



## LINGUOCULTURAL PRINCIPLES OF POLITENESS IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH

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**Abstract:** This paper studies the politeness strategies specific to both English and Uzbek, illustrating how cultural influences direct language selection in each respective language area. Politeness in English is more concerned with the reduction of imposition, and the retention of individual autonomy — a concept influenced by the individualistic culture in which the language is spoken.

**Key words:** Politeness strategies, cross-cultural pragmatics, English language, Uzbek language, intercultural communication, honorifics, face management, sociolinguistics, pragmatic competence, language and culture.

## ЛИНГВОКУЛЬТУРНЫЕ ПРИНЦИПЫ ВЕЖЛИВОСТИ В УЗБЕКСКОМ И АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКАХ

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**Аннотация.** В статье анализируются стратегии вежливости, присущие английскому и узбекскому языкам, а также демонстрируется влияние



культурных особенностей на выбор языковых средств в этих двух языках. В английском языке вежливость в большей мере направлена на минимизацию навязчивости и сохранение личной автономии — концепция, сформированная под воздействием индивидуалистической культуры, в которой используется этот язык.

**Ключевые слова:** способы выражения вежливости, прагматика межкультурного общения, английский и узбекский языки, межкультурная коммуникация, формы обращения, концепция лица, социолингвистика, прагматическая компетенция, взаимосвязь языка и культуры.

## O'ZBEK VA INGLIZ TILLARIDA XUSHBO'YLIKNING LINGVOMADANIY TAMOYILLARI

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**Annotatsiya.** Ushbu maqola ingliz va o'zbek tillariga xos bo'lgan xushmuomalalik strategiyalarini tahlil qiladi va ushbu ikki tilda lingvistik vositalarni tanlashga madaniy xususiyatlarning ta'sirini ko'rsatadi. Ingliz tilida xushmuomalalik asosan aralashuvni minimallashtirishga va shaxsiy avtonomiyani saqlashga qaratilgan - bu tushuncha ushbu til ishlatiladigan individualistik madaniyat tomonidan shakllantirilgan.

**Kalit so'zlar:** xushmuomalalik ifodalari, madaniyatlararo pragmatika, ingliz va o'zbek tillari, madaniyatlararo muloqot, murojaat shakllari, yuz tushunchasi, sotsiolingvistik, pragmatik kompetentsiya, til va madaniyat o'rtasidagi o'zaro bog'liqlik.



## Introduction

Politeness as a sociolinguistic and pragmatic phenomenon shows different as well as common features between languages, especially English and Uzbek [Ataboyeva,2024,P 23], [Pulatjonova, 2025, P 56],This cross-cultural examination, which we have tried to cover with theories like Brown and Levinson's politeness theory and Leech's politeness principles, is telling as it demonstrates politeness has deep cultural values and social structures underlying it in language. Politeness is recognized as a societal norm for people from all nations, but its perception and instrumental behavior are extremely divergent among cultures [Abdullazoda, 2025, P 46].Understanding these distinct politeness strategies will help effective communications. In an era of globalization, it has become more important than ever to study the features of linguistic politeness as a means for developing intercultural communicative competence [Abdullazoda, 2025,P46]. This suggests that politeness is heavily influenced by our culture and the way it is interpreted, and this influences the genre of communication and reading pragmatic meaning into them [Ataniyazova, 2024,P23],[Ochilboyeva,2024,P56].

Brown and Levinson theorized politeness, in a theoretical framework for many cross-cultural politeness studies, a system of universal strategies for mitigating "face-threatening acts" (FTAs), called the politeness theory and it serves as an anchor [Pulatjanova,2025,P129]. According to this theory, one uses politeness to sustain positive face (an aim to be valued and acknowledged) and negative face (an effort to limit others' actions) by using politeness strategies [Turdiyeva, 2019, P516]. But how, and how often, these methods are used can vary widely among cultures. For example, studies have looked at the application of the frameworks Brown and Levinson introduced with regard to many aspects of language from English and Uzbek[Pulatjanova,2025,p130].

Although Brown and Levinson theorize that social distance, power ratio, and task imposition predict politeness "weightiness" cross-culturally, some statistical



comparisons have found task imposition does not always have a statistically significant effect on determining politeness, particularly across cultural borders. It indicates that although the theory may be universal, cultural context could moderate its execution them [Ataboyeva, 2024, P23].

The individualistic value characteristics of the English language lead to a particular usage of linguistic devices to ensure politeness is displayed [Ataniyazova, 2024,P 23]. Usually these strategies also involve syntactic measures to soften the situation: the use of modal verbs (e.g. "could," "would") and hedging expressions (e.g., "maybe," "perhaps"). Such strategies focus mostly on defending the negative face of the interlocutor, so they reduce directness and provide choices. For example, a plea would be "Could you please pass the salt?" rather than "Pass the salt."

In this way, language of respect expresses itself as respect towards an individual; it is seen as politeness and is reflected in ways, which protect an individual's autonomy and a freedom from being imposed on them cultures [Abdullazoda, 2025, P 46]. Also helpful for social harmony is politeness in English communication such as apologies. In academic discourse, the cultural context of communication shapes the construct of pragmatic meaning, as observed in, for example, blind peer reviews, that involve a subjective interpretation guided by cultural factors [Turdiyeva, 2019, P516]. One particular linguistic practice in English (as in "it sounds X, but Y" like "it sounds silly now, but it was important then" in psychotherapy) supports the meaning of a personal experience and its perceived minority along with their linguistic representations, such that a nuanced linguistic strategy is utilized to manage social relations.

Moreover, politeness cues in the language domain, including "please," are important in certain contexts. A study among Egyptian English speakers also showed a gender bias towards the application of "please" in microbus driver requests and this showed that sociolinguistic differences exist even in a specific English speaking community [Ochilboyeva ,2024, P56]. Teaching politeness is also viewed



as a successful cognitive tool for the second language learner, particularly in a field like the hospitality sector that relies on the relationship between linguistic and social elements in the English language [Turdiyeva, 2019, P58].

Uzbek is Turkic; a Turkic language shaped by collectivist and hierarchical cultural values. Uzbek politeness uses honorifics and other forms, with context-dependent cues and avoidance strategies [Yulchiyeva, 2024, P.410]. In Uzbek, it is a cultural convention that "respect" is inseparably linked with the linguistic characteristics that speak of it, as they communicate according to patterns of lexical selection, syntax, and pragmatic techniques in expressing consideration with regard to social standing and social stability. Uzbek has, for example, a large and extensive system of morphosyntactic honorifics and kinship-oriented address expressions. The use of particular verb endings such as "-yap/-yop" and addresses such as "-siz/-sizlar" (the plural form for singular formal address) indicates hierarchical social relations among speakers and deference towards the listener. Not so with the more blunt, but also less harsh, approach that you often find in English [Pulatjonova, 2025, P 130]. There is also the role of gender in the use of honorifics, such as in Uzbek female speech where women say to each other "siz" (formal 'you'). Politeness in Uzbek is rooted in group traditions such as mehmondo'stlik ('hospitality') and also in adolat ('justice'), which influence speech and the patterns for social behaviour. We can see this in speech etiquette acts and polite phrases: the intention is to protect social harmony or show deference. The influence of politeness, politeness maxims, and respect on Uzbek communication are also addressed by studies comparing manners lexemes and politeness maxims with English, which show linguistic cues with substantial cultural and sociocultural ramifications. Language in the Uzbek context is also subtly shaped by indirect communication strategies, more often euphemism and implicature are used and often associated with a certain culture of respect and politeness. This is in contrast to English, which privileges metaphor and euphemism for subtle expression. Similar to this, political correctness presents itself



differently in Uzbek and in English language cultures, where there exist unique linguistic vehicles of the linguistic variety or euphemistic representations.

The comparative politeness strategies of English and Uzbek show that the politeness' principles are universal, yet their actual realization is very culture-specific [Ataniyazova, 2024, P 24]. Many English practices tend to be negative, emphasizing individual initiative and non-imposition, and may refer to indirectness and mitigation.

In contrast, Uzbek culture places positive politeness and deference above all values, and its collectivist and hierarchical social structure is expressed through honorifics and context-sensitive language. This divide is also reflected in the way "respect" is linguistically translated. In English, safeguarding one's own and others' personal "face" is paramount, while in Uzbek, respect is inextricably linked to social identity and social harmony. Intercultural studies using both Brown and Levinson's and Leech's politeness theories have been carried out to investigate these differences and, accordingly, have accentuated the salience of a pragmatic language of the intercultural nature of communication [Pulatjonova, 2025, P 130]. Leech's politeness maxims, such as the Tact Maxim and Modesty Maxim can be used for considering politeness across different situations. The difficulties come from the differences of language and culture, making these cross-cultural communication problems. What is seen as polite in one culture could be interpreted to be impolite in another. For instance, English-speaking people might recognize directness as legitimate while Uzbek people may regard it as impolite because of its emphasis on indirectness and deference

From foundational linguistics and social theories, to applications and again to theory. This convergence of linguistic and computing methods is essential if we are to grasp or cure politeness in a variety of communicative contexts Abdullazoda, 2025, P 48]. Finally, the examination of politeness in English and Uzbek underlines the importance of the application of "intercultural pragmatics," so as to cultivate a



greater sense of cultural sensitivity and understanding when politeness strategies are applied within multi-lingual contexts. This includes understanding that being polite is more than just using "nice" words; it is how a person communicates with people and what others think at different ages, races, and in different cultural contexts using our language.

While linguocultural terms in both English and Uzbek are also separated and systematically structured, the principles behind politeness are highly unique and systemic, showing how deep their culture is. While individualism-driven English politeness takes advantage of syntactic mitigating and hedging (to save face), collectivistic and hierarchical Uzbek politeness utilises honorifics and context clues to show deference and social unity. It is noteworthy that the common need for maintaining social order through politeness is present in general but differs greatly depending on the culture of which it is based. Acknowledging these distinctions is essential for successful cross-cultural communication and requires an intercultural pragmatic perspective that encourages the consideration of culturally salient politeness tactics.

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