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Abstract. Nowadays politeness is one of the most reinforcements of interactional communication and social everyday life. The article demonstrates the most important theoretical and analytical frameworks that attempt to make sense of politeness within and across cultures with the aim to reveal the universality of linguistic politeness.

Key words: Cross-cultural; Linguistic; Politeness.

LINGVOCULTURAL PECULIARITIES OF CONCEPT «POLITENESS» IN KAZAKH AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES AND ITS INFLUENCE ON FORMING CROSS-CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Introduction.

Being a very important aspect of humans' lives, politeness has become ubiquitous in different research areas. It is the central concern of many scholars in different fields of studies including pragmatics, sociolinguistics, cultural studies, comparative/contrastive studies and so forth. It is, therefore, no surprise to see that a single definition of politeness is by no means possible. However, although definitions abound, they happen to overlap in one aspect or another. The universality of politeness principles has been investigated by different scholars to determine to what extent they vary or coincide from language to language and from one culture to another. The aim of this article is to present an analysis and interpretation of the different views about politeness and to establish the similarities and differences between the various conceptualizations of politeness principles in order to answer the question of whether politeness is culture specific or reflects more universal norms.

Politeness - is a philosophical, ethical concept, a set of actions that people spend in the relationships, attitudes and attitudes of people in a particular environment. Because politeness is a socially-linguistic phenomenon, its main function is the following:

1) Both macro-language and micro-language linguistic functions are the same;
2) One of the special functions of politeness - the function of expression of culture;
3) One of the special functions of politeness is regulating activity;
4) The role of communication skills plays a key role in determining communication skills.

Almagul Seisenova, a Kazakh-language researcher, also provides information on grammatical aspects of politeness in her article entitled "Virtue Category".

Spandiyar Telkozuly, a Candidate of Chemical Sciences, in his article "Official and Reliable Words of the Kazakh Language", studied grammatically comparative study of the Kazakh language.

Scientists recognize the need to study the polite language in the common language. V.M.Alpatov stated, "It is important to study the ways to be polite in general linguistics as there is no real scientific work to study polite linguistic aspect". Therefore, in linguistics, it is still necessary to examine the different features of linguistic differentiation in the language. Scientifically differentiation of the ways of polite expression or its lexico-semantic groups in different nationalities has not been systematically implemented.

Kazakh language researcher Tomaeva B.G.in his work "The lexical-semantic group of meaningful words in the Kazakh language", he studied only the lexical-semantic group of honor. The lexical and semantic nature of the common word is still not studied.

According to Lakoff (1973), politeness is the system societies develop to lessen the friction inherent in

communicative interactions; therefore, it is by no means a chaotic but rather "a strategic conflict-avoidance" that can further be "measured in terms of the degree of effort put into the avoidance of a conflict situation" (Leech, 1980, p.109). Lakoff's assumption is that pragmatic competence encompasses two general sets of rules. The first rule, "Be clear" is a literal abidance by the Gricean conversational maxims of quantity, quality, relation, and manner. The second rule, "Be polite", is composed of other sub-rules that represent Lakoff's own conceptualization of politeness:

• Don't impose: used when formal, impersonal politeness is required in formal and impersonal settings.

• Give options: used when informal politeness is required in informal settings.

• Make (the hearer) feel good: used when intimate politeness is required in more intimate relationships.

Although, in her model, Lakoff does not clearly define politeness, she conceives it as a means of avoiding conversational conflicts most often at the expense of the rule of clarity. She, however, rationalizes this assumption as follows, "Politeness usually supersedes: it is considered more important in a conversation to avoid offense than to achieve clarity. This makes sense, since in most informal conversations, actual communication of important ideas is secondary to merely reaffirming and strengthening relationships" (1973, p. 289). However, the importance attached to each rule is something that Lakoff (1973) considers to be context-bound.

Lakoff's (1973) model of politeness deals with politeness as a set of rules that were postulated to be universal assuming the occurrence of patterns of reverberation across cultures with the possibility of detecting some instances of cross-cultural variation as far as the ordering of the rules and the priority given to each are concerned. Both claims, however, were conceived as means which steered a number of empirical investigations of politeness across different languages and cultures.

The different maxims underlying the Politeness Principle, according to Leech (1983) are explained as follows:

• Tact maxim: minimize cost to other; maximize other's benefit. (e.g., could I interrupt you for a second? If I could, just clarify this then.)

• Generosity maxim: minimize self-benefit; maximize cost to self. (e.g., you relax and let me do the dishes.)

• Approbation maxim: minimize dispraise to other; maximize praise to other. (e.g., I know you're a genius - would you know how to solve this math problem here?)

• Modesty maxim: minimize self-praise; maximize self-dispraise. (e.g., Oh! I'm stupid- I didn't make a note of our lecture! Did you?)

• Agreement maxim: minimize disagreement between self and other; maximize agreement between self and other. (e.g., yes—yes, but if you do that- you- your tea towel's soaking and at the end of the night, nothing's getting dried.)

• Sympathy maxim: minimize antipathy between self and other; maximize sympathy between self and other. (e.g., I was sorry to hear about your father…) Leech's (1983) work has been adopted by many researchers as a suitable analytical framework for linguistic politeness phenomena within or across different languages and cultures.

Another purpose politeness serves is suggested by Grundy (2000) as being the degree to which a speaker's linguistic action meets the addressee's expectations as to the way it should be expressed. To phrase it differently, these definitions go beyond explaining what linguistic politeness consists of to encompass the purpose it serves, namely, systematic conflict avoidance in the form of concern and awareness for the others.

Because language use is purposeful, some scholars tend to view both the form and the purposes it serves as inseparable entities and have provided definitions of the phenomenon of politeness with equal reference to both the nature (form) and the function it expresses. Politeness according to Brown (2005) is seen in terms of modifying one's language in a particular way as to consider the feelings of other interlocutors; consequently, the linguistic expression the speaker uses will take a different form than the one he would produce if he did not consider his addressee's feelings. This claim suggests that there is an interchangeable influence between the language used in a given interaction and the social relationships between the people involved in that interaction. Brown and Levinson (1987, p.281) explain how "On this view, a very considerable intentional and strategic mediation connects linguistic forms with social relationships." For them, linguistic politeness refers to the linguistic strategies the speaker uses to express

his communicative intention taking into consideration his hearer's feelings and face, and the relationship between the two participants.

One would say that politeness is neither a typical instance of the universality of language use nor an inflexible cultural property. Otherwise, how on the one hand, would one explain that people sometimes succeed to understand each other and communicate with people from other cultures? And how would one explain cross-cultural communication breakdowns on the other hand? Linguistic politeness universality is a matter of relativity.

METHOD

Participants and Setting

About 20 respondents aged 16 to 40 from the USA, Great Britain and Canada took part in the first survey.

About 50 citizens of Kazakhstan aged 14 to 55 took part in the survey. The survey was uploaded to Vkontakte, the most popular social network in Kazakhstan.

Data collection and Analysis

To find out associative peculiarities of politeness among speakers of English and Kazakh an experiment was held. The interview method was chosen as the main for this experiment. The respondents were several residents of the USA, Canada, Great Britain and Kazakhstan. The results of the survey were later used to create an associative field of the concept «politeness» in the English language and for the comparative analysis of this concept in Kazakh and English.

An associative field is a set of associates, i.e. reactions to stimulus words. It is created after results of an associative experiment are processed. An associative experiment can be of two types – free and directed. A free associative experiment means that its participants can respond to a stimulus using any word. In the case of a directed associative experiment, a response is restricted by some predetermined conditions (e.g. the necessity to use certain part of speech or constructions).

Both free and directed associative experiments were used in the study. Two questionnaires were compiled for speakers of Kazakh and English.

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

About 20 respondents aged 16 to 40 from the USA, Great Britain and Canada took part in the first survey. They were suggested to answer the following questions:

What forms of politeness do you use?

special words (ex. please,)

special constructions (ex. could you..., wouldn't be you so ..)

both of them

How will you ask for something from:

an unknown person (ex. asking time, way,)

your close friend (ex. asking help in organizing party,)

your relatives

What does «politeness» mean for you?

The answersare various though having some ideas in common.

The first question:

What forms of politeness do you use?

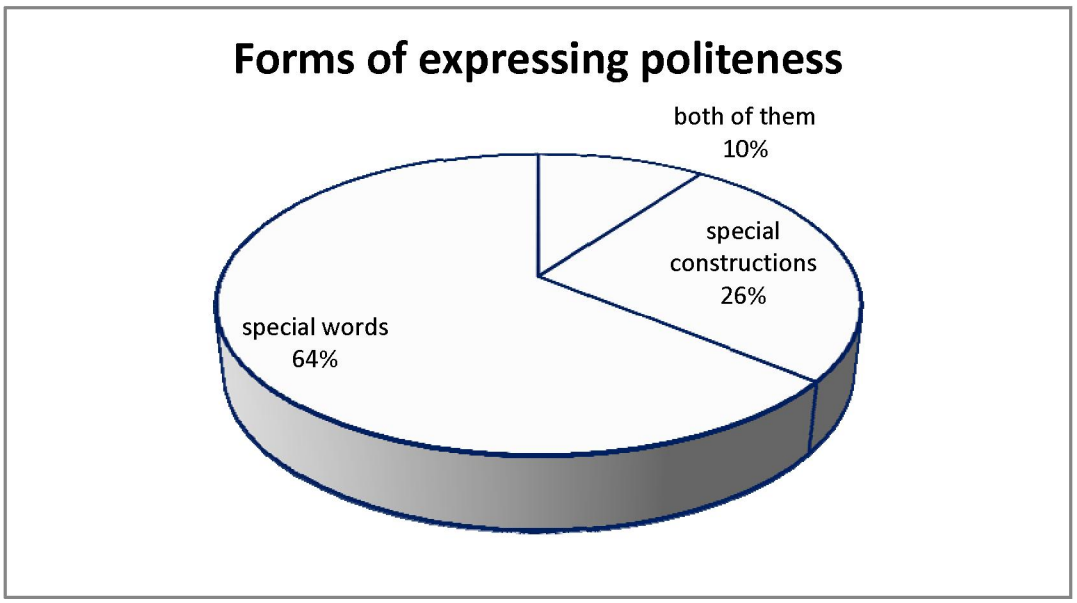
special words (ex. please, etc)

special constructions (ex. could you..., wouldn't be you so ..)

both of them

Having analyzed the responses one can say that 64% of the respondents use special words, 26% — special constructions and 10% — both special words and constructions. It is shown in Diagram 1.

D i a g ra m 1



From this diagram we can see that the Britons and the Americans mostly use special words like please, thank you, you are welcome to express politeness.

As for the special constructions, the following were pointed out: Could you…, Couldn't you…, Wouldn't you….

It is interesting to notice that the use of constructions was stressed mostly by the respondents from Great Britain. It can be assumed that for Britons it is important to use not only one word to show their polite attitude to somebody but the whole constructions.

The second question:

How will you ask for something from:

an unknown person (ex. asking time, way,)

your close friend (ex. asking help in organizing party,)

your relatives

Let us quote some of the answers to this question to illustrate the concept of politeness in English:

Sorry, what's time now? Could you tell me the time? Excuse me, can you show me the way to the nearest shop? I'm sorry, tell me please where I can buy a book. Excuse me, where can I have a snack?

In most of the responses the initial word was can, with please also mentioned.

What does «politeness» mean for you?

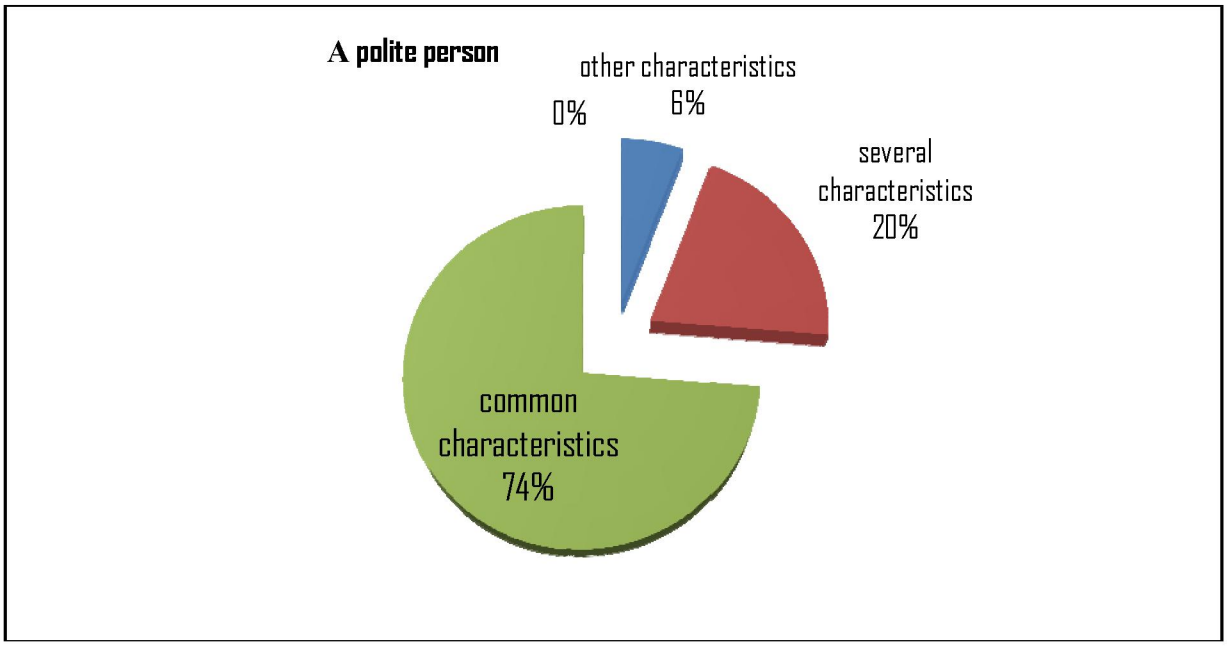
Some of the responses can give a good insight into the matter. Almost all the respondents characterized not the word 'politeness' bur a polite person.

Doing this the British respondents mostly mentioned that a polite person shows consideration, respect for other people; courteous, respectful, considerate and sensitive towards other people; thoughtful of others;

thinking of others; who is aware of other people; often use the words «please» and «thank you»; (each criterion was named by more than 50% of the informants). One response contained a repetition of several characteristics (39%): A polite person is someone, who says «please» and «thank you» and has respect for other people; a person who uses manners, says «please» and «thank you». Only a few responses enclosed other characteristics (11%): a polite person is reserve), tactful, calm and cool, friendly, kind, pleasant).

Percentagewise it looks as follows in Diagram 2:

D i a g ra m 2



Respondents from Kazakhstan were offered to answer the following questions:

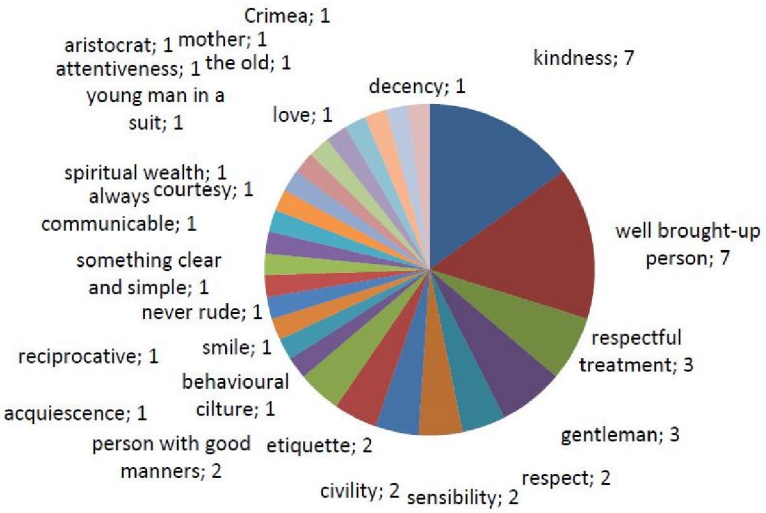
Write your immediate association with the word «politeness».

Describe a polite person.

About 50 citizens of Kazakhstan aged 14 to 55 took part in the survey. The survey was uploaded to Vkontakte, the most popular social network in Kazakhstan. The following results were obtained:

Write your immediate association with the word «politeness». 47 answers were given to this question. The results are presented at Diagram 3.

The results suggest that politeness in the minds of the Kazakhstan people is kindness and a well brought-up person. For the Kazakh respect is the background in contrast with the speakers of English for whom it is the main characteristic feature of politeness.

The conclusion can be made that English politeness is oriented to others (demonstration of respect to others) while Kazakhstan politeness is subject oriented and concentrates on the speaker and his/her kindness.

D i a g ra m 3