

**EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT SEMANTIC COMPONENTS OF POLITENESS
EXPRESSIONS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK**

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Annotation

This article examines explicit and implicit semantic components of politeness expressions in English and Uzbek. It analyzes how literal meaning and implied meaning interact in polite speech and how cultural factors influence their interpretation in cross-cultural communication.

Key words: Politeness, explicit meaning, implicit meaning, semantics, cross-cultural communication.

Аннотация

В статье рассматриваются эксплицитные и имплицитные семантические компоненты выражений вежливости в английском и узбекском языках. Анализируется взаимодействие буквального и скрытого значения и влияние культурных факторов на их интерпретацию.

Ключевые слова: Вежливость, эксплицитное значение, имплицитное значение, семантика, межкультурная коммуникация.

Annotatsiya

Mazkur maqolada ingliz va o'zbek tillaridagi muloyimlik ifodalarining eksplitsit va implitsit semantik komponentlari tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotda to'g'ridan-to'g'ri ma'no hamda yashirin ma'noning o'zaro munosabati va madaniy omillarning ta'siri yoritiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: muloyimlik, eksplitsit ma'no, implitsit ma'no, semantika, madaniyatlararo muloqot.

Introduction. In modern linguistics, politeness is studied not only as a pragmatic strategy but also as a semantic phenomenon involving both explicit and implicit meaning. Polite speech often conveys more than its literal content, and successful communication depends on the interpretation of these additional layers of meaning. In intercultural interaction, misunderstandings frequently arise from differences in implicit interpretation rather than from explicit statements.

Materials and methods. Explicit meaning refers to the direct semantic content expressed by linguistic forms, whereas implicit meaning involves context-dependent interpretation shaped by social and cultural norms. In polite communication, speakers frequently rely on implicitness to reduce imposition and maintain social harmony.

In English, politeness is commonly realized through modal verbs, indirect constructions, and hedging devices, where literal meaning differs from communicative intention. In Uzbek, politeness is often encoded through honorific markers and respectful pronouns, whose interpretation is closely connected to cultural hierarchy. The distinction between explicit and implicit meaning is fundamental in semantic and pragmatic theory. Explicit meaning refers to the literal semantic content directly encoded in linguistic expressions, whereas implicit meaning arises through contextual interpretation and shared background knowledge. In polite speech, communicative intention often relies more on implicit meaning than on explicit form.

The notion of implicit meaning is closely related to conversational implicature introduced by H. Paul Grice, who argued that speakers frequently convey additional meanings beyond literal content through cooperative principles and conversational maxims. [Grice H.P.: 1989.] In polite

communication, implicature functions as a mechanism for reducing directness and mitigating imposition.

The strategic role of indirectness was further elaborated by P. Brown and S C. Levinson, who demonstrated that indirect forms protect the interlocutor's face and minimize face-threatening acts. [Brown P: 1987.] For instance, interrogative constructions may explicitly function as questions but implicitly operate as requests. Similarly, G. Leech emphasizes that politeness involves evaluative meaning regulated by social norms, where indirectness increases tact and decreases imposition. [Leech G: 2014.]

In Uzbek linguistics, issues of communicative etiquette, respect markers, and speech culture have been explored within the framework of pragmatics and communicative norms. Uzbek scholar Sh. Safarov highlights that politeness in Uzbek is closely connected with social hierarchy, honorific morphology, and culturally embedded forms of address, where explicit grammatical markers of respect coexist with implicitly understood social meanings. [Safarov Sh: 2008.] However, most Uzbek studies focus primarily on pragmatic norms rather than on the interaction between explicit and implicit semantic components.

Thus, although politeness has been widely examined in both Western and Uzbek linguistics, comparative research specifically addressing explicit and implicit semantic structures in English and Uzbek polite expressions remains limited. This gap underlines the relevance of the present study. This study employs a qualitative comparative approach to examine explicit and implicit semantic components in politeness expressions in English and Uzbek. The data include commonly used requests, indirect directives, respectful forms of address, and honorific constructions in both languages. The analysis is based on semantic componential analysis and contextual interpretation, allowing identification of literal (explicit) meaning and implied (implicit) communicative intention.

In English, politeness frequently relies on implicit semantic mechanisms. For example:

“Could you open the window?”

Explicitly, this utterance is an interrogative construction referring to the hearer's ability. Implicitly, however, it functions as a request. The modal verb “could” weakens the directive force and reduces imposition, protecting the interlocutor's negative face. [Brown P: 1987.] The polite meaning therefore depends primarily on inference rather than on explicit markers of respect.

Similarly, in the sentence:

“I was wondering if you could help me,”

the explicit meaning expresses a past mental state, while the implicit meaning represents a softened request. The polite effect arises through contextual interpretation, consistent with the theory of implicature. [Grice H.P: 1989.]

In Uzbek, politeness is often encoded more explicitly through grammatical markers. For example:

“Yordam bera olasizmi?”

The suffix “-siz” explicitly signals respect and social distance. Unlike English, Uzbek incorporates politeness into morphological structure. However, implicit meaning remains important. The appropriate use of pronouns such as “sen” and “Siz” depends on contextual factors including age, hierarchy, and familiarity. Although the respectful form is grammatically explicit, its interpretation relies on shared cultural knowledge. [Safarov Sh: 2008.]

Thus, the comparison reveals that English politeness tends to rely more on implicit semantic strategies, whereas Uzbek combines explicit honorific markers with culturally conditioned implicit interpretation.

Discussion and Results. The analysis demonstrates that explicit and implicit meanings function differently in English and Uzbek polite speech. In English, politeness is primarily achieved through implicit semantic strategies such as indirectness, modal mitigation, and contextual inference. The literal grammatical form often differs from the intended communicative force, requiring interpretation beyond explicit meaning.

In contrast, Uzbek politeness is more frequently encoded through explicit grammatical markers, including honorific suffixes and respectful pronouns. However, the appropriate use and interpretation of these forms still depend on implicit socio-cultural knowledge. Thus, even when politeness is explicitly marked, implicit meaning remains essential for accurate communication. The comparative results indicate that:

- ✓ English politeness relies predominantly on implicit semantic mechanisms.
- ✓ Uzbek politeness combines explicit honorific markers with implicit cultural interpretation.
- ✓ The interaction between literal meaning and implied intention is central to polite communication in both languages.
- ✓ Misinterpretation of implicit meaning may lead to intercultural misunderstanding.

These findings confirm that politeness operates at the semantic-pragmatic interface and cannot be fully explained by literal meaning alone.

Conclusion. The present study has analyzed explicit and implicit semantic components of politeness expressions in English and Uzbek. The findings show that while English tends to express politeness through implicit indirectness, Uzbek integrates explicit grammatical markers of respect alongside culturally conditioned implicit meanings. The interaction between explicit form and implicit intention plays a crucial role in cross-cultural communication. Comparative semantic analysis therefore contributes to a deeper understanding of politeness as a culturally embedded linguistic phenomenon.

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