

Speech Etiquette In English And Uzbek: A Pragmalinguistic Analysis

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ABSTRACT

The present article is a comparative analysis of the pragmalinguistic features of the speech etiquette of the English and Uzbek languages. Speech etiquette is a significant aspect of communicative competence that mirrors the values of the culture, the social order, and the personal ties of the respective linguistic community.

Keywords: speech etiquette, pragmalinguistics, politeness strategies, comparative linguistics, face theory, communicative competence, cultural values.

Introduction. Speech etiquette is a major aspect of human communication, marking the set of linguistic formulas and behavioral norms that govern social interactions within particular cultural contexts. Globalization is increasing the number of intercultural contacts, and foreign language learning is becoming more necessary, therefore, the understanding of the pragmalinguistic features of speech etiquette in different languages is particularly important. The comparative study of English and Uzbek speech etiquette is revealing how different cultural worldviews and social structures can be seen through linguistic choices and communicative strategies. English, as a global lingua franca with mostly individualistic cultural orientation, and Uzbek, as a Central Asian language steeped in collectivistic traditions, are two different and opposing pragmatic systems that deserve a thorough investigation. The practical needs in translation, foreign language teaching, diplomatic communication, and business interactions between English-speaking and Uzbek-speaking communities make this research relevant. The gap created by the absence of studies comparing English-Uzbek speech etiquette is one aspect of the reason this article is written.

Methodology and Literature Review. The present research article uses a qualitative comparative method based on the systematic review of the literature and theoretical analysis of the existing literature on the politeness theory, pragmalinguistics, and speech etiquette in English and Uzbek languages. The theoretical foundation is mainly focusing on Brown and Levinson's politeness theory [1], which differentiates face as a universal human concern that is revealed through different cultural practices, and Leech's pragmatic principles [2], which are the maxims that are regulating polite verbal behavior. These models give analytical instruments to uncover the different ways of the speakers in the various linguistic communities managing their social relations through the use of the language. The present study also assumes Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory [3] which obligates the linguistic practices to be set against the background of the broader cultural value orientations, especially the individualism-collectivism continuum that is a strong determinant of communicative norms. The researchers place reliance on the work done by Dadabaev [4], in Central Asian communication patterns, and Saidaliyev's studies [5] of the linguistic politeness of the Uzbeks, aimed at interpreting the Uzbek speech etiquette. These works bear witness to the fact that the traditional values of respect, hospitality and hierarchical relationships are determining factors in the verbal interaction of the Uzbek society. The study of English speech etiquette is partly based on Holmes's [6] work on politeness across English-speaking contexts and is complemented by Thomas's [7] research on cross-cultural pragmatic failure. The former highlights the sources of miscommunication that arise from the conflicting politeness conventions while the latter delineates the locus of the misunderstandings. The comparative framework is congruent with

the contrastive pragmatic methodology as expounded by Wierzbicka [8], who examines parallel communicative situations across both languages to identify similarities and differences in linguistic realization of polite functions.

Results and Discussion. The comparative analysis reveals substantial pragmalinguistic differences between English and Uzbek speech etiquette, reflecting distinct cultural logics and social organization principles. In greeting formulas, English exhibits relatively limited variation with standard expressions such as "hello," "good morning," and "how are you" functioning across diverse social contexts with minimal adjustment for hierarchical relationships. In contrast, Uzbek greeting system demonstrates elaborate differentiation based on age, social status, and relationship intimacy, employing distinct formulas such as "assalomu alaykum" for general use, "xayrli tong" for morning greetings, and specialized age-graded forms like "salom" among peers versus "hurmatli" prefixes when addressing elders [5]. This difference manifests the collectivistic orientation of Uzbek culture, where social hierarchy receives explicit linguistic marking, compared to English emphasis on egalitarian interaction patterns characteristic of individualistic societies [3]. Terms of address similarly reveal contrasting pragmatic systems, with English increasingly favoring first-name usage even in formal contexts, reflecting informality trends and horizontal social relations, while Uzbek maintains complex honorific systems including kinship terms (aka, opa, tog'a, amma) extended beyond biological relatives to mark respect and social proximity [4]. The Uzbek practice of using kinship terminology for non-relatives, such as addressing older women as "opa" (elder sister) or older men as "aka" (elder brother), creates solidarity and acknowledges social roles in ways absent from contemporary English usage, where such extensions would seem peculiar or overly familiar. Request strategies demonstrate theoretically significant differences in face management preferences. English speakers predominantly employ negative politeness strategies that minimize imposition and respect the addressee's autonomy, utilizing conventionally indirect forms such as "could you possibly," "would you mind," and "if it's not too much trouble" that embed requests within hypothetical frames allowing refusal without face threat [1]. Uzbek request formulas, while also employing indirectness, more frequently incorporate positive politeness elements that emphasize solidarity, shared goals, and mutual obligation, with expressions invoking collective welfare or appealing to relationship bonds rather than individual autonomy [5]. The Uzbek phrase "iltimos" (please) often appears with additional softening through diminutives and affective vocabulary that builds rapport, contrasting with English distancing strategies that create interactional space. Gratitude expressions reveal parallel patterns, with English "thank you" functioning as relatively standardized acknowledgment across contexts, while Uzbek employs graduated expressions from "rahmat" for routine thanks to "katta rahmat" for deeper gratitude, often extended with elaborate formulas acknowledging specific benefits and expressing indebtedness that maintain ongoing reciprocity expectations characteristic of collectivistic relationship maintenance [4].

Conclusion. This comparative pragmalinguistic analysis demonstrates that English and Uzbek speech etiquette systems exhibit significant differences reflecting distinct cultural values, social organization principles, and conceptualizations of politeness. English speech etiquette emphasizes individual autonomy, negative politeness strategies, and relatively egalitarian interaction norms, manifested through conventionally indirect requests, standardized courtesy formulas, and first-name informality trends. Uzbek speech etiquette prioritizes hierarchical respect, positive politeness strategies, and collective harmony, realized through elaborate age-graded greetings, extended kinship terminology, and face-saving indirectness that maintains social bonds. These pragmalinguistic characteristics cannot be understood merely as linguistic features but must be interpreted within broader cultural contexts where language serves to construct and maintain social relationships according to culturally specific values. The theoretical frameworks of Brown and Levinson's face theory and Hofstede's cultural dimensions prove valuable for explaining observed differences, though they require cultural

particularization to account fully for Uzbek communicative norms shaped by Central Asian traditions and Islamic cultural heritage.

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