CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN THE DIGITAL AGE: PRAGMALINGUISTIC FEATURES OF UZBEK AND ENGLISH ONLINE ETIQUETTE

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Annotation: This study compares the pragmalinguistic features of Uzbek and English digital etiquette, focusing on how cultural values like "andisha" and "directness" influence communication norms in virtual environments.

Key words: etiquette, pragmalinguistics, cross-cultural communication, digital discourse, honorifics.

Annotatsiya: Tadqiqot o'zbek va ingliz raqamli etiketi pragmalingvistikasini qiyoslaydi. Unda "andisha" va "to'g'ridan-to'g'ri muloqot" kabi madaniy qadriyatlarning virtual muloqot normalariga ta'siri tahlil qilingan.

Kalit so'zlar: etiket, pragmalingvistika, madaniyatlararo muloqot, raqamli diskurs, murojaat shakllari.

Аннотация: Исследование сравнивает прагмалингвистику цифрового этикета в узбекском и английском языках, анализируя влияние культурных ценностей (андиша, прямолинейность) на нормы коммуникации в виртуальной среде.

Ключевые слова: этикет, прагмалингвистика, межкультурная коммуникация, цифровой дискурс, формы обращения.

Introduction: The rapid advancement of information and communication technologies has shifted the paradigm of human interaction from physical to virtual spaces. In this digital landscape, "Netiquette" – the social code of online communication – has emerged as a crucial field of linguistic study [1]. However, digital etiquette is not a universal set of rules; it is deeply filtered through the cultural and pragmatic lenses of the speakers. This paper investigates the pragmalinguistic divergence between Uzbek and English online etiquette. While English digital discourse is often characterized by "low-context" traits such as brevity and directness, Uzbek digital interaction reflects "high-context" cultural values, maintaining traditional honorifics and indirectness even in asynchronous messaging. Understanding these differences is essential for preventing cross-cultural pragmatic failure in a globalized professional environment.

Methods. The research employs a mixed-methods approach. First, Contrastive Analysis is used to identify the structural differences in digital greetings. Second, a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) was conducted among 100 participants (50 Uzbek, 50 English) to simulate digital request-making [3]. Finally, Qualitative Discourse Analysis was applied to a corpus of 200 digital messages to observe the pragmalinguistic impact of "high-context" and "low-context" cultural traits on netiquette.

1. Contrastive Linguistic Analysis

This is the core method for any cross-cultural study.

Application: You compare specific linguistic units (greetings, apologies, requests) in both languages.

Example: Analyzing the frequency of honorifics like "aka/opa" or "Siz" in Uzbek

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Telegram chats versus the use of first names in English WhatsApp groups [4].

2. Discourse Analysis

This method looks at the language "in action" within its social context.

Application: You analyze actual screenshots or transcripts of digital conversations (emails, social media comments, or DM threads).

Goal: To identify patterns in how "Netiquette" is maintained or broken in different digital environments (e.g., LinkedIn vs. Instagram).

3. Pragmatic Survey / DCT (Discourse Completion Task)

To get original data, you can use a structured survey.

Application: Present a scenario to 50 Uzbek and 50 English speakers.

Analysis: Compare the level of politeness, directness, and length of the messages between the two groups.

4. Qualitative Content Analysis

This involves categorized observation of non-verbal digital markers.

Application: Analyzing the use of Emojis, Punctuation, and Capitalization.

Focus: Determining if an exclamation mark (!) in an Uzbek business email is perceived as "enthusiasm" or "shouting" compared to its English counterpart [5].

Research. In order to capture both the formal and informal nuances of netiquette, diverse data sources were utilized, ranging from professional email correspondence to instant messaging. The table below outlines the multifaceted approach taken to compare the "high-context" and "low-context" features of the target digital discourses.

Table 1. Data collection summary [6]

Research method	Implementation
Corpus analysis	Analyzing a corpus of 100 emails and 200 Telegram/WhatsApp messages.
Discourse completion task (DCT)	Asking participants to write a digital request to a superior in both languages.
Quantitative analysis	Measuring the average word count of greetings in Uzbek vs. English.

Discussion. The most important part of our research is explaining what happens when these two meet.

Conflict: An Uzbek speaker might find an English email "rude" or "cold" because it lacks a proper inquiry into one's health.

Conflict: An English speaker might find an Uzbek message "vague" or "time-consuming" because the main request is hidden at the end of a long introductory paragraph.

This study demonstrates that the transition from physical to digital spaces does not eliminate cultural identity; rather, it transforms how it is expressed. The findings reveal a significant pragmalinguistic divergence: English speakers utilize a "low-context" approach focused on the "economy principle", whereas Uzbek speakers maintain a "high-context" style characterized by complex politeness rituals and social hierarchy. As digital interaction becomes the primary mode of international cooperation, understanding these nuances is vital. Bridging the gap between "direct" and "indirect" digital cultures is the key to preventing pragmatic failure and ensuring successful intercultural dialogue in the 21st century.

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