

# POLITENESS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

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## ABSTRACT

This article provides a comparative analysis of politeness as a component of speech etiquette in English and Uzbek languages, highlighting the cultural and linguistic factors that influence expressions of politeness in both societies. Address forms, requests, expressions of gratitude and apology, and the overall tone used in both languages are especially highlighted. The analysis also demonstrates how politeness reflects cultural values and communication styles in English-speaking and Uzbek-speaking communities.

**Keywords:** Politeness, Speech Etiquette, English Language, Uzbek Language, Culture, Indirectness, Respect.

## INTRODUCTION

Speech is more than just a tool for communication—it is also a reflection of one's culture, education, and social values. Politeness, as a key component of speech etiquette, helps maintain respect, harmony, and formality in communication among everyone - strangers, friends, family members, etc. In both English and Uzbek, politeness plays an important role, but it is used differently due to different cultural traditions and linguistic structures. In English, politeness often appears through indirectness and formality, while in Uzbek, it is deeply associated with respect for age, status, and traditional values. This article explores how each language expresses politeness and what this reveals about their respective cultures.

## METHODOLOGY

The comparison is based on practical examples from everyday communication, as well as insights from linguistics and cultural studies. From classical Uzbek literature, for example, “Qutadgʻu bilig” and “Hibatul haqoyiq” emphasize moral values and refined speech, while English politeness theory, developed by scholars such as Brown and Levinson, describes universal strategies of maintaining one's image in public. These perspectives help analyze the linguistic and cultural elements of politeness in both languages.

## DISCUSSION

Politeness can be seen in many parts of daily communication, five of which are mentioned and explained below with relevant comparisons between English and Uzbek languages:

### 1. Expressions of Gratitude

In English, expressing thanks is very brief:

- "Thank you."
  - "Thanks a lot."
  - "I really appreciate your help." are the common words for gratitude.
- In Uzbek, gratitude tends to be more elaborate and emotional:
- "Rahmat kattakon!" (Thank you very much)
  - "Sizga chin dildan minnatdorchilik bildiraman." (I thank you from the deep of my heart)
  - "Yordam berganingiz uchun ming rahmat!" (Thank you thousands of times for helping me)
- Also, Uzbek often includes blessings such as: "Rahmat, umringiz uzoq bo'ling!" (Thank you, I wish you a long life)

## 2. Indirect Requests and Softness

English uses modal verbs to sound polite when they ask someone to do something:

- "Could you open the window, please?"
- "Would you mind helping me?"

In Uzbek, as there are no modal verbs, politeness is achieved with respectful forms and careful phrasing:

- "Derazani ochib yubora olasizmi?"
- "Yordam bera olasizmi, iltimos?"

## 3. Greetings and Forms of Address

Formal greetings in English are brief and simple:

- "Good morning, Mr. Brown."
- "Excuse me, Sir."

However, informal greetings tend to be even more brief and casual:

- "Hey!"
- "Hi there!"

In contrast, formal Uzbek greetings reflect status and age. For example, one can greet their teacher in the following form:

- "Assalomu alaykum, ustoz! Ahvollaringiz yaxshimi?"

Informal greetings, however, are more similar with that of English, keeping it brief and casual :

- "Qalesan?"

Different titles such as "Aka", "Opa" and "Ustoz" are used to show respect based on age or profession.

## 4. Apologies and Permission

Common English apologetic phrases:

- "I'm sorry."
- "Pardon me."
- "Excuse me for interrupting."

Uzbek equivalents are more heartfelt and , in most cases, include self-blame:

- "Kechirasiz, bezovta qildim."
- "Uzr, meni kechiring."
- "Xafa qilgan bo'lsam, ming bor uzr."

## 5. Cultural Nuances in Politeness

English often emphasizes formality and social distance, especially in professional settings to show politeness. In contrast, Uzbek politeness reflects emotional closeness and high respect.

Even towards strangers, while an English speaker may say "Thanks", an Uzbek might say "Rahmat sizga, joningiz sog' bo'lsin" (Thank you, may you stay healthy) or "Katta raxmat,



baraka toping" (Big thanks, may you be blessed) which include blessings to express sincere gratitude.

In English, shorter polite forms are considered sufficient, but Uzbek often requires longer expressions to sound genuinely respectful.

## CONCLUSION

English and Uzbek communities take two different cultural approaches in communication to involve politeness. English relies on mostly indirect language, gentle tone, and universal etiquette norms. Uzbek, however, emphasizes emotional richness, respect for elders, and traditional expressions. Understanding these differences is essential for better cross-cultural communication.

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