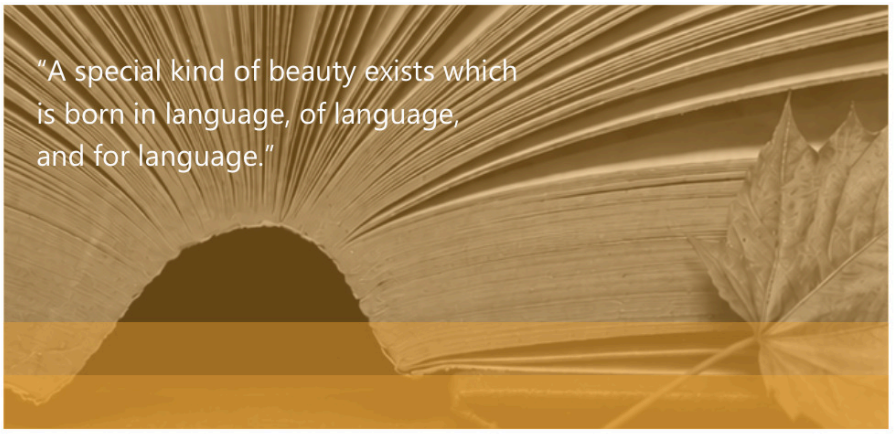
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Jalolova G.M.	Structural-semantic classification and etymological layers of astrological vocabulary in English and Uzbek	146
Abduxakimova G.	A Lexico-Semantic Comparative Analysis of Euphemisms Related to the Body, Health and Private Life in Contemporary English and Uzbek Media Discourse (Social Media, Online News and Blogs)	153
Dalieva M.Kh.	Lexical and pragmatic features of English-language media headlines: a corpus study of world health organization news releases	161
Baynazarov Z.M.	Language policy in the Timurid period and the status of the Turkic language	169
Im S.B.	Gallicisms and the Ways They Entered the Russian Language	181
Im S.B.	Karamzin as the Creator of the French Culture of Sensibility in the Russian Language	189
Siddikova F.O.	The representation of hospitality in English and Uzbek: A Comparative Linguocultural Analysis	195
Sadinova M.A.	Binary conceptual oppositions in the linguistic worldview: The life – death model	204
Umarova J.Zh.	Evaluative Language and Metaphor in Museum Discourse: Assessing AI-Based Analysis of the Savitsky Museum Catalogue	228
Xojanov Sh.B.	The study of phraseological units based on modern linguistic theories in K. Karimov's novel "Agabiy"	239
Azimova D.A.	The System of Non-Canonical Antonym Pairs in English Presidential Speeches and Proverbs (Non-Canonical Antonyms as Powerful Rhetorical Instruments)	246
Nasirova R.A.	Phraseological and Paremiological Conceptualization of Moral Values in English and Uzbek	254
Kambarova M.A.	Universal and National-Specific Features in English and Russian Proverbs (based on Proverbs about Homeland)	260
Djalilov M.M.	Neologisms and abbreviations: the interaction of word-formation processes in modern linguistics	267
Sabirova B.U.	The lexical-semantic analysis of Uzbek pragmalinguistic terms "lingvistik kontekst, vaziyat konteksti, ijtimoiy konteks va kognitiv kontekst"	273
Karimova Z.G'.	Illocutionary features of modal and interjection word-sentences in typologically different languages	282
Borisova Ye.V.	Linguistic representation of blame and responsibility in public corporate apologies	289
Yahyaeva E.V.	Vocative words and vocative sentences in Azerbaijani	301
Musayeva S.	Structural and semantic features of phraseological units in the form of word combinations and sentences in Azerbaijani	310

The Lingua Spectrum
Cogito, ergo sum

The Lingua Spectrum
Volume 10, October 2026

The representation of hospitality in English and Uzbek: A Comparative Linguocultural Analysis

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Annotation *This article compares the way hospitality is expressed in English and Uzbek from a linguocultural perspective. Attention is given to dictionary meanings, proverbs, conventional expressions, and common host-guest situations. The comparison shows that hospitality and mehmondo'stlik share a core meaning of welcome and care, but the cultural emphasis is not identical. Uzbek material gives a prominent place to respect for the guest, active service by the host, food sharing, kind speech, and the symbolic role of the dasturxon. English material also values generosity and a warm reception, while many expressions and proverbs make personal choice, visit duration, and the guest's responsibility not to impose more explicit. These tendencies are discussed without treating them as fixed national rules. Particular attention is paid to invitation, refusal, repeated offering, and leave-taking because these acts often reveal pragmatic differences more clearly than isolated vocabulary. The article also considers the relevance of these differences for translation and for teaching English to Uzbek learners.*

Keywords *Hospitality, mehmondo'stlik, linguoculturology, cultural script, proverb, politeness, intercultural communication*

Ingliz va o'zbek tillarida mehmondo'stlikning ifodalanishi: qiyosiy lingvomadaniy tahlil

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Annotatsiya *Maqolada ingliz va o'zbek tillarida "mehmondo'stlik" tushunchasining ifodalanishi qiyosiy lingvomadaniy nuqtayi nazardan ko'rib chiqiladi. Tahlil lug'aviy ma'nolar, maqollar, turg'un birikmalar hamda mezbon va mehmon o'rtasidagi odatiy muloqot holatlariga tayangan. Qiyoslash natijasida hospitality va mehmondo'stlik birliklari kutib olish va g'amxo'rlik ma'nolarida yaqin bo'lsa-da, ularning madaniy urg'usi bir xil emasligi ko'rinadi. O'zbek materialida mehmonga hurmat, mezbonning faol xizmati, taom ulashish, shirinso'zlik va dasturxonning ramziy ahamiyati alohida o'rin tutadi. Ingliz tili materialida ham samimiylik va saxiylik qadrlanadi, biroq shaxsiy tanlov, tashrif davomiyligi hamda mehmonning mezbonga ortiqcha yuk bo'lmasligi ko'proq ochiq ifodalanadi. Taklif qilish, rad etish, qayta taklif etish va xayrlashish kabi nutqiy holatlar ayniqsa muhim bo'lib, ular ikki madaniyatdagi pragmatik farqlarni yaqqolroq ko'rsatadi. Mazkur xususiyatlar qat'iy milliy qoida sifatida emas, til materialida kuzatiladigan tendensiya sifatida talqin qilinadi. Maqolada bu farqlarning tarjima hamda o'zbek auditoriyasida ingliz tilini o'qitishdagi ahamiyati ham yoritiladi. Shuningdek, so'zma-so'z tenglik bilan madaniy mazmunning to'liq mosligi har doim ham bir xil emasligi ta'kidlanadi.*

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Kalit so'zlar *Mehmondo'stlik, lingvomadaniyatshunoslik, madaniy ssenariy, maqol, xushmuomalalik, madaniyatlararo muloqot*

Репрезентация гостеприимства в английском и узбекском языках: сопоставительный лингвокультурологический анализ

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Аннотация *В статье сопоставляются языковые средства выражения гостеприимства в английской и узбекской культурах. Анализ опирается на словарные значения, устойчивые выражения и типичные ситуативные речевые формулы. Сравнение показывает, что английское «hospitality» и узбекское «mehmondo'stlik» имеют общее смысловое ядро, связанное с приёмом и заботой о госте, однако их культурные акценты существенно различаются. В узбекском материале ключевое место занимают уважение к гостю, активная роль хозяина, угощение, доброжелательная речь и символическое значение "dasturxon". В английской традиции также подчёркиваются приветливость и щедрость, однако особое внимание уделяется сохранению личных границ, продолжительности визита и обязанности гостя не создавать неудобств. Особый акцент сделан на ситуациях приглашения, отказа, повторного предложения и прощания, поскольку именно в них коммуникативные различия проявляются не как жёсткие правила, а как культурные тенденции. Кроме того, рассматривается практическое значение данных особенностей для теории и практики перевода, а также для методики преподавания английского языка узбекской аудитории. Подчёркивается, что прямое межязыковое соответствие не всегда передаёт культурные ожидания участников общения.*

Ключевые слова *Гостеприимство, вежливость, межкультурная коммуникация, сценарий, концепт, вежливость, национальный язык, лингвокультурология, сопоставительный анализ*

Introduction

Hospitality is easy to translate but harder to interpret. English hospitality and Uzbek mehmondo'stlik both refer to receiving and caring for guests, yet the social expectations attached to the two words are not identical. In English, the term commonly covers a friendly welcome, comfort, food, and entertainment. In Uzbek, mehmondo'stlik is closely tied to the figure of the "mehmon" and to familiar practices of serving, offering food, showing respect, and giving the guest a valued place in the household. These meanings are not carried by vocabulary alone. They are also shaped by repeated forms of speech and by culturally familiar situations. Kramsch notes that

language takes meaning from the cultural setting in which it is used, while Wierzbicka shows that culturally important words often carry values that are only partly visible in a direct translation (Kramsch, 1998; Wierzbicka, 1997).

The difference can be seen in ordinary host-guest exchanges. An Uzbek host may repeat an invitation or an offer of tea to show sincerity, whereas an English-speaking guest may understand a clear refusal as closing the exchange. Food provides another example: the Uzbek dasturxon often signals not only a meal but also respect, readiness to share, and the social value of the visit. English hospitality also gives food and comfort an important place, but conventional expressions such as "Help yourself" or "Would you like some more?" often leave the choice more explicitly with the guest. These patterns vary by family, age, region, and situation, so they should be read as tendencies rather than fixed national behavior. Uzbek linguocultural studies likewise stress that cultural meanings are reflected in vocabulary, phraseology, proverbs, and speech etiquette (Usmanova, 2019).

The article compares hospitality at three connected levels: lexical meaning, proverbial imagery, and host-guest speech behavior. The main questions are straightforward: what do hospitality and mehmondo'stlik have in common, where do their cultural associations differ, and how can those differences matter in translation or language teaching? The material is examined qualitatively. Dictionary entries, proverb collections, and relevant studies are compared with examples of invitation, offering, refusal, insistence, thanking, and leave-taking. No frequency claims are made, because the aim is to describe recurring meanings and pragmatic expectations rather than to measure their statistical distribution.

Theoretical framework

Linguoculturology is concerned with the point at which linguistic meaning and cultural knowledge meet. A word can name an action or object, but it can also call up expectations about who should act, how politely, and with what social purpose. This is especially clear in words connected with everyday customs. Uzbek scholarship treats vocabulary, phraseology, proverbs, and forms of address as important carriers of national-cultural meaning (Usmanova, 2019). Wierzbicka makes a similar point from a cross-cultural perspective: words that appear simple may encode different value systems in different languages (Wierzbicka, 1997). For hospitality, the useful question is therefore not which culture is "more hospitable," but how each language presents the roles of host and guest and what kinds of behavior it treats as appropriate.

Proverbs are valuable in this comparison because they preserve compact evaluations of familiar social situations. Mieder describes proverbs as traditional expressions that gain meaning through repeated use in concrete contexts (Mieder, 2004). They do not function as rules that every speaker follows, but they show which ideas are culturally recognizable. Uzbek hospitality proverbs repeatedly link the guest with "izzat", service, food, and kind speech. English proverb collections also praise good company and welcome, yet they include a noticeable group of sayings about moderation and the danger of overstaying. Speake's Oxford collection records this side of the English proverbial tradition and provides a useful basis for comparison (Speake, 2015).

Pragmatics helps explain why similar words may lead to different expectations in conversation. Brown and Levinson discuss politeness in relation to social distance, imposition, approval, and a person's freedom of action (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Hospitality brings several of these concerns together. A host wants to be warm and generous, while a guest may try not to create inconvenience. In Uzbek family settings, a second or third offer of food can strengthen the message that the offer is sincere. In an English-speaking setting, continued insistence after a clear refusal may be taken as pressure. The wording can be similar, but the social

force of the exchange changes with the cultural context.

Methodology

The analysis is comparative and qualitative. Uzbek lexical meanings are checked against the five-volume "O'zbek tilining izohli lug'ati" edited by A. Madvaliyev (Madvaliyev, 2006-2008). Proverbs and traditional sayings are considered with reference to Shomaqsudov and Shorahmedov's (2001) explanatory collection. English proverbial material is drawn from Speake's Oxford dictionary and interpreted alongside Mieder's work on paremiology (Speake, 2015; Mieder, 2004). Studies that address English-Uzbek hospitality directly are used for comparison, particularly the works of Najmiddinova and of Abdullayev and Mukumov (Najmiddinova, 2024; Abdullayev & Mukumov, 2026).

The material was read in four stages. First, the main lexical groups were identified: hospitality, guest, host, welcome, invitation, food, table, and service in English; mehmondo'stlik, mehmon, mezbon, kutib olish, taklif, dasturxon, taom, and xizmat in Uzbek. Next, the proverbs and conventional expressions were grouped according to the values they foregrounded, including respect, generosity, verbal warmth, obligation, time, and personal boundaries. The third stage compared common speech acts such as inviting, offering, accepting, refusing, insisting, thanking, and taking leave. Finally, the examples were read in context so that a single proverb or phrase would not be treated as a universal description of all speakers.

Results

1. **Lexical-semantic representation**

In everyday English, hospitality refers to the friendly reception and treatment of guests; in institutional use, the same word also names the hotel, restaurant, and related service sector. Uzbek mehmondo'stlik has a more transparent internal form. It is built from mehmon "guest" and do'st "friend," and the derived noun names the quality or practice of receiving guests well. The figure of the guest is therefore visible inside the word itself. Uzbek lexicography records mehmon, mezbon, mehmondo'st, and related forms as an interconnected group, showing how strongly the guest-host relation is represented in the vocabulary (Madvaliyev, 2006-2008).

The two terms meet in their basic meaning: a guest is welcomed, cared for, and recognized as temporarily belonging to the social space of the host. The difference appears in the associations that gather around this shared core. Uzbek usage often connects mehmondo'stlik with izzat, service, abundant offering, and visible attention. English hospitality includes the same wish to make a guest comfortable, but it is frequently expressed through language of choice: "Would you like...?", "Help yourself," "Make yourself at home," or "If you'd like." Such phrases combine welcome with room for individual preference. Kramsch's account of language and culture helps explain why two close lexical equivalents can still organize social meaning in different ways (Kramsch, 1998).

2. **Proverbial representation**

Uzbek proverbs give the guest a clearly marked social position. "Mehmon izzatda, mezbon xizmatda" presents respect and service as complementary duties, while "Mehmon joyi ko'z ustida" places the guest metaphorically in a position of honor. Hospitality is also connected with speech. The saying "Shirin choying bo'lmasa, shirin tiling bo'lsin" suggests that kind words may compensate for limited material means. What matters in these examples is the evaluation behind them: a good host is attentive, respectful, and willing to share what is available. Shomaqsudov and Shorahmedov's collection preserves many formulations built around these values (Shomaqsudov & Shorahmedov, 2001).

English proverbial material includes praise of company and shared food, but it also speaks more openly about the appropriate length of a visit. The well-known saying "Fish and guests stink after three days" is memorable precisely because it links hospitality with a limit.

Other sayings in the English tradition similarly warn against overstaying or imposing on a host. This does not make English hospitality less generous; it shows that moderation is linguistically visible beside welcome. Uzbek proverbs, by contrast, more often place the moral status of the guest and the host's service in the foreground. Abdullayev and Mukumov report a comparable pattern in their study of hospitality proverbs, noting Uzbek associations with blessing, dasturxon, and host responsibility alongside stronger English attention to time and boundaries (Abdullayev & Mukumov, 2026).

Najmiddinova also approaches English and Uzbek hospitality proverbs from both linguocultural and linguopragmatic angles (Najmiddinova, 2024). Her work is useful because it shows why dictionary meaning alone is not enough. A dictionary identifies the basic sense of a word, whereas a proverb adds judgment: who deserves respect, what counts as generosity, when a visit becomes excessive, and how host and guest are expected to protect the relationship. Reading the two kinds of material together gives a fuller picture of the concept.

3. **Food, table, and symbolic space**

Food is central to hospitality in both cultures. In Uzbek communication, however, dasturxon carries meanings that go beyond the physical table setting. It can suggest gathering, provision, respect, and the willingness of the household to share. Tea or food may therefore be offered even when the guest has not asked for it, and the offer itself becomes part of the welcome. Repetition can strengthen that message. English-speaking hosts also use food and drink to create comfort, but the verbal pattern often puts the guest's preference into words more directly. The host offers; the guest is generally expected to state a choice. In intercultural contact, the difference becomes noticeable when one side reads repeated offering as care and the other reads the same repetition as unnecessary insistence.

4. **Invitation and acceptance**

An invitation creates a short-term social obligation, but the force of acceptance and refusal is not identical in every setting. In Uzbek communication, an invitation may be repeated, personalized, or followed by reassurance that the guest is genuinely expected. A first refusal can sometimes express modesty or concern about troubling the host, so another invitation does not automatically sound unusual. In many English interactions, a clear refusal is more likely to be treated as the speaker's final preference. Brown and Levinson's discussion of non-imposition helps explain this difference: politeness may involve protecting the addressee's freedom to decide (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The risk in cross-cultural communication is obvious. Sincere insistence may be heard as pressure, while a polite refusal may be mistaken for hesitation.

5. **Offering, refusal, and insistence**

The same contrast appears around food. An Uzbek host may encourage a guest several times to take another portion, especially in a family setting. The repeated offer can signal care and the wish that the guest should leave satisfied. The guest, in turn, may initially decline out of politeness and accept later. English-speaking hosts can certainly offer again, but persistent urging after an explicit "No, thank you" may restrict the guest's stated choice. For translators and language learners, the difficulty lies not in the nouns food or tea, but in the sequence of turns: how many offers are natural, when refusal is final, and when insistence sounds warm rather than intrusive.

6. **The guest's responsibility**

Uzbek hospitality places strong duties on the host, but the guest is not free of obligations. Uzbek proverbial tradition also warns against poor timing, uninvited arrival, and behavior that burdens the household. English culture likewise cannot be reduced to distance or individualism; family and community gatherings may involve extensive generosity and repeated care. The comparison is therefore most useful when it keeps both

dominant patterns and counterexamples in view. Mieder's treatment of proverbs as context-dependent traditional speech is relevant here: a proverb shows that an idea is culturally familiar, not that every speaker behaves according to it (Mieder, 2004).

7. **Cultural scripts and translation**

Wierzbicka's work on culturally important key words is particularly relevant to hospitality because social expectations are not fully contained in dictionary definitions (Wierzbicka, 1997). Translating hospitality as mehmondo'stlik is usually correct at the lexical level, but a whole scene may require more careful choices. An English description of a hospitable host can suggest friendliness, comfort, and good treatment without implying repeated insistence or a ceremonial table. An Uzbek description of a mehmondo'st household may more readily evoke active serving, food, verbal respect, and visible care. In the opposite direction, an English comment about not overstaying can sound ordinary rather than unfriendly. Good translation has to carry the interpersonal tone as well as the dictionary meaning.

8. **Implications for English language teaching**

Hospitality is a practical topic for developing pragmatic competence among Uzbek learners of English because the vocabulary is familiar but the interactional habits are only partly shared. Instead of presenting culture as a list of national traits, a lesson can compare short dialogues. Learners might examine an English host asking, "Would you like some more tea?" and an Uzbek exchange in which the host continues after a first refusal. They can discuss when "No, thank you" closes the offer, when another invitation sounds natural, and how intonation changes the meaning. Kramsch's view of language learning as engagement with cultural meaning supports this kind of contextual work (Kramsch, 1998). This approach is consistent with Tomlinson's view that language-learning materials should provide learners with meaningful experiences of language use rather than focus only on the presentation of linguistic forms (Tomlinson, 2011). In the context of hospitality, authentic or carefully adapted dialogues can help learners explore how invitations, offers, refusals, and expressions of gratitude function in particular social situations. Comparing English and Uzbek examples can therefore support learners in developing both linguistic knowledge and an awareness of pragmatic meaning.

9. **Shared features**

The differences should not hide the large area of overlap. English and Uzbek both value a pleasant welcome, attention to the guest, food or refreshment, gratitude, and an appropriate leave-taking. Both also recognize that hospitality has limits and that a considerate guest contributes to a successful visit. The main contrast concerns emphasis. Uzbek linguistic material gives greater visibility to honor, obligation, abundance, and service; English material gives greater visibility to explicit preference, personal comfort, and time. These are overlapping tendencies rather than two closed systems.

A comparative model of the concept

Table 1 brings the main points of the comparison together. The categories come from the lexical, proverbial, and pragmatic material discussed above; they are descriptive, not frequency counts. They show where English and Uzbek share the same basic idea and where each language gives more attention to a particular social expectation.

Dimension	English representation	Uzbek representation	Comparative interpretation
Core idea	Warm reception and care for a guest	Warm reception, respect, and active service to the guest	Shared positive meaning; different degrees of social obligation
Central roles	host / guest	mezbon / mehmon	Uzbek terminology gives the guest figure greater lexical prominence
Food and table	refreshment, meal, comfort	taom, choy, dasturxon, Baraka	Dasturxon carries a strong social and symbolic meaning in Uzbek
Invitation	often explicit and preference-oriented	often strengthened by repetition and personal appeal	A first refusal may be interpreted differently across contexts
Refusal	often treated as final after a clear answer	may sometimes be followed by another offer	Direct transfer of pragmatic norms can cause misunderstanding
Time and boundaries	visible in proverbial warnings against overstaying	present, but less prominent than honor and service in many proverbs	English proverbial material marks visit duration more openly
Verbal warmth	friendly tone, thanks, room for choice	shirin so'z, izzat, duolar, repeated attention	Both value warmth; the forms and intensity differ

Table 1. *Comparative linguocultural dimensions of hospitality in English and Uzbek*

The comparison in the table shows a common semantic center: welcome, care, food or refreshment, and recognition of the guest. Around that center, Uzbek material places more weight on the host's duty to honor and serve, whereas English material more often verbalizes choice and limits. Abdullayev and Mukumov describe a similar relationship between shared meaning and different cultural emphasis in English and Uzbek hospitality proverbs (Abdullayev & Mukumov, 2026). The contrast therefore appears across groups of expressions, not only in a few isolated sayings.

Discussion

The evidence is more convincing when hospitality is treated as a cultural concept rather than as a pair of dictionary equivalents. Hospitality and mehmondo'stlik overlap substantially, but the surrounding expectations are arranged differently. Uzbek material gives the guest a highly visible moral status and places active responsibility on the host. English material combines generosity with a more explicit concern for personal choice and time. This difference is consistent with the broader view that linguistic meaning develops within cultural practices and cannot be reduced to a definition alone (Kramsch, 1998; Wierzbicka, 1997).

The comparison does not justify ranking one culture as "more hospitable" than the other. Care can be expressed in different ways. In many English interactions, politeness may mean avoiding pressure and allowing the guest to decide freely. In many Uzbek interactions, politeness may be shown through persistence, visible service, and reassurance that the guest is not a burden. Both aim to maintain a positive relationship, but they do so through different conversational habits. Brown and Levinson's

account of solidarity and non-imposition provides useful terminology for this contrast, although local interpretation remains necessary (Brown & Levinson, 1987). This finding is also relevant to Chan's (2018) discussion of English as a lingua franca. Based on interviews with English users in Hong Kong, Chan identifies cultural differences and context-specific language use as important factors in international communication. The study also indicates that speakers may adjust their language according to the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of their interlocutors. Applied to the present study, this perspective suggests that Uzbek learners of English may benefit from examining how hospitality-related expressions are interpreted in different contexts. For example, repeated offers of food may communicate warmth and sincerity in one interaction but be perceived as pressure in another. Such interpretations should therefore be considered in relation to context rather than treated as universal rules.

Using several types of material also prevents the analysis from depending too heavily on a single source. Dictionaries give relatively stable lexical meanings; proverb collections preserve traditional evaluations; interaction shows how speakers negotiate those meanings in practice. Najmiddinova's work on hospitality supports the value of combining linguocultural and pragmatic analysis instead of reading proverbs as isolated folklore (Najmiddinova, 2024). A fuller empirical study could later compare these qualitative observations with spoken conversations, interviews, or discourse-completion tasks to see how age, region, bilingualism, and formality influence hospitality behavior.

Translation is one area where these differences become practical. In fiction, tourism texts, subtitles, and intercultural materials, scenes of inviting, feeding, refusing, and leaving often carry more social meaning than the literal words suggest. An Uzbek host's repeated "Oling, oling" may need an English rendering that keeps the warmth without making the host sound forceful. Conversely, "Help yourself" should not automatically be read as emotional distance; in its usual context it can be a friendly way of giving the guest freedom and comfort. The translator's task is to preserve the relationship between the speakers, not just replace one expression with another.

The same point matters in the language classroom. Uzbek learners can benefit from seeing English and Uzbek hospitality dialogues side by side and identifying the invitation, offer, refusal, insistence, thanks, and leave-taking in each one. Proverbs can be used as short cultural prompts, provided they are discussed as traditional viewpoints rather than universal rules. Speake's English proverb collection and the Uzbek material compiled by Shomaqsudov and Shorahmedov offer suitable examples for such comparison (Speake, 2015; Shomaqsudov & Shorahmedov, 2001). This kind of work links vocabulary with context and helps learners notice how polite meaning changes across languages.

Conclusion

English hospitality and Uzbek mehmondo'stlik share a clear semantic core: receiving a guest warmly, offering care, and maintaining a positive social relationship. The difference lies in what each linguistic tradition tends to foreground. Uzbek material gives particular prominence to the status of the mehmon, the mezbon's duty to serve, generous offering, kind speech, and the symbolic space of the dasturxon. English material also values sociability and generosity, but proverbs and everyday interaction more often make personal choice, moderation, the length of a visit, and the wish not to impose linguistically explicit.

These patterns are best understood as tendencies. Families, regions, age groups, and individual speakers differ, and a proverb cannot predict actual behavior. Even so, lexical meanings, traditional sayings, and recurrent speech practices show how a community talks

about the host-guest relationship. For translation and English language teaching, this is the most useful point: hospitality should be approached not only as a word but also as a set of social expectations. Knowing when an invitation is sincere, when a refusal is final, when another offer sounds caring, and when it sounds intrusive can prevent small but meaningful misunderstandings in English-Uzbek communication.

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