
THE ASPECTS OF POLICE OFFICER'S COMMUNICATION CULTURE (BASED ON TV SHOW „THE COPS“)

Rasa Dobržiškienė*

**Mykolo Romerio universiteto Viešojo saugumo fakulteto Humanitarinių mokslų katedra
Putvinskio g. 70, LT-44211 Kaunas
Telefonas +370 37 30310
El. paštas: rasa.dobrziškiene@mruni.eu*

Annotation. People use communication to exchange the information, to socialize, to share their views, impressions, etc. One of the instances is the communication of police officers with the society under various circumstances. In this case both proper speaking and professional etiquettes are important. One of the core elements determining success of communication is saying hellos and goodbyes properly. These are normally used to start and end the conversation. The study is aimed at finding out if police officers meet the requirements set for them by the etiquette, if they communicate in a polite and formal manner, if they follow at least minimum communication respect regardless of the social status of their collocutors, and if they observe the communication culture. Forms of saying hello and goodbye normally depend on the person's age, closeness of communication, position occupied, etc. Police officers must obvious communicate in a polite and formal manner just as required by different official documents regulating their duties. The pilot study and the review of some series of TV show 'The Cops' led to the conclusion that in most of the cases police officers followed the established rules of speaking and conduct, said hello by using official forms such as 'Good afternoon' and 'Good evening', and only in some cases police officers did not use greeting at all or used familiar forms thereof. Specificity of reportages and situations involved determined that forms of saying goodbye remained unaddressed in this particular study.

Keywords: police officers, communication skills, ethic of language, TV show "The cops".

INTRODUCTION

The communication plays a vital role in human life. People use communication to exchange the information, to socialize, to share their views, impressions, etc. An extremely significant role is played by the communication during interaction among unfamiliar persons, representatives of distinct institutions. One of the instances is the communication of police officers with the society under various circumstances. In this case both proper speaking and professional etiquettes are important. The latter is defined in various documents, meanwhile speaking etiquette remains a matter of education in general, a part of general culture. Police officers must communicate with any person in a polite and professional manner, regardless of the social group this person belongs to, and always follow the rules of communication culture. One of the core elements determining success of communication is saying hellos and goodbyes properly. These are normally used to start and end the conversation. The success of any further communication is especially dependent on the manner in which the communication is started.

In that regard, **the subject** of this paper is the relation of a police officer's speaking etiquette to his/her ethics in TV show 'The Cops' (Lith., Orig.: *Farai*). **The objective** – to assess the speaking etiquette of police officers in realistic situations. To achieve this objective the following **tasks** are set: 1) to review the meaning of speaking etiquette in a process of communication; 2) to discuss the significance of the Code of Ethics of police officers in a process of communication; 3) to study the spread of the relation of speaking ethics to conduct ethics in a realistic situation.

Descriptive and analytical **methods** were used. The pilot research was undertaken based on the reportages shown in the TV show 'The Cops'. The latest series of September-October 2017 were viewed containing 5 to 7 reportages each.

COMMUNICATION AND SPEAKING ETIQUETTE

Most of the speaking (or conversation) etiquette comprises components of everyday communication. On the other hand, they form a foundation for a successful communication. Greeting, saying goodbye, wishing somebody something, addressing others, etc. – all of it determines the attitude of communication participants towards each other. Speaking or conversation etiquette should also include the choice of proper intonation – the tone of our communication determines how someone else sees us and what judgement he/she will form about us. In everyday non-public communication, all the above-mentioned determines only the judgment about the person, enables formation of the attitude towards him/her, deciding if we want to keep communicating with this person further or not. However, when in a public sphere, this is going to determine formation of the image of the institution represented by one of the participants of the communication. In public institutions, aspects of communication and service are of huge importance, ways of resolving conflict situations, etc. Society forms the impression regarding certain institution depending on the communication with its employees. For this reason, recently public relations became highly important for every public institution. However, they will not be a rescue, if the society keeps spreading an opposite word of mouth. This reveals a highly important role that the communication plays in social life although it seems to be a simple, everyday phenomenon¹. According to J. Almonaitienė, people tend to satisfy their basic needs through communication: exchange in information; communication enables to better understand and know yourself; communication is being promoted by so-called social needs.²

¹ Plg. Almonaitienė, J. *Bendravimo psichologija*, Kaunas: Technologija, 2007, p. 9.

² *Ibid.*, p. 11.

Similar communication aspects are distinguished by other scholars such as Misevičius and Urbonienė³, Velentzas, Dr. Georgia Broni⁴, Leonas Jovaiša⁵, I. Jansonė⁶, B. Railienė⁷. Interpersonal interaction is extremely important when comprehending your interlocutor is critical as well as conveying information clearly and receiving the same back. And when the communication performs a managerial function, in other words, when the communication is defined as a proper spread of information by an organized subject (enterprise, association, etc.) both inside of it and outside which is necessary for the members of this organization to properly conceive the processes in progress and bear the responsibility⁸, it can be seen as the professional communication. It is extremely important in the analysis of police officers' communication with citizens. A properly communicating police officer stays on a safe side, as the probability of physical confrontation is reduced. Meanwhile, the police officer who lacks proper communication skills can be seen as hostile and opposing while shaping a poor attitude of society towards police work.⁹ In their communication with citizens, police officers often face difficult issues that can only be resolved having a sound psychological background as they often have to encourage citizens do what they normally would not be willing to; more often than representatives of any other profession police officers increasingly have to deal with persons who possess personal qualities that make communication even more complicated; a policeman often has to have a contact with citizens under unfavourable conditions when there's no time for getting to know him/her better and interaction takes place under psychological stress.¹⁰ The police officer is believed to achieve better performance in his/her occupational activities when opts for polite communication, increases prestige of the police, improves the image of this entire institution, discourages and prevents provoking discontent of the general society.

In respect that every institution is willing to improve its image in the eyes of society and seeks its personnel to help it to do so, for this purpose various regulations, rule books, and codes

³ Misevičius, V. ir Urbonienė, R. Dalykinio bendravimo pagrindai, Šiauliai: Šiaulių universiteto leidykla, 2006, p. 9.

⁴ Velentzas, J., Broni G., Communication cycle: Definition, process, models and examples, Technological Institute of Western Macedonia, <http://www.wseas.us/e-library/conferences/2014/Istanbul/FINANCE/FINANCE - 17.pdf> [žr. 2016-10-01].

⁵ Jovaiša, L. Ugdymo mokslas ir praktika, Vilnius: Agora, 2001, p. 17.

⁶ Jansonė, I. Komunikaciniai testai: suprantama ir nesuprantama. Meniniai tekstai ir komunikaciniai tekstai. Mokslinės konferencijos tekstai, Šiauliai, 1997.

⁷ Railienė, B. Komunikacija mokslinėje veikloje. Komunikacijos ir informacijos procesai, Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla, 1996, p. 121.

⁸ Stoner, A. F., Freeman, F. E., Gilbert, D. R. Jr. Vadyba, Kaunas: Poligrafija ir informatika, 2000.

⁹ Patvirtinta Lietuvos policijos generalinio komisaro 2011 m. birželio 13 d. įsakymu Nr. 5-V-532, Kvalifikacijos tobulinimo programa „Bendravimas su asmenimis“, Vilnius, 2011, p. 2.

¹⁰ Justickis, V. ir Navikas, G. Bendravimo psichologija, Vilnius: Lietuvos policijos akademija, 1995, p. 13.

are introduced defining conduct of staff members at work and after work. The institution of a police has approved the Code for Conduct of Police Officers¹¹ that besides the instructions on official duties the information regarding speaking and behaviour etiquette is presented as well. For instance, it claims that “4.13 police officers must interact with other persons in a polite and business-like manner, always remain self-contained and discreet; 4.25 continuously improve their language and communication culture; 4.28 follow the accepted principles of morality, to endeavour to set an example for others through personal behaviours”. One of the politeness forms characteristic for both formal, official and familiar communication is saying hellos and goodbyes properly. These are used to start and end any conversation. Another important thing is respect. V. Žemaitis distinguishes between three following types of respect: basic respect (equally shown to any individual), exceptional respect (for persons preeminent in their achievements and merits), and minimum respect (for rakes, robbers, hooligans, etc.). As the author puts it, even such persons have to be respected more than they deserve it¹². The Lithuanian Code of Ethics for Police Officers also points out that police officer must unconditionally respect every person regardless of his/her nationality or origin, social status, political, religious or philosophical attitudes¹³; must act honestly, with respect for the society, properly take into consideration situations when facing groups of most vulnerable persons”¹⁴. Even the Specification of Police Patrol Operation states that communication culture is one of the criteria used for evaluation of patrol’s performance (Clause 104.5). One of the main features of speaking etiquette and general etiquette is saying hellos and goodbyes. Certain forms thereof are used depending on the age, closeness of communication, family relationships, subordination, etc. Taking into account the fact that communication by police officers is characterised by formality and keeping distance, as most of the individuals they have to communicate with are complete strangers, official forms of saying hellos and goodbyes should prevail. On the other hand, sometimes on purpose of extracting relevant information police officers opt to imitate friendly interaction, and consequently use more familiar forms, too.

¹¹ *Lietuvos policijos pareigūnų etikos kodeksas*, TAR, <https://www.e-ar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/dd8b5be083c211e5b7eba10a9b5a9c5f>

¹² Žemaitis, V. *Elgesio kultūra: žodynelis*, Vilnius: Lietuvos filosofijos ir sociologijos institutas, 1998, p. 52.

¹³ *Lietuvos policijos pareigūnų etikos kodeksas*, TAR, <https://www.e-ar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/dd8b5be083c211e5b7eba10a9b5a9c5f>

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

EXPRESSION OF GREETING AND SAYING GOODBYE BY POLICE OFFICERS IN THEIR OFFICIAL ACTIVITIES

Assessment of police officers' communication culture is made through analysis of forms of saying hello and goodbye and by discussing the intonation used for this purpose. The study is aimed at finding out if police officers meet the requirements set for them by the etiquette, if they communicate in a polite and formal manner, if they follow at least minimum communication respect regardless of the social status of their collocutors, and if they observe the communication culture.

For the purpose of the study, total 8 series of TV show 'The Cops' were reviewed in the period from September to October 2017. Each series contained 5–7 episodes of incidents. This show usually features various quarrels, domestic violence, fighting in a public place, thefts, cases of hooliganism, etc. Depending on the situation, police officers have to communicate with the representatives of at least two of three possible groups of persons: victims, infringers and witnesses. Each of these groups may respectively lead to a different form of communication to be chosen. Of course, there's no time for police officers to say hello or goodbye when they have to promptly respond to acts being committed by violent and aggressive persons. Sometimes, assessment is mad even more complicated by specific nuances of TV show arrangement, when the incident or conversation is being shown not from its very beginning. Such case were not addressed in this particular study. Analysis of the reviewed reportages suggests that in most of the cases police officers do say hello and often they are the first ones to do so. It's worth noting that only one officer out of two makes greeting – the one who is the first to arrive to the person; the second one does not greet him/her. Regarding the forms of greeting, the official ones prevail as follows: 'Good afternoon', 'Good evening', depending on the time of the day. Sometimes a neutral form of greeting 'Hello' is used, too. Even when the angry man asked 'What do you want' while swearing through half-opened door, the police officer managed to remain formal and polite, and first of all greeted him by saying 'Good evening'. Once, when addressing a potential violator the police officer is observed using irregular form of greeting 'Hello, Mister', which is rather familiar, sort of inconsonant with the appeal. In this situation, a little bit ironic shade can be envisaged as the greeting is made only for the sake of formality, but not because of the respect for that person. However, no more such cases were observed. Police officers were observed to greet both victims and suspected infringers, even witnesses and representatives of other institutions (for example, emergency medics) in the same manner. However, there were

several cases when police officers did not greet at all. For instance, the victim and even the perpetrator say hello, but none of police officers tend to respond. There were several cases when police officers approached and directly asked what happened, etc., i.e., started conversation not with a greeting. Such a behaviour was observed in respect of both perpetrators and victims. Thus, a conclusion follows that police officers say or do not say hello to persons involved in an incident not based on the social status of the latter but rather depending on their own norms of communication ethics. Such police officers cannot be considered as respecting the rules of etiquette, moreover such a behaviour shows that their polite and formal communication has some shortcomings. They do not observe the communication culture. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to assess another aspect of communication culture – saying goodbye – due to the structure of reportages or the situations involved. Reportages often seemed to lack this final part, and sometimes the very situation occurred so that in the end there was nobody to say goodbye to. This is especially true when participants of incidents are transported to some police headquarters. It can be assumed that even in cases when there is a potential space for saying goodbye, police officers do not do so, while ending conversations in giving some advices, orders, etc.

CONCLUSIONS

Communication plays an important role in everyone's life both when interacting with close people and strangers. Communication enables individuals not only to convey a particular information but also to show their attitude towards the person they are communicating with. Observing the conversation etiquette together with the professional and general etiquette is extremely important for the representatives of public services. Their communication determines attitude of the society towards the entire institution they belong to. One of the core elements of successful communication is greeting and saying goodbye properly. These elements are supposed to express the attitude towards the collocutor, too. Forms of saying hello and goodbye normally depend on the person's age, closeness of communication, position occupied, etc. Police officers must obvious communicate in a polite and formal manner just as required by different official documents regulating their duties. The pilot study and the review of some series of TV show 'The Cops' led to the conclusion that in most of the cases police officers followed the established rules of speaking and conduct, said hello by using official forms such as 'Good afternoon' and 'Good evening', and only in some cases police officers did not use

greeting at all or used familiar forms thereof. Specificity of reportages and situations involved determined that forms of saying goodbye remained unaddressed in this particular study.

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POLICIJOS PAREIGŪNŲ BENDRAVIMO KULTŪROS ASPEKTAI (TV LAIDOS „FARAI“ ATVEJIS)

Rasa Dobržinskienė*

Mykolas Romeris universitetas

Santrauka

Komunikacijos vaidmuo žmonių gyvenime atlieka labai svarbią funkciją. Ypač svarbus komunikacijos vaidmuo, kai bendrauja nepažįstami asmenys, įvairių įstaigų atstovai. Vienas iš tokių atvejų yra policijos pareigūnų ir visuomenės bendravimas įvairiais atvejais. Čia svarbus yra tiek kalbos etiketas, tiek profesinis etiketas. Pastarąjį apibrėžia įvairūs dokumentai, o kalbos etiketas lieka bendro išsilavinimo, bendrosios kultūros dalis. Policijos pareigūnai privalo bendrauti su visais asmenimis dalykiškai ir mandagiai, nepaisydami asmenų socialinės grupės, laikytis bendravimo kultūros. Vieni iš pagrindinių sėkmingos komunikacijos elementų – pasisveikinimas ir atsisveikinimas. Jais dažniausiai pradedamas ir baigiamas pokalbis. Atsižvelgiant į tai, šio straipsnio objektas – kalbos etiketo ir policijos pareigūno etikos santykis TV laidoje „Farai“. Tikslas – įvertinti policijos pareigūnų kalbos etiketą realiose situacijose. Tikslui pasiekti keliami šie uždaviniai: 1) apžvelgti kalbos etiketo reikšmę komunikacijos procese; 2) aptarti policijos pareigūnų etikos kodekso svarbą komunikacijos procese; 3) iširti kalbos ir elgesio etikos santykio sklaidą realioje situacijoje.

Bendraujant su piliečiais, dažnai policijos pareigūnui iškyla sudėtingų problemų, kurioms spręsti būtinas stiprus psichologinis pasiruošimas, nes dažnai tenka skatinti piliečius daryti tai, ką jie ne visada

norėtų daryti; policininkui daug dažniau nei kitų profesijų atstovams tenka susidurti su žmonėmis, kurie turi sunkinančių bendravimą asmenybės ypatybių; policininkui tenka nepalankiomis aplinkybėmis palaikyti kontaktą su piliečiais, kai nėra laiko geriau pažinti pilietį, bendraujama psichologinės įtampos sąlygomis. Mandagiai ir dalykiškai bendraujantis policininkas pasieks geresnių savo veiklos rezultatų, kels policijos prestižą, gerins visos institucijos įvaizdį, neskatins ir neprovokuos visuomenės nepasitenkinimo.

Paprastai sveikinimosi ir atsisiveikinimo formos priklauso nuo pašnekovo amžiaus, bendravimo artumo, užimamų pareigų ir pan. Akivaizdu, kad policijos pareigūnams, siekiant būtų dalykiškiems ir mandagiems, kaip to reikalauja įvairūs jų tarnybą reglamentuojantys dokumentai, reikėtų bendrauti dalykiškai ir mandagiai. Atlikus žvalgomąjį tyrimą ir peržiūrėjus TV laidos „Farai“ serijas, galima daryti išvadą, kad daugeliu atvejų policijos pareigūnai laikosi kalbos ir elgesio taisyklių, sveikinasi vartodami oficialias formas „Laba diena“, „Labas vakaras“, tik kai kuriais atvejais policijos pareigūnai nesisveikina arba vartoja familiarias svikinimosi formas. Dėl reportažų ir rodomų situacijų specifikos atsisveikinimo formų liko neištirtos.

Pagrindinės sąvokos: komunikacija, policijos poareigūnas, kalbos etiketas, TV laida „Farai“.

Rasa Dobržinskienė*, Mykolo Romerio universiteto Viešojo saugumo fakulteto Humanitarinių mokslų katedros lektorė. Mokslinių tyrimų kryptys: kalbos kultūra, specialybės kalbos kultūra, pragmatinė lingvistika, televizijos ir spaudos reklamų kalba.

Rasa Dobržinskienė*, Mykolas Romeris University, Faculty of Public Security, Department of Humanities, lecturer. Research interests: culture of language, professional language, pragmatic linguistics, language of advertisements and commercials.