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researchers and students: theory and practice collection of materials of the
international scientific and practical conference on the topic

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In the collection of materials of the conference, the role and role of Science, Education and production in the era of globalization, the pressing problems of the issues of interaction of these processes, feedback on their solutions were presented by mature specialists of the field.

In addition, research on the scientific and practical topic, carried out in the economics, Exact Sciences, Natural Sciences and socio-humanities during the globalization period, information is presented in the scientific and practical fields, which includes the latest innovative technologies in the fields of production.

It can be argued that this collection is one of the specific intersections of current thoughts and innovative ideas of the world of science. This scientific and practical conference was actively attended by professors and scientific researchers engaged in scientific research in Uzbekistan and foreign countries. In increasing the position of the scientific and practical conference, the professors and teachers of domestic and foreign higher educational institutions made a significant contribution.

Professors and teachers of foreign higher educational institutions who actively participated in the work of the conference made a worthy contribution to the high level of interaction with scientists of our country. The processes of international cooperation with foreign countries and exchange with them in the field of Science in the era of globalization have a positive effect on the development of Higher Education, the fields of Science and production. The materials of this conference are special in that they include a wide range of research, from theoretical developments to practical solutions, demonstrating the diversity of approaches and directions in this area.

In conclusion, it should be noted that this scientific and practical conference will be a very useful collection for everyone who is interested in modern research in the fields of further development of Higher Education, Science, Education and production in the era of globalization. The authors are responsible for the content and quality of the articles and abstracts included in the collection.

THE PRAGMATICS OF POLITENESS IN CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

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Annotation: This article provides an expanded pragmatic analysis of politeness in English workplace dialogues, focusing on cross-cultural communication. Using a sample dialogue between a manager and an employee, the study examines face-threatening acts, positive and negative politeness strategies, and the linguistic markers that convey respect, mitigate imposition, and maintain social harmony. It highlights the role of cultural norms, social hierarchy, and contextual factors in shaping the interpretation of polite language. The article emphasizes the importance of pragmatic competence for effective communication in professional and multicultural environments and demonstrates how understanding politeness strategies can prevent miscommunication and foster interpersonal and intercultural understanding.

Keywords: Pragmatics, Politeness, Cross-Cultural Communication, Face-Threatening Acts, Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness, Pragmatic Competence, English Workplace Communication, Linguistic Mitigation, Hedging, Social Hierarchy, Intercultural Pragmatics, Politeness Markers

Pragmatics is the branch of linguistics concerned with the study of language use in context, including how speakers convey meaning beyond the literal content of words. One of the most significant areas within pragmatics is politeness, which involves strategies used to maintain social harmony, protect the self-image of participants (face), and manage interpersonal relationships. Understanding politeness is especially crucial in professional and cross-cultural communication, where differences in social norms, hierarchical structures, and cultural expectations can influence the interpretation of language. This article provides a detailed analysis of politeness in a short English dialogue between a manager (M) and an employee (E), demonstrating the application of theoretical frameworks, including Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, and exploring the pragmatic mechanisms that underpin face-saving behavior.

Dialogue

M: "Could you possibly finish the report by tomorrow?"

E: "I'll try my best, but I might need an extra day to ensure accuracy."

M: "I understand, thank you for letting me know."

E: "No problem, I'll keep you updated."

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), face-threatening acts are communicative acts that have the potential to infringe on a listener's positive or

negative face. In the dialogue above, the manager's request—"Could you possibly finish the report by tomorrow?"—is a potential FTA because it imposes a duty on the employee. The manager's use of hedging expressions such as "could you possibly" mitigates the imposition, demonstrating sensitivity to the employee's autonomy and minimizing the threat to their negative face. This type of linguistic mitigation is common in English professional communication, particularly in hierarchical relationships where subordinates may feel pressured to comply.

Negative politeness strategies aim to reduce imposition and respect the listener's desire for autonomy. The employee responds, "I'll try my best, but I might need an extra day to ensure accuracy," employing hedging and indirect refusal rather than a blunt denial. This mitigated response preserves the employee's own face while simultaneously maintaining the manager's authority. Phrases such as "I might need" and "to ensure accuracy" function to justify the limitation, softening the potential conflict inherent in the inability to fully comply with the initial request.

Positive politeness seeks to establish social solidarity, show appreciation, and affirm the listener's positive face. The manager's reply, "I understand, thank you for letting me know," demonstrates empathy and gratitude. By acknowledging the employee's effort and providing positive reinforcement, the manager strengthens interpersonal rapport and fosters a cooperative workplace environment. This aligns with the principle that positive politeness strategies in English often include expressions of agreement, compliments, and recognition of effort or goodwill.

Cultural norms significantly influence the interpretation of politeness strategies. In English-speaking professional environments, indirectness and hedging are conventional methods to soften requests. According to Yule (1996) and Leech (2014), such linguistic choices are considered polite and professional. However, cross-cultural differences may affect how these strategies are perceived. For instance, employees from direct-communication cultures (e.g., Germany, Netherlands) might interpret "Could you possibly..." as overly tentative, whereas employees from cultures emphasizing hierarchy and indirectness (e.g., Japan) may expect even more mitigated phrasing. These differences highlight the importance of cultural competence and pragmatic awareness in interpreting face-saving strategies.

Pragmatic competence is the ability to understand and apply context-sensitive language appropriately. In the analyzed dialogue, both participants demonstrate pragmatic competence by using linguistic strategies to maintain harmony and avoid miscommunication. The manager balances the need to request timely completion of work with politeness, while the employee navigates the constraints of professional obligations without offending or disrespecting authority. Developing pragmatic competence is crucial in multicultural workplaces to prevent misunderstandings and foster positive interpersonal relationships.

Hedges: "possibly," "might"

These soften statements and reduce direct imposition.

Mitigation: "I'll try my best," "I understand"

These phrases reduce the perceived threat of the FTA while acknowledging relational context.

Gratitude and Acknowledgment: “thank you for letting me know,” “No problem”

Expressions of appreciation and acknowledgment reinforce positive face and strengthen social bonds.

Such markers illustrate the interplay between linguistic form, social context, and cultural norms in English workplace interactions. They demonstrate that even brief dialogues are rich in pragmatic features that reflect face-management strategies.

English politeness strategies often rely on hedging, indirectness, and mitigation, which may contrast sharply with the norms of other languages and cultures. For example, in East Asian cultures such as Japanese or Korean, honorific systems and elaborate levels of formality guide communication in ways not directly mirrored in English. Failure to understand these cultural differences can result in miscommunication: a straightforward English request may seem blunt to someone accustomed to more elaborate mitigated forms, while excessive indirectness may appear evasive to English interlocutors.

In addition, globalization and digital communication have introduced new forms of interaction that influence politeness expression. Emails, instant messaging, and virtual meetings often retain the structural markers of politeness—hedges, modal verbs, and mitigated imperatives—but may rely less on tone and nonverbal cues, requiring greater attention to pragmatic markers. Emoji, abbreviations, and digital conventions supplement face-saving strategies in online contexts.

Conclusion

The detailed analysis of this English dialogue confirms that politeness strategies are essential in professional and cross-cultural communication. Negative and positive politeness mechanisms work together to protect face, maintain harmony, and navigate hierarchical relationships. Linguistic markers such as hedges, mitigation, and acknowledgment reflect culturally normative approaches to politeness. Cross-cultural awareness and pragmatic competence are critical for avoiding misinterpretation and ensuring effective communication. This analysis demonstrates that even short dialogues are pedagogically valuable for illustrating the principles of politeness theory and the real-world application of pragmatics in English-language interaction.

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