
**“Could you please...” vs.
“Tayyorlang”: A pragmatic
investigation of indirectness and
directness in English and Uzbek
language orders**

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Annotation *This research article investigates the pragmatic tactics used to articulate direct and indirect orders in the English and Uzbek linguistic environments, with a focus on educational leadership settings. This study uses frameworks based on speech act theory and politeness theory to analyse how cultural norms impact the expression of instructions in these two typologically dissimilar languages (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1975; Brown & Levinson, 1987). According to the findings, English speakers generally attenuate their directions via modal verbs, hedging, and collaborative framing approaches. In contrast, Uzbek speakers prefer more direct imperative formulations that are shaped by established social hierarchies and role-based expectations. The approach, which uses real speech samples, shows how the concept of politeness is encoded and culturally defined in directive communication (Thomas, 1983). Furthermore, the study emphasizes how language users adopt either linguistic softening or hierarchical positioning depending on their communicative roles and contexts. This work contributes significantly to the subject of intercultural pragmatics and has implications for educators and institutional leaders dealing with complicated multilingual or multicultural situations. The insights gathered may aid in more nuanced and courteous communication across various institutional contexts.*

Keywords *Directive speech acts, indirectness, directness, pragmatics, speech act theory, politeness theory, educational leadership, intercultural communication, mitigation strategies, authority and hierarchy, cross-cultural pragmatics, syntactic structure*

**«Could you please...» и
«Tayyorlang»: прагматическое
исследование косвенных и
прямых директив в английском
и узбекском языках**

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Аннотация *Данная научная статья посвящена исследованию прагматических тактик, используемых для выражения прямых и косвенных приказов в англоязычной и узбек язычной языковых средах, с особым акцентом на сферу образовательного лидерства. В работе применяются теоретические рамки, основанные на теории речевых актов и теории вежливости, для анализа того, как культурные нормы влияют на выражение директив в двух типологически различных языках (Остин, 1962; Серль, 1975; Браун и Левинсон, 1987). Согласно полученным данным, носители английского языка, как правило, смягчают свои приказы с помощью модальных глаголов,*

эвфемизмов и кооперативных формулировок. В противоположность этому, носители узбекского языка чаще прибегают к прямым императивным конструкциям, обусловленным устоявшимися социальными иерархиями и ролевыми ожиданиями. Методология, основанная на анализе реальных речевых образцов, демонстрирует, каким образом понятие вежливости кодируется и культурно определяется в директивной коммуникации (Томас, 1983). Кроме того, в исследовании подчеркивается, что носители языка опираются либо на языковое смягчение, либо на иерархическое положение в зависимости от коммуникативных ролей и ситуаций. Работа вносит значительный вклад в область межкультурной прагматики и имеет практическое значение для преподавателей и руководителей образовательных учреждений, работающих в сложных многоязычных или мультикультурных условиях. Полученные выводы могут способствовать более тонкому и уважительному общению в различных институциональных контекстах.

Ключевые слова

Директивные речевые акты, косвенность, прямота, прагматика, теория речевых актов, теория вежливости, образовательное лидерство, межкультурная коммуникация, стратегии смягчения, власть и иерархия, межкультурная прагматика, синтаксическая структура

**«Could you please...» va
«Tayyorlang»: Ingliz va o'zbek
tillaridagi buyruqlarning bilvosita
va bevosita ifoda shakllarining
pragmatik tahlili**

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Annotatsiya

Ushbu ilmiy maqola ingliz va o'zbek tilli muhitlarda bevosita va bilvosita buyruqlarni ifodalash uchun qo'llaniladigan pragmatik usullarni o'rganishga bag'ishlangan bo'lib, ta'lim sohasidagi yetakchilikka alohida e'tibor qaratilgan. Tadqiqotda nutq aktlari nazariyasi va xushmuomalalik nazariyasiga asoslangan nazariy asoslar qo'llanilgan bo'lib, ular yordamida ikki tipologik jihatdan farqlanuvchi tillarda madaniy me'yorlarning ko'rsatmalarini ifodalashga ta'siri tahlil qilingan (Ostin, 1962; Searl, 1975; Braun va Levinson, 1987). Olingan natijalarga ko'ra, ingliz tilida so'zlashuvchilar odatda o'z buyruqlarini modal fe'llar, evfemizmlar va hamkorlikka asoslangan iboralar yordamida yumshatishga moyil. Bunga qarama-qarshi o'laroq, o'zbek tilida so'zlashuvchilar ko'proq o'rnatilgan ijtimoiy darajalar va vazifaviy kutilmalar tufayli to'g'ridan to'g'ri imperativ konstruksiyalarga murojaat qilishadi. Haqiqiy nutq namunalari tahlil qilishga asoslangan metodologiya buyruq berish muloqotida xushmuomalalik tushunchasi qanday kodlanganligini va madaniy jihatdan qanday belgilanganligini ko'rsatadi (Tomas, 1983). Bundan tashqari, tadqiqotda til egalarining muloqotdagi rollar va vaziyatlarga qarab, yoki til orqali yumshatish usullariga, yoki ierarxik mavqega tayanuvchi strategiyalardan foydalanishi keltirib o'tiladi. Ushbu ish madaniyatlararo pragmatika sohasiga

sezilarli hissa qo'shadi hamda murakkab ko'p tilli yoki ko'p madaniyatli sharoitlarda faoliyat yuritayotgan ta'lim muassasalari o'qituvchilari va rahbarlari uchun amaliy ahamiyatga ega.

Kalit so'zlar *Buyruq nutq aktlari, bilvosita ifoda, bevosita ifoda, pragmatika, nutq aktlari nazariyasi, hushmuomalalik, ta'limdagi yetakchilik, madaniyatlararo muloqot, yumshatish strategiyalari, hokimiyat va ierarxiya, madaniyatlararo pragmatika, sintaktik tuzilma*

Introduction

Directives are essential in the dynamic context of educational institutions for leaders and instructors to communicate effectively. However, the forms and pragmatics of delivering commands change considerably among cultures and languages. This research investigates the differences in how English and Uzbek speakers explain directions, with a special emphasis on directness and mitigating measures. The analysis is based on speech act theory (Searle, 1979) and politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987), which provide insight into how linguistic choices reflect cultural objectives and norms. Additionally, the study investigates how syntactic word order and rhetorical standards influence the perception of authority, intelligibility, and respect in directive acts.

Theoretical Framework

Speech acts classify statements according to their intended influence on the recipient. According to Austin (1962) and Searle (1975), instructions are utterances designed to elicit a response from the hearer. They can be expressed explicitly (such as *"Please send the updated report to the academic committee by 3 PM."* – mentioned by a dean) or indirectly (such as *"Could you possibly arrange the documents for the rector's briefing?"* – uttered by a department head). The illocutionary impact of these statements is frequently influenced by the environment, social dynamics, and cultural expectations surrounding communication. Notably, instructional leaders' professional

communication incorporates rhetorical aesthetics, with tone, clarity, and communicative etiquette representing moral and intellectual authority (Thomas, 1983).

Politeness Theory

Politeness theory provides a lens through which to understand why speakers choose direct or indirect ways of contact, taking into account issues such as "face" concern (the need to maintain one's own and others' self-images) and culturally dictated standards of interaction. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), individuals' communication techniques are heavily influenced by their social and cultural surroundings, which determine suitable levels of directness or indirectness.

Methodology

The study used a comparative qualitative approach, based on a curated corpus of speech samples from English- and Uzbek-speaking educational leaders such as rectors, deans, and senior teachers. Data sources include a variety of communication formats such as recorded meetings, institutional memoranda, and classroom encounters. The investigation focuses on the speech act aspects, mitigation mechanisms used, and relevant contextual variables such as role, social distance, and level of formality.

Findings and Analysis

English directives: Preference for indirectness

English-speaking educational leaders have a strong preference for indirect means of dissent in order to maintain a courteous

environment and reduce potential face threats. Common strategies include:

- **Modal verbs:** (e.g., "must," "should," "could")
- **Interrogative forms:** (e.g., "Can you...?")
- **Softeners:** (e.g., "I'd appreciate it if...")

Such strategies demonstrate equality and cooperation, and are consistent with Hofstede's (2001) cultural orientations of individualism and low power distance.

Example (by a dean): "Could you please finalise the schedule for next week's faculty meeting?"

Example (by a rector): "Would it be possible to update the academic report by Thursday?"

Direct communication cultures, such as those present in English-speaking countries, rely heavily on words to communicate the message, and literal interpretation is expected. Phrases like "Say what you mean" and "Get to the point" reflect this emphasis on clarity and efficiency (Thomas, 1983).

Uzbek directives: Cultural legitimacy of directness

In contrast, the use of directions in Uzbek language frequently embodies a more direct approach, especially with imperative forms like "Tayyorlang" ("Prepare it"). This direct mode of

approach is culturally validated within established hierarchies of age, social position, and institutional roles. In these cases, politeness is typically stated as follows:

- **Suffixes:** (e.g., -ing, (-lar) bare infinitive) that signal respect,
- **Relational framing** rather than through syntactic mitigation.

Example (by a department chair): "Ish rejangizni bugun soat beshgacha topshiringlar." (Submit your work plan by 5 PM today.)

Example (by a professor): "Ma'lumotnomani olib chiqing." (Bring the reference file.)

In contrast, as noted in *O'zbek tili grammatikasi. Sintaksis* (1995), Uzbek indirect communication represents a context-rich culture in which meaning is inferred from social cues, silence, tone, or role-based expectations. Expressions like "If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything," or "The nail that sticks out gets hammered back in," demonstrate a strong preference for social harmony, conflict avoidance, and face saving.

Comparative Pragmatic Strategies

The following table summarises the key features differentiating directives in English and Uzbek:

Feature	English	Uzbek
Typical Structure	Modalized requests, interrogatives	Imperatives with politeness suffixes
Face-saving Strategy	Negative and positive politeness	Role-based deference, honorifics
Cultural Orientation	Individualist, egalitarian	Collectivist, hierarchical
Examples	"Could you please upload this?"	"Bu faylni yuklab qo'ying"

Table 1.

Cultural aesthetics of leadership speech: Uzbek oratory culture (notiqlik madaniyati) views speech not only as a utilitarian tool, but also as a reflection of the speaker's intellectual and ethical status. Directives frequently use poetic, allegorical, or religious phrases to reinforce authority while

remaining harmonious. To inspire obedience with moral legitimacy, an order could be preceded by a saying like "Harakatda baraka" (There is blessing in action) (Karimov, 2015).

In English leadership speech, rhetorical clarity, structure, and positive motivational language (e.g., "Let's aim to finish this

together") are valued. These methods are consistent with leadership ideas based on teamwork and shared responsibility rather than command compliance.

Syntactic patterns of word order in English and Uzbek command sentences

While pragmatic techniques of politeness and authority alter the surface form of directions, the underlying word order patterns reflect long-held linguistic standards. In English, the imperative structure usually starts with the verb and skips the subject: "Open the book." In Uzbek, however, the imperative verb is at the conclusion of the sentence: "Kitobingizni oching".

Uzbek syntax allows for stylistic emphasis change, such as beginning a command with the verb in emotionally charged discourse (e.g., "Olib chiqing o'sha tekshirilgan ishlaringizni"), whereas English word order is less adaptable (Yadixanova, 1954). Uzbek command sentences include modal expressions like "kerak", "mumkin", and hopeful constructs like "Qani endi..." to soften or stylize directives.

Discussion

The tendency for indirect directions among English speakers is not just linguistic, but also reflects deeper norms of interpersonal sensitivity and cultural expectations of authority and equality. In contrast, direct

directives in Uzbek communication frequently denote clarity and decisiveness, especially when articulated by people in positions of power. While both languages include systems for dealing with dangers, their use is dependent on different sociocultural norms and conditions.

Furthermore, communication from educational leaders in both circumstances is characterised by professional demands such as clarity, composure, and persuasion, which show not only language but also ethical aspects. According to Uzbek educational discourse, the teacher's or dean's job is inextricably linked to the ideals expressed, which include respect, mentorship, and communal harmony.

Conclusion

This study proves clearly that the displays of directness and indirectness in order speaking acts are heavily influenced by broader cultural patterns and institutional norms. English directives typically adopt mitigating tactics to ease imposition, but Uzbek directives support directness as a legitimate expression of power. An respect and comprehension of these contrasts can help individuals improve their pragmatic competence, especially in cross-cultural educational settings where effective communication is essential for successful collaboration and leadership.

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