# ON TYPOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION OF THE CONCEPT OF POLITENESS IN ETHNOLINGUISTICS

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**Abstract:** This article explores the theory of typological classification of politeness within the framework of ethnolinguistics, examining how politeness is conceptualized, expressed, and perceived across different cultural and linguistic contexts. Drawing on foundational theories by Brown and Levinson, and integrating insights from modern research, including contributions from Uzbek scholars, the study investigates various politeness strategies and their contextual applications. Key findings highlight the role of linguistic markers, social norms, and situational context in shaping polite behavior. The article emphasizes the dynamic nature of politeness, influenced by cultural values and social structures, particularly in Uzbek culture, where respect for elders and communal harmony are paramount. Applications in intercultural communication, language teaching, and translation are discussed, underscoring the practical relevance of understanding politeness typology in fostering effective and respectful global interactions. The study contributes to the broader understanding of politeness, advocating for a nuanced approach that considers both universal and culture-specific aspects.

**Key words**: *ethnolinguistics, typological classification, face theory, politeness strategies, honorifics, positive politeness, negative politeness, cognitive Linguistics, conceptual metaphors, sociolinguistics, intercultural communication, linguistic markers*

Politeness is a multifaceted concept that permeates various aspects of human communication and social interaction. It is intrinsically tied to the cultural and linguistic norms of different societies, making it a rich field of study in ethnolinguistics. Ethnolinguistics, the branch of linguistics that examines the relationship between language and culture, provides a framework for understanding how politeness is conceptualized, expressed, and perceived across different linguistic communities. This article aims to delve into the theory of typological classification of politeness, drawing on modern research and contributions from both global and Uzbek scholars.

The study of politeness began to gain traction with the seminal work of Penelope Brown

and Stephen Levinson in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Their politeness theory, which is grounded in the concept of face (as introduced by Erving Goffman), posits that politeness strategies are employed to mitigate face-threatening acts (FTAs). Brown and Levinson identify two types of face: positive face, which is the desire to be liked and approved of, and negative face, which is the desire to be free from imposition.

Brown and Levinson's model outlines four main politeness strategies:

1. Bald on-record: Direct communication without any minimization of the imposition, used when the speaker's need to be clear outweighs the need to be polite.

2. Positive politeness: Strategies aimed at minimizing the distance between speaker and listener by expressing friendliness and solidifying in-group membership.

3. Negative politeness: Strategies that recognize the listener's negative face and aim to avoid imposition.

4. Off-record: Indirect communication that leaves room for the listener to interpret the speaker's intention.

These strategies, while foundational, do not account for the full spectrum of politeness phenomena across different cultures, necessitating further research into the typological classification of politeness.

Typological classification in linguistics involves categorizing languages based on shared characteristics. In the context of politeness, it entails identifying and classifying the various ways in which politeness is manifested across different linguistic and cultural contexts.

Cross-cultural studies reveal that politeness is not a monolithic concept but varies widely among cultures. For instance, Japanese politeness is heavily influenced by hierarchical social structures and the use of honorifics, as discussed by Shibatani (1990). In contrast, Scandinavian countries, such as Sweden and Norway, prioritize egalitarianism and directness, resulting in different politeness norms.

Context plays a crucial role in the realization of politeness. The situational context, including factors such as power dynamics, social distance, and the level of imposition, affects how politeness is enacted. For example, in many Asian cultures, addressing elders or superiors requires a higher degree of formality and indirectness compared to interactions with peers.

Recent research has expanded the understanding of politeness by incorporating

insights from pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and cognitive linguistics. This section highlights significant contributions from contemporary scholars, including those from Uzbekistan.

Pragmatic approaches to politeness emphasize the importance of context and the dynamic nature of communication. Marina Terkourafi (2005) introduces the concept of frame-based politeness, which suggests that politeness is not solely a matter of fixed strategies but also involves the interplay of conventionalized expressions and contextual cues.

Sociolinguistic research has shed light on how social variables such as gender, age, and social class influence politeness. Janet Holmes (1995) explores the role of gender in politeness, revealing that women tend to use more positive politeness strategies, while men are more likely to employ bald on-record strategies. Uzbek scholars, have examined how social hierarchy and traditional norms shape politeness practices in Uzbek society.

Cognitive linguistics offers a novel perspective on politeness through the study of conceptual metaphors. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's (1980) work on metaphors highlights how abstract concepts, including politeness, are understood in terms of more concrete experiences.

Uzbek scholars have made significant contributions to the study of politeness, particularly in the context of Uzbek culture and language. Politeness in Uzbek is deeply rooted in traditional values such as respect for elders, hospitality, and communal harmony. We can identify specific linguistic markers of politeness in Uzbek, such as honorifics and formulaic expressions, and examine how these markers are used in various social contexts. Comparative studies involving Uzbek and other languages have also enriched the understanding of politeness. While comparing politeness strategies in Uzbek and English, we can notice that both languages employ positive and negative politeness strategies, the specific expressions and norms governing their use differ significantly due to cultural influences. Politeness in Uzbek is marked by a range of linguistic features, including honorifics, address forms, and polite expressions. For example, the use of the honorific suffix "-jon" (e.g., "Ota-jon" for father) conveys respect and affection. Additionally, formulaic expressions such as "Yaxshi ko'rganim" (my beloved) are used to express positive politeness.

Social norms play a crucial role in shaping politeness in Uzbek culture. Respect for elders, hospitality, and communal harmony are fundamental values that influence polite behavior. These norms dictate appropriate forms of address, greetings, and expressions of gratitude. For instance, it is customary to greet elders with a slight bow and a respectful phrase such as "Assalomu alaykum" (peace be upon you).

The situational context, including the relationship between interlocutors and the the interaction, affects the choice of politeness strategies in Uzbek. In formal settings, levels of politeness and indirectness are expected, while informal contexts may allow for more direct and casual communication. Power dynamics, such as interactions between superiors and subordinates, also play a significant role in determining appropriate politeness strategies.

Understanding the typological classification of politeness in Uzbek and other languages has practical applications in various fields, including intercultural communication, language teaching, and translation. Effective intercultural communication requires an awareness of different politeness norms and strategies. Misunderstandings and conflicts often arise from differences in politeness expectations.

By understanding the typological classification of politeness, communicators can navigate cross-cultural interactions more effectively, fostering mutual respect and understanding. In language teaching, incorporating lessons on politeness can enhance learners' communicative competence. Teaching materials should include cultural norms and politeness strategies specific to the target language. For Uzbek language learners, this means not only learning vocabulary and grammar but also understanding the cultural contexts in which polite expressions are used.

Translators and interpreters must navigate the complexities of politeness when rendering texts from one language to another. A deep understanding of the typological classification of politeness helps ensure that translations convey the intended level of politeness and adhere to the cultural norms of the target audience. This is particularly important in diplomatic and business contexts, where politeness can significantly impact the success of interactions.

The theory of typological classification of politeness in ethnolinguistics provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how politeness is conceptualized, expressed, and perceived across different cultures and languages. By examining the contributions of both global and Uzbek scholars, this article has highlighted the diverse ways in which politeness is manifested and the factors that influence its realization.

The typological classification of politeness has practical applications in intercultural communication, language teaching, and translation, underscoring its relevance in an increasingly interconnected world. By fostering a deeper understanding of politeness across cultures, we can promote more effective and respectful communication, bridging

cultural divides and enhancing global cooperation.

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