

**THE STUDY OF LINGUAPRAGMATICS IN ENGLISH, RUSSIAN
AND UZBEK LINGUISTICS**

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Annotation: Linguapragmatics examines how speakers turn linguistic forms into situated social action. This article traces the field across English-language, Russian-language and Uzbek-language scholarship, where shared concepts have developed under different names and research habits. The discussion follows a comparative historiographic method, reading representative work on speech acts, inference, discourse, communicative intention, politeness and speech behaviour. English-language pragmatics supplied much of the international metalanguage, especially through speech-act theory and accounts of implicature. Russian research reframed these ideas through the speaking subject, functional semantics, dialogue, strategy and verbal influence. Uzbek linguistics joined those lines of inquiry to text interpretation, national speech etiquette, social roles, address forms and non-verbal conduct. The comparison shows that linguapragmatics is not a fixed package exported from one centre. It changes when grammatical resources, scholarly traditions and local norms of interaction become part of the analysis. A balanced account therefore needs theory, data and comparison across communities and genres.

Keywords: linguapragmatics, pragmatics, speech act, discourse, communicative intention, English linguistics.

Introduction

A sentence does not arrive in communication with its work already completed. Its wording matters, yet wording alone does not tell us whether the speaker is warning, requesting, refusing, joking, correcting or quietly challenging another person. The same grammatical form may carry different force in a classroom, a family conversation and an official letter. Linguapragmatics begins at this point: it asks how linguistic choices acquire force when a speaker, an addressee, a purpose and a social setting come together.

The field is easy to describe too broadly. If every contextual fact is called pragmatic, the term loses analytical value. If pragmatics is reduced to a short list of speech acts and maxims, much of real interaction disappears. The



difficulty becomes sharper in cross-tradition work. English-language scholarship normally uses pragmatics as the broad label, while pragmalinguistics may denote the linguistic resources available for performing a communicative act. In Russian and Uzbek scholarship, *lingvisticheskaya pragmatika*, *lingvopragmatika* and *pragmalingvistika* often name the wider field. A comparison based on apparent word equivalents can therefore mistake a difference in terminology for a difference in theory, or overlook a genuine conceptual shift.

This study treats English, Russian and Uzbek not as sealed national systems but as languages of scholarship with distinct histories of citation, teaching and research. Many scholars work across two or three of these traditions, and Russian scholarship has had a strong mediating role in Central Asian linguistics. The labels are used for practical comparison, not to claim intellectual isolation. Three questions guide the discussion. How has each tradition defined the object of linguapragmatics? Which problems have received sustained attention? What becomes visible when their analytical habits are read together?

Scope and method

The article uses a comparative historiographic review rather than a bibliometric survey. Representative monographs, foundational essays and widely cited studies were selected because they established concepts, consolidated a regional research programme or connected pragmatics with a recurring object such as text, politeness, communicative strategy or speech behaviour. The time span runs from Morris's semiotic formulation in 1938 to recent discussion of discourse and corpus work in Russian linguistics. Uzbek sources include early research on speech etiquette and social behaviour, as well as the monographs that gave *pragmalingvistika* a stable place in university teaching and research.

The sources are read along five lines: the name given to the field, the preferred unit of analysis, the treatment of context, the type of evidence commonly used and the relation between general theory and language-specific description. This procedure cannot stand in for a complete history. It does, however, prevent a loose catalogue of scholars. The purpose is to identify intellectual movement: what entered a tradition, what was reorganised there and what kind of linguistic fact came to count as persuasive evidence.

Examples later in the article are constructed for comparison and are marked as illustrations, not corpus findings. They test the descriptive reach of the three traditions without pretending that one utterance represents an entire speech community. Social class, age, region, multilingual experience, institutional role and genre can all alter pragmatic choice. Any claim about a national communicative style must therefore remain a tendency open to empirical challenge, not a rule attached to every speaker.



Where the field begins

The modern history usually starts with semiotics. Morris (1938) distinguished syntax, semantics and pragmatics by relating signs respectively to other signs, to objects and to interpreters. The division was productive because it placed the user of the sign inside a scientific account of meaning. Yet the category of interpreter remained abstract. Later linguistic work had to explain what an actual speaker knows, intends and assumes, and how an addressee reaches an interpretation under real conditions.

Austin (1962) changed the scale of the problem. Utterances were no longer treated only as statements that represent a state of affairs. Saying could itself constitute an act: promising, naming, apologising or ordering. Searle (1969) systematised this insight through rules and conditions for illocutionary acts. Grice (1975) approached the gap between sentence meaning and speaker meaning from another direction. His account of conversational implicature showed how hearers infer more than the words conventionally encode. These theories supplied a common vocabulary, but they did not settle the boundaries of pragmatics. Levinson (1983) organised the field around deixis, implicature, presupposition, speech acts and conversational structure, while Leech (1983) explored the interface between pragmatic principles and linguistic form. Verschueren (1999) later treated pragmatics as a perspective on meaningful linguistic choice rather than a neatly bounded component.

That history matters for the word *linguapragmatics*. In Anglophone applied linguistics, Thomas (1983) distinguished *pragmalinguistic* knowledge from *sociopragmatic* judgement. The former concerns forms and strategies that can realise a request, apology or other act; the latter concerns the social evaluation of distance, power, rights and obligations. Russian and Uzbek uses of *pragmalingvistika* frequently cover both sides. Thus the same term can refer either to a subdomain of pragmatic competence or to an expansive science of language in use. A comparative account must keep this asymmetry visible from the start.

The English-language tradition

English-language pragmatics grew through a productive disagreement between philosophy, formal linguistics, discourse study and the ethnography of communication. Its early strength lay in carefully framed problems. What conditions make a promise valid? How does an interrogative become a request? Which inferences are cancellable? How do deictic expressions anchor an utterance to person, place and time? Such questions encouraged explicit categories and testable distinctions. They also made pragmatics portable: the analytical vocabulary could be applied to languages far beyond English.

Speech-act theory and implicature became especially influential because they explained two different kinds of action. A speaker can perform an act through conventional force, yet a hearer often recovers an intended meaning by



reasoning beyond the literal wording. The sentence *Can you reach the shelf?* may seek information about physical ability, but in a kitchen it can function as a request. The interpretation depends on shared knowledge of the immediate task, the relevance of the question and an expectation that speakers normally have a point. English-language research developed precise tests for such relations, though invented examples long remained more common than naturally recorded interaction.

Politeness research widened the field from inference to social relations. Brown and Levinson (1987) proposed a general account of face and strategic redress. Their model generated an enormous comparative literature, but it also drew criticism for making individual autonomy and particular forms of indirectness appear more universal than they are. Wierzbicka (2003) argued that communicative norms must be described through culture-sensitive meanings. Cross-cultural projects on requests and apologies likewise showed that a formally similar strategy may carry a different social value across communities (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989). Larina (2009) traced such differences through English and Russian politeness and communicative style. Ogiermann's (2009) work on requests in English, German, Polish and Russian gives a pointed example: indirectness cannot be ranked on one universal ladder of politeness.

Two features of the Anglophone tradition deserve emphasis. First, it maintains a strong semantics-pragmatics debate. Researchers repeatedly ask which part of an interpretation belongs to linguistic convention and which part is supplied by context. Second, it has developed rich experimental and corpus methods. Reaction-time experiments, discourse-completion tasks, conversation analysis and large digital corpora now coexist, although they do not produce the same kind of evidence. This methodological range is a strength when the limits of each method are stated. A questionnaire reveals what participants judge plausible; it does not reproduce the timing, repair and embodied conduct of an actual encounter.

The tradition's influence can also create a blind spot. English examples often serve as if they were theory-neutral. They are not. English has no productive second-person T/V contrast comparable to Russian *ty/vy* or Uzbek *sen/siz*, and it organises respect through other resources: titles, names, modal expressions, hedges, prosody and the design of a turn. A theory built from English can travel, but its categories should not predetermine what counts as a pragmatic contrast in another language.

The Russian-language tradition

Russian work on linguistic pragmatics took shape through translation, semiotics, functional grammar, lexical semantics and a long-standing interest in speech culture. The 1985 volume *Lingvisticheskaya pragmatika* made major Western texts available in Russian and opened with Arutyunova and

Paducheva's (1985) account of the field's sources, problems and categories. It did more than transmit terminology. It placed pragmatics in dialogue with Russian research on predication, reference, evaluation, modality and the organisation of utterance meaning.

Stepanov's (1981) search for pragmatics centred on the problem of the subject. This move is conceptually important. Context is not merely a container surrounding a sentence; it is structured through a speaking consciousness, a point of view and relations between participants. Russian scholarship consequently gave sustained attention to the image of the speaker encoded in language, the addressee, the observer, presupposed knowledge and the evaluative position from which an utterance is produced. Such concerns cross the boundary between lexical semantics and pragmatics rather than treating the two as competing territories.

The study of speech interaction gave the field a practical and social direction. Formanovskaya (2007) connected communication, speech etiquette and pragmatic organisation. Issers (2008) described communicative strategies and tactics as forms of planning and control in Russian speech. These works encouraged analysts to look beyond isolated acts to sequences: how a speaker pursues a goal, adjusts to resistance, protects a relationship or changes tactics. Norman (2009) presented linguistic pragmatics through Russian and other Slavic material, strengthening its status as a teachable domain grounded in language-specific facts.

Russian research often uses *vozdeistvie*, speech influence, as a central category. The term draws attention to effect, persuasion, manipulation and the selection of means for an intended response. This creates a different centre of gravity from a narrow study of speaker meaning. Political discourse, advertising, media language, courtroom interaction and interpersonal strategy become natural objects of pragmatics. The benefit is a clear connection between linguistic design and social consequence. The risk is that intention may be inferred too confidently from the completed text. A text can invite an effect without producing it, and recipients can resist, reinterpret or ignore the designed influence.

Recent Russian discussion also records a methodological shift. Kotorova (2019) maps competing views of pragmatics as an independent discipline, a branch of linguistics or a cross-disciplinary perspective. Feshchenko (2025) places language, discourse and corpus among the field's current vectors and asks how data-centred methods alter the older problem of the subject. The question is timely. Large corpora reveal patterns that introspection misses, but pragmatic meaning is often carried by local timing, shared history, gesture and participant uptake. Scale should extend analysis, not remove the human subject that made pragmatics necessary.

The Uzbek-language tradition



Uzbek linguapragmatics developed at the meeting point of several intellectual lines. General pragmatic theory reached Uzbek scholarship through English-language concepts, Russian translations and Soviet traditions of functional and text linguistics. At the same time, Uzbek researchers were working on speech etiquette, address, social roles, non-verbal conduct and the structure of the Uzbek text. The field therefore did not begin as a simple later copy of an established Western model. Its local questions were already pragmatic, even when the label *pragmalingvistika* was not yet dominant.

Research on *nutq odati* and *muloqot xulqi* gave early prominence to socially patterned communication. Iskandarova (1993) examined forms of Uzbek speech custom, while Mo'minov (2000) studied the social-linguistic characteristics of Uzbek communicative behaviour. These works made age, status, familiarity, kinship and setting part of linguistic analysis. They also treated non-verbal behaviour as relevant to interpretation. This is crucial in a community where respect can be distributed across pronoun choice, kinship address, formulaic expressions, posture, gaze, tone and the management of turns.

Safarov's *Pragmalingvistika* (2008) offered a broad theoretical synthesis in Uzbek. It connected communicative intention, discourse, speech acts, presupposition and implicature with the analysis of linguistic choice. Hakimov's *O'zbek pragmalingvistikasi asoslari* (2013) consolidated the field around the pragmatic interpretation of Uzbek texts and the relation between linguistic form, the creator of the text and the recipient. Together, these monographs helped establish Uzbek pragmalinguistics as more than an imported chapter in general linguistics. They provided terminology through which earlier work on text, speech culture and communicative behaviour could be re-read as parts of a coherent research area.

The Uzbek tradition's attention to text deserves separate notice. Pragmatic interpretation is often pursued through literary prose, publicistic writing, official documents, proverbs and dialogue represented in fiction. Such material is culturally dense and often preserves address forms, ellipsis, indirect evaluation and implied knowledge. Yet written examples cannot be assumed to reproduce spontaneous conversation. Literary dialogue is designed by an author; official discourse is constrained by institutional templates. Work on Uzbek interaction will become more persuasive when these sources are placed beside recordings of everyday conversation, classroom talk, service encounters and multilingual digital exchange.

Uzbek also brings grammatical and lexical resources that unsettle English-centred models. The *sen/siz* distinction can mark distance, respect, age, intimacy or a change in relationship. Kinship terms such as *aka*, *opa*, *amaki* and *xola* may function as address beyond biological kinship, creating respect or social closeness. Auxiliary constructions can soften a request by presenting the



action as a favour, and agglutinative morphology packs person, possibility, negation and interrogation into a compact form. These are not ornamental cultural details. They shape how force is built and how a hearer locates the relationship proposed by the utterance.

A further feature is the multilingual ecology in which Uzbek pragmatics operates. Uzbek speakers may shift among Uzbek, Russian and English in education, business and online communication. A borrowed phrase can keep its source-language wording while acquiring a local social value. Code choice itself may index expertise, solidarity, formality or institutional power. Research restricted to monolingual sentences will miss this layer. For contemporary Uzbek linguapragmatics, multilingual practice is not a peripheral topic; it is part of the ordinary context in which intentions are interpreted.

Reading the three traditions together

The three traditions share a core insight: linguistic meaning is underdetermined until it is connected with users and use. Their differences lie in where they place the analytic weight. English-language pragmatics has been especially strong in modelling inference and classifying acts. Russian-language work often foregrounds the speaking subject, strategy, evaluation and influence. Uzbek-language research has tied pragmatic meaning closely to text, speech custom, social role and culturally recognised conduct. These are tendencies within large bodies of work, not exclusive properties.

Terminology is the first point of divergence. In English applied linguistics, pragmalinguistic resources may be contrasted with sociopragmatic judgement. In Russian and Uzbek, pragmalingvistika commonly includes both. A researcher who translates the term without explaining its scope may build a false disagreement. The safer practice is to define the object directly: whether the study concerns forms that realise an act, social norms governing their use, inferential interpretation, discourse strategy or the entire relation between language and context.

The unit of analysis differs as well. An English-language article may start with an utterance and ask how its force or implicature is calculated. Russian analysis frequently expands toward the communicative move, tactic, strategy or discourse position. Uzbek studies often begin with a text, an etiquette formula, an address form or a feature of communicative behaviour. Each unit answers a different question. Problems arise when results are compared as though utterance, strategy, text and cultural practice were interchangeable. A mature comparative method should move across levels while keeping their evidence distinct.

The traditions can correct one another. Formal distinctions protect analysis from impressionistic cultural commentary. Russian attention to subjectivity and influence reminds us that language use is purposive and socially consequential. Uzbek work on respect, role and embodied behaviour



exposes how thin a purely verbal account can be. The resulting model of context is layered. It includes linguistic co-text, the immediate activity, participant relations, institutional constraints, culturally circulating expectations and the history built inside the conversation itself.

This layered account also clarifies the status of culture. Culture is not an invisible cause that automatically assigns one meaning to a form. It is a repertoire of expectations that participants may reproduce, negotiate or reject. A respectful form can be used sarcastically. A direct request can signal trust among colleagues rather than impoliteness. A switch from *siz* to *sen* can mark intimacy, condescension or conflict, depending on who initiates it and how the other person responds. Pragmatic analysis must therefore examine uptake: the next turn, the repair, the acceptance, the silence or the change in footing that reveals how an action was understood.

Three illustrative speech events

Requests show how related strategies are built from different grammatical materials. Consider three constructed forms: Could you send me the draft today?; Не могли бы вы прислать мне черновик сегодня?; and Bugun qoralamani menga yuborib bera olasizmi? All three package a request through a question about possibility rather than an imperative. Their pragmatic shapes are not identical. English *could* marks remoteness from direct assertion. Russian combines negation, conditional morphology and the respectful *vy* form. Uzbek combines the respectful second-person ending with an ability construction and *yuborib bermoq*, which presents the requested action as done for the beneficiary. A label such as conventional indirect request is useful, but it does not exhaust the relational work carried by each form.

Address provides a second test. English *you* does not grammatically distinguish a familiar from a respectful singular addressee. Russian *ty/vy* and Uzbek *sen/siz* do, yet the oppositions cannot be mapped mechanically. The marked choice depends on age, institutional role, intimacy, regional habit and the history of the relationship. Uzbek kinship vocatives may extend respect to non-relatives, while Russian name and patronymic combinations can perform institutional respect. English often distributes comparable work across titles, first-name choice, mitigation and turn design. The pragmatic function is therefore comparable, but its linguistic concentration differs.

Refusal reveals the limits of sentence-level comparison. No, I cannot; Нет, я не могу; and Yo'q, qila olmayman are semantically close. In interaction, refusals are commonly delayed, justified, softened or accompanied by an alternative. What counts as enough explanation is socially variable. A researcher who codes only the head act will miss hesitation, gratitude, apology, account and subsequent negotiation. Russian strategy analysis is well suited to the larger sequence; English conversation analysis supplies tools for turn-by-turn organisation; Uzbek work on *muloqot xulqi* directs attention to



respect, role and accompanying non-verbal conduct. Used together, the traditions yield a fuller account than any single coding scheme.

Limits and future work

The literature still contains three recurring weaknesses. The first is the use of invented sentences as proof of ordinary behaviour. Intuition can isolate a contrast, but it cannot show frequency or participant interpretation. The second is the treatment of national style as a stable personality. Labels such as direct, collectivist or highly polite compress internal difference and can turn a research tendency into a stereotype. The third is dependence on translated terminology without checking conceptual scope. The word equivalent may belong to a different map of the field.

A stronger research programme would build comparable corpora of spoken and digital interaction in English, Russian and Uzbek. The data should include audio or video where possible, because timing, gaze, gesture and overlap can change the action performed by a turn. Metadata should be detailed enough to examine age, gender, region, institutional status and multilingual repertoire without reducing speakers to those categories. Comparable does not mean identical: a family dinner, a university consultation and a Telegram exchange involve different activities, even when each contains a request.

Coding should combine form, action and uptake. Morphology, syntax, lexical choice and prosody show how a turn is designed. Sequential position shows what the turn is doing at that moment. The addressee's response tests the analyst's interpretation. Interviews or stimulated recall can then reveal participants' own accounts, though such accounts are later reflections rather than transparent access to intention. Mixed evidence is slower to collect, but it limits the temptation to explain every difference through culture alone.

Translation and language teaching offer immediate applications. Learners often produce a grammatically correct sentence whose social calibration is wrong for the setting. The problem may lie in the selected form, the assessment of distance and obligation, or the transfer of a familiar interactional routine. Teaching can separate these layers. Students can compare several plausible requests, trace how each positions the addressee and observe actual responses. Translators likewise need to preserve the relationship enacted by a line, not only its propositional content.

Digital communication raises a final set of questions. Short messages weaken some contextual cues while introducing others: response delay, emoji, punctuation, voice notes, forwarded text and visible group membership. Uzbek-Russian-English code-switching is particularly revealing here. Corpus tools can locate recurring patterns, but their categories should be developed with speakers and checked against close interactional analysis. Otherwise, the new scale of data will reproduce old assumptions more efficiently.

What the comparison changes



The history of linguapragmatics across English, Russian and Uzbek scholarship is a history of selective adoption and local reworking. English-language theories offered durable accounts of action, inference and politeness. Russian linguistics placed these questions beside subjectivity, functional meaning, strategy and influence. Uzbek linguistics connected them with text, speech custom, respect, social role and multilingual communicative life. None of these lines is complete on its own.

The comparison changes the question from which tradition owns the correct definition to what each definition enables a researcher to see. An utterance-centred model can explain how indirect force is inferred. A strategy-centred model can follow a goal across several moves. A speech-behaviour model can relate those moves to role, etiquette and embodied conduct. The levels should be linked rather than collapsed.

Linguapragmatics is most useful when it keeps language and lived interaction in the same frame. Its evidence must show the form chosen, the situation in which it was chosen and the response through which its force became publicly recognisable. Such work will produce a less symmetrical comparison, but a more truthful one. English, Russian and Uzbek do not offer three versions of a single ready-made theory. They offer three routes into the practical question at the centre of the field: how people use linguistic resources to act, relate and be understood.

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