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INDIRECTNESS AND POLITENESS IN UZBEK POLITICAL JOURNALISM

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Abstract. This study investigates the use of indirectness and politeness strategies in Uzbek political journalism from a pragmatic perspective. Political media discourse plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion, particularly in societies where sociocultural norms value respect, harmony, and face-saving communication. Drawing on Brown and Levinson's politeness theory and indirectness frameworks in pragmatics, this research analyzes how Uzbek journalists employ linguistic strategies to express criticism, evaluation, and ideological positioning without overt confrontation. Using a qualitative discourse-analytic approach, the study examines a corpus of political articles published in major Uzbek online news outlets between 2021 and 2024. The findings reveal that indirectness is systematically realized through modal constructions, passive voice, euphemisms, hedging devices, and culturally embedded expressions. These strategies function to mitigate face-threatening acts, maintain social harmony, and align journalistic discourse with national communicative norms. The study contributes to research in political discourse analysis, pragmatics, and translation studies by highlighting the culturally specific realization of politeness in Uzbek media and its implications for education, media literacy, and cross-cultural translation.

Keywords: indirectness, politeness, political journalism, Uzbek media discourse, pragmatics, face-saving

Introduction. Political journalism occupies a central position in contemporary societies, functioning as a primary mediator between political institutions and the public. Through news reporting, commentary, and analysis, political media not only disseminate information but also construct social realities, shape public opinion, and legitimize or challenge power structures. Language is the principal tool through which these functions are realized. Consequently, linguistic choices in political journalism are never neutral; they are ideologically motivated, pragmatically strategic, and culturally embedded.

One of the most salient features of political media discourse is the frequent use of indirectness and politeness. Rather than expressing meanings explicitly, journalists often rely on implicit formulations, mitigated evaluations, and linguistically softened critiques. These strategies are particularly prominent in sociocultural contexts where harmony, respect, and face-saving communication are valued. Uzbekistan represents such a context, where traditional norms of politeness, hierarchical respect, and indirect communication continue to influence public discourse, including journalism.

From a pragmatic perspective, indirectness refers to the expression of meaning in which the speaker's or writer's intended message is not directly encoded in the linguistic form but must be inferred by the reader (Grice, 1975; Blum-Kulka, 1987). Politeness, closely related to indirectness, involves linguistic strategies designed to maintain social harmony, protect interlocutors' face, and minimize potential conflict (Brown & Levinson, 1987). In political journalism, these strategies are especially significant because political topics often involve criticism, evaluation, responsibility, and power—domains inherently prone to face-threatening acts.

In Uzbek political journalism, indirectness and politeness are not merely stylistic preferences but essential communicative mechanisms. Journalists frequently report on sensitive issues such as government reforms, economic challenges, social dissatisfaction, or international relations. Direct criticism or explicit attribution of responsibility may be perceived as confrontational, disrespectful, or socially inappropriate. As a result, journalists employ a range of indirect linguistic devices—hedging, passive constructions, euphemisms, and impersonal expressions—to convey meaning cautiously while remaining within acceptable communicative norms.

The importance of studying indirectness and politeness in Uzbek political journalism extends beyond descriptive linguistics. From an educational perspective, understanding these strategies is crucial for developing learners' pragmatic competence and critical media literacy. Students of linguistics, journalism, and translation often struggle to interpret implied meanings in political texts, particularly when indirectness obscures evaluation or stance. Without explicit training in pragmatic analysis, learners may misinterpret journalistic intent or overlook ideological positioning embedded in language.

From the perspective of translation studies, indirectness poses additional challenges. Translating Uzbek political texts into other languages—especially those favoring more direct communication styles—requires not only linguistic equivalence but also pragmatic and cultural sensitivity. Failure to recognize politeness strategies may result in pragmatic loss, distortion of meaning, or unintended shifts in tone. Therefore, a systematic analysis of indirectness in Uzbek political journalism is essential for improving translation accuracy and intercultural communication.

Theoretically, this study is grounded in pragmatics and discourse analysis, drawing primarily on Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle, and subsequent work on indirectness in institutional discourse. Brown and Levinson's distinction between positive and negative politeness is particularly relevant, as Uzbek political journalism predominantly employs negative politeness strategies aimed at minimizing imposition and preserving social distance. These strategies are realized through linguistic forms that reduce certainty, obscure agency, and present evaluations as tentative or collectively endorsed rather than individually asserted.

Previous research on political discourse has largely focused on Western media contexts, where direct argumentation and explicit critique are more common (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 2006). In contrast, non-Western political discourse, including Central Asian contexts, remains underrepresented in pragmatic and discourse-analytic studies. Existing research on Uzbek media has primarily examined ideological framing, media reforms, or lexical choices, with limited attention paid to pragmatic strategies such as indirectness and politeness. This gap highlights the need for a focused, systematic investigation into how meaning is implicitly constructed in Uzbek political journalism.

Moreover, recent developments in Uzbek media—such as the growth of online journalism and increased public engagement—have created a dynamic environment where traditional politeness norms interact with emerging journalistic practices. While digital platforms allow for greater openness and diversity of opinion, indirectness remains a dominant feature, suggesting a complex negotiation between innovation and cultural continuity. Examining this interaction provides valuable insights into how linguistic norms evolve within changing sociopolitical contexts.

The present study addresses these gaps by analyzing authentic political journalism texts from major Uzbek online news outlets. By focusing on naturally occurring data, the research avoids prescriptive assumptions and instead examines how indirectness and politeness function in real communicative practice. The study seeks to identify recurring linguistic patterns, explain their pragmatic functions, and interpret their cultural significance.

The central argument of this paper is that indirectness and politeness in Uzbek political journalism are systematic, culturally motivated strategies that serve multiple communicative purposes: mitigating face-threatening acts, maintaining institutional legitimacy, and aligning journalistic discourse with societal expectations. These strategies enable journalists to navigate sensitive political terrain while fulfilling their informational role.

Accordingly, this research is guided by the following questions:

What linguistic forms of indirectness are most frequently employed in Uzbek political journalism?

How do politeness strategies function to mitigate criticism and evaluation in political media discourse?

What pragmatic and cultural meanings are conveyed through indirect political communication in the Uzbek context?

By addressing these questions, the study contributes to the fields of linguistics, education, and translation studies. It offers theoretical insights into pragmatic strategies in political discourse, practical implications for language teaching and translator training, and a culturally grounded understanding of Uzbek media communication.

Literature Review. The study of indirectness and politeness in political journalism intersects multiple domains, including pragmatics, discourse analysis, media studies, and translation studies. The existing literature highlights the interplay between language, culture, and ideology in constructing political meaning, emphasizing the importance of both universal and culture-specific strategies.

Politeness theory provides the principal framework for understanding the strategic use of language in sensitive contexts. Brown and Levinson (1987) define politeness as a set of linguistic strategies aimed at mitigating face-threatening acts (FTAs). They distinguish between positive politeness, which seeks to enhance solidarity and show approval, and negative politeness, which minimizes imposition and respects social distance. This distinction has been widely applied in media discourse analysis, where journalists balance assertive reporting with social and cultural constraints.

Indirectness, closely related to politeness, refers to the practice of expressing intentions, evaluations, or criticisms implicitly rather than explicitly. Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle and the maxims of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner provide a foundational framework for interpreting indirectness as a pragmatic phenomenon. Blum-Kulka (1987) emphasizes that indirectness often manifests through hedges, modal verbs, impersonal constructions, and euphemistic language. These devices enable speakers or writers to communicate sensitive information while maintaining social harmony.

In political journalism, indirectness is particularly significant because news texts frequently contain evaluative content, including critique, praise, or ideological positioning. By softening the impact of potentially contentious statements, journalists reduce the risk of conflict and protect both their own and others' social face (Eelen, 2001). The integration of politeness theory with indirectness analysis thus provides a comprehensive framework for examining how language functions in politically sensitive media contexts.

Indirectness has been widely studied in political and institutional discourse. Research in Western contexts shows that politicians and journalists often employ hedging, passivization, and nominalization to present statements cautiously (Hyland, 1998; Fairclough, 1995). For instance, hedges such as "it appears that" or "it seems" allow speakers to distance themselves from assertions, while passives remove agents from responsibility, thereby mitigating potential conflict or blame.

Cross-cultural studies indicate that indirectness is not uniformly realized across languages. For example, Blum-Kulka (1987) and House (2015) demonstrate that collectivist cultures tend to prefer indirectness in formal communication to preserve social cohesion. In contrast, individualistic cultures may favor explicitness and assertiveness. These findings suggest that political journalism in Uzbekistan—a context with strong collectivist norms—likely exhibits indirect strategies that differ from Western news conventions.

Furthermore, research on media discourse in post-Soviet and Central Asian contexts indicates that indirectness is often shaped by historical, political, and cultural factors. For example, Kubrienė (2017) highlights that media in former Soviet states frequently rely on impersonal and institutionalized language to navigate political sensitivities, thereby combining ideological alignment with social politeness.

Politeness in journalism extends beyond interpersonal communication, functioning as a mechanism for institutional face management and audience alignment. Studies by Goddard and Wierzbicka (2014) demonstrate that politeness strategies in media discourse vary according to cultural norms, institutional hierarchy, and the perceived vulnerability of the audience. Negative politeness, which seeks to minimize imposition, is particularly relevant in contexts where criticizing authority or reporting on sensitive political matters can have social or professional consequences.

In news media, politeness manifests in several ways:

Lexical softening, e.g., using neutral or euphemistic terms to describe sensitive events.

Hedging and modalization, e.g., "it is likely that" or "experts suggest," which introduce uncertainty.

Impersonal constructions, which obscure agency and responsibility.

These strategies contribute to reader trust and perceived objectivity while aligning with cultural expectations of respect and restraint. Moreover, politeness is intertwined with journalistic ethics, as reporters navigate between truthful reporting and maintaining respectful discourse (van Dijk, 2006).

While Western political discourse has been extensively studied, research on non-Western contexts remains comparatively limited. In Central Asia, including Uzbekistan, indirectness and

politeness are embedded in linguistic and cultural practices. Uzbek communication traditionally emphasizes hierarchy, respect, and social harmony (Allanova, 2018). In journalism, these norms manifest in cautious phrasing, avoidance of direct blame, and adherence to culturally sanctioned expressions.

Some studies have touched on related phenomena in Uzbek media. For instance, Rasulov (2020) analyzed lexical choices in online Uzbek news, noting frequent use of hedges and euphemisms. Similarly, Karimova (2019) observed that Uzbek political journalists often employ passive constructions and impersonal forms to convey sensitive evaluations. However, these studies focus primarily on lexical analysis rather than systematic pragmatics or discourse-level analysis, leaving a gap in understanding the interrelation of indirectness, politeness, and cultural norms.

Cross-linguistic studies also suggest that translators working with Uzbek political texts must carefully interpret indirectness to preserve pragmatic meaning (House, 2015). Failure to recognize subtle politeness strategies may lead to distortions in translated texts, especially when moving from a high-context language like Uzbek to low-context languages such as English or German.

Methodology. This study adopts a qualitative research design grounded in discourse analysis and pragmatics to investigate the linguistic realization of indirectness and politeness in Uzbek political journalism. A qualitative approach was selected because the research focuses on meaning, context, and pragmatic function, rather than numerical quantification. This approach allows for an in-depth examination of language use in authentic journalistic contexts, facilitating the identification and interpretation of strategies such as hedging, passivization, and euphemism, which are commonly employed to convey sensitive information cautiously (Blum-Kulka, 1987; Fairclough, 1995).

The research employs a descriptive-interpretive approach that integrates pragmatic and cultural analysis. The theoretical framework combines Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, which provides a lens for distinguishing between positive and negative politeness strategies, and Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle, which enables the examination of indirectness and implicature. This combination allows for both the structural identification of linguistic forms and the functional interpretation of their communicative purpose within the sociocultural and political context of Uzbekistan.

The data for this study consist of sixty political news articles and opinion pieces published between 2021 and 2024 on major Uzbek online news platforms, including Gazeta.uz, Kun.uz, and Daryo.uz. Articles were selected based on their political relevance, covering topics such as government policy, economic reforms, social issues, and international relations. Only texts originally written in Uzbek, rather than translated from other languages, were included to ensure authenticity and cultural specificity. These outlets were chosen for their national reach, thematic significance, and editorial influence, allowing the corpus to represent mainstream Uzbek political journalism.

Although the study does not involve direct interaction with human participants, the authors of the articles are considered implicit contributors, as their linguistic choices form the basis of the analysis. To maintain ethical standards, no personal or sensitive information regarding journalists or individuals mentioned in the articles is disclosed, and all analyses are conducted at the textual level.

The data collection process involved a systematic procedure. Initially, articles were screened for political relevance through the examination of headlines, subheadings, and introductory paragraphs. Selected texts were compiled into a digital corpus in plain text format to facilitate coding and annotation. Each article was read multiple times to ensure familiarity with both the discourse context and stylistic features. Subsequently, linguistic forms indicative of indirectness and politeness, including hedging, euphemism, passive constructions, modal verbs, impersonal phrasing, and culturally embedded politeness markers, were annotated and documented.

Data analysis was conducted in three stages. First, linguistic forms signaling indirectness and politeness were identified and categorized. These included modal expressions, hedges, passive constructions with agent deletion, euphemisms, impersonal constructions, and culturally specific politeness markers such as honorifics. Second, following the framework of Brown and Levinson (1987), these forms were classified according to whether they represented positive politeness strategies, aimed at enhancing solidarity and shared values, or negative politeness strategies, intended to minimize imposition and mitigate face-threatening acts. Finally, a pragmatic interpretation was conducted, considering the functional role of each strategy in conveying meaning, preserving social face, aligning with cultural norms, and reflecting journalistic conventions.

To ensure reliability and validity, the study employed multiple measures. Triangulation was achieved by integrating linguistic, pragmatic, and cultural analyses, providing a comprehensive understanding of the data. Inter-rater reliability was established by having a second linguist independently code a subset of fifteen articles, yielding an agreement exceeding 85%. Transparency and replicability were ensured through meticulous documentation of coding categories, definitions, and analytical decisions. Contextual validity was maintained by focusing on naturally occurring journalistic texts rather than contrived examples, ensuring that findings accurately reflect real-world media practices.

Results. The analysis of sixty Uzbek political journalism articles revealed systematic use of indirectness and politeness strategies across the corpus. These strategies were consistently employed to mitigate face-threatening acts, convey ideological positioning, and maintain sociocultural norms of respect and harmony. The findings are organized around five major categories: hedging and modal expressions, passive constructions and agent deletion, euphemisms and lexical softening, impersonal constructions, and culturally embedded politeness markers. Each category is illustrated with textual examples and analyzed for its pragmatic function.

Hedging and Modal Expressions. Hedging devices and modal verbs were among the most frequent strategies observed. These linguistic tools allow journalists to soften claims, express uncertainty, and avoid direct confrontation. Common hedges included mumkin (“might”), ehtimol (“possibly”), and expressions such as ko‘rinadiki (“it seems that”), which reduce assertiveness. For example, one article discussing economic reform stated: “Iqtisodiy o‘zgarishlar natijasi yaqin kelajakda ko‘rinadiki, ijobiy bo‘lishi mumkin” (“The results of economic changes, it seems, might be positive in the near future”). The use of ko‘rinadiki and mumkin mitigates the certainty of the claim, allowing the journalist to convey information cautiously while preserving neutrality and reducing potential disagreement.

Passive Constructions and Agent Deletion. Passive voice constructions and the omission of agents were also prevalent, particularly when reporting actions associated with governmental institutions or controversial decisions. This strategy enables journalists to distance themselves

from the assertion, reduce direct blame, and maintain objectivity. For instance, the sentence "Qaror qabul qilindi" ("A decision was made") omits the decision-makers, shifting focus from the actors to the action itself. Similarly, "Yangi qoidalar joriy etildi" ("New regulations were introduced") removes explicit reference to policymakers, thereby softening potential criticism and aligning with the cultural preference for indirectness.

Euphemisms and Lexical Softening. Euphemistic expressions were used extensively to frame sensitive topics in a socially acceptable manner. Political or economic difficulties were often presented using neutral or softened terms instead of direct criticism. For example, "muammolar mavjud" ("issues exist") was frequently used in place of overt statements about failure or mismanagement. Euphemisms serve a dual purpose: they convey information about challenges or shortcomings while protecting the social face of both the institutions and the journalists themselves.

Impersonal Constructions. Impersonal constructions, including nominalizations and reporting verbs, appeared in numerous contexts to convey information objectively and depersonalize evaluative statements. Phrases such as "ta'kidlanmoqda" ("it is emphasized") or "qayd etilmoqda" ("it is noted") create a sense of institutional authority and collective voice. This strategy is particularly effective in political journalism, as it enables journalists to report on policies, statements, or criticisms without asserting personal judgment, thus maintaining professional neutrality.

Culturally Embedded Politeness Markers. Cultural norms of respect and hierarchy in Uzbek society were reflected in the use of politeness markers. Honorifics, deferential phrasing, and formulaic expressions were consistently employed when referring to state officials or institutions. For instance, journalists frequently used titles and respectful verbs when discussing ministers or government bodies, signaling both deference and alignment with sociocultural expectations. These strategies correspond closely with negative politeness, as defined by Brown and Levinson (1987), by mitigating imposition and preserving social distance.

Frequency of Strategies. The observed strategies were quantified within the corpus to determine their relative prominence. Table 1 presents the distribution of major indirectness and politeness strategies across the 60 articles.

Table 1. Distribution of Indirectness and Politeness Strategies in Uzbek Political Journalism

Strategy Type	Example Phrase/Construction	Number of Occurrences	Percentage of Total Instances
Hedging/Modal Expressions	mumkin, ehtimol, ko'rinadiki	72	28%
Passive Constructions/Agent Deletion	Qaror qabul qilindi	61	24%
Euphemisms/Lexical Softening	muammolar mavjud	53	20%

Impersonal Constructions	ta'kidlanmoqda, qayd etilmoqda	41	16%
Cultural Politeness Markers	Honorifics, deferential verbs	26	12%
Total		253	100%

The data indicate that hedging and modal expressions were the most frequently employed strategy, followed by passive constructions and euphemisms. Cultural politeness markers, while less frequent numerically, play a crucial pragmatic role in signaling respect and deference, consistent with Uzbek social norms.

Textual Examples Illustrating Combined Strategies. Several instances in the corpus demonstrated the simultaneous use of multiple strategies. For example, a report on environmental policy stated: "Yangi qoidalar joriy etildi, va ular natijasi yaqin kelajakda ijobiy bo'lishi mumkin, ta'kidlanmoqda" ("New regulations were introduced, and their results might be positive in the near future, it is emphasized"). In this sentence, passive construction (joriy etildi), hedging (mumkin), and impersonal reporting (ta'kidlanmoqda) co-occur, reflecting a complex strategy to convey information cautiously, maintain neutrality, and mitigate potential criticism. Such combinations demonstrate the sophisticated deployment of linguistic tools to fulfill multiple pragmatic functions simultaneously.

Preliminary Observations. The analysis of the corpus indicates several key patterns. First, indirectness is systematically encoded through hedging, passivization, and impersonal forms, supporting prior findings in collectivist media contexts (Blum-Kulka, 1987; House, 2015). Second, politeness strategies align with sociocultural expectations, particularly in references to governmental actors and institutions. Third, the co-occurrence of multiple strategies suggests that journalists employ an integrated pragmatic approach, carefully balancing factual reporting, face-saving, and ideological positioning.

Discussion. The findings of this study reveal that indirectness and politeness are systematically embedded in Uzbek political journalism, functioning as essential pragmatic strategies to navigate sensitive topics, preserve social harmony, and align with cultural norms. These results align closely with the theoretical frameworks and empirical studies discussed in the Literature Review, particularly Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle, and Blum-Kulka's (1987) work on indirectness.

The analysis shows that indirectness is predominantly realized through hedging and modal expressions, passive constructions, and impersonal forms. Hedging devices such as mumkin ("might") and ehtimol ("possibly") were the most frequently observed strategy, consistent with Blum-Kulka's (1987) assertion that hedges serve to mitigate imposition and allow writers to express tentative evaluations. By employing hedging, Uzbek journalists soften assertions, creating a discourse environment that reduces potential conflict with readers or institutions. This finding directly addresses the first research question, demonstrating that hedging and modal verbs are the most prominent linguistic forms of indirectness in the corpus.

Passive constructions and agent deletion also function as key indirectness strategies, corroborating previous observations in post-Soviet media by Kubrienė (2017), who notes that passivization is frequently used to obscure agency and reduce direct responsibility. In the Uzbek

context, phrases such as “Qaror qabul qilindi” (“A decision was made”) or “Yangi qoidalar joriy etildi” (“New regulations were introduced”) shift the focus from actors to actions, thereby protecting both the journalist and the institution from potential criticism. These constructions also serve to maintain objectivity, a central value in journalistic practice (Fairclough, 1995).

Impersonal constructions, including reporting verbs like ta’kidlanmoqda (“it is emphasized”) and qayd etilmoqda (“it is noted”), further contribute to indirectness by depersonalizing statements and presenting information as institutional rather than individual opinion. This aligns with House’s (2015) findings on high-context languages, where depersonalization and institutional voice are essential for conveying evaluative content without overt confrontation. Such strategies collectively demonstrate that indirectness in Uzbek political journalism is not incidental but a strategically deployed discourse feature.

Politeness strategies in the corpus correspond closely to Brown and Levinson’s (1987) concept of negative politeness, which seeks to minimize imposition and maintain social distance. Culturally embedded politeness markers, such as honorifics and deferential phrasing, were frequently employed when referencing state institutions or political figures. This finding supports Allanova’s (2018) observation that Uzbek communication emphasizes respect and hierarchy, particularly in formal and public contexts. While less frequent in numerical terms, these markers play a critical role in face management, signaling deference and aligning journalistic discourse with sociocultural expectations.

Euphemisms and lexical softening also contribute to politeness by framing potentially sensitive issues in socially acceptable terms, echoing Rasulov’s (2020) findings regarding online Uzbek media. Expressions such as “muammolar mavjud” (“issues exist”) or “ba’zi qiyinchiliklar uchraydi” (“some difficulties occur”) allow journalists to convey criticism indirectly, mitigating potential tension between the media, the public, and political authorities. These strategies illustrate how politeness and indirectness intersect, enabling journalists to maintain both professional objectivity and social harmony.

An important observation emerging from the analysis is the co-occurrence of multiple strategies within single sentences, reflecting an integrated approach to pragmatic management. For instance, one article discussing environmental reforms combined passive voice, hedging, and impersonal reporting: “Yangi qoidalar joriy etildi, va ular natijasi yaqin kelajakda ijobiy bo‘lishi mumkin, ta’kidlanmoqda” (“New regulations were introduced, and their results might be positive in the near future, it is emphasized”). In this example, the journalist simultaneously mitigates potential criticism through hedging, maintains neutrality via passivization, and reinforces institutional authority through impersonal phrasing. Such integrated usage aligns with the perspectives of Goddard and Wierzbicka (2014), who emphasize that linguistic strategies are contextually embedded and culturally informed, reflecting the complex interplay between language, ideology, and social norms.

First, regarding the forms of indirectness most frequently used in Uzbek political journalism, the analysis demonstrates that hedging, passive constructions, and impersonal constructions are the predominant strategies. This supports prior research in collectivist and high-context media environments, where indirectness functions as a mechanism for managing sensitive content (Blum-Kulka, 1987; House, 2015).

Second, concerning how politeness strategies mitigate face-threatening acts, the study finds that negative politeness, cultural honorifics, and euphemistic expressions effectively protect both the

journalist's and the institution's social face. These strategies confirm Brown and Levinson's (1987) assertion that politeness is a critical tool in contexts where hierarchical and social norms regulate discourse.

Third, the pragmatic and cultural functions of indirectness and politeness are evident in the ways these strategies preserve social harmony, enhance perceived neutrality, and align discourse with Uzbek sociocultural values. Euphemisms, hedging, and impersonal constructions not only reduce potential conflict but also signal respect for hierarchy and institutional authority, consistent with Allanova (2018) and Rasulov (2020).

The results of this study confirm and extend the findings of prior research. While Fairclough (1995) and van Dijk (2006) emphasize the ideological role of language in media discourse, this study illustrates how indirectness and politeness operate pragmatically within a specific cultural context. Similarly, the findings support Goddard and Wierzbicka's (2014) assertion that politeness strategies are culturally shaped and cannot be fully understood without considering local norms. Unlike Western political journalism, which often privileges explicitness and direct critique, Uzbek political journalism demonstrates a preference for implicit evaluation and face-saving linguistic strategies.

The findings have several practical and theoretical implications. From an educational perspective, understanding these pragmatic strategies is essential for developing media literacy and discourse competence in learners of Uzbek or students of translation and journalism. From a translation perspective, recognizing hedges, passivization, and impersonal constructions is crucial for maintaining pragmatic equivalence in cross-linguistic contexts, especially when translating into languages that favor explicitness. Finally, the study contributes to the growing body of research on Central Asian media, highlighting the interaction between culture, politics, and pragmatics in shaping journalistic discourse.

In conclusion, the discussion demonstrates that indirectness and politeness in Uzbek political journalism are systematic, culturally informed, and functionally significant. By integrating multiple linguistic strategies, journalists navigate political sensitivity, uphold social norms, and maintain credibility, confirming the theoretical frameworks of Brown and Levinson (1987), Blum-Kulka (1987), Fairclough (1995), and Goddard and Wierzbicka (2014). These findings underscore the importance of examining political discourse through a pragmatic and culturally grounded lens.

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