PRAGMATIC FEATURES OF FAMILY UPBRINGING TERMS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK DISCOURSE

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Abstract: The article analyses the pragmatic features of family upbringing terms in English and Uzbek discourse. Unlike purely technical terms, these units retain connotative, evaluative and culture-specific meanings and perform communicative functions in pedagogical, media, legal and everyday discourse. The study applies speech act theory, politeness theory and the concept of cultural scripts to terms and term-based utterances collected from parenting media, pedagogical literature, official documents and fiction. Five pragmatic parameters are compared: evaluative connotation, illocutionary function, politeness and hierarchy, euphemistic use, and discourse-specific marking. The results show that English terms tend towards neutral, non-judgemental and child-centred framing, while Uzbek terms carry stronger moral evaluation and reflect hierarchical, collective responsibility for upbringing. These differences must be considered in translation and intercultural communication.
Keywords: pragmatics, family upbringing, term, connotation, speech act, politeness, euphemism, cultural script, English, Uzbek.

Annotatsiya. Maqolada ingliz va o'zbek tillarida oila tarbiyasiga oid terminlarning pragmatik xususiyatlari nutq aktlari, xushmuomalalik nazariyasi va madaniy skriptlar asosida tahlil qilingan. Ingliz tilida neytral va bolaga yo'naltirilgan ifoda, o'zbek tilida esa axloqiy baho va ierarxik, jamoaviy mas'uliyat ustunligi aniqlangan.

Introduction

A term is traditionally defined as a word with a precise, context-independent meaning. However, in the social sciences terms circulate far beyond specialised texts. Family upbringing terms are used by parents, teachers, journalists, lawyers and policy makers, and in each type of discourse they acquire additional pragmatic meanings: evaluation, emotional colouring, implied obligation or social positioning.

Pragmatics studies meaning in use, including the speaker's intention, the relationship between participants and the cultural context (Leech, 1983; Levinson, 1983). Speech act theory shows that utterances perform actions such as advising, warning or praising (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969). Politeness theory explains how speakers manage face and social distance (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The theory of cultural scripts shows that key words encode culture-specific norms of behaviour (Wierzbicka, 1997).

These approaches have rarely been applied to family upbringing terminology in English and Uzbek. Yet the pragmatic load of terms such as *tarbiyasiz*, *nasihat*, *permissive parenting* or *challenging behaviour* directly affects how a message is received by a parent, a child or a reader of a translated text.

The **aim** of the article is to identify and compare the pragmatic features of family upbringing terms in English and Uzbek discourse. The research questions are: (1) What evaluative connotations do the

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terms carry? (2) Which speech acts are typically realised with them? (3) How do politeness, hierarchy and euphemism shape their use?

2. Materials and Methods

The material includes terms and term-based utterances collected from four types of discourse: (a) pedagogical literature and textbooks; (b) parenting media (English-language parenting websites and magazines; Uzbek newspapers, television programmes and websites on family issues); (c) official documents (laws, decrees, the Family Code); (d) fiction and folklore, including proverbs. English usage was additionally checked in COCA and BNC.

The analysis combined contextual analysis, speech act analysis, componential analysis of connotative semes, and the contrastive method. Each term was described by five parameters: (1) evaluative connotation (positive, negative, neutral); (2) typical illocutionary force; (3) politeness and hierarchy marking; (4) euphemistic or dysphemistic use; (5) discourse in which the term is marked.

3. Results

3.1. Evaluative connotation

English professional discourse shows a clear tendency to neutralise evaluation. Child behaviour is described by descriptive terms (*challenging behaviour, behavioural difficulties, special needs*), and parenting styles are presented as types rather than faults. Even negative styles are labelled descriptively (*permissive, uninvolved parenting*).

Uzbek terms in the same domain are strongly evaluative. *Tarbiyasiz, betarbiya, odobsiz, erka, tarbiyasi og'ir bola* express explicit social disapproval, while *tarbiyali, odobli, andishali, oqil* express approval. The evaluation often extends from the child to the family: *tarbiyasiz bola* implies a failure of the parents and even of the household (*oilasidan ko'rgani shu*).

3.2. Illocutionary functions

The Uzbek term *nasihat* names a speech act of authoritative advice and moral instruction. It is typically performed by an older person and is expected to be received respectfully. Its closest English equivalents *advice* and *lecture* differ pragmatically: *advice* implies optionality, and *lecture* has a negative connotation of tedious moralising (*Don't lecture me*).

English parenting discourse prefers directive speech acts softened as suggestions or choices (*Let's tidy up*, *Would you like to…?*), and terms such as *positive discipline, gentle parenting, validate feelings* name these strategies. In Uzbek, directives from parents are more direct, and their legitimacy is grounded in age and status (*Kattalarning gapiga kir*). Praise and blessing (*duo*, *oq yo'l*) function as speech acts of approval with a strong moral force.

3.3. Politeness and hierarchy

Uzbek family upbringing discourse is shaped by vertical relations. Respect for elders (*kattalarga hurmat*), the plural address *siz* towards parents, and affectionate forms (*dadajon, oyijon*) are themselves treated as outcomes of good upbringing. The term *andisha* names a culture-specific norm of restraint and consideration for others' face.

In English, the dominant model is horizontal. Terms such as *child-centred approach, mutual respect, autonomy, the child's voice* reflect an orientation to the child's negative face, i.e. freedom from imposition (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Table 1 summarises the contrast.

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Parameter	English	Uzbek
Evaluation	mostly neutral, descriptive	explicitly moral, approving or condemning
Typical speech acts	suggestion, choice, encouragement	nasihat (authoritative advice), directive, blessing
Social orientation	horizontal; child's autonomy	vertical; respect for elders
Responsibility	parent as individual	family, kin, mahalla
Euphemism	frequent (challenging behaviour, special needs)	less frequent; mitigation through affectionate forms

3.4. Euphemism

English professional discourse uses many euphemistic terms to avoid stigmatising the child or the family: *challenging behaviour* instead of 'naughty, bad behaviour', *looked-after children* instead of 'children in care', *family breakdown*. In Uzbek official discourse, partial euphemisms also appear (*nosog'lom muhitdagi oila, ijtimoiy himoyaga muhtoj oila*), but everyday discourse keeps direct evaluative terms. Mitigation in Uzbek is achieved less by terms than by diminutive and affectionate forms and by indirect proverbs (*Qush uyasida ko'rganini qiladi*).

3.5. Discourse-specific marking

The same term may change its pragmatic value across discourses. *Tarbiya* in official discourse is ideologically marked (*ma'naviy-axloqiy tarbiya, milliy g'oya*), in everyday discourse it is evaluative (*tarbiyasini ko'r*), and in pedagogical discourse it is neutral. Similarly, *discipline* in English legal and school discourse is neutral, while in public debate it can imply punishment and is often replaced by *positive behaviour support*.

4. Discussion

The results show that the pragmatic profile of family upbringing terms is determined by cultural scripts (Wierzbicka, 1997). English terms encode the script of individual autonomy and non-judgemental communication. Uzbek terms encode the script of collective responsibility, respect for hierarchy and public moral evaluation. This agrees with the general distinction between individualist and collectivist cultures (Hofstede, 2001) and with earlier observations on the cultural load of family education terms in the two languages.

These differences have direct consequences for translation. Rendering *tarbiyasiz* as *ill-mannered* preserves the denotation but loses the implied judgement of the family. Translating *permissive parenting* as *erkin tarbiya* may lose the critical evaluation present in Baumrind's (1966) typology, while *erkalatuvchi tarbiya* adds a stronger negative tone than the English term. Translators should therefore compensate pragmatic meaning through context, explanation or a functional analogue (Baker, 2018).

The study is qualitative. Future research could use questionnaires to measure how native speakers evaluate these terms and parallel corpora to compare their contexts statistically.

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Conclusion

Family upbringing terms in English and Uzbek carry pragmatic meanings beyond their dictionary definitions.

English terms tend towards neutral, descriptive and euphemistic framing; Uzbek terms carry explicit moral evaluation that often extends to the family.

Uzbek *nasihat* and *duo* represent culture-specific speech acts grounded in age and status; English discourse favours suggestion and choice.

Uzbek usage reflects vertical, collective responsibility; English usage reflects horizontal relations and the child's autonomy.

Pragmatic asymmetry must be addressed in translation, bilingual lexicography and the teaching of intercultural communication.

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