

GENERAL AND SPECIFIC NORMS OF POLITENESS IN UZBEK AND AMERICAN CULTURES

Ne'matjonova Ruxshona

Student: UzSWLU 3rd English faculty, group 2330

Annotation: *This article dedicated to tell about what are exactly general and specific norms of politeness, what kind of definitions do they take, as well as provides with some examples of politeness norms in both cultures. What's more captivating is that observations and findings of social norms in movies of both cultures. Moreover, here will be mentioned about several factors that why individuals should be informed with datas based on various kinds of politeness in variety of countries.*

Key words: *general norms, specific norms of politeness, hospitality, equality, "Forrest Gump", "To'ylar muborak", avoid misunderstandings, beforehand awareness.*

At the outset, in our society every individual knows how to greet with elders in a proper way, how to behave in public areas or what to wear to different ceremonies and whatnot, these kind of things will be taught for everyone from their childhood in every families. To be more precise, general norms of politeness are the unwritten rules and expectations about how people should behave in a particular society, group, or social setting. Added to this, general norms of politeness are considered to be social conventions that guide how individuals interact respectfully and considerately with one another. These norms can vary significantly across cultures, but some common elements include:

Use of Language:

- Greetings and Farewells: Saying "hello," "please," "thank you," and "goodbye" is fundamental in many cultures.
- Formal Titles: Using appropriate titles (Mr., Mrs., Dr.) shows respect, especially in formal settings.
- Indirectness: Polite requests often avoid direct commands, using phrases like "Could you please...?" instead of "Do this."

Saying "*thank you*" when someone helps you. Standing in line and waiting your turn. Shaking hands or greeting others in a socially accepted manner. Dressing appropriately for different occasions (e.g., formal events or religious ceremonies). These norms are socially accepted ways behaving yourself in society.

General norms of politeness are pressing way in order to reach stability and peace between citizens.

No doubt, basic norms of politeness alter through cultures, in the light of the fact based on all cultures' various history and values. Let's take two different cultures which

one is cited in Northern part of the universe, America. Another is Uzbekistan, which is located in the heart of Central Asia.

General norms of politeness in Uzbek culture.

Greetings

- *Handshakes*: Men greet each other with handshakes, often placing their other hand over their heart as a sign of warmth. Women may place their hands over their chest and bow slightly as a greeting.

- *Kissing on the cheeks*: Close friends and family members may greet each other by kissing on both cheeks.

Respect for Elders.

- Standing when an elder enters the room: It is customary to stand up as a sign of respect when an elder enters a room

Hospitality

- *Offering food and tea*: When guests visit, it is customary to serve tea and food immediately as a sign of hospitality. Guests are treated with great care, and hosts often prepare lavish meals.

- *Guests first*: At the dinner table, guests are always served first, and it is common for hosts to encourage guests to eat more.

Visiting Homes

- *Removing shoes*: When entering someone's home, it is customary to remove your shoes at the door.

- *Avoiding empty-handed visits*: It is considered impolite to visit someone's home without bringing a small gift, such as sweets or fruit.

Traditional Gender Roles

- *Men and women in separate spaces*: In some traditional gatherings, men and women may be seated separately, especially in rural areas or during religious events.

- *Women serving the table*: In many households, women are expected to serve food and tea during family or social gatherings, though this is changing in modern urban settings.

General norms of politeness in American culture.

Equality and Non-Discrimination

- Politeness in American culture often involves treating everyone equally, regardless of their social, racial, or economic background.

Respect for Personal Choices and Individualism

- In American culture, respecting personal freedom and choices is a form of politeness.

Honesty and Sincerity in Communication

- Americans value direct but respectful communication, where being honest is important, but doing so in a way that doesn't hurt others is crucial.

Punctuality and Respect for Time

- Being on time and respecting others' time is a key norm in American politeness. Lateness without explanation can be seen as rude or inconsiderate.

Use of Polite Phrases: "Please," "Thank You," and "Excuse Me"

- Common expressions like "please" and "thank you" are essential in everyday politeness in American culture.

Observation of specific politeness formulas of Uzbek culture through some expressions used in the Uzbek movie "To'ylar muborak"

1. *"Assalomu alaykum" / "Va alaykum assalom"*- Meaning: "Peace be upon you" / "And peace be upon you too"

- Usage in the movie: This is a standard greeting in Uzbek culture, and it is frequently used when characters meet each other, especially when greeting elders or in formal settings. The response "Va alaykum assalom" is given to reciprocate the greeting.

2. *"Ilohim, baxtli bo'linglar"* - Meaning: "May God bless you with happiness"

- Usage in the movie: This phrase is often used to give blessings, especially to the bride and groom during weddings. It reflects the cultural value of invoking divine blessings as part of polite conversation.

3. *"Xush kelibsiz" / "Xush ko'rdik"*- Meaning: "Welcome" / "We are glad to see you"

- Usage in the movie: These expressions are used to welcome guests and show respect to visitors. Hospitality is central to Uzbek culture, and this formula helps make guests feel honored and appreciated.

4. *"Kechirasiz"* - Meaning: "Excuse me" or "I'm sorry"

- Usage in the movie: This formula is used to apologize or politely ask for attention, especially in cases of mistakes or interruptions.

5. *"Mehmon keldi, dasturxon yozing"* - Meaning: "The guest has arrived, spread the table" Usage in the movie: This phrase reflects the importance of hospitality in Uzbek culture. It is a symbolic way of expressing the host's eagerness to welcome and feed the guest.

Observation of specific politeness formulas of American culture through some expressions used in the movie "Forrest Gump"

1. *"Yes, sir" / "Yes, ma'am"*- Meaning: A formal way of addressing people, especially elders, superiors, or those in positions of authority.

- Usage in the movie: Forrest frequently uses "Yes, sir" and "Yes, ma'am" when responding to authority figures, reflecting his upbringing in the American South where formal address is a sign of respect and politeness.

2. *"I'm sorry"*

- Meaning: A phrase used to apologize, often expressing regret or sympathy for an unfortunate situation.

3. **"Please"** - Meaning: A polite request, commonly used in American conversations to soften demands or ask for something.

- Usage in the movie: Forrest uses "Please" when he asks for help or makes requests.

4. **"It would be nice if..."**

- Meaning: A polite way to suggest something without sounding demanding.

- Usage in the movie: Forrest, though not always articulate, implies his requests or desires in a humble way, never imposing himself on others.

5. **"Nice to meet you"**- Meaning: A polite expression used when being introduced to someone for the first time.

- Usage in the movie: Forrest and other characters use this phrase during introductions as part of formal politeness.

Cultural values that influence on these norms in both cultures.

Cultural values are the shared principles, standards, or qualities that a group of people within a society collectively view as important and desirable. These values shape behavior, influence social norms, and provide a framework for making decisions and understanding the world.

Cultural Values in "Forrest Gump" American values such as *individualism, hard work, and self-reliance* are prominent. These values influence many of the norms of politeness and interaction seen in the film. In "Tóylar Muborak," the cultural values of *collectivism, respect for tradition, and community* are strongly emphasized. These values shape the norms of *liberal individual politeness* in Uzbek culture, which are more centered around the family, community, and respect for elders.

Lastly, politeness varies widely across cultures, influencing how people communicate and interact. Here's a breakdown of the differences, examples, and the importance of being aware of these variations:

How Politeness Varies in

Different Cultures - Direct vs.

Indirect Communication:

- Some cultures prefer straightforwardness (e.g., the U.S., Germany), while others value subtlety and indirectness (e.g., Japan, China).

- Formality:

- In cultures like South Korea, formal speech is crucial based on social hierarchy, whereas in Scandinavian countries, informality is more common.

- Non-Verbal Cues:

- Eye contact may be seen as respectful in some cultures (e.g., the U.S.) but can be viewed as confrontational in others (e.g., some Indigenous cultures).

Examples of Cultural Differences in Politeness

- Japanese Keigo: The use of honorific language to show respect based on the relationship between speakers.

- American Informality: Using first names quickly in professional settings, reflecting a more egalitarian approach.
- Middle Eastern Hospitality: Offering food and drink as a sign of respect; refusing an invitation can be considered impolite.
- Latin American Warmth: Physical touch (like hugs or cheek kisses) is common as a greeting, indicating warmth and friendliness.

Importance of Being Aware of Cultural Differences in Politeness

- Avoid Misunderstandings: Avoid communication breakdown. Misinterpretations can lead to offense or conflict; understanding cultural norms helps navigate interactions smoothly.
- Build Relationships: Respecting cultural differences fosters trust and rapport, essential for personal and professional relationships.
- Enhance Communication Skills: Being aware of these differences makes you a more effective communicator, enabling you to adapt your style to various contexts.

Using Knowledge of Cultural Differences to Improve Communication

- Research and Observe: Before interacting with individuals from different cultures, learn about their communication styles and politeness norms.
- Be Adaptable: Adjust your language, tone, and body language according to the cultural context. For example, use formal titles when appropriate in hierarchical cultures.
- Ask Questions: If unsure about politeness norms, it's often acceptable to ask someone about their preferences regarding communication.

Overall, all nationalities have their own general and specific norms of politeness and cultural values. In order not to have breakdown in the communication with another culture everybody should be informed from these information. Owing to politeness norms serve to facilitate respectful communication, promote social harmony, and reflect cultural values. They continue to evolve as societies change and interact with one another.

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