

THE WAYS OF REALIZING LINGUISTIC POLITENESS IN ENGLISH AND KARAKALPAK CULTURES

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Abstract. *In the context of globalization, linguistic politeness has become a key area in pragmatics and intercultural communication. This study provides a comparative analysis of how politeness is realized in English and Karakalpak cultures. The findings show that English politeness is mainly based on indirectness, modal verbs, and mitigation strategies, reflecting individualistic values. In contrast, Karakalpak politeness emphasizes respect, social hierarchy, and culturally embedded expressions, reflecting collectivist norms. Overall, the study demonstrates that while politeness is universal in function, its realization is culturally specific. Therefore, understanding these differences is essential for effective intercultural communication and language teaching.*

Keywords: *linguistic politeness, pragmatics, politeness strategies, English language, Karakalpak language, intercultural communication, cultural norms.*

In recent decades, as globalization and intercultural communication have expanded, the study of linguistic politeness has become increasingly important in pragmatics and sociolinguistics. Indeed, politeness functions as a key mechanism for maintaining social harmony, expressing respect, and regulating interpersonal relationships. However, it is essential to emphasize that politeness is not universal in its form; rather, it is shaped by cultural norms, social values, and communicative traditions. Therefore, comparative research across languages provides deeper insights into both linguistic structures and cultural worldviews.

From a theoretical perspective, politeness has been widely examined by prominent scholars. In particular, Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson introduced the concept of “face,” referring to an individual’s public self-image, and distinguished between positive and negative politeness strategies [1]. Furthermore, Geoffrey Leech proposed the Politeness Principle, which includes maxims such as tact and generosity that guide communicative behavior [4]. Additionally, Geert Hofstede demonstrated that cultural dimensions, particularly individualism and collectivism, significantly influence politeness norms and interaction styles [2].

At the same time, Karakalpak scholars have contributed to understanding politeness as a culturally embedded phenomenon. For example, A. Mambetniyazova highlights that politeness in the Karakalpak language reflects national traditions and ethical values, where respect and social harmony are central [5, 73-91]. Similarly, G. Najimova emphasizes the role of social hierarchy and age in shaping communicative behavior [6]. Moreover, Z. Uteshova underlines the importance of speech etiquette and culturally fixed expressions [7],

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while M. Jarilkapovna points to morphological markers such as honorifics as key tools of politeness [3, 60-64].

Thus, comparing English and Karakalpak politeness reveals both universal functions and culture-specific realizations, which are essential for effective intercultural communication.

Methodology. The present study adopts a qualitative and comparative research design to examine how linguistic politeness is realized in English and Karakalpak cultures. First of all, the research is grounded in a pragmatic and sociolinguistic approach, which allows for analyzing politeness as both a linguistic and cultural phenomenon. In addition, a cultural perspective is incorporated to better understand how communicative behavior is shaped by social values such as individualism, collectivism, respect, and social hierarchy. Secondly, the data for the study are collected from authentic communicative contexts, including everyday speech, educational materials, and published linguistic sources. The dataset consists of common speech acts such as requests, apologies, greetings, offers, and expressions of gratitude, which are considered essential for examining politeness strategies in real-life interaction. Furthermore, the analysis focuses on several key aspects. Firstly, lexical markers of politeness (for example, polite expressions and respectful forms) are examined. Secondly, grammatical structures are analyzed in order to identify how politeness is encoded linguistically. Thirdly, pragmatic strategies such as indirectness, mitigation, and expressions of respect are investigated. Finally, cultural factors, including age, social hierarchy, and interpersonal relations, are taken into account. Thus, a comparative approach is applied to identify similarities and differences, ensuring a comprehensive and context-based analysis of linguistic politeness.

Results. The analysis of the collected data reveals that linguistic politeness in English and Karakalpak cultures is realized through distinct yet functionally equivalent strategies, each shaped by specific linguistic and cultural norms. First of all, English politeness is predominantly expressed through indirectness and mitigation. In particular, speakers tend to avoid direct commands and instead employ modal constructions such as “*Could you help me?*”, “*Would you mind opening the window?*”, or “*I was wondering if you could...*”. These structures reduce the force of the request and help maintain the interlocutor’s autonomy. Furthermore, hedging devices like “*perhaps,*” “*a bit,*” “*I think,*” and “*maybe*” are frequently used to soften statements. In addition, formulaic expressions such as “*please,*” “*thank you,*” and “*sorry*” function as key markers of politeness and are widely applied in both formal and informal contexts.

In contrast, Karakalpak politeness is primarily based on respect-oriented linguistic forms and culturally embedded expressions. For example, polite requests are often structured through respectful patterns such as “*Sizden járdem sorasam bolama?*” or “*Múmkın bolsa, qarap beresiz be?*”. Similarly, expressions like “*Keshirersiz*” and “*Raxmet sizge*” serve as essential politeness markers. Moreover, ritualized forms such as greetings (“*Assalawma áleykum*”) and blessings (“*Aman bolıń,*” “*Jolıńız ashıq bolsın*”) play a crucial role in maintaining social harmony and reflect strong cultural traditions.

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Another significant result concerns structural realization. English politeness relies heavily on grammatical means such as modal verbs and interrogative constructions, whereas Karakalpak politeness is more dependent on lexical choices, honorifics, and culturally fixed expressions. Furthermore, while English communication favors indirectness, Karakalpak speakers may use relatively direct forms in informal contexts, where such directness signals sincerity rather than impoliteness.

Table 1. Extended Comparative Features of Politeness in English and Karakalpak

Aspect	English	Karakalpak
Main strategy	Indirectness, mitigation	Respect, social hierarchy
Typical request	“Could you help me?”	“Sizden járdem sorasam bolama?”
Apology	“Sorry for the delay.”	“Keshirersiz, kech qaldım.”
Gratitude	“Thank you very much.”	“Raxmet sizge.”
Greeting	“Hello”	“Assalawma áleykum”
Linguistic means	Modal verbs, hedging, softeners	Honorifics, respectful forms, fixed expressions
Cultural orientation	Individualistic	Collectivist
Role of directness	Avoided (seen as impolite)	Accepted in informal context (signals sincerity)
Pragmatic focus	Minimizing imposition	Expressing respect and social harmony

Overall, the results demonstrate that although both languages aim to maintain politeness and interpersonal harmony, they rely on different linguistic mechanisms and cultural frameworks, highlighting the importance of context in interpreting politeness.

Discussion. The findings of the study indicate that linguistic politeness in English and Karakalpak cultures is shaped by different pragmatic and cultural principles, although both serve the same communicative purpose of maintaining social harmony. First of all, English politeness is primarily realized through indirectness and mitigation. In this context, speakers tend to avoid direct expressions and instead use softened forms, which help reduce imposition and respect the interlocutor’s personal space. Therefore, politeness in English is mainly encoded through grammatical and lexical means.

In contrast, Karakalpak politeness is closely connected with cultural norms and social relations. More specifically, it emphasizes respect for age, hierarchy, and collective values. As a result, politeness is often expressed through respectful forms of address, greetings, and culturally fixed expressions. Consequently, politeness in Karakalpak reflects not only linguistic choices but also social structure and traditions.

Another important aspect concerns the role of directness. While English communication generally favors indirectness, Karakalpak speakers may use more direct forms in informal situations, where such expressions indicate sincerity rather than impoliteness.

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Overall, the discussion confirms that politeness is a culturally conditioned and context-dependent phenomenon, requiring intercultural awareness for effective communication.

Conclusion. In conclusion, the present study has demonstrated that linguistic politeness in English and Karakalpak cultures is realized through distinct yet functionally equivalent strategies shaped by cultural values and communicative norms. On the one hand, English politeness is primarily characterized by indirectness, grammatical mitigation, and the use of modal verbs and hedging devices. These features reflect an individualistic orientation, where the main goal is to minimize imposition and respect the interlocutor’s autonomy.

On the other hand, Karakalpak politeness is deeply rooted in respect, social hierarchy, and collectivist values. In this context, politeness is expressed through honorific forms, culturally embedded expressions, and ritualized speech patterns such as greetings and blessings. Therefore, politeness is not only a linguistic phenomenon but also a reflection of social structure and cultural traditions.

Furthermore, the comparative analysis has shown that similar communicative goals—such as maintaining harmony and avoiding conflict—are achieved through different linguistic mechanisms in the two languages. Consequently, politeness should be understood as a culturally conditioned and context-dependent phenomenon rather than a universal set of forms.

In addition, the findings highlight the importance of integrating cultural awareness into language teaching and intercultural communication. Misinterpretations may arise when speakers apply the norms of one culture to another without understanding underlying differences. Therefore, developing pragmatic competence is essential for effective communication in multilingual and multicultural environments.

Finally, future research may focus on the evolution of politeness strategies in digital communication, as well as on expanding the analysis to other languages and cultural contexts. Such studies would further contribute to the understanding of politeness as a dynamic and evolving aspect of human interaction.

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