POLITENESS

informal and formal -
  • 'thanks', 'cheers' – informal
  • 'thank you' – formal

formal and informal pronouns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal</th>
<th>Informal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>thee</td>
<td>you</td>
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<td>thy</td>
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<td>thine</td>
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Politeness principles:

Leech –
  • tact maxim – 'minimise cost to other, maximise benefit to other'
    - turn the music down.
    - would you turn the music down please?
    - I wonder if I could ask you to turn the music down.
  • Approbation maxim – 'minimise dispraise of other, maximise praise of other'
    - a fringe doesn't suit you
    - why don't try growing your fringe out
    - you'd look lovely without a fringe.

These principles assume a cosy world where social pleasantries are everything. Friends tend to be more direct with each other anyway – context needs to be taken into account.

different people find different levels of lexis offensive.

Brown and Levinson -
  • developed a politeness strategy around the concept of face, which refers to our public self-image.
  • Positive face refers to our need to be liked and accepted.
  • Negative face refers to our right not to be imposed on.
  • Thus politeness involves speakers showing an awareness of the other's 'face needs'.
  • Positive politeness strategies should be used with friends to emphasise solidarity, such as:
    - shared dialect
    - informal lexis
    - informal grammar
    - more direct requests.
  • Negative politeness strategies emphasise respect when there is a social distance between speakers, so more indirect requests and a more formal lexis and grammar are used.