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LINGUISTIC CONDITIONING OF POLITENESS CATEGORY IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK ARTISTIC DISCOURSE

Abstract: This article explores the linguistic conditioning of politeness in English and Uzbek artistic discourse. Politeness, as a sociolinguistic phenomenon, varies significantly across cultures and languages, reflecting societal norms and expectations. By analyzing various examples from literature, poetry, and everyday conversation in both languages, this study highlights the role of cultural context in shaping polite expressions, the use of address forms, and the implications for intercultural communication. The findings indicate that while there are universal elements of politeness, significant distinctions exist influenced by cultural heritage, social hierarchy, and communicative purpose.

Key words: politeness, linguistic conditioning, English, Uzbek, artistic discourse, cultural context, sociolinguistics.

Introduction

Politeness is a crucial aspect of human interaction, serving as a marker of respect, social hierarchy, and cultural values; that serves to maintain social harmony and mitigate conflict. Linguistic conditioning of politeness categories can significantly affect how messages are conveyed and received within different cultures. This paper explores the ways in which politeness manifests itself in English and Uzbek artistic discourse, examining the underlying theories and specific examples from literature, poetry, and other artistic expressions. By analyzing comparative frameworks, we can better understand how language shapes our perceptions and practices of politeness within and across cultural boundaries.

Artistic discourse, inclusive of literature, poetry, and oral traditions, provides rich contexts for examining how politeness is constructed and conveyed in different languages. Understanding these linguistic nuances can foster better intercultural communication and appreciation of diverse literary traditions.

The study of politeness in language has been notably influenced by the work of sociolinguists like Brown and Levinson (1987), who introduced the concepts of positive and negative politeness strategies. Positive politeness aims at enhancing the listener's sense of belonging and approval, whereas negative politeness seeks to avoid intrusion or imposition. Similarly, the concept of face, which refers to an individual's self-esteem and social value, is central to understanding politeness strategies in both English and Uzbek.

In the context of Uzbek discourse, politeness is heavily influenced by societal norms that emphasize respect, hierarchy, and communal values. The term "yaxshi" in Uzbek, meaning "good", not only serves as an ethical standard but also as a marker of politeness when addressing elders or those in higher social standing.

Politeness theory, developed by sociolinguists Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson in their influential work "Politeness: Some Universals in Language Utilization" (1987), posits that politeness is a social strategy employed to manage interpersonal relationships. The theory introduces key concepts such as "face" – the public self-image of individuals—and "positive" and "negative face" needs. Positive face refers to the desire for social approval and acceptance, while negative face emphasizes the need for autonomy and freedom from imposition.

According to Brown and Levinson, linguistic strategies to mitigate face threats include:

1. "Indirectness": Using non-assertive language to soften requests or criticisms.

2. "Hedges": Phrases like "perhaps" or "maybe" that express uncertainty.
3. "Honorifics and Formal Address": Expressions that reflect respect and social hierarchy.

Cultural Context of Politeness

The ways in which politeness is expressed are deeply rooted in cultural norms and values. Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf championed the idea that language shapes thought and cultural identity. Thus, the constructs of politeness vary significantly between cultures, influenced by societal expectations, power dynamics, and relational contexts.

In an artistic discourse, where imagination and expression take precedence, the use of politeness strategies can serve to enhance the aesthetic quality of the text while simultaneously informing the reader about sociocultural hierarchies or emotional undercurrents.

Politeness in English Artistic Discourse

In English literature, politeness is often expressed through various linguistic strategies. Consider the famous line from Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice": "You have bewitched me, body and soul." Here, Mr. Darcy uses an indirect approach to express his affection, thus employing positive politeness strategies. The use of hedging, e.g., "I'm not sure, but I think..." or modal verbs like "could" and "might," is also prevalent in English discourse as a means to soften requests or statements.

Another example can be found in Shakespeare's plays. In "Hamlet", the use of formal titles and polite speech acts serves to reflect the characters' social status and relationship dynamics, reinforcing the importance of politeness in navigating complex social hierarchies.

English literature, from Shakespearean plays to contemporary poetry, illustrates various manifestations of politeness.

Examples from English Literature,

1. Shakespearean Dialogues: Shakespeare's works heavily utilize indirectness in his characters' speech, a strategy that tactfully navigates social tension. For instance, in "Hamlet", when Hamlet speaks to Ophelia, he employs sarcasm as a politeness strategy to mask his true emotions and maintain a semblance of respect (Act 3, Scene 1): "I did love you once." His indirectness allows him to evade direct confrontation, reflecting both his inner turmoil and his concern for Ophelia's emotional state.

2. Modern Poetry: Contemporary poets like John Keats and Emily Dickinson often embed politeness within their metaphors and imagery. Dickinson's poem "I cannot live with You" addresses the subject of love and separation delicately, using hedging language to explore the complexities of emotional vulnerability: "And were You saved / And I condemned to be / Where You were not." The hesitance and humility conveyed through these verses exemplify a deep-seated respect for the listener's emotions.

Strategies in English Discourse

Politeness strategies in English discourse include honorifics and modal verbs like "would" or "could," which soften requests or suggestions. For instance, asking someone to do something in the negative might be phrased as, "I wouldn't trouble you, but could you help me?"

Politeness in Uzbek Artistic Discourse

The Uzbek language, with its rich history and cultural significance, offers a unique lens through which to examine politeness. Uzbek politeness is often characterized by its emphasis on relational contexts, familial ties, and collective values.

Uzbek literary works, such as those by Alisher Navoi and Abdulla Qadiri, frequently exhibit the linguistic nuances of politeness embedded in their dialogues and prose. The use of respectful forms of address, like "janob" (Mr.) or "xonim" (Mrs.), is essential, especially in traditional narratives. For example, in the poetry of Navoi, the use of elevated language and metaphors conveys not only beauty but also respect for the audience and subjects described.

Examples from Uzbek Literature,

1. Classic Poetry: Poets like Alisher Navoi emphasize respect and magnanimity through the use of honorifics. In his ghazals, Navoi often addresses his beloved in a manner that showcases reverence and care, using forms of address that elevate their status: "Oh, beloved, your absence is a hardship on my soul." The elaborate structure of his verses often includes indirect expressions of yearning, highlighting the cultural value placed on humility and respect.

2. Contemporary Fiction: In modern Uzbek prose, authors like Abdulla Qadiri explore interpersonal relationships with a strong undercurrent of politeness. In his novel "O'tkan kunlar", Qadiri showcases characters navigating complex social networks, using indirect speech and polite forms to address elders or authority figures: "If it pleases you, may I speak my mind?" This illustrates the importance of maintaining harmony and respecting societal roles.

Additionally, Uzbek culture's emphasis on communal values often leads to the use of inclusive language, such as "biz" (we) instead of "men" (I), which reflects a collective identity and fosters a sense of community.

Strategies in Uzbek Discourse

Uzbek politeness is often marked by the use of "siz" (formal 'you') vs. "sen" (informal 'you'), depending on the interlocutor's age and status. This distinction exemplifies the linguistic nuances that signal respect and social hierarchy.

Comparative Analysis of Politeness Strategies

A comparative analysis reveals both similarities and differences in the expression of politeness between the two languages. For instance, while both English and Uzbek utilize formal titles to convey respect, Uzbek demonstrates a greater degree of formality in everyday conversation due to its cultural emphasis on hierarchy and respect for elders.

Both English and Uzbek artistic discourse employ indirectness as a primary strategy for politeness. The use of metaphors and imagery serves to mitigate potential face threats while enriching the text's aesthetic appeal. Additionally, honorific language resonates in both cultures, reflecting a shared understanding of respect and interpersonal dynamics.

Moreover, the indirectness of requests is more pronounced in Uzbek discourse, utilizing expressions like "If you don't mind..." or "It would be great if..." more frequently than their English counterparts. This reflects a cultural norm of humility and deference in Uzbek society.

However, notable differences exist. English discourse often embraces a more direct confrontation of feelings, whereas Uzbek expressions are typically more subdued, emphasizing collective harmony. The use of formal address in Uzbek is more rigidly defined by age and status, reflecting a cultural prioritization of respect that may not be as pronounced in English contexts.

Examples from Artistic Discourse,

1. English Poetry: In John Keats' sonnet "When I have fears that I may cease to be," the poet delicately navigates themes of love and mortality, using polite and exalted language to engage the reader.

2. Uzbek Folklore: In traditional Uzbek tales, characters often employ polite forms of speech to appeal for assistance or favor, demonstrating the importance of respect and decorum in storytelling.

3. Dialogue in Literature: Characters in novels by Chingiz Aitmatov often exhibit politeness through elaborate greetings and inquiries about well-being, showcasing cultural values and social relationships.

Conclusion

The exploration of linguistic conditioning of politeness categories in English and Uzbek artistic discourse reveals the intricate interplay between language, culture, and social norms; significant insights into how language is used to express respect, mitigate social tension, and enhance

interpersonal relationships. Through examining literary examples and theoretical frameworks, we uncover the ways politeness constructs shape interpersonal relationships and aesthetic choices. As authors engage with these linguistic strategies, they not only reflect their societal values but also influence how readers interpret respect and resolve conflicts, bridging cultural divides through their art.

Politeness strategies are not merely linguistic forms but reflections of deeper cultural values and social norms. Understanding these linguistic conditions fosters a greater appreciation of both English and Uzbek literatures and promotes effective intercultural communication.

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