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THE LINGUACULTURAL STUDY OF SPEECH ACTS TO DEVELOP NATIONAL LANGUAGE CORPORA

Annotation

This study examines the cross-linguistic realization of speech acts—specifically requests and apologies—among Uzbek, Russian, and English speakers, with the aim of informing the development of national language corpora. Grounded in speech act theory and contextual pragmatics, the research employs a mixed-methods approach combining statistical analysis via JASP with qualitative thematic coding. Findings reveal culturally distinct preferences: Uzbek speakers favor politeness as a normative standard, Russian speakers prioritize directness and sincerity, while English speakers demonstrate context-sensitive, multidimensional pragmatics. These results underscore the role of linguacultural norms in shaping speech behavior and contribute to the typological profiling of pragmatic variation across languages.

Key words: Speech acts, pragmatics, politeness strategies, cross-cultural communication, language corpora, illocutionary force, linguistic typology, Uzbek language, multilingual discourse, contextual pragmatics.

ЛИНГВОКУЛЬТУРНОЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ РЕЧЕВЫХ АКТОВ ДЛЯ РАЗРАБОТКИ НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫХ ЯЗЫКОВЫХ КОРПУСОВ

Аннотация

В данном исследовании рассматривается межъязыковая реализация речевых актов — в частности просьб и извинений — среди носителей узбекского, русского и английского языков с целью содействия развитию национальных языковых корпусов. Опираясь на теорию речевых актов и контекстуальную прагматику, работа использует смешанный методологический подход, объединяющий статистический анализ с помощью программы JASP и качественное тематическое кодирование. Результаты показывают культурно обусловленные предпочтения: носители узбекского языка склонны рассматривать вежливость как нормативный стандарт, носители русского языка отдают приоритет прямоте и искренности, тогда как носители английского языка демонстрируют контекстно-зависимую, многомерную прагматику. Полученные данные подчеркивают роль лингвокультурных норм в формировании речевого поведения и способствуют типологическому профилированию прагматической вариативности в разных языках.

Ключевые слова: Речевые акты, прагматика, стратегии вежливости, межкультурная коммуникация, языковые корпусы, иллокутивная сила, лингвистическая типология, узбекский язык, многоязычный дискурс, контекстуальная прагматика.

MILLIY TIL KORPUSLARINI YARATISH UCHUN NUTQIY AKTLARNING LINGVOMADANIY TADQIQI

Annotatsiya

Ushbu tadqiqot nutqiy aktlarning – xususan, iltimos va kechirimlarning – o'zbek, rus va ingliz tillari so'zlovchilari orasida tildan tilga qanday namoyon bo'lishini o'rganadi hamda milliy til korpuslarini rivojlantirishga hissa qo'shishni maqsad qiladi. Nutqiy akt nazariyasi va kontekstual pragmatika asosida olib borilgan tadqiqot aralash metodologiyani qo'llaydi: JASP dasturi yordamida statistik tahlil va sifat jihatdan tematik kodlash usullari birlashtirilgan. Natijalar madaniyatga xos ustuvor yo'nalishlarni ko'rsatadi: o'zbek so'zlovchilari odobni me'yoriy standart sifatida afzal ko'rishadi, rus so'zlovchilari bevositalik va samimiyatni birinchi o'ringa qo'yadi, ingliz so'zlovchilari esa kontekstga mos, ko'p qirrali pragmatikani namoyon etadi. Bu xulosalar lingvomadaniy me'yorlarning nutqiy xulq shakllanishidagi rolini ta'kidlaydi va tillararo pragmatik tafovutlarning tipologik profillanishiga hissa qo'shadi.

Kalit so'zlar: Nutqiy aktlar, pragmatika, odob strategiyalari, madaniyatlararo muloqot, til korpuslari, illokutsion kuch, lingvistik tipologiya, o'zbek tili, ko'p tilli diskurs, kontekstual pragmatika.

Introduction. The emergence and investigation of speech represent a fundamental necessity for humanity, primarily serving the functions of information preservation and transmission. This phenomenon has historically been examined in parallel with the evolution of language, whereby speech is conceptualized as a natural process embodying both communicative and stylistic features.

In his monograph Pragma-linguistics, Sh. Safarov conceptualizes the vitality of language as inherently linked to the execution of speaking and writing acts by individuals [1]. He posits that linguistic units in speech not only denote specific meanings or content but also carry additional illocutionary nuances—such as warnings, promises, affirmations, and commands—which emerge because of communicative action. These pragmatic meanings are actualized when the speaker engages in verbal or written expression. Accordingly, the speech act is defined as a linguistically encoded phenomenon that is purposefully directed by the speaker toward the listener in alignment with specific communicative intentions.

From a broader perspective, the speech act may be interpreted as a goal-oriented communicative event, shaped by and enacted in accordance with the ethical and moral norms established within a given speech community. The theoretical framing of this phenomenon is intricately associated with the foundational works of C. S. Peirce, whose classification of language within logical and philosophical categories laid the

groundwork for the field of pragmatics. Nevertheless, antecedents of this conceptualization can be discerned in the contributions of earlier linguists such as M. Bakhtin, W. von Humboldt, C. Bally, É. Benveniste, and K. Bühler, whose theoretical insights anticipated many of the core principles of modern speech act theory.

J. L. Austin was among the first to systematically categorize speech acts, introducing a three-fold distinction: the locutionary act (the act of saying something), the illocutionary act (the speaker's intended function, such as requesting or promising), and the perlocutionary act (the actual effect on the listener) [2]. Austin's model emphasizes the layered nature of speech, where a single utterance performs simultaneously on multiple pragmatic levels. Building on Austin's foundation, J. R. Searle developed a more functionally oriented classification of illocutionary acts [3]. He identified five primary types: assertive (statements that convey belief), directives (attempts to get the hearer to do something), commissive (commitments to future actions), expressive (revelations of psychological states), and declaratives (utterances that affect institutional change). Searle's framework foregrounds the speaker's communicative intent—what he termed illocutionary force—as the primary organizing principle.

Politeness theory. From a politeness-oriented perspective, G. Leech proposed a taxonomy aligned with interpersonal goals and social harmony [4]. His typology includes competitive acts (e.g., ordering), convivial acts (e.g., thanking), and conflictive acts (e.g., threatening), among others. Leech's approach underscores the cultural norms of politeness and the ethical constraints that shape linguistic behavior, especially in cross-cultural contexts. A more ideologically and socially embedded approach comes from Teun A. van Dijk, who viewed speech acts through the lens of contextual pragmatics [5]. In his model, speech acts are not merely linguistic forms but are deeply tied to ideological structures, social hierarchies, and power relations. This perspective emphasizes the socio-cognitive conditions under which speech acts are produced and interpreted. Finally, Franz Schulz von Thun introduced a four-layered model of communication, wherein each utterance is seen to perform simultaneously on four levels: (1) the factual or informative content, (2) the self-revealing layer (the speaker's emotions or stance), (3) the relational dimension (the speaker's attitude toward the listener), and (4) the appeal or appellative layer (intended effect on the listener's actions). This model highlights the multidimensional nature of speech, offering a comprehensive lens through which pragmatic meaning can be analyzed.

Previous research has demonstrated that speech act realization patterns differ significantly across cultural and social contexts. Consequently, exploring the relationship between speech act selection and linguistic-cultural norms holds considerable potential for the development of national and multilingual language corpora, which may serve both pedagogical purposes and the enhancement of linguacultural competence. Grounded in existing linguistic theories and pragmatic models of speech acts, this study formulates the following research question:

How do the realizations of equivalent speech act types vary across different languages and cultural frameworks?

Methodology. This study employs a mixed-methods research design, integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches to ensure comprehensive and scientifically grounded data interpretation. Throughout the investigation, survey instruments and statistical procedures were applied, with data analysis conducted via JASP—a statistical software platform developed by the University of Amsterdam. The research population comprises language instructors based in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, as well as native speakers of Uzbek, Russian, and English, thereby enabling cross-linguistic and cross-cultural comparisons relevant to the study's objectives.

Results and discussion. Implementation in language corpora

These findings have direct implications for the design of national and multilingual language corpora. Incorporating dedicated pragmatic annotation layers—capturing speech act type, illocutionary force, pragmatic strategy, cultural profile, and formality level—would enable precise cross-linguistic comparisons. Quantitative patterns identified here, such as Uzbek speakers' strong preference for politeness or Russian speakers' emphasis on directness, can serve as benchmarks for sampling and balancing corpus data. Aligning Uzbek, Russian, and English sub corpora would facilitate retrieval of equivalent speech act types, while annotated datasets could support automated detection of pragmatic strategies in monitor corpora. Such integration would also benefit language pedagogy, allowing learner corpora to highlight culturally appropriate realizations of requests and apologies, thereby enhancing intercultural communication competence.

Cultural awareness in speech acts usage

The integration of these findings into corpus design also underscores the critical role of cultural awareness in speech act usage. As demonstrated in Blum-Kulka and Olsten's Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP), pragmatic failure frequently occurs when speakers transfer speech act strategies from their native language without adapting to the sociocultural norms of the target language [6]. Wierzbicka, similarly, contends that speech acts are not universal formulas, but culturally embedded practices shaped by values, social hierarchies, and interpersonal expectations [7]. In the context of this study, recognizing that Uzbek requests predominantly foreground politeness, Russian apologies may employ greater directness, and English strategies vary with social distance is essential for preventing miscommunication in cross-cultural settings. Embedding such culturally specific patterns into language corpora would therefore not only enrich linguistic analysis but also equip learners, translators, and AI-driven dialogue systems with the capacity to produce pragmatically appropriate utterances, fostering more effective and culturally sensitive communication.

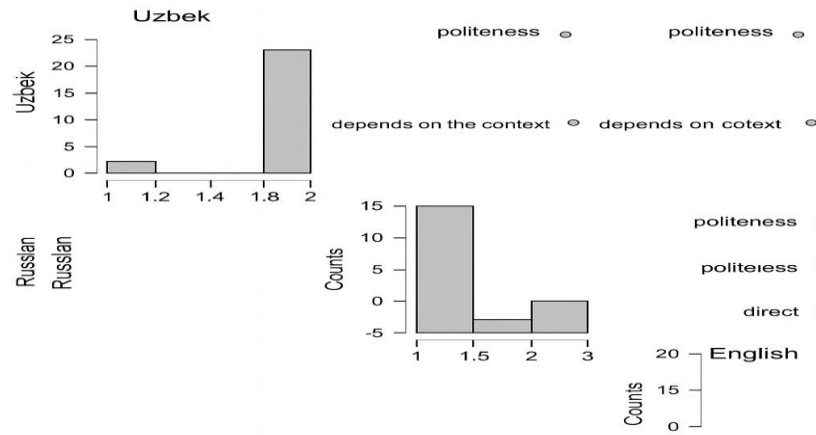Distribution of Speech Act Preferences Across Languages

Table 1 presents the distribution and thematic categorization of speech act preferences (requests and apologies) among Uzbek, Russian, and English speakers. Quantitative data were visualized through histograms, indicating the frequency of preference ratings, while qualitative responses were categorized based on associated pragmatic concepts (e.g., politeness, sincerity, directness).

Among Uzbek speakers, a highly concentrated preference pattern was observed, with most responses clustered around the upper end of the scale (value = 2). This suggests a strong normative orientation toward a specific speech act strategy, predominantly characterized by an emphasis on politeness. Qualitative annotations further supported this, with frequent references to contextual appropriateness and cultural expectations of formality. In contrast, Russian speakers displayed a broader distribution, with primary clustering around lower values (1–1.5) and a secondary peak near value 3. This indicates greater variability in strategy selection. Thematic coding revealed a blend of sincerity, politeness, and directness as coexisting rationales, suggesting a context-sensitive but somewhat more direct approach to interpersonal communication. English speakers exhibited the widest dispersion across preference ratings, with notable counts at multiple points along the scale. Categorical annotations included references to politeness, sincerity, directness, and social distance, indicating a more multidimensional and adaptive orientation. This group demonstrated the most pragmatically flexible approach, reflecting the influence of situational factors on speech act realization.
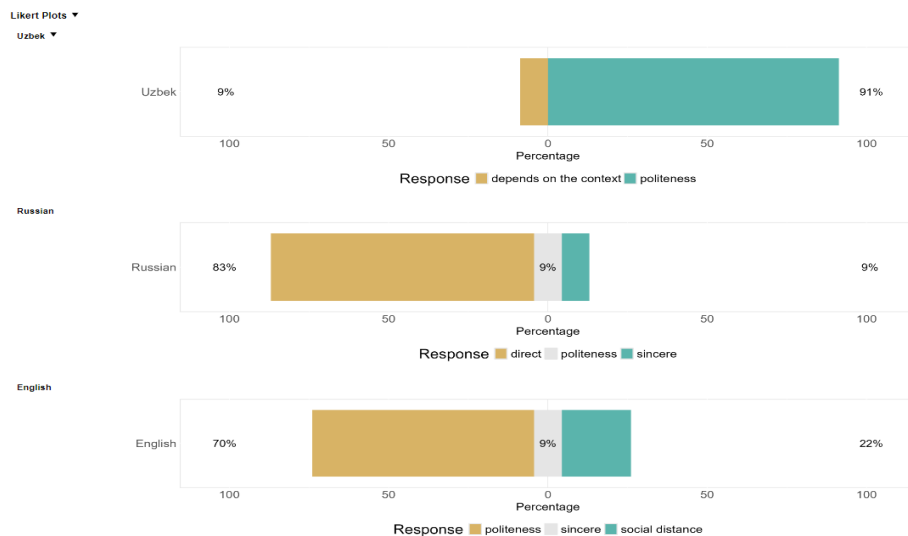

Fig. 1

Speech act preference distribution among Uzbek, Russian, and English speakers across politeness, directness, social distance, and context dependence.

Figure 1 illustrates that Uzbek, Russian, and English speakers exhibit different patterns in prioritizing politeness, directness, social distance, and context dependence when performing speech acts, reflecting cross-cultural variation in pragmatic strategies.

Uzbek participants overwhelmingly prioritized politeness (91%), with only 9% citing context dependence, indicating a culturally uniform approach to maintaining formality in interpersonal communication. Russian participants primarily emphasized directness (83%), with politeness and sincerity each accounting for 9%. This reflects a communicative style favoring clarity and emotional transparency over conventional politeness. English participants showed more variation: politeness (70%) remained dominant, but sincerity (9%) and especially social distance (22%) were also cited. This suggests a more context-sensitive and relationally adaptive approach to speech acts. These findings highlight clear cross-cultural differences: Uzbek communication favors politeness as a fixed norm, Russian speech emphasizes directness and sincerity, and English speakers demonstrate multi-dimensional pragmatics influenced by social context.

Conclusion. The findings of this study confirm that speech act realization is deeply influenced by linguacultural norms. Uzbek speakers exhibit a consistent preference for politeness, reflecting a culturally fixed communicative style. In contrast, Russian speakers favor directness and sincerity, while English speakers adopt a more flexible, context-dependent approach. These distinctions highlight the importance of cultural context in pragmatic behavior and support the integration of speech act variation into national and multilingual language corpora. Such integration can enhance linguistic research, language teaching, and intercultural communication competence.

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