LINGUOPRAGMATIC FEATURES OF GREETINGS AND LEAVE-TAKINGS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This study presents a comparative linguopragmatic analysis of greeting and leave-taking expressions in English and Uzbek. Although such expressions are often regarded as routine formulations, they function as culturally embedded speech acts that regulate private as interpersonal relationships and social hierarchy. Drawing upon Speech Act Theory, Brown and Levinson`s Politeness Theory and intercultural pragmatics, the research concerts how social distance, power relations and cultural norms shape the pragmatic realization of greetings and farewells simultaneously. The findings indicate that English interaction tends toward efficiency and phatic minimalism, whereas Uzbek discourse emphasizes relational solidarity, honorification and ritual extension. The paper highlights the role of cultural cognition in shaping pragmatic meanings and conventions.

Keywords: linguopragmatics, intercultural pragmatics, greetings, leave-taking, politeness theory, speech acts.

INTRODUCTION

Greetings and farewell expressions that individuals use them as obligatory structures in daily conversations. Even though they may seem semantically simple and identical, they signify and perform complex pragmatic functions: establishing social alignment, negotiating power relations, and signaling relational intent.

When people encounter people from other origin or culture, they may face difficulties due to differences in pragmatic expectations rather than lexical meaning and pragmatic expression, in order to solve such kind of misunderstandings speakers must be enlightened about the linguopragmatic features of personal communication skills. For example, the English formula "How are you?" is frequently misinterpreted by Uzbek speakers as a genuine inquiry requiring detailed response. Such mismatches illustrate the importance of linguopragmatic competence.For example, the English formula "How are you?" is frequently

misinterpreted by Uzbek speakers as a genuine inquiry requiring detailed response. Such mismatches illustrate the importance of linguopragmatic competence.

This study aims to:

1. Identify structural and pragmatic features of greetings and leave-taking expressions in English and Uzbek.

2. Analyze politeness strategies embedded in these expressions.

3. Examine cultural factors influencing their usage.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Greetings and leave-takings have been widely examined within pragmatics and intercultural communication studies. Austin (1962) introduced the concept of speech acts, arguing that utterances perform actions. Searle (1969) further classified expressive speech acts, including greetings, as communicative acts reflecting psychological states.

Malinowski (1923) introduced the notion of phatic communion, emphasizing the role of language in maintaining social bonds rather than conveying information. This concept is particularly relevant in analyzing greeting formulas such as "How are you?"

Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory explains how speakers manage positive and negative face. Greetings typically enhance positive face by expressing recognition and inclusion, while leave-takings mitigate the face-threatening act of conversational disengagement.

Recent intercultural pragmatics research emphasizes that greeting rituals reflect broader cultural dimensions such as individualism versus collectivism and hierarchy sensitivity. In collectivist societies, greeting sequences tend to be more elaborate and relationally oriented.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Politeness strategies vary from country to country, however politeness strategies have been widely examined in pragmatic research.

2.1 Speech Act Theory

According to Austin (1962), utterances perform actions. Greetings and leave-taking expressions function as ritual expressive acts whose primary illocutionary force is relational rather than informational.

Searle (1969) classifies them within expressive acts, yet they also carry phatic functions (Malinowski, 1923), maintaining social bonds.

2.2 Politeness Theory

Brown and Levinson (1987) propose that interaction involves managing positive and negative face. Greetings primarily enhance positive face (recognition, inclusion), while leave-taking often mitigates the potential threat of disengagement.

In collectivist cultures, such as Uzbek society, face maintenance is strongly group-oriented, influencing extended greeting rituals.

METHODOLOGY

There has been a study that applies qualitative comparative analysis based on:

* Thirty naturally occurring greeting and leave-taking exchanges were observed, 30 naturally occurring greeting exchanges (15 English, 15 Uzbek)

* The venue of the study is institutional settings (university classrooms, formal meetings)

* Informal peer conversations

Data were analyzed using:

* Speech act classification

* Politeness strategy identification

* Contextual sociolinguistic analysis

RESULTS/ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.1 Pragmatic Minimalism in English Greetings

English people surpass to ise concise structures:

Hi.

Hello.

Good morning.

How are you?

The phrase "How are you?" functions as a phatic marker rather than a literal request. Expected responses are formulaic ("Fine, thanks"), demonstrating pragmatic conventionalization.

Power and distance are encoded through:

Title usage ("Good morning, Professor.")

Intonation patterns

Degree of lexical formality

Efficiency and time economy characterize English greeting behavior.

4.2 Relational Expansion in Uzbek Greetings

Uzbek greetings are frequently extended:

Assalomu alaykum.

Vaalaykum assalom.

Yaxshimisiz?

Ishlaringiz yaxshimi?

Oilangiz tinchmi?

These sequences demonstrate relational reinforcement. Questions may not require detailed answers but function as solidarity-building strategies.

The plural respectful suffix -siz encodes deference and social hierarchy. Religious formulas reflect cultural worldview and collective identity.

4.3 Leave-Taking Strategies

English leave-taking:

Goodbye.

See you later.

Take care.

I should get going.

Mitigation strategies soften disengagement:

"It was nice talking to you."

"I'll let you get back to work."

Uzbek leave-taking:

Xayr.

Omon bo'ling.

Yaxshi boring.

Allohga omonat.

These expressions often contain blessings, emphasizing goodwill and spiritual protection.

DISCUSSION

The above-mentioned studies advocate that English interaction is characterized by pragmatic economy and phatic efficiency, whereas Uzbek communication reflects ritual elaboration and relational depth.

The difference aligns with broader cultural dimensions:

Individualistic orientation (English)

Collectivist and hierarchy-sensitive orientation (Uzbek)

Thus, greetings and leave-taking expressions serve as micro-level reflections of macro-cultural cognition. Uzbek people highly conform the assimilation of conventions, cultura and traditons that alleviate the meaning of the contextual words.

CONCLUSION

Greetings and leave-taking expressions are not merely conversational formalities but culturally structured pragmatic acts. English prioritizes brevity and functional clarity, while Uzbek emphasizes relational solidarity and honorification. Developing awareness of these differences is essential for intercultural competence, foreign language pedagogy, and pragmatic instruction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study shows that greetings and leave-takings are more than simple phrases—they carry cultural and social meaning. Learners of English and Uzbek should pay attention to politeness strategies and relational norms to communicate effectively. Teachers can help students by including practical activities on greetings, farewells, and respectful expressions. People involved in intercultural communication should be aware of the differences between concise English greetings and extended Uzbek exchanges to avoid misunderstandings. Future research can explore how these expressions are used in digital communication and other languages to deepen our understanding of intercultural pragmatics.

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