным восклицанием. Чичиков заметил, что в самом деле неприлично подобное безучастие к чужому горю, и потому вздохнул тут же и сказал, что соболезнет.

In this sad chapter, we meet Plyushkin, a compulsive hoarder who is not complacent with his lot in life and is miserable daily. This is the first example when Chichikov fails at keeping both the friendly and professional courtesy he had toward people he encountered before. His greed and poshlost' get the upper hand over him when he replies excitingly to the tragedy of a man losing over a hundred and twenty serfs in a short amount of time.

Plyushkin is fast to notice his misplaced happiness that he even takes offense because of it. Our sleazeball lost face by getting too excited over the possibility of a great deal. Recognizing the missed strategy, he quickly recuperates from his indecent indifference to someone else's grief by sharing his condolences. The societal status of his interlocutor also influences why Chichikov made this misstep. His previous partners: Manilov, Nozdrev, and Sobakevich, were wealthy and well-

respected amongst the townsfolk, whereas Plyushkin is simply a failed landowner who doomed his serfs to their demise. Because Chichikov recovered in the end, this excerpt gets a score of two.

Eighth passage. Chapter VI.

- Только, батюшка, ради нищеты-то моей, уже дали бы по сорока копеек.
- Почтеннейший! — сказал Чичиков, — не только по сорока копеек, по пятисот рублей заплатил бы! с удовольствием заплатил бы, потому что вижу — почтенный, добрый старик терпит по причине собственного добродушия.
- А ей Богу, так! ей Богу, правда! — сказал Плюшкин, свесив голову вниз и сокрушительно покачав ее. — Всё от добродушия.
- Ну, видите ли, я вдруг постигнул ваш характер. Итак, почему ж не дать бы мне по пятисот рублей за душу, но... состоянья нет; по пяти копеек, извольте, готов прибавить, чтобы каждая душа обошлась, таким образом, в тридцать копеек.
- Ну, батюшка, воля ваша, хоть по две копейки пристегните:

In this part, we observe how politeness strategies can be used toward unethical means, such as Chichikov buttering Plyushkin up and swindling him out of dead souls for almost nothing. Plyushkin damages his positive face in his impoverished situation by underselling himself and pleading for Chichikov to pay forty kopeks per soul. In his true fashion, the protagonist calls Plyushkin the most venerable and swears that not only would he pay forty kopeks per soul but would give out give hundred rubles thanks to his good nature and bonhomie character. However, none of those statements are true to Chichikov's conscience. It is all strategically plotted to get the older man back in his good grace and force an unfair deal onto him. Getting Plyushkin all excited, keeping him dealing damage to himself

and his status, finally, Chichikov makes the final statement that he would pay up by the highest price, only if he had the fortune to do so. Instead, he would pay thirty kopeks, which was more than two magnitudes lower than what he promised the older man. Accepting the inevitability of the deal and damaged face, Plyushkin is ready to take the value at the lowest price. This passage will receive a score of nine.

Ninth passage. Chapter VII.

- Да вы всегда славились здоровьем, — сказал председатель, — и покойный ваш батюшка был также крепкий человек.
- Да, на медведя один хаживал, — отвечал Собакевич.
- Мне кажется, однако ж, — сказал председатель. — вы бы тоже повалили медведя, если бы захотели выйти против него.
- Нет, не повалю, — отвечал Собакевич, — покойник был меня покрепче, — и, вздохнувши, продолжал:— Нет, теперь не те люди: вот хоть и моя жизнь, что за жизнь? так как-то себе...

Let us refreshen us a little bit. This passage will explore the politeness between the town's elites. The chairperson in this excerpt flatters Sobakevich by praising his father's health. This works in the framework of a negative face-threatening act, as the chairman expresses his sentiments about the hearer's and his father's health by stating they could even topple a bear. This gets a score of seven out of ten.

Tenth passage. Chapter IX.

- Да, однако же, нашлись некоторые дамы, которые были равнодушны к нему.
- Я, Анна Григорьевна? Вот уж никогда вы не можете сказать этого, никогда, никогда! — Да я не говорю об вас, как будто, кроме вас, никого нет.
- Никогда, никогда, Анна Григорьевна! Позвольте мне вам заметить, что я очень хорошо себя знаю; а разве со стороны каких-нибудь иных дам, которые играют роль недоступных.

- Уж извините, Софья Ивановна! Уж позвольте вам сказать, что за мной подобных скандальностей никогда еще не водилось. За кем другим разве, а уж за мной нет, уж позвольте мне вам это заметить.
- Отчего же вы обиделись? ведь там были и другие дамы, были даже такие, которые первые захватили стул у дверей, чтобы сидеть к нему поближе.

Finally, in this last passage, closer to the end of the novel, we get to a conversation between two most esteemed town ladies.

Politeness in Polish

In this chapter, I am going to analyze nine passages from „Dead Souls” by Nikolai Gogol, translated to Polish by Wiktor Dłuski. My goal is to find out what linguistic means the translator used to express politeness. These means are primarily linguistic, but as we know - the language does not exist in the void. Therefore, I am taking into account also cultural factors.

Passage I

- (1) - Błagam pana, niechże się pan tak dla mnie nie krępuje, wejdę za panem - mówił Cziczikow.
- (2) - Ach, nie, nie, drogi panie, pan jest gościem - mówił Maniłow, wskazując ręką drzwi.
- (3) - Niechże pan się nie krępuje, proszę się nie krępować. Proszę przejść - mówił Cziczikow.
- (4) Nie, proszę jednak wybaczyć, ale nie pozwolę przejść za mną takiemu przyjemnemu, wykształconemu gościowi.
- (5) A czemuż to wykształconemu?... Proszę przejść.

The passage above presents a short discussion between Chichikov and Manilov. They are trying to convince one another to enter the door first. The situation is very uncomplicated and does not require extreme politeness used by both characters. The dialogue starts with Chichikov saying „ Błagam pana, niechże się pan tak dla mnie nie krępuje, wejdę za panem”. The first thing we should pay

attention to is the usage of the „pan” form. There is no „Vy” form in the Polish language, understood as a means of expressing politeness towards the interlocutor, as it is in Russian or Czech. Polish „Wy” can be used only in its basic grammatical form - indicating 2nd person of Plural. Therefore, the same level of politeness as in Russian while using the „vy” form is attained with the form of „Pan/pani.”

Another factor making the above passage polite is using certain verbs to stress the degree of goodwill. The first sentence starts with the word „błagam,” English „I beg.” There is no other reason than stressing politeness in using the strong expression of „błagać” instead of, more natural here, „proszę” (Eng. „please”) or even „nalegam” (Eng. „I insist”). „Proszę” is used in line (3) twice. In both sentences we can observe the construction „Proszę” + infinitive („proszę przejść”). The same communication would be maintained using the form „proszę” + imperative („proszę przejdź”); however, the first version is considered more polite. The reluctance to use the imperatives and employing other forms instead is also one of the ways of showing respect and politeness in the Polish language.

The other language technique applied in the passage above is using the intensifiers instead of imperative. The particle -że („niechże”) or -ż („czemuż”) are making the statement firm, but in the way, much more polite than using a simple imperative, which operated here could be considered rude.

Other factors making the passage polite are certain adjectives that refer directly to the good features of the interlocutor (line (4) - „przyjemny,” „wykształcony” - Eng.

„nice,” „educated”) and extralinguistic, cultural factor – a reference to the traditional hospitality and highest position of the guest (line (2) – „pan jest gościem”). We can also indicate the set phrase „proszę wybaczyć, ale...” (line (4)), also traditionally used as means of expressing politeness.

Numerically, this passage receives 10/10.

Passage II

- (1) A wicegubernator, prawda, jaki to miły człowiek? – powiedział Maniłow, znów z lekka mrużąc oczy.
- (2) Bardzo, bardzo godny człowiek – odrzekł Cziczikow.
- (3) No a, za pozwoleniem, jaki się panu wydał policmajster? Prawda, że to bardzo przyjemny człowiek?
- (4) Nadzwyczaj przyjemny i jaki mądry, jaki odcytany człowiek! Graliśmy z nim w wista razem z prokuratorem i prezesem sądu do najostatniejszego piania kogutów. Bardzo, bardzo godny człowiek.
- (5) A jakiego jest pan zdania o żonie policmajstra? – dodała Maniłowa – Prawda, że to nadzwyczaj uprzejma kobieta?
- (6) O, to jedna z najgodniejszych kobiet, jakie w ogóle znam – odpowiedział Cziczikow.

In the passage, we can observe the continuation of the first dialogue between Chichikov and Manilov. They are discussing other people, the crucial figures in society.

As the primary way of expressing politeness, we can again acknowledge using the form „pan” instead of the direct form „ty.” Using „pan” indicates basic respect between two sides of the conversation and that both sides keep the conversation polite. Also, once again, we can point out using certain positive adjectives as one the indicators of politeness – „przyjemny,” „odcytany,” „mądry” (sentence (4)) – „nice,” „widely-read,” „smart.” The new mean used in this particular passage is employing the superlative – in the sentence (6), Chichikov describes the policeman’s wife as

„najgodniejsza” = „the most noble.” Using a superlative here is a way of expressing politeness and respect; there is no justification for using it in any other meaning. Objectively, we cannot say if the policeman’s wife is or is not the noblest woman in the world. This exaggeration’s goal is exclusively being polite. The other linguistic technique is the repetition - in the sentence (2), it would definitely be enough if Chichikov said only „Godny człowiek” (Eng. „A noble man”) or even „Bardzo godny człowiek” = „very noble man.” Adding seemingly redundant repetition is another means used to express politeness. The exact role has the word „nadzwyczaj,” an old-fashioned way of saying „extremely” - in this case, once again, a kind of exaggeration used to show politeness.

Numerically, this passage receives 9/10.

Passage III

- (1) No więc posłuchaj, żeby ci dowieść, że żadnym liczykrupą nie jestem, ja nic za nich nie wezmę. Kup ode mnie ogiera, ja ci dam dusze na dokładkę.
- (2) Zlituj się, na co mi ogier? - powiedział Cziczikow, zaiste zdumiony taką propozycją.
- (3) Jak to na co? Przecież ja za niego dziesięć tysięcy zapłaciłem, a tobie go oddaję za cztery.
- (4) Ale na co mi ogier? Stadniny nie trzymam.
- (5) Posłuchaj, nic nie rozumiesz: przecież ja od ciebie teraz wezmę tylko trzy tysiące, a ostatni tysiąc możesz mi zapłacić później.
- (6) Ale mnie ogier niepotrzebny, Bóg z nim!

The passage above is a dialogue between Chichikov and Nozdarev. What is noticeable at first sight is an entirely different character of the conversation compared to the dialogue with Mamilov. The main difference is conducting the exchange using the „ty” form - the „pan” form is absent; instead of the sides of the dialogue, use the forms of 2nd person of Singular. This leads to the conclusion that

politeness is on a lower level in this particular passage than in previous ones. We also can observe using the imperative instead of form „proszę” + infinitive („posłuchaj” instead of „proszę posłuchać” or „kup” instead of „proszę kupić” in sentence (1)). Another factor lowering the level of politeness is the resignation from the conditional mood when asking for a favor or expressing doubt. In line (4), Chichikov says, „Ale na co mi ogier?” using no conditional. If he wanted to be polite, he would use the second conditional, a widely used means to make the statement less direct, hence - more polite. Directness itself is considered rather impolite - the interlocutor is making no effort to make the other side feel better, using smooth words. There is a vivid example of such behavior in line (5) - Nozdarev says: „Posłuchaj, nic nie rozumiesz (...)” - Eng. „Listen, you don't understand a single thing.” If Nazdarev wanted to maintain a high level of politeness he would probably say „Obawiam się, że mnie źle zrozumiałeś” = „I am afraid you did not understand me”.

At the same time, we cannot say that this dialogue is impolite - it is direct and between people who do not need to use the „pan” form between each other because their relationship is close, not because of being impolite.

Numerically, this passage receives 7/10.

Passage IV

- (1) Ech, naprawdę, co z ciebie...! Z tobą, widzę, nie można, jak wypada między dobrymi przyjaciółmi i towarzyszami, taki z ciebie naprawdę...! Teraz widać, że ty dwulicowy jesteś!
- (2) Ale co ty, czy ja dureń jestem czy jak? Sam pomyśl: po co kupować rzecz, która mi całkiem do niczego nie jest potrzebna?

(3) No, już ja cię proszę, nawet nie mów. Teraz to ja już ciebie bardzo dobrze znam. Po prostu szubrawiec z ciebie! No więc posłuchaj, chcesz, rozegramy banczek. Postawię wszystkich zmarłych na kartę i katarynkę też.

This passage continues the dialogue between Chichikov and Nozdarev. The conversation does not go directly where Nozdarev wishes, and he is frustrated. This frustration is well seen in the low level of politeness. Still, as in the previous passage, they address each other using the form of „ty.” What is new in this passage is using the words unquestionably impolite - „szubrawiec” = rogue is almost calling names. Also, using the adjective „dwulicowy” = double-faced points out a flaw directly. What also draws attention is the syntax - sentences are not grammatically correct, are not thought through, and the syntax is reversed, which may indicate indignation. In the line (1) Nozdarev says „Teraz widać, że ty dwulicowy jesteś!”. According to the rules of Polish syntax, the verb should be put before the adjective, and there is no need to indicate the subject (ty). The sentence constructed this way is received as impolite.

In line (3), we can observe using the imperative „nie mów” - „don't say anything.” Asking people to stop talking is generally considered rude, along with imperative form; this message is even stronger.

Numerically, this passage receives 3/10.

Passage V

- (1) U gubernatora jednak stół jest nie najgorszy - powiedział Cziczikow.
- (2) A wie pan, z czego oni to wszystko przyrządzają? Jeść pan nie będziesz, kiedy się dowiesz.
- (3) Nie wiem, jak się przyrządza, o tym wypowiadać się nie mogę, ale kotlety wieprzowe i ryba z wody były doskonałe.
- (4) To się panu tylko tak wydawało. Przecież ja wiem, co oni na rynku kupują. Kupi ta kanalia, kucharz, ten co się u Francuza wyuczył, kota, obedrze ze skóry i poda na stół zamiast zająca.
- (5) Fu, jakie ty nieprzyjemności mówisz! - powiedziała małżonka Sobakiewicza.

In passage V, we listen to the dialogue between Chichikov and Sobakevich. We can observe a fascinating interaction - while Chichikov decides to keep his words polite and measured, Sobakevich is far more direct and is not very careful about his comments. They keep using the „pan” form, which naturally indicates a high level of politeness. However, in line (2), we experience very unusual use of this form. Sobakevich says „Jeść pan nie będzie, kiedy się dowie” instead of definitely more polite „Kiedy pan się dowie, nie będzie pan (tego) jadł”. Sobakevich uses the vocative form of „pan” along with the verb with the ending of the 2nd person of Singular, which is polite only on the surface. Sobakevich is also very direct in his statement, which is considered impolite, as we stated earlier. In section (4), he dismissively responds to Chichikov’s opinion, saying, „To się panu tylko tak wydawało” - he does not even try to say „you were wrong” in a friendly way. Sobakevich also uses the universally considered rude words, like „kanalia” = „scum.” Chichikov, on the other hand, is trying to remain polite, elevating the level of politeness in this dialogue.

Numerically, this passage receives 5/10.

Passage VI

- (1) A czy to dla pana za drogo? - spytał Sobakiewicz, po czym dodał - A jaka, powiedzmy, byłaby pańska cena?
- (2) Moja cena! My się chyba jakoś pomyliliśmy albo nie rozumiemy się wzajemnie, zapomnieliśmy na czym sprawa polega. Ja ze swej strony uważam, rękę kładąc na sercu: osiemdziesiąt kopiejek za duszę, to najprzypoitsza cena!
- (3) A to dopiero, osiemdziesiąt kopiejek!

In this passage, we can observe that Sobakevich's attitude changes. He begins being more polite, which proves, for example, using the conditional while asking about opinion: „jaka byłaby pańska cena?”. Also, asking the interlocutor for an opinion is an expression of politeness itself. Also, Chichikov remains polite, although he seems to be frustrated. In section (2), he does not address his statement directly to Sobakevich. He does not say, „You were wrong, or you don't understand me” instead, he is using the forms of 2nd person of Plural, making an impression that is not only Sobakevich's fault but that they are in this situation together: „My się chyba jakoś pomyliliśmy albo nie rozumiemy się wzajemnie” = „We probably both were wrong or we do not understand each other.” Putting words this way makes the communication smoother, with no direct attack or accusation.

Numerically, this passage receives 6/10.

Passage VII

- (1) Gdyby tak, to jeszcze chwala Bogu - powiedział Pluszkin - Niech mnie лихо, że od tamtego czasu do stu dwudziestu się zbierze.
- (2) Naprawdę, całe sto dwadzieścia? - zawołał Cziczikow i aż usta trochę otworzył ze zdumienia.
- (3) Za stary jestem, ojczulku, żeby łąć: siódmy krzyżyk mam na karku - powiedział Pluszkin.

Passage VII is a dialogue between Plyushkin and Chichikov. Plyushkin in the social hierarchy is situated lower than Chichikov, which is reflected in their conversation. Plyushkin uses towards Chichikov the vocative form - „ojczulku,” which may be an indicator of respect. Chichikov, for the first time, is not extremely

polite - he cannot hide his excitement, while in the face of Plyushkin's tragedy, the politeness would require him to act differently.

Numerically, this passage receives 3/10.

Passage VIII

- (1) Tylko, ojczulku, dla nędzy mojej już dalibyście po czterdzieści kopiejek.
- (2) Najszacowniejszy! - powiedział Czichikow - Nie tylko po czterdzieści kopiejek, ale i po pięćset rubli bym zapłacił. Z zadowoleniem bym zapłacił, bo widzę: szacowny, zacny starzec cierpi z powodu własnej zacności.
- (3) A jak Boga kocham, że tak! Bóg widzi, że prawda - powiedział Pluszkin, zwiesiwszy głowę i z z troskaniem nią kiwając - Wszystko z zacności.
- (4) No, sam pan widzi, ja pański charakter od razu przejrzałem. No, więc czemu bym miał nie dać po pięćset rubli za duszę, ale...majątku nie ma. Po pięć kopiejek, proszę bardzo, mogę dodać, tak żeby każda dusza w ten sposób wypadła po trzydzieści kopiejek.
- (5) Ale, ojczulku, z łaski swojej, choć po dwie kopiejki dorzucić.

In the passage above, we can observe how politeness can be used for somebody's benefit and to achieve their goals. Chichikov is being very friendly and polite to Plyushkin to get what he wants. Discussing linguistic means he is using, we definitely can indicate the usage of conditional (section 2). He is also referring to Plyushkin's features, using positive adjectives to describe him: „szacowny,” „zacny” = „noble”, „worthy”. Chichikov also uses the superlative in the vocative form when he addresses Plyushkin - „Najszacowniejszy!” = „The most noble!”. They are not using the „pan” form under the same conditions - only Chichikov does that. In contrast, Plyushkin calls him in the diminutive form of „ojczulku,” which may indicate his lower position.

Numerically, this passage receives 8/10.

Passage IX

- (1) No przecież pan zawsze służył z dobrego zdrowia - powiedział prezes - i świętej pamięci ojczulek pański był krzepkim człowiekiem.
- (2) A tak, sam na niedźwiedzia chodził - odrzekł Sobakiewicz.
- (3) Wydaje mi się jednak - powiedział prezes - że pan też by niedźwiedzia powalił, gdyby zechciał pójść po niego.
- (4) Nie, nie powalę - rzekł Sobakiewicz - Nieboszczyk ode mnie mocniejszy był. - I westchnąwszy, mówił dalej - Nie, teraz ludzie już nie tacy, no choćby i moje życie, co to za życie?

Passage IX is a dialogue between two prominent, equal people - Sobakevich and the chairperson. As it is easy to predict, they are keeping the form of „pan” in their conversation in such a situation. In this passage, besides only-linguistic means of expressing politeness, we can observe how the chairman is trying to please Sobakevich by mentioning his father and listing his features. He also uses the phrase „świętej pamięci” (=Eng. „Of blessed memory”), a traditional word being used to show respect for the dead. By referring to Sobakevich’s late father, showing respect to him, and finally comparing Sobakevich to him, the chairman tries to make his interlocutor good.

Numerically, this passage receives 7/10.

Comparative analysis

This chapter is fully dedicated to analyze and compare how, and to what extent, the level of politeness was maintained in the original text and translation.

In the table below, we compare the subjective level of politeness using the numerical scale. The maximum point is 10 (=extremely polite), the minimum is 0 (=extremely impolite)

死せる魂	Original text	Translation	Difference
Passage I	9	10	1
Passage II	6	9	3
Passage III	8	7	-1
Passage IV	3	3	0
Passage V	5	5	0
Passage VI	5	6	1
Passage VII	2	3	1
Passage VIII	9	8	-1
Passage IX	7	7	0

Let us perform a statistical analysis to see whether we can conclude a significant difference between the scores above. Let us assume present a null hypothesis of the translation average score matching the original text, and the alternative hypothesis would state that it does differ. We will use the difference scores above and assume William Gosset's sample t-test statistical hypothesis test under the null hypothesis proposed above.¹ We have 9 passages, which means we have 8 degrees of freedom; call it ν . We compute the mean and standard deviation of the differences to be $\bar{x} = 0.44$ and $s_x = 1.24$, respectively. Using Student's t-test statistic, we find the t-value,

$$t = \frac{\bar{x} - 0}{s_x / \sqrt{\nu + 1}} = \frac{0.44}{1.24 / \sqrt{9}} \approx 1.065.$$

Using the t value of 1.065, we can find its respective p-value to determine whether the change in politeness was significantly observed in our sample.² We find,

¹ Student's t-test distribution for sample statistics, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Student's_t-test

² The importance of p-value to the null hypothesis, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P-value

$$p = 2 \times \Pr(T[v = 8] \geq t) = 2 \times \Pr(T[v = 8] \geq 1.065) \approx 2 \times 0.147 = 0.294.$$

This concludes to be a 29.4% confidence rate of politeness scores differing in a major way; therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. We observe that in both the Russian and Polish versions of Dead souls, politeness scores are significantly similar.

There are a few conclusions we can draw from the presented data. The general conclusion is that the fluctuations between our subjective impressions are rather little - usually no more than +/- one point. This is undoubtedly proof that the translator successfully transferred a certain level of politeness from one language to another.

In Passage I, we are facing the highest level of politeness from all of the presented examples. However, the same goal is achieved by using different means. As a part of the Russian way of expressing politeness, Manilov is addressing Chichikov using his patronym - Pavel Ivanovich. This, translated to Polish, would be confusing since the Polish language does not use patronyms. Still, the translator had to maintain the same very high level of politeness. To do that, he decided to use the addressative form of „szanowny panie” - which is not a part of direct translation but serves as a great substitute in terms of politeness. Using the form „pan” is a natural choice in Polish conditions as well.

Passage II is the one where we assessed the level of politeness with the most difference. Sandy, when deciding to give this passage 6 out of 10 points, writes about the lack of direct politeness actions in the original text. In Polish translation, the level of politeness maintains very high - using a lot of positive adjectives (also as superlatives) and a kind of exaggerated kindness makes this particular passage may seem more polite in Polish than in Russian.

In passage III, we both assessed as very polite. In the Polish version, the dialogue remains polite even without the form „pan” - but because of the lack of this form, I decided to subtract one point on my scale. My subjective, native-Polish speaker opinion, which, however, stems from the experience of using Polish in both formal and informal ways, is that resigning from „pan” form is making a whole conversation less formal. Even if it stays polite, the level of politeness is lowered because of lacking formality.

Passages IV and V, we both decided to score with equal points. Passage IV is one of the dialogues we assessed as least polite. In Polish translation, the translator decided to use the form „ty” instead of „pan”, but, as I pointed out above, this alone is not enough to make the conversation impolite. The other factors taken into account while assessing this passage as impolite were pejorative epithets (in both versions, like ‘дурак’ or ‘dureń’) and intensive use of imperative. As an interesting

discovery, I would like to indicate the reverse syntax in the Polish version, which is making the whole communication almost rude. In Passage V, we both point out extralinguistic factors as a reason for lowering the level of politeness in the dialogue.

In Passage VI, one of the factors present in both language versions and making them more polite is the presence of conditional. Conditional, hence making the statement less firm, apparently is one of the reasons why we both decided that this particular passage deserves to be described as „polite”, even though the sides of the dialogue are arguing.

Passage VII we both decided to assess as „rather impolite”, giving it only 2/10 and 3/10. What is interesting is that what decided to give this passage such a low note are not strictly linguistic factors but the fact that Chichikov is being happy because of the Plyushkin’s loss. In both cultures, Russian and Polish, such behavior is received as very impolite.

Passage VIII and IX, once again, we assessed almost equally. Both in the Russian and Polish versions, we observe the usage of similar linguistic means, which make the dialogues polite on a comparable level.

Conclusion

The main goal of the analysis of the particular passages of „Dead souls” was to examine and compare how politeness is expressed in two languages - Russian and

Polish. By „how” we mean what factors - both linguistic and extra-linguistic - were used to maintain the same level of politeness in both versions of the novel.

Moreover, as the socio-linguistic part of this research, we decided to analyze mentioned passages with regard to politeness theory.

The main conclusion seems to be the fact that the linguistic and cultural factors which make the particular expressions being received as polite or impolite are similar in both languages. As main factors we indicated, among others, using positive adjectives, using conditional, avoiding using imperative, and using proper syntax. However, due to different cultures, some of the cultural aspects of politeness could not be translated directly. The most vivid example is the fact of using patronyms in Russian culture, which are completely absent in Polish conditions. The translator decided that the same role in maintaining the level of politeness expressed by using patronyms may play using the form „pan”, often followed by „szanowny”.

The main conclusion of this project seems to be the fact that expressing politeness in two different languages (even if being close to each other genetically) is not only a matter of language but also culture and other non-linguistic factors. At the same time, it is possible, taking into account all possible differences, to transfer the same level of politeness from one language to another, using the means (again, both linguistic and extra-linguistic) proper to this particular language and culture.

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