



PRAGMALINGUISTIC FEATURES IN TOURISM TEXTS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF UZBEK AND ENGLISH

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Abstract: This study investigates the pragmalinguistic features employed in tourism promotional texts in Uzbek and English languages. Using a corpus of tourism materials from both languages, we analyze how linguistic devices function pragmatically to attract tourists and promote destinations. Findings reveal significant differences in the deployment of deixis, speech acts, politeness strategies, and cultural references between Uzbek and English tourism texts. These differences reflect not only linguistic variations but also cultural values and communication norms. The results provide insights for tourism text creators, translators, and marketers seeking to develop effective cross-cultural communication strategies in tourism promotion.

Key words: pragmalinguistics, tourism discourse, Uzbek language, English language, cross-cultural communication.

Аннотация: Данное исследование посвящено прагмалингвистическим особенностям, используемым в туристических рекламных текстах на узбекском и английском языках. Используя корпус туристических материалов на обоих языках, мы анализируем, как лингвистические средства функционируют прагматически для привлечения туристов и продвижения направлений. Результаты показывают значительные различия в использовании дейксиса, речевых актов, стратегий вежливости и культурных отсылок между узбекскими и английскими туристическими текстами. Эти различия отражают не только лингвистические вариации, но и культурные ценности и нормы общения. Результаты предоставляют полезные сведения для создателей туристических текстов, переводчиков и маркетологов, стремящихся разработать эффективные стратегии межкультурной коммуникации в области туристического продвижения.

Ключевые слова: прагмалингвистика, туристический дискурс, узбекский язык, английский язык, межкультурная коммуникация.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu tadqiqot o'zbek va ingliz tillaridagi turizm targ'ibot matnlarida qo'llaniladigan pragmalingvistik xususiyatlarni o'rganadi. Ikkala til uchun turizm materiallari korpusidan foydalanib, biz lingvistik vositalarning pragmatik jihatdan qanday ishlashini, sayyohlarni jalb qilish va manzillarni targ'ib qilishda qanday rol o'ynashini tahlil qilamiz. Natijalar o'zbek va ingliz turizm matnlari o'rtasida deiksis, nutq aktlari, muloyimlik strategiyalari va madaniy havolalar foydalanishida sezilarli farqlarni ko'rsatadi. Ushbu farqlar nafaqat lingvistik farqlarni, balki madaniy qadriyatlar va muloqot me'yorlarini ham aks ettiradi. Natijalar turizm matnlarini yaratish, tarjimonlar va marketing mutaxassislari uchun samarali xalqaro muloqot strategiyalarini ishlab chiqishga yordam beradi.

Kalit so'zlar: pragmalingvistika, turizm diskursi, o'zbek tili, ingliz tili, xalqaro muloqot.

Introduction

Tourism discourse represents a specialized form of communication designed to accomplish

multiple pragmatic goals: informing potential visitors, persuading them to visit destinations, and creating positive impressions of locations and experiences. The linguistic choices made in tourism texts are not arbitrary but rather strategically deployed to achieve these communicative functions (Dann, 1996).

The pragmalinguistic features of tourism texts - including deixis, speech acts, implicature, presupposition, and politeness strategies - play a crucial role in how destinations are marketed across different linguistic and cultural contexts. While considerable research has examined tourism discourse in Western languages (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010; Cappelli, 2013), limited attention has been paid to comparative analysis between Western and Central Asian languages.

This research gap is particularly significant given Uzbekistan's growing tourism industry and increasing need for effective multilingual tourism communication. As Uzbekistan continues to develop its tourism sector and promote its historical Silk Road cities, understanding the pragmalinguistic differences between Uzbek and English tourism texts becomes increasingly important for effective cross-cultural marketing.

This study addresses this gap by investigating how pragmalinguistic features function in tourism texts in Uzbek and English. The research questions guiding this study are:

1. What pragmalinguistic features characterize tourism texts in Uzbek and English?
2. How do these features differ between the two languages?
3. What cultural and communicative factors influence these differences?
4. What implications do these differences have for tourism text creation and translation?

Methods

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods approach combining corpus analysis and qualitative discourse analysis. The research was conducted in three phases:

1. Corpus collection and preparation
2. Quantitative analysis of pragmalinguistic features
3. Qualitative discourse analysis of selected texts

Corpus Collection

The corpus comprised 100 tourism texts (50 in Uzbek, 50 in English) collected from the following sources:

- Official tourism websites of Uzbekistan and English-speaking countries
- Tourism brochures and guidebooks
- Hotel and tour operator promotional materials
- Travel blogs and magazine articles

Selection criteria included:

- Texts published between 2018-2023
- Promotional function (rather than purely informational)
- Minimum length of 200 words
- Variety of tourism sub-genres (destination descriptions, activity promotions, accommodation advertisements)

Analytical Framework

The analysis focused on four categories of pragmalinguistic features:

1. Deixis: Personal, spatial, and temporal references that orient the reader
2. Speech Acts: Directives, commissives, representatives, expressives, and declarations
3. Politeness Strategies: Positive and negative politeness, directness/indirectness
4. Cultural References: Explicit and implicit references to cultural values and norms

Analytical Procedure

1. Texts were coded using a coding scheme developed based on previous research in tourism pragmatics
2. Two researchers independently coded a sample of 20% of the corpus to establish intercoder reliability (Cohen's kappa = 0.87)

3. Quantitative analysis was conducted using corpus analysis software to identify frequencies and patterns
4. Qualitative discourse analysis was applied to examine contextual factors and implicit meanings

Results

Deixis

The analysis revealed significant differences in the use of deictic expressions between Uzbek and English tourism texts, as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Frequency of Deictic Expressions per 1000 words

Type of Deixis	Uzbek	English	Chi-square (p-value)
Personal	32.7	25.3	8.76 (p < 0.01)
Spatial	28.4	19.8	7.92 (p < 0.01)
Temporal	16.3	22.5	6.34 (p < 0.05)

Uzbek texts showed a significantly higher frequency of personal deixis, particularly first-person plural pronouns (we/us/our), which occurred 2.4 times more frequently than in English texts. This reflects a tendency toward collective orientation in Uzbek tourism discourse. For example: Uzbek: “Bizning mehmonxonamiz sizga milliy an’analарimizni his qilish imkonini beradi.”

(English translation: “Our hotel allows you to experience our national traditions.”)

In contrast, English texts employed a higher frequency of second-person deixis, directly addressing the reader: English: “You’ll discover hidden gems as you wander through the ancient streets.”

Spatial deixis also differed significantly, with Uzbek texts using more proximal markers (“hhere” “this place”) compared to English texts, which favored distal markers creating a sense of exotic distance.

Speech Acts

Both languages employed a variety of speech acts, but with different distributions and realizations (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Distribution of Speech Acts in Uzbek and English Tourism Texts

English texts contained a higher percentage of directive speech acts (28.4% vs. 17.6% in Uzbek), primarily realized through imperative structures urging direct action: English: “Visit the ancient fortress at sunset for breathtaking views.” Uzbek texts, however, showed a preference for representative speech acts (42.3% vs. 31.7% in English), often describing destinations through assertions about their qualities and historical significance:

Uzbek: “Samarqand shahri ko’p asrlіk madaniyat va tarixga ega.”

(English translation: “Samarkand city has many centuries of culture and history.”)

Commissive speech acts were more prevalent in Uzbek (24.5%) than English (18.2%) texts, with Uzbek texts making more explicit promises about hospitality and emotional experiences:

Uzbek: “Sizni samimiy mehmon-do’stlik bilan kutib olamiz.”

(English translation: “We will welcome you with sincere hospitality.”)

Politeness Strategies

Significant differences emerged in the realization of politeness strategies (Table 2).

Table 2. Politeness Strategies in Tourism Texts

Politeness Strategy	Uzbek (%)	English (%)
Positive politeness	68.4	42.6
Negative politeness	31.6	57.4
Direct expressions	37.2	58.3
Indirect expressions	62.8	41.7

Uzbek tourism texts employed significantly more positive politeness strategies, emphasizing relationship-building and shared cultural values:

Uzbek: “Aziz mehmonlar, sizlarni qadimiy diyorimizga taklif etamiz.”

(English translation: “Dear guests, we invite you to our ancient land.”)

English texts, meanwhile, showed a preference for negative politeness strategies that emphasized freedom and options:

English: “Should you wish to explore further, optional excursions are available.”

The difference in directness was also noteworthy, with English texts employing more direct suggestions and imperatives, while Uzbek texts favored more indirect expressions of invitation and possibility.

Cultural References

Cultural references were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively, revealing distinct patterns in how cultural values were communicated (Table 3).

Table 3. Types of Cultural References (occurrences per 10,000 words)

Type of Reference	Uzbek	English
Historical	68.3	52.7
Hospitality	43.5	14.2
Culinary	37.8	25.6
Religious	22.4	8.3
Arts/Crafts	28.5	19.7

Uzbek texts contained significantly more references to hospitality traditions and values:

Uzbek: “Mehmon – aziz, mehmon keldi – rizq keldi degan ajdodlarimiz.”

(English translation: “Our ancestors said: the guest is sacred, with the guest comes prosperity.”)

English texts, however, placed greater emphasis on individual experiences and sensory enjoyment:

English: “Feel the sun on your face as you sip local wine and gaze across the ancient cityscape.”

Discussion

Cultural Foundations of Pragmalinguistic Differences

The differences in pragmalinguistic features between Uzbek and English tourism texts reflect deeper cultural orientations. The higher frequency of collective pronouns and positive politeness strategies in Uzbek texts aligns with the collectivist orientation of Uzbek culture (Hofstede, 2001), which emphasizes group harmony and relationships. The emphasis on hospitality in Uzbek texts reflects the central cultural value of “mehmon-do'stlik” (hospitality), which forms a cornerstone of Uzbek identity.

In contrast, the greater use of second-person address and negative politeness strategies in English texts reflects the more individualistic orientation of English-speaking cultures, which prioritize autonomy and personal choice. The difference in directness also aligns with Hall’s (1976) distinction between high-context and low-context cultures, with Uzbek representing a higher-context communication style that relies more on implicit meaning and contextual understanding.

Implications for Tourism Communication

These findings have several implications for tourism text creation and translation:

1. Translation Challenges: Direct translation of tourism texts between Uzbek and English may fail to transfer the pragmatic force intended in the original. Translators need to consider pragmatic equivalence, not just semantic equivalence.
2. Cultural Adaptation: Effective tourism communication requires adaptation to the expected pragmalinguistic patterns of the target language. For example, Uzbek texts translated for English-speaking audiences may benefit from increased directness and emphasis on individual experience.
3. Marketing Strategy: The different emphasis on cultural values suggests that marketing strategies should be tailored to emphasize collective experience and hospitality for Uzbek audiences, while highlighting individual choice and sensory experience for English-speaking audiences.
4. Digital Communication: As Uzbekistan develops its online tourism presence, understanding these pragmalinguistic differences becomes crucial for effective website localization and social media engagement.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations that could be addressed in future research:

1. The corpus was limited to written texts and did not include multimodal or spoken tourism discourse.
2. The analysis focused on general patterns and did not account for sub-genres within tourism texts (e.g., adventure tourism vs. cultural tourism).
3. The study did not examine the effectiveness of different pragmalinguistic strategies in influencing tourist behavior.

Future research could explore:

- The impact of pragmalinguistic features on tourist perception and decision-making
- How digital platforms and social media affect pragmalinguistic choices in tourism discourse
- Comparative analyses including other Central Asian and European languages

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that tourism texts in Uzbek and English employ distinct pragmalinguistic strategies that reflect broader cultural and communicative patterns. While Uzbek tourism texts emphasize collectivity, hospitality, and indirect communication, English texts prioritize individual experience, autonomy, and directness. These differences have important implications for tourism marketing, translation, and cross-cultural communication.

As Uzbekistan continues to develop its tourism industry and engage with international visitors, understanding these pragmalinguistic differences becomes increasingly important. Effective tourism communication requires not just linguistic translation but pragmatic adaptation that accounts for the distinct communicative expectations of different cultural audiences.

By recognizing and strategically employing these pragmalinguistic features, tourism text creators can develop more effective cross-cultural communication strategies that resonate with both domestic and international audiences.

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