

POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH SPEECH ETIQUETTE

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This article explains politeness in Uzbek and English speech etiquette. It compares how people in the two cultures show politeness through greetings, requests, gratitude, and apologies.

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Introduction

In modern linguistics and intercultural communication, speech etiquette plays a crucial role in maintaining respectful and effective interaction among people. Politeness is considered one of the main components of communication because it reflects not only language use but also cultural values, traditions, and social relationships. Different nations express politeness in different ways according to their worldview and communicative norms. In Uzbek and English cultures, politeness occupies an important place; however, the strategies used in these languages differ significantly. English speech etiquette is often characterized by indirectness, concise expressions, and respect for personal space. Speakers usually employ polite modal verbs, formal greetings, and soft communicative forms to avoid sounding rude or too direct. Uzbek speech etiquette, on the other hand, is closely connected with hospitality, emotional warmth, respect for elders, and traditional values. Respectful titles, blessings, and emotionally expressive phrases are widely used in everyday communication. The study of politeness strategies has become increasingly important due to globalization and intercultural interaction. Understanding these differences can help language learners avoid communicative misunderstandings and develop pragmatic competence. This article analyzes the communicative and pragmatic features of politeness strategies in Uzbek and English speech etiquette and examines how cultural values influence language behavior.

Literature review and methodology

The concept of politeness has been widely studied in pragmatics and sociolinguistics. One of the most influential theories belongs to Brown and Levinson, who explained politeness through the concepts of positive and negative face. According to their theory, speakers use politeness strategies to maintain social harmony and avoid conflict [1, B. 15]. Positive politeness helps establish closeness and solidarity, while negative politeness respects personal freedom and minimizes imposition. Leech also contributed greatly to politeness studies through his Politeness Principle, emphasizing that polite communication strengthens social relationships and creates mutual respect between speakers [2, B. 37]. Researchers in intercultural communication note that politeness strategies differ depending on national culture, social hierarchy, and communicative traditions. Studies on English speech etiquette show that English-speaking societies value individualism and personal boundaries. Therefore, speakers often use indirect language, modal verbs, and formal expressions such as “Could you...?” or “Would you mind...?” to sound polite [3, B. 52]. In contrast, Uzbek speech etiquette reflects collectivist traditions, emotional closeness, and respect for elders. Words such as “aka,” “opa,” and “ustoz” are commonly used to demonstrate respect and social status [4, B. 61]. The methodology of this research is based on comparative and descriptive analysis. Examples of polite expressions were collected from spoken conversations, educational materials, and everyday communication in Uzbek and English. The research focuses on several categories of speech etiquette, including greetings, requests, gratitude, apologies, and forms of address. The collected examples were analyzed from pragmatic and cultural perspectives in order to identify similarities and differences between the two languages.

Discussion and results

The analysis demonstrates that both Uzbek and English cultures highly value politeness, but they express it through different linguistic and communicative means. One of the clearest differences can be observed in expressions of gratitude. English speakers often prefer short and simple phrases such as “Thank you” or “Thanks a lot.” In Uzbek communication, gratitude tends to be emotionally richer and more expressive. Speakers frequently use intensified forms and blessings such as “Katta rahmat” or “Rahmat, umringiz uzoq bo‘lsin.” These expressions reflect sincerity, hospitality, and emotional closeness. Another important aspect is indirectness in requests. English speakers commonly use modal verbs to soften requests and sound polite:

“Could you help me?”;

“Would you mind opening the window?”.

Uzbek speakers also avoid direct commands, but politeness is mainly expressed through respectful verb forms and careful tone:

“Yordam bera olasizmi?”;

“Derazani ochib yuborsangiz?”.

The findings suggest that English politeness depends more on grammatical structures, whereas Uzbek politeness relies heavily on cultural respect and emotional expression.

Greetings, forms of address, and apologies differ in Uzbek and English cultures. English expressions are usually short and neutral, while Uzbek speech often includes respect, politeness, and emotional warmth. Uzbek speakers frequently use respectful titles such as “aka,” “opa,” and “ustoz,” especially when speaking to older people.

The comparative findings are summarized in the following tables.

Table 1. **Comparison of politeness strategies in Uzbek and English.**

Communicative aspect	Uzbek speech etiquette	English speech etiquette
Greetings	Longer and respectful	Short and neutral
Requests	Respectful tone and verb forms	Indirect with modal verbs
Gratitude	Emotional and expressive phrases	Brief expressions
Apologies	Emotional and humble expressions	Formal and concise
Forms of address	Age and status-based titles	Formal titles

Table 2. **Cultural features of politeness**

Culture	Main characteristics of politeness
Uzbek culture	Respect for elders, emotional warmth, collectivism
English culture	Individualism, indirectness, impersonal space

Conclusion

In conclusion, politeness strategies are essential elements of both Uzbek and English speech etiquette. Although both cultures aim to maintain respectful communication, they differ significantly in linguistic forms and communicative behavior. English politeness is mainly expressed through indirectness, concise

expressions, and grammatical softening devices. Uzbek politeness, however, emphasizes emotional sincerity, respect for elders, and traditional cultural values. The research shows that understanding these differences is important for successful intercultural communication and foreign language learning. Knowledge of politeness strategies can help learners develop pragmatic competence and communicate more naturally in multilingual environments. Future studies may focus on politeness in digital communication, academic discourse, or professional interaction.

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