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WOMEN'S SURPRISE IN AMERICAN AND KYRGYZ CULTURE

This article is devoted to the expression of surprise of both women and men in American and Kyrgyz culture. It can be suggested as the way to promote professional development among EFL teachers at the lessons of intercultural communication, stylistics, grammar and practical phonetics.

Key words: surprise, neutral/moderate, pleasant, unpleasant, positive, or negative.

Эта статья посвящена способам выражения удивления как женщинами, так и мужчинами в американской и кыргызской культурах. Эту методику можно использовать для профессионального развития среди учителей по направлению (английский язык как иностранный) на уроках межкультурной коммуникации, стилистики, грамматики и практической фонетики.

Ключевые слова: удивление, нейтральные/умеренные, приятные, неприятные, положительные или отрицательные.

Surprise is a brief mental and physiological state, a response of experienced animals and humans as the result of an unexpected event. Surprise can be neutral/moderate, pleasant, unpleasant, positive, or negative. Surprise is intimately connected to the idea of acting in accordance with a set of rules. When the rules of reality generating events of daily life separate from the rule-of-thumb expectations, surprise is the outcome. Surprise represents the difference between expectations and reality, the gap between our assumptions and expectations about worldly events and the way that those events actually turn out. This gap can be deemed an important foundation on which new findings are based since surprises can make people aware of their own ignorance. The acknowledgement of ignorance, in turn, can mean a window to new knowledge. Surprise can also occur due to a violation of expectancies. The Expectancy Violation Theory (EVT) says that three factors influence a person's expectations: interacting variables, environmental variables, and variables related to the nature of the interaction or interaction variables.

- Interacting variables involve traits of the persons involved in the communication and in this instance the communication leading to surprise, including: race, sex, socio-economic status, age, and appearance. Environmental variables that effect the communication of surprise include the nature of the surroundings of the interaction.

- Interaction variables that influence surprise include: social norms, cultural norms, physiological influences, biological influences and unique individual behavioral patterns.

Surprise may occur due to a violation of one, two, or a combination of all three factors.

Surprise does not always have to have a negative valence. EVT proposes that expectancy's will influence the outcome of the communication as a confirmation, behaviors within the expected range, or violation, behaviors outside the expected range. EVT also postulates that positive interactions will increase the level of attraction of the violator, where as negative violations decrease the attraction. Positive violations would then cause positive surprise, such as a surprise birthday party, and negative violations would cause negative surprise, such as a parking ticket. Positive violations of surprise may enhance credibility, power, attraction, and persuasiveness, where as negative violations of surprise may reduce credibility, power, attraction, and persuasiveness.

Surprise is expressed in the face by the following features:

- Eyebrows that are raised so they become curved and high.
- Horizontal wrinkles across the forehead.
- Open eyelids: the upper lid is raised and the lower lid is drawn down.
- Pupil dilation or pupil constriction.
- Dropped jaw so that the lips and teeth are parted, with no tension around the mouth.

Spontaneous, involuntary surprise is often expressed for only a fraction of a second. It may be followed immediately by the emotion of fear, joy or confusion. The intensity of the surprise is associated with how much the jaw drops, but the mouth may not open at all in some cases. The raising of the eyebrows, at least momentarily, is the most distinctive and predictable sign of surprise.

Pupil dilation and constriction can determine the valence of surprise from the action to the

reaction of the individual. Positive valence to surprise is shown through a dilation or expansion of the pupil; where as negative valence in surprise is associated with pupil constriction.

Non-verbal responses to surprise can also be affected by voice inflection, distance, time, environment, volume, rate, quality, pitch, speaking style, and even the level of eye contact made by an individual trying the cause a surprise. These non-verbal cues help to define whether the perceived surprise will have a positive or negative valence and to what degree the surprise will be induced by the individual.

Linguistics can play a major role in the formulation of surprise. The Language expectancy theory (LET) states that people develop norms and expectations concerning appropriate usage of a language in a given situation. When norms or expectations of verbal language are violated surprise may occur. The EVT model supports that expectations can be violated verbally and this violation may cause a surprise within the individual. Expectations of verbal language that may lead to surprise may include but are not limited to, expletives, shouts, screams, and gasps. The aforementioned expectations of verbal language are more closely associated to negative expectancies of surprise, but positive surprise can occur from verbal interaction as well. A positive violation of expectations that could result in a positive surprise may include a low credibility source making a persuasive argument that leads to the change of beliefs or emotions thus enhancing the speakers' credibility. The move from a low credibility source to a high credibility source can elicit a positive surprise among individuals.

I would like to emphasize the positive surprise and the smile as the result of the positive surprise.

Smiles are not the small and innocuous things they appear to be: Too many of us smile to show what's really on our minds. Indeed, the success of the women's movement might be measured by the sincerity-and lack of it-in our smiles. Despite all the work, Amy Cunningham wrote: "We American women, have done to get and maintain full legal control of our bodies, not to mention our destinies, we still don't seem to be fully in charge of a couple of small muscle groups in our faces". We smile so often and so promiscuously-when we're angry, when we're tense, when we're with children, when we're surprised, when we're interviewing for a job, when we're meeting

candidates to employ-that the Smiling Woman has become a peculiarly American archetype. This isn't entirely a bad thing, of course. A smile lightens the load, diffuses unpleasantness, and redistributes nervous tension. Women doctors smile more than their male counterparts, studies show, and are better liked by their patients. Oscar Wilde's old saw that "a woman's face is her work of fiction" is often quoted to remind us that what's on the surface may have little connection to what we're feeling. What is it in our cultures that keep our smiles on automatic pilot? Psychologists and psychiatrists have noted that even babies also smile and laugh with relief when they realize that something they thought might be dangerous is not dangerous after all. Or 3 year old kid is surprised when it sees the candy and smiles in reaction of taking it. Evidently, a woman's happy, willing deference is something the world wants visibly demonstrated. Woe to the waitress, the personal assistant or receptionist, the flight attendant, or any other woman in the line of public service whose smile is not offered up to the boss or client as proof that there are no storm clouds-no kids to support, no sleep that's been missed-rolling into the sunny workplace landscape. Women are expected to smile no matter where they line up on the social, cultural, or economic ladder: College professors are criticized for not smiling, political spouses are pilloried for being too serious, and women's roles in films have historically been smiling ones. Its little wonder that men on the street still call out, "Hey, baby, surprise, smile! Life's not that bad, is it?" to women passing by, lost in thought.

Europeans visiting the United States for the first time are often surprised at just how often Americans smile. But when you look at their history, the relentless good humor falls into perspective. In countries with a more rigid class structure or caste system, fewer people are as captivated by the idea of quickly winning friends and influencing people. Here in the States, however, every stranger is a potential associate. American smiles bring new people on board. The American smile is a democratic version of a curtsy or doffed hat.

African-American males stopped smiling on the streets in the 1960s, happily aware of the unsettling effect this action had on the white population. The image of the simpleminded, smiling, white-toothed black was rejected as blatantly racist, and it gradually retreated into the

distance. However, like the women of Sparta and the wives of samurai, who were expected to look happy upon learning their sons or husbands had died in battle, contemporary American women have yet to unilaterally declare their faces their own property.

Kyrgyz women have nearly the same reaction as the American ones; the same smile, the same surprise. But there might be some situations which may seem surprisingly cruel for American women and normal for Kyrgyz women. In Kyrgyzstan, as many as 40% of ethnic Kyrgyz women are married after being kidnapped by their husbands, according to a local NGO. For local people it's rather a custom, than a surprise, but for American women it is just a violence of women's right. But like American women Kyrgyz women also smile after being surprised in different situations; when they are with friends, with children, when they

meet with candidates, when they take gifts, at interviews. From all we had written, we could say that there are more similarities rather than differences. Different can be just the sounds or cries when women are surprised.

1. Oh shucks! – Э, кокуй десе!
2. Lordy! - Кокуй!
3. Ah! - А-А!
4. Oh! - И-и!
5. Cad! - Мына!

"Smiles are as important as sound bites on television," insists producer and media coach Heidi Berenson, who has worked with many of Washington's most famous faces. "And women have always been better at understanding this than men. But the smile I'm talking about is not a cutesy smile. It's an authoritative smile. A genuine smile. Properly timed, it's tremendously powerful and surprising."

References

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