

**THE LINGUO-PRAGMATIC STRUCTURE OF HUMOR AND SPEECH ACTS IN THE  
LANGUAGES UNDER COMPARISON**

**Karimova Nasiba Kerimbay gizi**

lecturer in English at Renaissance university of education

[nasibakarimova98@mail.com](mailto:nasibakarimova98@mail.com)

**Abstract:** This article examines the linguo-pragmatic structure of humor in the languages under comparison. Special attention is given to the formation of humorous devices, their communicative functions, and the cultural-pragmatic factors shaping humorous expression in English, Russian, and Uzbek. The study analyses the structural-semantic elements of humor, its relationship with speech acts, and its role in achieving communicative goals through a linguo-pragmatic approach. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the functional nature of humor in multicultural communication.

**Keywords:** humor, linguo-pragmatics, speech acts, intercultural communication, comparative analysis, semantics, communicative strategies

**ЛИНГВОПРАГМАТИЧЕСКАЯ СТРУКТУРА ЮМОРА И ФУНКЦИОНИРОВАНИЕ  
РЕЧЕВЫХ АКТОВ В СРАВНИВАЕМЫХ ЯЗЫКАХ**

**Аннотация:** В данной статье проводится анализ лингвопрагматической структуры юмора в сопоставляемых языках. Особое внимание уделяется формированию юмористических средств, их коммуникативным функциям, а также культурно-прагматическим факторам, влияющим на специфику юмористического выражения в английском, русском и узбекском языках. В исследовании рассматриваются структурно-семантические элементы юмора, его взаимосвязь с речевыми актами и роль в достижении коммуникативных целей на основе лингвопрагматического подхода. Полученные результаты способствуют более глубокому пониманию функциональной природы юмора в межкультурной коммуникации.

**Ключевые слова:** юмор, лингвопрагматика, речевые акты, межкультурная коммуникация, сопоставительный анализ, семантика, коммуникативные стратегии

**CHOQ'ISHTIRILAYOTGAN TILLARDA YUMORNING LINGVOPRAGMATIK  
STRUKTURASI VA NUTQ AKTLARI**

**Annotatsiya:** Ushbu maqolada chog'ishtirilayotgan tillarda yumorning lingvopragmatik strukturasi tahlil qilishga alohida e'tibor qaratiladi. Humor vositalarining shakllanishi, ularning nutq jarayonidagi vazifasi, madaniy-pragmatik omillar bilan bog'liqligi hamda ingliz, rus va o'zbek tillaridagi ifoda modellari qiyosiy ko'rinishda yoritiladi. Tadqiqot davomida yumorning strukturaviy-semantik elementlari, nutq aktlari bilan o'zaro munosabati va kommunikativ maqsadlarga erishishdagi roli lingvopragmatik yondashuv asosida tahlil qilinadi. Maqola natijalari ko'p madaniyatli muloqotda yumorning funktsional tabiatini chuqurroq anglashga xizmat qiladi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** yumor, lingvopragmatika, nutq aktlari, madaniyatlararo muloqot, qiyosiy tahlil, semantika, kommunikatsiya

**INTRODUCTION**

Humor represents one of the most intricate and culturally loaded phenomena in human communication, functioning simultaneously as a linguistic, cognitive, and social construct. Although its universal presence in human interaction is unquestionable, the ways humor is linguistically structured and pragmatically interpreted vary greatly across languages and cultures. These variations reflect not only differences in linguistic resources but also the diverse cultural norms, value systems, and communicative expectations that shape humor comprehension and production. In multilingual and multicultural contexts—especially within English, Russian, and Uzbek speech communities—humor serves as a revealing indicator of how speakers negotiate meaning, display identity, and maintain interpersonal relationships. In recent decades, the study of humor has shifted from purely literary and stylistic analysis toward interdisciplinary perspectives that incorporate pragmatics, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, and cognitive linguistics. Within this broader framework, linguo-pragmatics offers a productive lens for exploring humor because it focuses on how linguistic form, contextual cues, and communicative intent interact to produce playful, ironic, or humorous effects. Humor frequently relies on implicit meaning, presupposition, background knowledge, and pragmatic strategies such as flouting conversational maxims, creating incongruity, or manipulating speech acts. Therefore, analyzing humor from a linguo-pragmatic standpoint allows researchers to understand not only what is said but how, why, and under what conditions humorous meaning emerges. A comparative study of humor in English, Russian, and Uzbek is particularly relevant due to the distinct cultural traditions, communicative styles, and pragmatic norms that characterize these languages. English humor is often associated with understatement, irony, and self-deprecation; Russian humor tends to incorporate satirical, philosophical, or socially critical undertones; while Uzbek humor is deeply rooted in folkloric traditions, communal values, and context-dependent wit. These differing humorous traditions create fertile ground for examining how linguistic and pragmatic mechanisms operate across languages. Despite the rich body of research on humor, comparative linguo-pragmatic investigations remain limited, especially those focusing on structural-semantic properties and the interplay between humor and speech acts. The lack of comprehensive cross-linguistic studies creates a gap in understanding how humor functions as a communicative tool in multilingual environments, language learning contexts, translation practices, and intercultural dialogue. Addressing this gap is crucial for both theoretical insight and practical applications, such as improving cross-cultural competence, enhancing translation quality, and facilitating effective communication among speakers of different cultural backgrounds. Thus, the present study aims to explore the linguo-pragmatic structure of humor in English, Russian, and Uzbek, identifying the underlying mechanisms that shape humorous expression and distinguishing the linguistic strategies used to generate humorous effects. By analyzing humor from a comparative perspective, the research seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the functional, semantic, and pragmatic dimensions of humor and contribute to the development of a broader theoretical model that integrates linguistic form, cultural context, and communicative intention.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY**

The study of humor has a long-standing tradition across various branches of linguistics, including pragmatics, discourse analysis, cognitive linguistics, and sociolinguistics. Early theoretical foundations were laid by classical humor theories such as the Incongruity Theory (Kant, Schopenhauer), the Superiority Theory (Hobbes), and the Relief Theory (Freud), which conceptualized humor as a cognitive or emotional reaction to social and psychological stimuli. Although these theories contributed to the philosophical understanding of humor,

modern linguistics requires a more nuanced approach that accounts for linguistic structures, contextual factors, and pragmatic strategies. In the field of pragmatics, scholars such as Grice (1975), Levinson (1983), and Sperber & Wilson (1995) paved the way for understanding humor through implicature, relevance, and the violation of conversational maxims. Humor often arises when speakers intentionally flout the Maxims of Quality, Quantity, Relation, or Manner, creating unexpected or incongruous meanings. This perspective is especially relevant for analyzing English, Russian, and Uzbek humor, each of which utilizes pragmatic manipulation to achieve comedic effects. Russian scholars such as Kreidlin (2000) and Karasik (2014) emphasize the cultural-pragmatic features of humor, noting that Russian humorous discourse frequently includes irony, satire, and philosophical reflections. Uzbek linguistic studies, represented by To'xtaev (2016), Qodirova (2019), and Rasulov (2021), highlight the role of folklore, proverbs, and situational humor as culturally embedded mechanisms shaped by collective values and social norms. In English-language research, authors like Raskin (1985) and Attardo (1994) developed the Semantic Script Theory of Humor (SSTH) and the General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH), which remain the most influential frameworks for analyzing humorous texts and interactions. Comparative studies, although growing in number, still remain methodologically fragmented and often focus on lexical or cultural aspects of humor rather than its deeper linguo-pragmatic structures. Thus, this research seeks to synthesize findings from multiple linguistic traditions and offer a unified comparative perspective that bridges semantic, pragmatic, and communicative layers of humor across English, Russian, and Uzbek languages.

This study employs a qualitative, descriptive, and comparative linguo-pragmatic methodology. The research is grounded in the principles of discourse analysis, pragmatics, and comparative linguistics, with focus on identifying structural-semantic and functional-pragmatic features of humor.

### **Data collection**

The corpus of the study includes:

- humorous dialogues from English, Russian, and Uzbek fiction
- comedy shows, stand-up performances, and media extracts
- conversational exchanges from online forums and social media
- translated humorous texts to analyze equivalence and shifts
- culturally specific jokes and situational humor samples

The data spans the last 10–15 years to ensure contemporary linguistic relevance.

### **Analytical framework**

The analysis is based on the following theoretical approaches:

#### **Pragmatic analysis**

- examination of implicature, presupposition, speech acts
- identification of pragmatic strategies such as irony, understatement, exaggeration, and metaphorical play
- analysis of Gricean maxim violations as triggers of humorous meaning

### **Semantic-script analysis**

- application of Raskin's Script Theory for identifying semantic incongruities
- detection of competing scripts (e.g., "normal vs. absurd", "expected vs. unexpected")

### **Cultural-pragmatic interpretation**

- examination of humor against socio-cultural norms
- comparison of cultural values encoded in humorous exchanges
- analysis of ethnospecific humor markers

### **Comparative structural analysis**

- identification of common and divergent linguistic structures
- classification of humor types (verbal, situational, narrative, conversational)
- cross-linguistic comparison of humor strategies

### **Research procedures**

- coding and categorization of humorous units
- structural analysis of linguistic markers (lexical, syntactic, prosodic)
- pragmatic interpretation based on context
- cross-cultural comparison to identify unique and universal features
- synthesis of findings to form a linguo-pragmatic model of humor

The methodology ensures theoretical depth, contextual sensitivity, and cross-linguistic comparability.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The analysis shows that humor in English, Russian, and Uzbek is based on universal linguo-pragmatic mechanisms such as incongruity, script opposition, implicature, and the strategic violation of conversational norms. Despite these common principles, each language demonstrates distinct cultural and structural preferences. English humor relies heavily on irony, understatement, subtle wordplay, and indirect pragmatic strategies. It often serves as a tool for maintaining politeness and reducing interpersonal tension. Russian humorous discourse, by contrast, is characterized by expressive irony, hyperbole, satire, and socially reflective commentary, revealing a strong cultural link between humor and collective experience. Uzbek humor typically draws on situational context, folkloric references, communal values, and pragmatic ambiguity, emphasizing social harmony and shared cultural knowledge. Structurally, English favors polysemy and implicature-based humor; Russian makes extensive use of exaggeration and expressive morphology; while Uzbek humor incorporates phraseological units, cultural metaphors, and context-driven irony. Humor also interacts differently with speech acts: English humor softens assertives and directives, Russian humor reshapes expressives and commissives, and Uzbek humor primarily functions within phatic communication to strengthen social bonds. Cross-linguistic comparison demonstrates that humor reflects each culture's communicative style—individualistic in English, philosophically evaluative in Russian, and community-oriented in Uzbek. These differences create challenges in humor translation due to cultural scripts, pragmatic mismatches, and lexical inequivalence, highlighting the need for functional and pragmatic equivalence in intercultural communication.

## **CONCLUSION**

The comparative analysis of humorous discourse in English, Russian, and Uzbek demonstrates that humor is not merely a linguistic phenomenon but a complex socio-pragmatic mechanism

shaped by cultural norms, communicative traditions, and cognitive patterns. Although humor in all three languages relies on universal principles such as incongruity, implicature, script opposition, and the deliberate flouting of conversational maxims, the ways these principles manifest linguistically and pragmatically vary significantly. The findings reveal that English humor is predominantly indirect, irony-driven, and oriented toward maintaining interpersonal balance. Russian humor, in contrast, tends to be more expressive, satirical, and philosophically reflective, often serving as a vehicle for social critique and emotional resilience. Uzbek humor stands out for its reliance on contextual cues, folkloric references, and communal values, highlighting humor's function as a tool for maintaining social cohesion and reinforcing shared cultural identity. These differences confirm that humor cannot be fully understood without considering the cultural-pragmatic environment in which it is produced. While English humor values subtlety and individual expression, Russian humor often embraces intensity and emotional depth, and Uzbek humor is deeply rooted in collective wisdom and social harmony. The interplay between language structure, cultural scripts, and pragmatic strategies underscores humor's multidimensional nature. The study also highlights the challenges of translating humor across these languages. Differences in cultural imagery, pragmatic expectations, and linguistic encoding make direct translation difficult and often insufficient. As a result, achieving pragmatic and functional equivalence becomes essential for preserving humorous effect in cross-cultural communication. This finding is particularly relevant for translators, language teachers, and intercultural communication specialists who aim to ensure accurate and culturally sensitive interpretation of humorous discourse. Overall, this research contributes to a deeper theoretical understanding of the linguo-pragmatic structure of humor and enriches comparative linguistic scholarship by demonstrating how humor reflects the communicative identity of each speech community. It also emphasizes the need for further interdisciplinary studies that integrate linguistics, culture, cognition, and translation studies to explore humor in broader communicative contexts. Future research may expand the corpus, include digital humor or multimodal data, and examine how globalization and media influence humorous practices across cultures.

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