



**Cross-Cultural Pragmatic Aspects of Media Language in English and  
Uzbek Contexts**

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**Abstract**

The article explores cross-cultural pragmatic issues of media language in English and Uzbek contexts. The current research deals with how journalists make use of language to express meaning, politeness, and cultural values in headlines and reports. Media discourse embraces cultural identity and influences the way news is framed and interpreted. Using examples from BBC, CNN, Kun.uz, and Daryo.uz, this study follows a qualitative contrastive discourse analysis to expose differences in pragmatics in English and Uzbek media. The findings of the study revealed that English media tends towards more direct and explicit strategies of communication; meanwhile, the Uzbek media shows indirectness, politeness, and some collectivist expressions. Such differences are explained through the high-context and low-context dimensions of cultures proposed by Hall (1976). This study enriches intercultural pragmatics and translation studies with instances showing how cultural norms affect journalistic communication.

**Keywords:** pragmatics, media discourse, cross-cultural communication, English, Uzbek, politeness

**Кросс-культурные прагматические аспекты языка средств массовой информации в английском и узбекском контекстах**

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#### **Аннотация**

В статье рассматриваются межкультурные прагматические особенности языка СМИ в английском и узбекском контекстах. Исследование фокусируется на том, как журналисты выражают значения, вежливость и культурные ценности через заголовки и тексты новостей. Используя примеры из BBC, CNN, Kun.uz и Daryo.uz, автор проводит качественный контрастивный анализ дискурса и выявляет, что английские СМИ используют более прямые и эксплицитные стратегии, тогда как узбекские — более вежливые, косвенные и коллективистские формы. Результаты объясняются культурными различиями между низко- и высококонтекстными типами коммуникации (Холл, 1976).

**Ключевые слова:** прагматика, медиадискурс, межкультурная коммуникация, английский язык, узбекский язык.

**Ingliz va o‘zbek kontekstlarida ommaviy axborot vositalari tilining  
madaniyatlararo pragmatik jihatlari**

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#### **Annotatsiya**

Ushbu maqolada ingliz va o‘zbek media tili nutqining madaniyatlararo pragmatik jihatlari o‘rganiladi. Tadqiqotda jurnalistlar tildan qanday qilib ma‘no, muloyimlik va madaniy qadriyatlarni ifodalash vositasi sifatida foydalanishlari tahlil qilinadi. BBC, CNN, Kun.uz va Daryo.uz misollarida diskurs tahlili o‘tkazilib, ingliz media tili bevosita va aniq ifodalardan foydalanishini, o‘zbek media tili esa bilvosita, odobli va





jamoaviy uslublarni afzal ko‘rishini ko‘rsatadi. Ushbu farqlar Hall (1976) tomonidan ilgari surilgan yuqori va past kontekstli madaniyatlar nazariyasi bilan izohlanadi.

**Kalit so‘zlar:** pragmatika, media nutqi, madaniyatlararo muloqot, ingliz tili, o‘zbek tili

### **Introduction**

In the 21st century, the role of media in shaping cultural perceptions and public opinion has become stronger than ever. Indeed, through language, media institutions are not just reporting facts; they are constructing meaning, attitude, and values. The language of media, then, is a site where culture and communication meet.

Pragmatics is the study of meaning in context and is an important vehicle for understanding differential interpretation of media messages across cultures. A headline that seems neutral in one culture may sound harsh or impolite in another. The same linguistic form can have different pragmatic meanings depending upon the cultural background of its audience.

English and Uzbek represent two different communicative cultures. English, particularly in British and American media, reflects low-context communication, where messages are expected to be clear and explicit. Uzbek, however, belongs to a high-context culture that values politeness, respect, and implicit meaning. This paper explores how these cultural orientations shape the pragmatic style of media discourse in both languages.

### **Theoretical Background**

The theoretical foundation of this study lies in cross-cultural pragmatics and media discourse analysis. According to Grice’s (1975) Cooperative Principle, speakers generally aim to be informative, truthful, relevant, and clear. However, in different cultural contexts, these maxims are interpreted differently. What is considered “clear” in English media might seem “too direct” in Uzbek.

Speech Act Theory, developed by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969), describes how utterances can function to inform, warn, or persuade and do much more than describe facts. In media language, headlines function as speech acts that both inform and influence public perception.

The theory of Politeness by Brown & Levinson (1987) provides devices on how journalists balance being informative with being socially appropriate. While English





media tend to apply negative politeness, avoiding imposition, in Uzbek media, one often finds the use of positive politeness, showing respect and closeness.

Other differences in cross-cultural communications can be further explained by Hall's 1976 distinction between high-context and low-context communication. Low-context cultures, such as the English-speaking culture, rely on direct verbal messages; whereas high-context cultures, such as Uzbek, draw heavily on shared social knowledge and implicit meaning.

Finally, media pragmatics research (Fairclough 1995; Wierzbicka 1991) stresses that media discourse both constructs and reflects social power, ideology, and identity.

### **Methods**

This research adopts a qualitative contrastive analysis approach. The data consisted of 20 online news texts (10 English and 10 Uzbek) selected from:

- **English sources:** BBC News, CNN (2023–2025)
- **Uzbek sources:** Kun.uz, Daryo.uz (2023–2025)

Each article was analyzed in terms of:

1. Speech act type (assertive, directive, expressive)
2. Directness vs. indirectness
3. Politeness strategies
4. Cultural values or social references

The analysis focused on headlines and short leads (first 2–3 sentences) because these parts carry the strongest pragmatic signals and cultural cues.

### **Results and Discussion**

#### **Directness and Objectivity in English Media**

English media discourse is characterized by factual, concise, and explicit style. Examples include:

- “Prime Minister resigns amid corruption scandal.” (BBC)
- “Protesters clash with police in London.” (CNN)

These headlines follow the informative principle: who, what, where, and why. There are no emotional or evaluative words, and the structure is agent-centered — assigning responsibility directly. This reflects the individualistic nature of English-speaking cultures, where accountability and transparency are valued.





### **Indirectness and Collectivism in Uzbek Media**

In contrast, Uzbek news headlines often avoid assigning direct responsibility or judgment:

- “Bosh vazir iste’foga chiqdi.” (Kun.uz)
- “Namanganda yo‘l-transport hodisasi oqibatida bir necha kishi halok bo‘ldi.”

(Daryo.uz)

These examples illustrate indirectness and collectivism. The focus is placed on events rather than on agents. This tendency reduces confrontation and aligns with social expectations of politeness and respect. Such discourse strategies mirror Uzbek cultural norms rooted in collectivism and hierarchy.

### **Cultural Implications**

Differences in the two media systems support Hall’s framework from 1976. English is representative of a low-context culture that is explicit, efficient, and self-oriented, whereas Uzbek represents a high-context culture, which is relational, implicit, and community-oriented.

The findings also support Wierzbicka's concept of cultural scripts (1991) in the sense that the linguistic choices made in the media follow social values that are shared and not purely grammatical ones.

### **Conclusion**

The comparative analysis of English and Uzbek media discourse demonstrates that the pragmatic strategy is deeply influenced by cultural norms. English media is more inclined towards clarity, directness, and factuality, while Uzbek media maintains politeness, respect, and collectivist harmony. Such differences are not linguistic but cultural in nature. Being aware of these differences enables translators, journalists, and educators to advance intercultural understanding. As an illustration, if headlines are directly translated from English into Uzbek, they may sound too blunt or even rude, while headlines translated from Uzbek into English may sound vague or too formal. Future studies can broaden this research into social media discourse, television news, or advertising languages, which often show even more complex pragmatic and cultural dynamics.





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