

М. Овсянкина (ГУО «Гимназия № 2 г. Витебска»)

А. С. Миненко (научный руководитель)

**CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES AS A GENRE OF PUBLIC
RELATIONS DISCOURSE:
A CROSS-LINGUISTIC COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS
(A CASE STUDY OF ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN)**

The theoretical foundation of the study is firmly grounded in the scholarly contributions of S. V. Ponomarev, A. N. Chumikov, O. G. Filatova, I. V. Aleshina, M. A. Shishkina, A. D. Krivonosov, alongside numerous other luminaries. In the Western academic sphere, the work of S. Black, F. Buari, and S. Catlip stands as noteworthy contributions.

The object of the research is Russian and English public relations texts situated within the congratulatory genre.

The subject of the research is the structural attributes and linguistic tools that embody congratulations in both Russian and English.

The overarching aim of the research endeavor is the determination of the compositional structure and the specific linguistic apparatus underpinning congratulatory messages within the realm of public relations texts.

Guided by these aim, our research has articulated specific objectives to navigate the complexities of our inquiry. These objectives span a conceptual exploration of PR texts, identification of genre-stylistic diversity within them, analysis of linguistic devices in congratulatory messages, deepening insights into cultural nuances, deciphering the role of congratulatory messages in PR communication, and culminating in the provision of strategic recommendations. To achieve these objectives, we have adopted a rigorous methodological triad comprising content analysis, comparative analysis, and discourse analysis.

The findings stand poised to expand the cognitive horizons of learners, foregrounding the cultural subtleties enveloping the act of congratulation within both linguistic realms – a pivotal tenet for the curation of public relations texts that resonate harmoniously with their intended recipients. Noteworthy pedagogical initiatives have been undertaken, exemplified by their implementation in the educational milieu of Gymnasium № 2, wherein practical recommendations have been transmuted into a comprehensive guide facilitating the creation of effective congratulatory messages. This guide has been strategically incorporated into the curriculum, bolstered by a diverse array of scenarios, contextual situations, sample PR congratulatory texts, and an interactive online learning tool (Bamboozle) tailored for Grades 10–11.

The first section lays the groundwork for our investigation where our research takes us through the nuanced landscape of defining PR texts, elucidating the diverse approaches that scholars and practitioners have embraced to encapsulate their essence.

A. D. Krivonosov presents a comprehensive perspective, characterizing “the PR text as a form of mass communication text existing both in written form on traditional media and in the digital realm, with the overarching goal of shaping or augmenting the reputational capital of a foundational PR entity”. Thus, the construct of a “PR text” is manifest as a communication artifact intended for a broad audience. Disseminated through both conventional print and electronic media, its fundamental objective lies in the dissemination of information pertaining to a public entity.

Contemporary scholarly discourse has witnessed significant endeavors to classify the multifarious genres encapsulated within the domain of Public Relations (PR) texts. The taxonomy of PR texts is grounded in several salient criteria, chiefly including complexity, intended recipient, and modality of dissemination. Within this contextual framework, S. V. Ponomarev advances a typological classification, categorizing “PR texts into three primary groups that cater to distinct audiences: materials tailored for media outlets, textual forms harmonized with corporate communication strategies, texts designed for diffusion to a broader public sphere”.

The landscape of PR texts traverses an expansive spectrum of genres, each strategically orchestrated to cater to diverse communication needs. These genres play an integral role in engendering effective relationships with business partners and the wider public, underscoring their indispensability within the realm of public interaction.

Our next step was to embark on a cross-linguistic journey so as to dissect the structural underpinnings of congratulatory messages in English and Russian. Our exploration reveals the compositional patterns that distinguish these messages, unveiling linguistic devices that are distinct yet remarkably coherent in conveying felicitations.

Through meticulous analysis, we uncover the common threads that bind congratulatory messages, transcending linguistic boundaries. Whether in English or Russian, these messages share a core structure that underscores the universality of the congratulatory act.

Congratulatory messages in the Russian language adhere to a prescribed format encompassing the following indispensable elements: Addressee's addressing, Congratulatory segment, Exposition segment, Optional component, Sender's sign-off.

Correspondingly, the compositional configuration of congratulatory messages in the English language adheres to a subject-verb-object structure. Predominantly, the subject pertains to the individual or collective being felicitated, the verb adopts a form of "congratulate" or its synonymous variants, and the object signifies the occasion prompting commendation. Optional inclusions might serve to augment contextual understanding or accentuate specific facets of congratulation, concluding invariably with the sender's seal of endorsement.

The corpus-based analysis, drawing from diverse sources, identified distinct lexical-semantic dominants in Russian congratulatory messages. Themes encompassing achievement, good wishes, warmth of relationships and love, joy and good mood emerged as prominent. Each theme, through its carefully chosen lexemes, crafts a multifaceted narrative that resonates with the cultural and emotional context of the recipient. For instance: "Пусть наступившая весна подарит вам радость, хорошее настроение и улыбку!"

In juxtaposition, English congratulatory expressions predominantly gravitate toward themes of elation, accomplishment, triumph, contentment, exuberance, serenity, and pride. Collectively, these thematic focal points extol the recipient's achievements, resonating with a chorus of celebration and affirmation. "From the bottom of our hearts, we congratulate you on the magnificent result!"

Evidently, the cultural backdrop casts a significant shadow on the nuances of congratulatory discourse. The interplay between linguistic tools and cultural contexts shapes the selection of terms, tonal nuances, and thematic underpinnings.

In the final section, we delve into the cultural dimensions that shape congratulatory messages and explore their broader implications within the realm of public relations.

Through meticulous analysis, our study uncovers a plethora of cultural distinctions that distinguish English and Russian-speaking milieus in their approach to the conveyance of congratulatory messages. Primarily, we discern that English-speaking societies predominantly employ a more direct, succinct, and unambiguous lexicon in their congratulatory discourse. Exempli gratia, a quintessential English message may read, Congratulations on your promotion! Well done! This concise utterance zeroes in solely on the celebrant, with unwavering focus.

In stark contrast, Russian-speaking communities tend to embrace a lexicon characterized by intricacy, and lyricism within their felicitations. A representative Russian message might read, «Дорогой друг, в этот особенный день мы хотим поздравить тебя с повышением. Пусть твой успех продолжает расти, как дерево с сильными корнями и красивыми ветвями». This expansive expression conveys more than the surface message, intertwining emotions with the words themselves.

Another compelling cultural variance is encapsulated in the custom of extending congratulations not just to the primary celebrant but also to their familial and social milieu, a practice particularly resonant in Russian-speaking cultures. This phenomenon mirrors the collectivist ethos inherent to Russian culture, where the cohesive unit takes precedence over individual achievements.

Contrastingly, English-speaking societies tend to channel their congratulatory expressions predominantly towards the individual in question, reflecting the individualistic orientation pervasive in such cultures.

The domain of congratulatory messages occupies a pivotal role within the realm of public relations communication. These messages function as potent conduits through which appreciation, recognition, and encouragement are extended to individuals and entities during pivotal junctures, including birthdays, achievements, milestones, and anniversaries. Within the intricate fabric of public relations, congratulatory messages serve as a compelling instrument for nurturing and fortifying relationships with stakeholders – ranging from clients and partners to employees and media entities. These messages, serving as bridges between organizations and their stakeholders, carry the potential to foster positive relations, enhance brand image, and exhibit cultural sensitivity.

However, an indispensable caveat warrants acknowledgment – congratulatory messages must emanate from a place of genuineness and sincerity. The moment such messages are perceived as disingenuous or animated by ulterior motives, the potential looms large for them to degenerate into instruments that undermine stakeholder relationships.

In conclusion, our research journey has traversed the interplay of linguistic structures, cultural nuances, and strategic communication within congratulatory messages. Our findings unveil the intricate layers of communication that transcend language, offering insights into the universality of the congratulatory act while acknowledging the distinct cultural shades it acquires. Moreover, this study

illuminates the integral role of congratulatory messages in the realm of public relations, positioning them as conduits that bridge cultures, build relationships, and resonate with diverse audiences.