

POLITENESS CATEGORY PSYCHOLINGUISTIC BASICS

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In modern linguistics, human speech is studied through various methodological approaches that consider the mutual connection of socio-psychological factors. From this perspective, the concept of *politeness* is a complex phenomenon that lies at the intersection of linguistics, sociolinguistics, pragmalinguistics, and psycholinguistics. Politeness is not merely the application of etiquette formulas, but rather an expression of interpersonal relationships, social roles, cultural values, and psychological circumstances that occur during communication.

In linguistics, politeness is often interpreted as a communicative strategy. The classic theory of politeness proposed by P. Brown and S. Levinson is one of the primary sources in this area. They explain politeness through the concept of “face” and “face-saving.” According to this theory, every person has a *social face*—that is, the desire to be positively recognized by others—and speech acts can either support or threaten this face. Additionally, scholars like G. Leech and R. Watts view politeness as a tool for maintaining *social balance*, linking it with conversational cooperation, social equality, and normativity. From a psycholinguistic perspective, politeness is a product of communicative intention and cognitive processes that operate within a social context. Several key factors play a role in this process. The choice of politeness strategies is based on mental models, social stereotypes, and discursive experience present in the speaker’s mind. The speaker evaluates the communicative situation, considers both their own and the interlocutor’s social status, and selects the most appropriate strategy accordingly.

The manifestation of politeness is closely related to various psychological needs, such as the desire for respect, the avoidance of rejection, and the demonstration of empathy. In the process of psycholinguistic planning, these needs serve as key determinants of politeness expression. Linguistic tools of politeness often involve emotional modulation—expressing feelings through polite forms, sarcasm, and softened language. This shows that politeness is not only rational but also has an affective (emotional) basis.

Culture plays a central role in the psycholinguistic approach to politeness. Cultural frameworks embedded in the human mind define politeness norms, expressions, and conventions. Researchers like Hofstede and Hall, who study types of cultures (e.g., individualistic vs. collectivist), provide insight into how politeness is expressed differently across languages and societies. For instance, the use of the formal “you” in Uzbek indicates social distance and respect, while in English it often serves to soften the tone and promote informality. Such differences highlight the unique cultural imprint of speech strategies.

MODERN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND INNOVATIVE TEACHING SOLUTIONS

From a psycholinguistic point of view, politeness manifests at lexical, grammatical, and pragmatic levels:

Lexical level – Words and expressions that convey respect (e.g., “please,” “could you,” “excuse me”).

Grammatical level – Use of modal verbs, passive voice, and interrogative forms (e.g., “Could you give me a hand?”, “Am I understanding you correctly?”).

Pragmatic level – Use of context-sensitive strategies, discourse management tools like humor, sarcasm, and softeners.

Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies can also be interpreted through a psycholinguistic lens:

Bald on Record – Direct communication used in close or trusting relationships (high level of psychological openness).

Positive Politeness – Aimed at strengthening social intimacy and showing solidarity.

Negative Politeness – Focused on maintaining personal space and respecting social distance.

Off Record – Indirect strategies that preserve emotional balance by using vague or implied expressions (e.g., “It's a bit cold in here, I wonder if the door is open?”).

Politeness also plays a vital role in the *art of conversation*. A kind word can win someone's trust and open their heart. Words, facial expressions, and tone are considered powerful tools in human interaction. In many cultures, words are believed to have incredible power—though the tongue has no bones, it can make the bones tremble. Good manners involve respecting others, placing value on human dignity, and upholding traditional moral standards. Demonstrating kindness and politeness is often seen as a reflection of one's good character.

In conversations, the essence of human interaction is shaped. Communication is not merely the exchange of thoughts, but a reflection of intellect and eloquence. However, some individuals struggle to begin conversations or lose their composure while speaking. They often misuse terms like “communication” and “interaction,” failing to distinguish between them clearly. Communication, in general, refers to the transmission of information and may serve merely as a tool for delivering data to a broader audience.

In such cases, the most critical factor is the speaker's attitude. People often want others to see things from their perspective. They only accept information that supports their own needs and dismiss the rest. But understanding another's viewpoint does not necessarily mean agreeing with them. Such mutual understanding can reduce conflict and prevent misinterpretation of feedback, which otherwise may escalate tensions.

Conflicts often arise when people fail to truly listen to one another, even when the message is delivered clearly and concisely. Sometimes it seems as though people pretend not to hear, or they genuinely do not listen. Considering the difficulties in communication, psychologists E. Melburd, V. Zigert, and L. Longe developed a behavioral model for managing human interactions in controversial situations. Constructive conflict resolution depends on:

- Adequate perception of conflict—recognizing the rights of both sides.

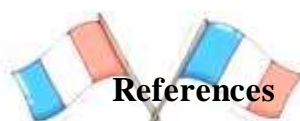
- Sincerity and effectiveness in communication—seeking a fair solution without bias.

- Establishing an atmosphere of mutual trust and cooperation.

Understanding the individual traits that lead to conflict is especially important for leaders and communicators.

The category of politeness is not merely a linguistic phenomenon; rather, it is the verbal expression of social, cultural, and psychological mechanisms in the human mind. A psycholinguistic approach interprets this process as a multi-level system, integrating cognitive, affective, and pragmatic factors.

Studying the psycholinguistic foundations of politeness in language learning and linguistic research offers an opportunity to gain deeper insight—not only into language but also into the inner world of humans, cultural dynamics, and the structure of social relationships.



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