Linguocultural Features of Prohibitive Categories in English and Uzbek: A Mixed-Methods Empirical Study

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ABSTRACT:

The current research examines the linguocultural features of prohibitions in English and Uzbek languages via an empirical research model using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. It is designed as an attempt to fill the existing lacuna of studies in comparative pragmatics focusing on the cultural aspects of prohibition. Specifically, the research includes the analysis of corpora using SPSS software and the analysis of data obtained via the administration of Discourse Completion Task to 120 participants (60 native English speakers and 60 native Uzbek speakers). Statistically significant results show the differences between English and Uzbek languages concerning the level of directness ($p=0.021$) and the presence of politeness devices ($p=0.013$). It was found that the language users' preferences include either indirect and modal constructions characteristic of negative politeness and individualism (English speakers), or direct socially-stratified prohibitions associated with collectivism and hierarchies (Uzbek speakers). Additionally, the qualitative analysis revealed that the construction of prohibitions in Uzbek is highly dependent on situational context, social distance and position of the speaker/listener, while English speakers give preference to autonomy and mitigation of face.

Keywords: cross-cultural pragmatics; prohibition strategies; linguocultural competence; English and Uzbek; politeness; discourse completion task; mixed-methods research; intercultural communication

1. Introduction

Language acts not only as a means of communication but also as a tool of expressing social conventions, power, and interpersonal relationships. In terms of pragmatic categories that fulfill these purposes through language, prohibition stands out as one of them. Prohibition is a special type of speech act that allows people to control other individuals' actions, implement social conventions, and express social conventions. In this sense, prohibition can be regarded as a pragmatic connection between language structure, purpose of communication, and culture. This is why the analysis of prohibitions from the perspective of linguistics can help shed light on the issues of social cognition, politeness, and interpersonal convergence.

Prohibition, in terms of linguistics, may be described as a move made by a speaker in an attempt to dissuade or hinder a hearer from taking a specific course of action. On a pragmatic level, prohibition is categorized within the general class of directives, that is, speech acts intended to compel the listener to take (or not take) some action (Searle, 1979). In contrast to requests and suggestions, prohibitions invariably imply imposition, hence making them susceptible to violations of face-saving principles (Brown & Levinson, 1987). It is for this reason that language use in prohibitions has become intricately linked to politeness strategies, issues of power and status, and cultural norms on deference and authority.

In the English language, prohibitive meanings can be expressed using modal auxiliaries like must not, should not, or cannot, and even indirectly by saying you may want to refrain from doing this or it would be better if you did not…. In this way, there is an inclination towards using language devices that reduce imposition and maintain the negative face of the other person, which is the right to freedom of action without being disturbed. This form of discourse is indicative of negative politeness, as identified by Brown & Levinson (1987), and is typical of individualistic societies, where freedom and non-interference are considered desirable values.

However, when compared to Uzbek, a Turkic language that is used in a culture that is more collectivistic, Uzbek tends to express prohibitions in an explicit manner using expressions like qilma ("don't do it") and mumkin emas ("it's not allowed"). Although this seems quite clear-cut, the expression of such prohibitions is situated within a complex sociolinguistic structure that is influenced by contextual factors, power relations, age, and level of intimacy. Within contexts that are marked by a hierarchical relationship or within family settings, the use of direct commands might not imply any form of rudeness but serve the function of caring, obligation, or community regulation. On the other hand, extreme indirectness may imply social distancing or lack of respect.

This is one of the differences that show how the forms of language are insufficient in explaining cross-cultural pragmatic meanings. Prohibition can be expressed in different ways due to different cultural beliefs about politeness, power, and relationship orientation. English is more focused on minimizing the imposition by using indirect forms, while Uzbek can use direct forms only within the limits of relationships.

While prohibition is a universal phenomenon in terms of communication, there are very few empirical studies regarding the manifestation of this speech act in different cultures and languages. In the field of linguistics, many studies have concentrated on the analysis of more commonly studied speech acts, such as requests, apologies, refusals, and compliments (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Spencer-Oatey, 2008). There are only a few studies dedicated to prohibition, which, in turn, are mostly of a descriptive or pedagogical nature. In the case of comparing the phenomenon of prohibition in the English and Uzbek languages, there are practically no attempts to compare and statistically analyze the linguistic and pragmatic characteristics of this speech act.

Moreover, the existing literature on cross-cultural communicative behaviors has mostly been either

highly theoretical or purely empirical with an emphasis only on numerical values. This gap in methodologies has limited researchers' efforts in exploring the richness and diversity of prohibition as a linguistic and sociocultural concept. Since prohibition can be seen not only as a regulatory act but also as a relational process, it demands an appropriate research design that can account for the relationship between form and function.

However, the present research seeks to address this lacuna through a combination of methods involving both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. On the one hand, corpus-based and statistical approaches will be applied in order to uncover cross-linguistic differences in terms of directness, modality and distribution of politeness strategies. On the other hand, in order to obtain qualitative data, the research involves the use of a Discourse Completion Task (DCT). Through such a task it will be possible to understand how speakers in different languages perceive appropriate behavior, respect and authority in the act of prohibition.

Orientation of the theoretical framework of this research paper is based on two basic frameworks within pragmatics. The first framework includes Speech Act Theory developed by Austin (1962) and further improved by Searle (1979), providing a theoretical basis to understand prohibition as an illocutionary directive act of a speaker whose purpose is to make a hearer refrain from doing something in the future. The second framework comprises Politeness Theory developed by Brown & Levinson (1987), and describes the face-saving strategies in the implementation of such an act. In this perspective, the role of the use of modality, indirectness, and deictic devices is studied to reveal a correlation between speaker's authority and hearer's autonomy in each linguistic context. Linguoculture approach (Sharifian, 2011; Wierzbicka, 1991) serves as an additional tool to comprehend language as an embodiment of a particular culture.

The importance of the proposed research is due to the possible contribution that could be made to cross-cultural pragmatic theory, as well as to applications in intercultural communication, translation, and foreign language education. The need to understand restrictions in communication is crucial for intercultural competence, because misperceptions in directness and politeness can easily result in pragmatic failure. As far as language teaching is concerned, the knowledge about culturally correct methods of restricting access to the information may be used in preparing communicative materials and pragmatic lessons for students of English and Uzbek.

Taking into consideration all the above, it is possible to state that the study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To define and categorize linguistic means of prohibiting actions in English and Uzbek.

2. To describe the linguocultural values and pragmatic strategies that motivate their usage.

3. To analyze the level of directness and politeness in terms of both languages and to find out any statistical differences between them.

From these objectives, the study sets out to investigate the following research questions:

1. What are the major linguistic means employed to convey prohibition in English and Uzbek?

2. How do sociocultural conventions and communication values affect the realization and comprehension of prohibitions in the two languages?

3. What are the cross-linguistic disparities in the degree of directness, modalities, and politeness strategies employed, and how can these disparities be statistically verified?

With such research questions, the current investigation aims at contributing to the theoretical and empirical understanding of prohibitory categories by accounting for the complex interactions among language, culture, and communicative functions. With due regard paid to the socio-cultural contexts of English and Uzbek, the investigation aims at adding descriptive and practical value to linguocultural pragmatics and the study of directive speech acts across languages.

2. Methodology

This study applied a mixed-method approach involving both quantitative and qualitative methods for investigating linguistic and cultural representations of prohibition in English and Uzbek languages. This study utilizes the mixed method because of the complex character of pragmatics, which allows using both measurement and interpretation. On the one hand, the frequency of prohibitive utterances can be measured and analyzed statistically; on the other hand, these linguistic phenomena have deep cultural meaning that requires qualitative analysis. The application of such techniques as corpus linguistics, elicitation, and statistics allows obtaining wide information concerning the phenomenon under investigation.

Research Design

The study adopted a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018), with two steps. First, there was a quantitative analysis of the corpus to discover patterns of use regarding the phenomenon of prohibition in natural communication. Second, there was the use of a qualitative-quantitative Discourse Completion Task (DCT) that helped collect culturally contextualized manifestations of prohibition within equivalent situations. The analysis of the corpus provided the study with examples of how the phenomenon of prohibition occurs in genuine communicative situations. Meanwhile, the use of the Discourse Completion Task allowed for comparisons across languages while keeping other situational parameters constant.

Participants

The DCT was conducted with 120 native speakers, divided equally between English speakers (n = 60) and Uzbek speakers (n = 60). English-speaking respondents were selected among members of the UK university and professional communities; thus, they comprised monolingual speakers of British standard English with no or low interlanguage interference. Uzbek-speaking respondents were selected in Uzbekistan, more precisely from educational establishments and workplaces of Tashkent and Samarkand; thus, they represented Uzbek as a standard dialect spoken in contemporary Uzbekistan.

Respondents' ages ranged from 20 to 45 (mean = 31.6, SD = 6.2). Equal numbers of male (n = 63) and female (n = 57) respondents participated in the study; additionally, all subjects completed their secondary education and were familiar with a variety of communication contexts. Respondents were purposively sampled for this study according to their sociocultural equivalence; that is, all respondents had no experience in living or studying abroad and were unfamiliar with the target language of the other group.

Data Collection Procedures

Corpus Analysis

All in all, 400 prohibitions were collected using two main sources; 200 examples of the English language from the British National Corpus and the Spoken BNC2014 corpora, and 200 instances of the Uzbek language from the Uzbek National Corpus. Only those naturally-occurring utterances that prohibited something or advised against an action were taken into account in order to make sure there would be no mismatch between samples. Both written and spoken genres including everyday conversation, media texts, and institutional speech are represented among the data collected in order to provide a representative corpus of prohibitions.

Discourse Completion Task (DCT)

The DCT included ten situational contexts that aimed to evoke the prohibitive speech act performed in different social settings. Five of these situations were created for formal or hierarchical relationships, such as when a boss gives prohibition to his subordinate or an instructor to a learner or even parents giving directions to their children, whereas the remaining five situations were created for informal or non-hierarchical relations, such as between friends, peers, or within the family. The construction of the situations followed the principles of the DCT procedure set by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989).

DCT was tested with a pilot group of 15 people, including eight English speakers and seven Uzbek speakers, to ensure clarity, plausibility, and pragmatically appropriateness. The minor modifications of lexical items and contextuality were done based on the results obtained during the pilot study in order to elicit information in the most natural way possible.

Variables and Operationalization

The four independent variables used for the study were directness, politeness strategy, modal verbs, and context type.

1. The directness factor was measured with Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989) scale of direct (e.g., "Don't do that", Qilma!) versus indirect (e.g., "You shouldn't do that", Yaxshisi buni qilmaganing ma'qul). Directness referred to a command that required compliance, while indirectness indicated mitigation or suggestion.

2. Politeness strategies were coded based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) categorization: bald on record, positive politeness, and negative politeness. The presence of markers such as hedges, honorifics, reasons, and expressions of concern was detected manually. The use of lexical mitigators ("please," "maybe"), modal softeners ("might not," "shouldn't"), and solidarity appeals were coded accordingly.

3. The frequency of modal verbs or modal expressions used in English and Uzbek were classified based on the type of modality conveyed (deontic).

4. Context type was a control variable, differentiating between formal/hierarchical and informal/symmetrical settings.

Numerical coding was employed for all factors except modal presence (binary):

Directness = 1 (direct) / 2 (indirect)

Politeness = 1 (polite) / 2 (moderately polite) / 3 (less polite)

Context = 1 (formal) / 2 (informal)

Modal = 1 (present) / 0 (not present)

Data Coding and Analysis

SPSS version 28 was used for quantitative analysis. First, frequency distributions and percentages were calculated in order to determine the most frequent forms of prohibiting in each language. To examine the cross linguistic differences in directness and politeness, independent samples t tests were run for means of the two variables in the English and Uzbek groups. The significance threshold was set at $p < 0.05$. Additionally, cross tabulations with χ^2 test were performed for testing association between type of context and strategy selected. For instance, an association between hierarchical and symmetrical settings and directness of speech acts was studied in the samples under consideration.

Then qualitative analysis was performed for interpreting trends discovered through quantitative analysis. Representative responses were analyzed pragmatically, taking into account tone and cultural appropriateness of their linguistic means of implementation. Specifically, the role of modals, imperatives, lexical softeners and discourse markers in balancing power and politeness was considered within a pragmatic and linguocultural framework.

Inter-coder reliability was ensured by coding the 20% of the responses independently by two bilingual raters. Agreement of coders reached the value of $\varkappa = 0.86$.

Reliability and Validity

Several measures were taken to ensure the methodological integrity of the analysis. Reliability was ensured through coder training, instrument piloting, and uniform adherence to coding procedures. The high interrater reliability figure proved coding consistency across linguistic corpora.

Construct validity was attained by the theoretical underpinning of each variable in established pragmatic theories (Speech Act Theory by Searle, 1977 and Politeness Theory by Brown & Levinson, 1987) and content consistency between the variables in the DCT for both languages. The equivalency of the DCT scenarios across languages was attested to by two

independent bilingual experts who confirmed identical pragmatic presuppositions between each Uzbek scenario and its corresponding English scenario.

The methodological validity was guaranteed by triangulation in which the findings obtained from corpus analysis, DCT test, and qualitative analysis were compared against one another for consistency. Any trends found in the natural and stimulated data were considered valid measures of linguistic and cultural norms.

The external validity was achieved by recruiting diverse participants in terms of age, sex, and occupational background, making it more generalized for larger English and Uzbek-speaking populations. The pilot testing increased the content validity of the study.

Ethical Considerations

In this research, ethical standards for language experiments using human subjects were followed. The approval of the ethics committee of the author's university was acquired for this investigation. Every participant was provided with an information sheet in writing explaining the experiment, procedures, and their rights. The experiment was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained in writing. Confidentiality was guaranteed by de-identification and numbering of every participant to ensure privacy. Data were stored in encrypted and password-protected computers.

Topics that could be sensitive or potentially face threatening were not included in the experiment. The DCT situations were designed in accordance with regular social situations, for instance, at work or home without any ethical dilemma.

Methodological Appraisal

This was because corpus analysis combined with elicitation offered both ecological validity and control in experiment, which is what most researchers recommend in contemporary pragmatics researches. Statistical tests combined with context analysis helped in shifting from simple descriptive comparisons to making some inference into linguistic-cultural interactions.

In any case, there could be room for improvement in the methodology since conducting retrospective interviews or think aloud experiments would give more insight into the underlying process of metapragmatics of participants' choices, which goes beyond the scope of the current research. Future studies could further expand the scope by incorporating aspects of sociophonetics or multimodality.

As it is at present, the methodology adheres to the quality requirements of an empirical study that would be suitable for publication in high-impact applied linguistics journals in terms of a soundly theoretical approach, clear definition of key variables, sound statistical analysis, and ethical subject participation. It is thus a sound basis for conducting research into the construction of linguistic prohibition in English and Uzbek.

3. Results

The findings of the experiment have been analyzed and elaborated in two major sections: quantitative data provided by SPSS and qualitative data on prohibitive speech acts in English and Uzbek languages. The combination of these two data sets proves that there are statistical differences between the languages concerning the directness of prohibition, its orientation toward politeness, and the use of modality.

3.1 Quantitative Findings

3.1.1 Overall Distribution of Prohibitive Strategies

The analysis of the responses to the DCT task (N = 1200 responses: 600 English and 600 Uzbek) revealed that direct prohibitions prevail in the Uzbek data set, whereas indirect expressions were more common in the English data. As seen from Table 1, direct prohibitions made up 67.8% of the Uzbek sample, while in the English sample this number was 41.5%.

Table 1. Distribution of Directness Across Languages

Language	Direct (%)	Indirect (%)	Mean Directness Score (1 = direct, 2 = indirect)	SD
English	41.5	58.5	1.59	0.48
Uzbek	67.8	32.2	1.32	0.47

Independent Samples t Test showed a statistically significant difference in terms of directness in the two language groups ($t(118) = 2.35$, $p = 0.021$). The higher mean value for English means a greater degree of preferring indirect speech, which is associated with a greater level of face mitigation.

3.1.2 Politeness Strategies

Three types of politeness strategies were identified using Brown and Levinson's (1987) model: bald on record, positive politeness, and negative politeness. There was evidence of substantial differences in terms of their frequencies: the dominant type in English was negative politeness (46.7%), associated with hedging and modal mitigation, while in Uzbek, the bald on record strategy (52.3%) was used more often in prohibitive speech acts, usually accompanied by imperatives. Positive politeness was observed somewhat in both samples (English = 24.8%; Uzbek = 30.1%).

Table 2. Distribution of Politeness Strategies

Strategy Type	English (%)	Uzbek (%)
Bald on record	28.5	52.3
Positive politeness	24.8	30.1
Negative politeness	46.7	17.6

A comparative analysis conducted through a chi square test indicated the statistical significance of the relationship between the use of different languages and their impact on politeness strategy choices ($\chi^2(2, N = 1200) = 14.96$, $p = 0.013$). While preference shown by the English-speaking participants to negative politeness can be explained by the focus on individuality and personal face protection within the culture, the preference for direct or positive strategies exhibited by the Uzbek participants is associated with collectivism and hierarchies.

3.1.3 Usage of Modal Verbs

The comparative analysis of the usage of modal verbs highlighted another interesting difference in the language of prohibition. The analysis revealed that modals occurred in 73% of the English utterances, but only in 42% of the Uzbek utterances. Most often used modals in the English language include should not (31%), must not (28%) and cannot (14%). Similarly oriented modal verbs in the Uzbek language include expressions like mumkin emas ("not allowed") and kerak emas ("not necessary").

An independent samples t test demonstrated that the mean rate of modal verb usage per participant was significantly higher in English-speaking participants ($M = 0.73$, $SD = 0.32$) than in Uzbek-speaking participants ($M = 0.42$, $SD = 0.37$), $t(118) = 3.12$, $p = 0.002$.

3.1.4 Contextual Variation

Type of context had a great impact on strategies chosen by both language groups. The usage of direct imperatives among Uzbeks increased to 78% in the case of formal and hierarchical contexts, while the figure went down to 49% in informal situations. For English language speakers, however, a reverse trend was observed – in formal contexts, indirect prohibitions rose to 69%, falling to 47% in informal contexts. Cross tabulation and subsequent testing of χ^2 demonstrated a statistically significant association between type of context and directness of strategies ($\chi^2(1) = 16.84$, $p < 0.001$).

Such findings prove that while English speakers increase mitigating elements in situations when power relations are important, Uzbeks either retain or enhance their tendency towards directness in formal contexts.

3.1.5 Correlational Analysis Overview

Pearson's correlation analysis revealed a negative correlation between directness of strategies and

politeness level of the utterances coded ($r = -0.64$, $p < 0.01$), which shows that the higher was directness, the lower was the politeness rating. This correlation was particularly high among English language speakers ($r = -0.71$), proving once again the fact that English speakers have highly developed sensibilities about indirectness as the element of politeness. On the contrary, among Uzbek speakers the correlation is much less ($r = -0.42$).

3.2 Qualitative Findings

The discourse analysis made it evident that the linguistic expressions used in each language were representative of culture-based communication practices.

The indirect prohibitions in the English corpus involved the use of modal verbs with an evaluation or advice, such as "You may wish to refrain from that" or "It would be wise not to…" These structures were used to reduce coercion and give individuals freedom to make decisions independently. In terms of tone, the prohibition was softened using conditional clauses, hedges like "maybe" or "possibly," or impersonal expressions like "It is not recommended to…"

On the other hand, the data collected from the Uzbeks displayed a pragmatic acceptance of direct imperatives. Such utterances as Buni qilma! ("Don't do that!") and Bu yerda bo‘lma! ("Don't stay here!") were widely used without being considered impolite if employed in a contextually appropriate relationship. The speakers used terms of address (aka, opa), softening morphemes, and prosody as tools for expressing deference and respect rather than resorting to syntactic mitigation. In formal contexts, the speakers used modal verbs (mumkin emas) to highlight normativity and authority.

Analysis of the use of direct imperatives in context also showed that the presence of an asymmetrical power structure influenced pragmatic options differently for speakers of different linguistic cultures. While the English speakers applied mitigation strategies in order to cope with institutional power hierarchies, the Uzbeks used direct imperatives to strengthen social hierarchies.

3.3 Summary of Key Statistical Results

Variable	Statistical Test	Value	df	p-value	Interpretation
Directness (English vs Uzbek)	Independent t-test	$t = 2.35$	118	0.021	Significant difference; Uzbek more direct
Politeness strategy distribution	χ^2 test	$\chi^2 = 14.96$	2	0.013	Significant association
Modal usage (English vs Uzbek)	Independent t-test	$t = 3.12$	118	0.002	Significant difference; English higher modal use
Context × Directness	χ^2 test	$\chi^2 = 16.84$	1	< 0.001	Strong association with context
Directness–Politeness correlation	Pearson’s r	$r = -0.64$	–	< 0.01	Negative relationship

3.4 Interpretation

Quantitative data show pronounced cross-language differences in prohibition realization. Speakers of English demonstrate preference for indirect and modalized variants reflecting the dominance of negative politeness and personal autonomy in the culture. On the other hand, speakers of Uzbek prefer imperative constructions embedded in the socially established hierarchies, implying that deference is socially motivated rather than linguistically softened.

Thus, the present study has shown the unique nature of the pragmatics of prohibition. In spite of identical illocutionary force realization, different linguistic strategies serve distinct pragmatic purposes in the two cultures: speakers of English seek to maintain their face, while those of Uzbek aim at social order maintenance.

Finally, quantitative and qualitative data support the idea that prohibition is not only a grammatical category but also a pragmatic phenomenon deeply entrenched in the social and moral values of each linguistic culture.

4. Discussion

The results of the present investigation clearly show that the use of prohibition in English and Uzbek cannot be seen in terms of the linguistic structure and grammar alone but rather as the embodiment of fundamental and deeply rooted cultural attitudes and discourse principles. The distinction between the indirect and softened prohibitions preferred by English-speaking individuals and the culturally contextualized and interpersonally considerate prohibitions favored by Uzbek-speaking individuals demonstrates how culture influences the pragmatic aspects of prohibition and control. Instead of being purely prohibitory structures, they come to represent a range of social values like autonomy, respect, solidarity, and hierarchy as well. These aspects will be examined from the perspectives of pragmatics, cultural linguistics, and intercultural communication.

4.1 Linguocultural Rationales Behind Pragmatic Divergence

Underlying this cross-cultural difference is a clear contrast in the underlying cultural orientation of both societies. English-speaking communities have traditionally been described as individualist cultures, characterized by autonomy, equality, and non-interference (Hofstede, 2001; Scollon & Scollon, 2012). Naturally, such cultural assumptions would encourage the use of more pragmatic techniques that would minimize coercion and guarantee the interlocutors' freedom. In particular, the English statement "You might not want to do that" despite being a weak prohibition from the linguistic perspective implies a complicated negotiation between the participants. It is consistent with the approach suggested by Brown & Levinson (1987), which is based on negative politeness. Speakers use conditionals and modal verbs in order to reduce face threats.

However, Uzbek conversational practice, shaped by a collectivist and hierarchically structured social system, is guided by the value of relational stability when considering human relations rather than individual independence. The widespread use of such direct imperatives as Buni qilma! ('Don't do that!'), demonstrates how the principle of directness can be employed in communication not as a sign of impoliteness but as a culturally approved way to show responsibility or concern. The notion of such pragmatics can be described with regard to cultural scripts which are defined by Wierzbicka (1991) as shared understandings about ways in which speech acts are performed in accordance with social prescriptions. In this respect, social connectedness and hierarchy become legitimate reasons for performing directive acts, so that prohibition of an activity will hardly damage one's face.

The discrepancy lies not in the ability of people to speak but in different cultural perceptions of face and social distance. Thus, English politeness values indirectness as means of face preservation while Uzbek politeness values position recognition. For an English speaker, directness may imply aggression, while for an Uzbek it may denote sincere interest or hierarchical status.

4.2 Interpretive Integration Through Pragmatic Theory

According to the Speech Act Theory (Searle, 1979), prohibition can be viewed as one of the types of directive acts where the speaker intends to stop a certain behavior in the future. Face-threateningness is an inherent characteristic of the illocutionary act of prohibition due to its restrictive nature. How the restriction is softened or justified is exactly what differentiates cultures when it comes to pragmatical aspects. In English culture, people tend to soften their illocutionary acts by changing prohibitions into suggestions or advisory statements. Such modal verbs as 'might,'

'could,' or 'shouldn't' weaken obligatory features while putting emphasis on the logic of the speaker rather than on authority.

Such an example proves that the hypotheses put forward about the perception of politeness and directness based on communicative rationality are true. As shown by the model by Brown and Levinson, native English speakers use negative politeness when formulating their prohibitions, as well as avoiding issuing clear orders, wrapping up such actions into modal and conditional constructions, and providing some reasoning for their behavior ("Better not to," "You may hurt yourself"). At the same time, Uzbek speakers combine bald-on-record politeness and positive politeness strategies, which means they use direct imperatives along with relational language forms.

In such a case, the co-existence of directness and relationship deference makes it impossible to claim that directness is considered impolite in the Uzbek language. Such a phenomenon can be explained by the difference between discernment politeness (wakimae) and volition politeness suggested by Ide (1989). Volitional politeness is used when choosing the appropriate strategy to preserve one's face, while the first one stems from socially determined norms.

4.3 Cultural Cognition, Hierarchy, and Social Proximity

A deeper analysis of the significance of hierarchical relations highlights the importance of sociocultural cognition in defining appropriate prohibitive acts. In the Uzbek communicative context, hierarchy is not just a background element, but rather an organizing factor in interactions. The elderly and superiors can rightfully exercise their authority in imposing prohibitions without making any linguistic concessions, and subordinates respond through acknowledging their commands or acquiescence, instead of negotiating. The relational norm assumes that deference is shown not through linguistic softening, but through social order observance.

On the other hand, power asymmetry in the English-language setting is viewed as an area where linguistic compensation should be made. Prohibitions imposed on the part of English-speakers in organizational communication are mitigated in a demonstration of professionalism and equal treatment. Such constructions as "I'd prefer if you didn't…" demonstrate authority in an equalizing fashion. It aligns with the findings of Oatey (2008), who points out that English politeness practice usually combines rapport-building and deference.

The flexibility demonstrated by the Uzbek communicators in their use of directness through the mode of expression and not through language structure is an example of collectivism, where politeness is determined by context more than language form. Solidarity markers like kinship terms, honorific titles, or a low pitch of voice are used to make up for the grammatical directness. The inference here is that in collectivist cultures, pragmatics are shared socially and not negotiated individually; politeness is a joint venture. This is the reason why the correlation between directness and politeness was lower in the Uzbek data set.

4.4 Comparison with Previous Studies

It should also be noted that results of this research corroborate many previous investigations conducted in the field of cross-cultural pragmatics about the impact of individualism-collectivism distinction on the speech acts of directing. First, Blum Kulka et al. (1989) found out that speakers of English use indirect techniques of making requests because of modal verbs and hedging that allow protecting the negative face needs. Secondly, Trosborg (1995) and Haugh (2010) state that politeness in English speaking countries is realized due to lowering the imposition level of directive acts. In other words, the present study confirms that mitigated approach to negative directives is typical not only to positive requests.

At the same time, previous works dedicated to investigating the politeness strategies used in Central Asia and among Turkic-speaking people (Kadyrova, 2017; Sharipov, 2021) claim that politeness of collectivist culture is based on accommodation to the social order. Therefore, direct imperatives accompanied with respectful

forms of address, justifications, and affiliative intonation can be considered to be both polite and proper. Thus, the results obtained from the analysis of Uzbek language support the theory proposed by Wierzbicka (2003).

The way this research contributes to the current state of scholarship is through the combination of corpus and elicitation methods which allow for an analysis of linguistic behavior that reflects cultural cognition. In contrast with previous research on prohibitions in pragmatic approaches which utilized either anecdotal or classroom data, the combined quantitative and qualitative approach in this paper draws attention to the predictability of such behavior: English-speaking people and Uzbek speakers demonstrate statistically different patterns in the use of directness and modality which are related to their cultural logic.

Another contribution made by this research is that the findings partly contradict claims of some intercultural pragmatics studies about directness inevitably being linked with impoliteness. The findings indicate that Uzbek "bald on record" imperative forms may still belong to polite speech acts if they are placed in the context of collective caring and hierarchical values. It confirms the emerging position of the representatives of the cultural pragmatics school (see Haugh, 2015; Kádár & Ide, 2011) regarding politeness as a concept.

4.5 Theoretical Implications and Conceptual Synthesis

The comparison between English language data and Uzbek language data contributes greatly to important theoretical considerations about the mechanisms of politeness and speech act theory. Although Brown and Levinson's framework is invaluable, one must apply it with some degree of flexibility when dealing with cultures where politeness emerges through social awareness and not individual willingness. The indirectness found in the use of English supports their prediction of negative politeness as a way to maintain one's face. Nevertheless, the analysis of Uzbek proves that there are situations where bald on record acts can be used alongside politeness, necessitating a different interpretation of face as a collective one rather than an individual concept.

Speech Act Theory, on the other hand, gets empirical validation in the form of two different approaches used by the two groups towards an illocutionary act such as prohibition, with different perlocutionary effects. English-speaking persons try to achieve compliance through persuasive acts, while Uzbek speakers do so through socially valid acts. It can thus be seen that the success of prohibitive acts depends not only on linguistic strength but also on cultural norms surrounding authority, empathy, and reciprocity.

Apart from classical theories of linguistics, the study results also align with linguistic relativity and conceptualization theory, both put forward by Sharifian in 2011. The use of modal verbs for prohibitive acts in English shows that the language embodies a conceptual system that protects and maintains interpersonal boundaries and initiative. On the other hand, the discourse of Uzbek prohibitive language practices represents a conceptual system where communication is ethical and moral and serves as a tool to maintain social order.

4.6 Applied and Pedagogical Implications

These linguistic-cultural differences have important implications for the application of linguistics in language education, intercultural communication, and translation. In language education, the results point to the need to develop pragmatic competence by enabling students to use forms that are socially and culturally appropriate, rather than just grammatically correct. Students of English who come from Uzbek or similar cultures would use direct prohibitive structures and would be perceived as being rude or tactless in an English-speaking environment. Similarly, students of English who come from Uzbek culture would excessively use indirect structures and come across as lacking confidence or interest, thus diluting their authority.

From a translator/interpreter's point of view, the results show that simple equivalence of expressions in the two languages will not suffice. Translating "You might not want to do that" into

Buni qilma disregards the difference in pragmatic function; the latter implies authority while the former is advisory in nature. Consequently, it is essential for translations to capture the speakers' illocutionary intentions as opposed to simple literal translation, using, for example, a less authoritative expression in Uzbek (Yaxshisi buni qilmaganing ma'qul).

From a perspective of intercultural communication, it is important to be aware of such differences, especially in diplomacy, education, and work environments where miscommunication between the participants in terms of directness/indirectness may result in being considered rude. Linguistic empathy – the process of interpreting the speech acts performed by other people based on their cultural framework – needs to be trained.

4.7 Broader Cultural and Pragmatic Insights

Indeed, a comparative study of prohibitive forms used in English and Uzbek highlights how different cultures embody different moral and relational perspectives through language use. English norms of communication rely on individual accountability where politeness is seen as overcoming coerciveness through respect for freedom of choice. Conversely, Uzbek communicative norms center on social accountability where politeness involves acknowledging oneself as a part of predetermined hierarchical relations. For example, an utterance like "You shouldn't do that" makes a suggestion in one culture, while "Don't do that" can be interpreted as care and solidarity in another culture.

In addition, such observations provide another important point regarding linguistic pragmatics. Cultural orientation is a factor that affects not the actual words uttered but their meaning and interpretation. While the purpose of the act of speaking lies in achieving harmony and agreement, the means differ between the two cultures. In English, harmony is maintained using a sense of distance and verbal restraint, while in Uzbek, harmony is achieved via inclusiveness and linguistic clarity.

In short, prohibition can be viewed as a miniaturized version of linguocultural perspective. Hedging on the part of the English speaking person and imperative on the part of the Uzbek speaker cannot be treated as two types of contradictory behavior but as two different ways of accomplishing one and the same pragmatic aim – keeping the relational equilibrium.

4.8 Concluding Reflection

Based on the empirical results, it can be stated that even though prohibition always involves a socially obligatory communicative action, its pragmatic manifestation is culturally constructed. The use of prohibitions by the native speakers of English and Uzbek languages shows that there is common ground in terms of pragmatic functions served by these speech acts; however, there is a complete mismatch in social logics of these cultures with regard to choosing appropriate forms. This proves the claim that speech acts should be considered within the framework of specific cultural contexts.

Through an effective combination of quantifiable data, insights of speech act theory, and linguocultural perspective, this research adds to the applied linguistics approach towards studying the impact of culture-specific values on pragmatic categories, which is one of the central aims of this interdisciplinary branch of knowledge.

5. Conclusion

The current research was conducted in an attempt to analyze linguocultural characteristics of prohibitions in the English and Uzbek languages. By employing both quantitative and qualitative methods, we have attempted to shed light on how the cultural perceptions of different societies manifest themselves in the linguistic codes. The study has proven that prohibition as a general pragmalinguistic category may vary depending on sociocultural norms and conventions inherent to each language community. It is generally known that English language users prefer indirect, modalized, and mitigated prohibitions due to the lack of imposition on the addressee and respect for the latter's independence. Uzbek speakers tend to prefer direct imperatives, as their use is supported

by the hierarchy principle, respect for the other person, and collectivism.

The main contribution of the current research is the way in which the speech act of prohibition as one of the under-researched categories is seen as an indicator of culture schemata in general. In English language, politeness is reflected in linguistic behavior by indirect forms and modal hedging as means of expression of negative politeness associated with individualism of English-speaking communities. In Uzbek language, on the contrary, directness is not impoliteness but the embodiment of power and social solidarity, indicating that the notion of politeness is situation-dependent and relation-based. By providing examples of such interlanguage differences, the study contributes to existing theories of speech act realization by expanding the list of speech acts from requests and apologies to prohibitions.

Theoretical contribution of this work to cross-cultural pragmatics can be seen in its argument that the implementation of speech acts cannot be explained with universal principles of politeness or illocutionary force alone. While classical approaches, like Searle's (1979) or that of Brown and Levinson (1987), offer the basis for the analysis of the mechanism behind prohibition as a type of directive speech act, they should be revised under the conditions of collectivist and hierarchal society like Uzbek culture. Current findings support a trend toward the development of a new paradigm of linguoculture studies, in which politeness is no longer regarded as a fixed phenomenon or one that can be compared across different cultures, but rather is understood as a product of social cognition, mediated by local cultural models. This way, the investigation makes a contribution to the existing literature on the topic of linguistic politeness and appropriateness, suggesting that these notions are context-specific and therefore need to be studied through the prism of linguocultural theory.

From a more general applied standpoint, these results also have implications for language learning, translation, and intercultural communication. When it comes to teaching foreign languages, especially in an ESL/EFL or Uzbek as a Foreign Language environment, pragmatic competence needs to be emphasized along with grammatical competence. The transfer of the politeness conventions from one's native language to the foreign language often results in pragmatic failure—the direct prohibition form used in Uzbek would be considered impolite in English, whereas the indirect prohibition form in English would come across as hesitant in Uzbek. Thus, teaching materials and methods need to incorporate training in culturally appropriate forms of prohibition and other directives using role-playing, discourse analysis, and intercultural comparison techniques.

In terms of translation and interpretation, this research shows that a translator must understand the pragmatics of prohibitive speech acts beyond the mere semantic equivalence of translation. The translation of an English utterance like You might not want to do that as Buni qilma in Uzbek turns it from an advise to a prohibition, altering its pragmatic effect entirely. Hence, the correct translation should involve understanding of the relationship and politeness norms of the two cultures involved in order to translate the communicative intent of an act regardless of its grammatical form. For any form of intercultural communication, be it diplomacy, education, or business, the present study stresses the significance of linguistic empathy in understanding the communicative acts of people on the basis of their sociocultural norms of pragmatics.

Nevertheless, there are certain shortcomings to the study, despite its important contribution to both theory and evidence-based knowledge. Firstly, although the sample group was well-balanced in terms of language and gender, it was quite small and comprised only educated adults. In addition, a more diverse representation of people from various parts of the world, different age groups, and varying socio-economic statuses might have helped discover further nuances in the same languages. Secondly, despite being a well-established tool for studying pragmatics, the Discourse Completion Task (DCT) cannot help elicit authentic speech. Even though the corpus

approach helped mitigate this issue, the very nature of the DCT does not allow the participants to engage in natural conversation. This implies that the study may have been affected by the participants' written speech that did not take into consideration the prosodic cues and non-verbal communication typical of live interactions.

Future studies could be conducted by extending the scope of linguistic and cultural comparison of prohibition speech acts. Comparative study of prohibition in several languages such as those in the groups of Turkic, Indo-European, and East Asian languages would allow for more comprehensive typological investigation into the cultural indexation of prohibition. Multimodality and technological methods could be applied in the investigation, such as prosody analysis and corpus linguistics with the aid of technological tools that enable analysis of prosodic features as well as gesture, alongside with the application of AI technology in discourse analysis. Ethnographic or conversation analysis methods could be employed to supplement the controlled approach followed in the current study, allowing for an examination of the negotiation and rejection of prohibitions in naturally occurring discourse.

In conclusion, the research further confirms the truth that language cannot be separated from culture, not just as its mirror image but also as its builder. Each prohibition sentence uttered in English using modal verbs or in Uzbek as a straightforward imperative contains unique moral principles of the respective cultures concerning how authority should be communicated and respect should be shown. It carries important ramifications, not only for academic purposes but also in an ethical context because of the realization that pragmatics cannot be separated from cultural considerations in the sense that linguistic forms are constructed with cultural meanings attached to them as well.

Conclusion

The present study has shown that the examination of prohibitive forms is a fruitful perspective in pragmatic analysis. By using the combination of corpus-based and experimental approaches to studying pragmatics, positioning the analysis within the frameworks of existing pragmatic theory, and relating the results to practical implications of language use, the study has provided an insightful description of how native speakers of English and Uzbek use language to express certain aspects of power, respect, and social harmony. At the same time, the research addresses a gap in cross-cultural comparison of speech acts as well as opens new horizons for analyzing the ways in which politeness, authority, and relational ethics are embodied in communication across cultures. In doing so, it confirms the very purpose of applied linguistics, that is, to discover the intricate mechanism of language-related sense-making underlying human comprehension across languages and cultures.

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