

POLITENESS, SOLIDATORY AND SOCIAL RELATIONS IN ENGLISH AND KARAKALPAK RITUAL DISCOURSE

Orinbaeva Inabat Dauletmuratovna

Assistant Teacher, Department of Philology,
University of Innovation Technologies
Mobile phone: +998 906531019

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.23466987>

Annotatsiya: Maqolada ingliz va qoraqalpoq marosimiy nutqida muloyimlik, birdamlik va ijtimoiy munosabatlarning pragmatik xususiyatlari tahlil qilinadi. To’y va dafn marosimlaridagi tabriklar, yaxshi tilaklar va ta’ziya ifodalarining kommunikativ vazifalariga e’tibor qaratiladi.

Kalit so’zlar: muloyimlik, birdamlik, pragmatika, marosimiy nutq, ijtimoiy munosabatlar, tabrik, ta’ziya, madaniyatlararo muloqot.

Аннотация: В статье анализируются прагматические особенности вежливости, солидарности и социальных отношений в английском и каракалпакском ритуальном дискурсе. Рассматриваются поздравления, добрые пожелания и соболезнования в свадебных и похоронных обрядах.

Ключевые слова: вежливость, солидарность, прагматика, ритуальный дискурс, социальные отношения, поздравление, соболезнование, межкультурная коммуникация.

Abstract: This article examines politeness, solidarity and social relations in English and Karakalpak ritual discourse. It focuses on wedding congratulations, blessings and funeral condolences, exploring how these expressions communicate respect, emotional support and social belonging. It also considers the implications of pragmatic differences for translation and language teaching.

Keywords: politeness, solidarity, pragmatics, ritual discourse, social relations, congratulations, condolences, intercultural communication.

INTRODUCTION

Language serves not only to exchange information but also to express emotions, establish relationships and maintain social connections. These functions become particularly important during weddings and funerals, when people are expected to respond appropriately to significant events in the lives of individuals.

Wedding discourse commonly includes congratulations, blessings and wishes for a happy future. Funeral discourse, by contrast, involves condolences, expressions of sympathy and support for bereaved families. Although these situations differ emotionally, both demonstrate how language reflects social expectations and helps people maintain relationships.

Politeness has been widely discussed in pragmatics. Brown and Levinson explain how speakers use different strategies to manage face and interpersonal relationships [1]. Spencer-Oatey’s approach to rapport management further emphasizes the importance of social expectations and harmonious interaction [2]. Leech also demonstrates that politeness is closely connected with the context and purpose of communication [3].

The comparison of English and Karakalpak ritual discourse offers an opportunity to examine how similar social intentions are expressed through different linguistic and cultural practices. This article aims to analyse the pragmatic functions of politeness and solidarity in wedding and funeral communication, with particular attention to interpersonal relationships and cultural context.

1. Theoretical framework

1.1. Politeness and interpersonal relationships

Politeness is more complex than the use of formal or respectful words. An expression may be grammatically correct but inappropriate if it does not suit the relationship between the speaker and the listener. Its interpretation depends on the situation, the communicative purpose and the expectations of the participants.

Brown and Levinson distinguish between positive face, which concerns a person’s desire to be accepted and appreciated, and negative face, which concerns the desire to maintain freedom of action [1]. These concepts help explain why speakers adapt their language to different social situations. For example, “*Congratulations on your wedding!*” expresses positive recognition, while “*I’m sorry for your loss*” acknowledges another person’s difficult experience.

Leech’s pragmatic approach is also relevant because it considers how linguistic choices affect interpersonal relations [3]. A short expression may be appropriate in a formal setting, whereas a more personal message may be preferred between close friends. Politeness therefore depends not only on the words used but also on how they function in context.

1.2. Ritual discourse and social action

Ritual expressions can be understood as forms of social action. Austin’s speech act theory explains that utterances do not merely describe situations; they can also perform actions, such as congratulating, promising or expressing sympathy [5]. This perspective is useful for analysing wedding and funeral communication.

Levinson’s work on pragmatics further demonstrates the importance of interpreting utterances in relation to their context and intended meaning [6]. For example, a wedding blessing is not simply a statement about the future. It acknowledges the importance of the couple’s new relationship.

Kádár examines the relationship between politeness and ritual, emphasizing that ritualized interaction can reinforce or transform interpersonal relationships [7]. Similarly, Kádár discusses politeness as a socially situated phenomenon that must be understood through interaction rather than through isolated expressions [8].

These approaches provide a theoretical basis for examining how ritual language expresses respect, solidarity and social expectations in English and Karakalpak.

2. Politeness and solidarity in wedding discourse

Wedding communication provides an opportunity to express happiness, respect and support. Common English expressions include “*Congratulations on your wedding!*”, “*Wishing you both a lifetime of happiness*” and “*May your life together be filled with love and understanding.*” These expressions have different pragmatic functions. Both communicate goodwill, but the choice depends on the relationship between the speaker and the recipients.

In Karakalpak wedding discourse, congratulations, blessings and good wishes also play an important communicative role. Their wording may vary according to family traditions, the relationship between participants and the setting. Consequently, the analysis should focus on how expressions function in particular situations rather than assume that all speakers follow identical conventions.

Social relationships influence the choice of language. Close friends may use informal and emotionally expressive phrases, whereas people addressing older relatives or less familiar guests may prefer more formal expressions. Brown and Levinson’s theory helps explain how social distance and interpersonal expectations influence such choices [1].

Wedding discourse also connects individuals with wider family and community relationships. A wish addressed to the couple may emphasize their future together, while an expression addressed to their parents may recognize the family’s involvement in the occasion. In this way, ritual language communicates both personal goodwill and social recognition. From the perspective of speech act theory, congratulations and blessings perform recognizable social actions rather than merely convey information [5].

However, politeness should not automatically be equated with formality. An informal expression may be entirely appropriate between close friends, while a formal expression may be suitable for a public speech. The essential consideration is whether the language matches the relationship and the communicative situation.

3. Condolences and social support in funeral discourse

Funeral discourse requires particular sensitivity because it takes place in circumstances of grief and emotional vulnerability. Speakers must acknowledge the loss and express sympathy without causing additional discomfort.

Common English expressions include *“I’m sorry for your loss”*, *“Please accept my deepest condolences”* and *“My thoughts are with you and your family.”* These phrases communicate sympathy, but they differ in tone and formality. The first is concise, while the second is more formal. The third emphasizes concern for the bereaved person and their family.

In Karakalpak, *kóñil aytıw* is associated with expressing condolences. Its communicative function involves acknowledging bereavement and demonstrating concern for the bereaved person or family. The expression should therefore be interpreted in relation to its social use rather than through a purely literal translation.

English expressions such as *“to offer condolences”* and *“to express sympathy”* may be appropriate equivalents, depending on context. Nevertheless, a translation should preserve the intended communicative function rather than reproduce the structure of the original expression mechanically. Pragmatic interpretation requires attention to the situation and the relationship between participants [6; 8].

Condolences are not simply conventional phrases. They help people acknowledge another person’s suffering and maintain social connections during a difficult period. Offering condolences, visiting a bereaved family or providing practical assistance can communicate that the family is not alone.

Kádár’s analysis of ritual and politeness is particularly relevant because conventional social practices can reinforce interpersonal relationships and shared expectations [7]. In funeral contexts,

respectful behaviour and appropriate language help participants respond to grief in socially meaningful ways.

4. Comparative analysis

The English and Karakalpak examples discussed above reveal several dimensions for comparing ritual discourse.

First, both languages provide ways to respond to significant life events. Wedding expressions communicate congratulations and goodwill, while funeral expressions acknowledge loss and offer sympathy. These utterances perform social actions and help participants respond to the situation [5].

Second, the choice of expression depends on interpersonal relationships. Speakers may adjust their language according to age, familiarity, social distance and the formality of the occasion. Such contextual variation supports the pragmatic view that politeness cannot be evaluated independently of the interaction [3; 8].

Third, cultural meaning cannot always be preserved through word-for-word translation. An expression may have a direct lexical equivalent but differ in tone, emotional force or appropriateness. The Karakalpak expression *kónil aytıw*, for instance, should be translated according to its role in a particular condolence interaction.

Fourth, ritual language can reinforce social relationships. Kádár’s work emphasizes the close connection between ritual practices and the maintenance of interpersonal relationships [7]. Wedding wishes can affirm positive connections, while condolences can communicate continued support during bereavement.

These similarities should not lead to broad generalizations about English or Karakalpak speakers. Individuals vary in their communication styles, and traditions may change across generations and social settings. A reliable comparison should examine specific expressions and situations rather than describe entire cultures as uniform.

The analysis is conceptual and uses illustrative expressions rather than a systematically collected bilingual corpus. Further research should examine authentic wedding speeches, condolence messages and interviews in both languages. Such data could provide a stronger empirical basis for identifying how pragmatic strategies vary according to age, social relationship and communicative setting.

CONCLUSION

Politeness and solidarity are important features of English and Karakalpak ritual discourse. Wedding congratulations and blessings communicate goodwill and recognize significant relationships, while condolences acknowledge loss and provide emotional support. In both contexts, language helps people respond to important events and maintain social connections.

The theoretical perspectives discussed in this paper show that ritual expressions should be understood as context-dependent social actions. Their interpretation depends on communicative purpose, interpersonal relationships and cultural expectations. Similar intentions do not necessarily require identical linguistic forms, which makes pragmatic awareness essential for translation and intercultural communication.

A better understanding of ritual discourse can also improve language teaching by helping learners choose expressions appropriate to particular social situations. Further research based on

authentic English and Karakalpak examples would provide a stronger empirical basis for explaining how politeness and solidarity are expressed across different contexts.

References

1. Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge University Press.
2. Spencer-Oatey, H. (Ed.). (2008). *Culturally Speaking: Culture, Communication and Politeness Theory* (2nd ed.). Continuum.
3. Leech, G. N. (2014). *The Pragmatics of Politeness*. Oxford University Press.
4. Goffman, E. (1967). *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior*. Anchor Books.
5. Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to Do Things with Words*. Oxford University Press.
6. Levinson, S. C. (1983). *Pragmatics*. Cambridge University Press.
7. Kádár, D. Z. (2017). *Politeness, Impoliteness and Ritual: Maintaining the Moral Order in Interpersonal Interaction*. Cambridge University Press.
8. Kádár, D. Z., & Haugh, M. (2013). *Understanding Politeness*. Cambridge University Press.