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**“TABOO SPEECH ACTS IN DIFFERENT CULTURES” (BASED ON ENGLISH, RUSSIAN, JAPANESE AND UZBEK LINGUOCULTURES)**

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**Abstract:** The article examines taboo speech acts as a specific pragmatic phenomenon reflecting cultural, social, and value-based norms of different linguacultures. Particular attention is paid to the analysis of speech acts of prohibition, insult, curse, intimate reference, and silence, which demonstrate varying degrees of acceptability and illocutionary force across cultures. Based on a comparative analysis of several languages and cultures, the study identifies similarities and differences in the realization of taboo speech acts, as well as mechanisms of mitigation, euphemization, and substitution. It is shown that the violation of taboo does not always lead to communicative failure and, in certain contexts, functions as a strategic tool for expressing emotions, power, or group identity. The findings contribute to the development of speech act theory, intercultural pragmatics, and linguacultural studies.

**Keywords:** taboo, taboo speech acts, speech act theory, pragmatics, illocutionary force, linguaculture, intercultural communication, euphemization, communicative strategies, discourse.

**«ТАБУИРОВАННЫЕ РЕЧЕВЫЕ АКТЫ В РАЗНЫХ КУЛЬТУРАХ  
(НА МАТЕРИАЛЕ АНГЛОЯЗЫЧНОЙ, РУССКОЙ, ЯПОНСКОЙ И  
УЗБЕКСКОЙ ЛИНГВОКУЛЬТУР)»**

**Аннотация:** В статье рассматриваются табуированные речевые акты как особый прагматический феномен, отражающий культурные, социальные и ценностные нормы различных лингвокультур. Основное внимание уделяется анализу речевых актов запрета, оскорбления, проклятия, интимного упоминания и молчания, которые в разных культурах обладают различной степенью допустимости и иллокутивной силы. На материале сопоставления нескольких языков и культур выявляются сходства и различия в реализации табуированных

речевых актов, а также механизмы их смягчения, эвфемизации и замещения. Показано, что нарушение табу не всегда ведёт к коммуникативному сбою, а в ряде случаев используется как стратегический приём для выражения эмоций, власти или групповой идентичности. Результаты исследования вносят вклад в развитие теории речевых актов, межкультурной прагматики и лингвокультурологии.

**Ключевые слова:** табу, табуированные речевые акты, теория речевых актов, прагматика, иллокутивная сила, лингвокультура, межкультурная коммуникация, эвфемизация, коммуникативные стратегии, дискурс.

## “TURLI MADANIYATLARDA TABU NUTQIY AKTLARI” (INGLIZ, RUS, YAPON VA O‘ZBEK LINGVOKULTURALARI MISOLIDA)

**Annotatsiya:** Maqolada tabu qilingan nutq aktlari turli lingvomadaniyatlarning madaniy, ijtimoiy va qadriyatga oid me’yorlarini aks ettiruvchi o’ziga xos pragmatik hodisa sifatida tahlil qilinadi. Asosiy e’tibor turli madaniyatlarda maqbullik darajasi va illokutsion kuchi jihatidan farqlanuvchi taqiqlash, haqoratlash, qarg’ish, intim mavzularni tilga olish hamda sukut bilan bog’liq nutq aktlarini o’rganishga qaratiladi. Bir nechta tillar va madaniyatlar qiyosiy tahlili asosida tabu qilingan nutq aktlarining amalga oshirishidagi o’xshash va farqli jihatlar, shuningdek ularni yumshatish, evfemizatsiya va almashtirish mexanizmlari aniqlanadi. Tadqiqot natijalari shuni ko’rsatadiki, tabu buzilishi har doim ham kommunikativ muvaffaqiyatsizlikka olib kelmaydi, balki ayrim holatlarda hissiyotlar, hokimiyat yoki guruhiiy identifikatsiyani ifodalashda strategik vosita sifatida xizmat qiladi. Tadqiqot xulosalari nutq aktlari nazariyasi, madaniyatlararo pragmatika va lingvomadaniyatshunoslik rivojiga hissa qo’shadi.

**Kalit so’zlar:** tabu, tabu qilingan nutq aktlari, nutq aktlari nazariyasi, pragmatika, illokutsion kuch, lingvomadaniyat, madaniyatlararo muloqot, evfemizatsiya, kommunikativ strategiyalar, diskurs.

### Introduction

The relevance of studying taboo speech acts in contemporary linguistics is обусловлена the intensification of intercultural contacts, globalization, and the growing interest in the pragmatic aspects of communication. In situations where representatives of different cultures interact, a lack of awareness or disregard of speech taboos often leads to communicative breakdowns, conflicts, and distortion of meaning. For this reason, the analysis of taboo speech acts acquires particular significance within intercultural pragmatics, linguoculturology, and communication theory.

Taboo as a sociocultural phenomenon regulates not only the content of speech but also the forms used to express illocutionary intentions, the choice of politeness strategies, and acceptable communicative models. Speech acts that fall under prohibition function as indicators of a society’s value system and reflect its attitudes toward authority, age, gender, religion, and morality.

The aim of this article is to provide a comprehensive analysis of taboo speech acts in Russian, Uzbek, English-speaking, and Japanese linguocultures. To achieve this aim, the following objectives are set: to define the theoretical foundations for the study of taboo speech acts; to identify their culture-specific features; to conduct a comparative analysis of the ways they are realized; and to determine the pragmatic functions of taboo violation.

The methodological framework of the study is based on comparative analysis, pragmatic and discourse analysis, as well as elements of the linguocultural approach.

### **Theoretical Foundations of the Study**

Speech act theory, developed by J. L. Austin and further elaborated in the works of John Searle, views an utterance as an action aimed at achieving a specific communicative effect. Within this framework, a distinction is made between three levels of a speech act: the locutionary act (the production of a meaningful linguistic expression), the illocutionary act (the speaker's communicative intention), and the perlocutionary act (the effect produced on the listener). This tripartite model makes it possible to describe more precisely the pragmatic nature of taboo utterances, since prohibitions and restrictions may operate at different levels: in the content of the utterance, in its communicative intention, or in its potential social and psychological impact on the interlocutor. [1,2].

The concept of taboo has traditionally been examined in anthropology and sociology; however, in linguistics it acquires particular significance in connection with the study of prohibited topics, forms of expression, and communicative strategies. According to Keith Allan and Kate Burridge, linguistic taboo is closely related to social mechanisms of control and the maintenance of behavioral norms. Taboo speech acts can be defined as communicative actions whose realization is restricted or prohibited due to cultural, moral, or social norms. These include acts of insult, cursing, direct refusal, explicit reference to intimate matters, as well as silence that carries illocutionary force.

### **Taboo Speech Acts in Russian Culture**

Russian linguoculture is characterized by a combination of directness and emotional expressiveness, alongside a high sensitivity to social context. One of the most striking manifestations of taboo is the use of obscene vocabulary and profane expressions (so-called *mat*). Despite their relatively wide distribution in informal spoken communication, they remain strictly prohibited in official and public discourse. A special place is occupied by taboo speech acts connected with religion and the sacred sphere. Given the historical influence of the Russian Orthodox Church, curses and blasphemous statements have traditionally been perceived as violations of moral and spiritual norms. At the same time, in literary and colloquial discourse such acts may function as expressive devices, intensifying emotional impact or character portrayal.

Direct refusal or open criticism addressed to elders or individuals of higher social status is also subject to mitigation. In such cases, speakers tend to employ indirect speech acts, euphemisms, and modal constructions in order to preserve social harmony. Silence in Russian culture can serve as a form of implicit disagreement or emotional protest, thus acquiring illocutionary force within the communicative situation.

### **Taboo Speech Acts in Uzbek Culture**

Uzbek linguoculture is characterized by a strong orientation toward collective values, respect for elders, and a clearly defined hierarchy of social roles. In this context, taboo speech acts are often associated with violations of norms of politeness and deference.

Direct expression of disagreement, refusal, or criticism addressed to elders is generally perceived as communicatively inappropriate. Instead, speakers tend to employ indirect forms of expression, hints, or silence. Silence may function as a strategy of avoidance, signaling disagreement without openly confronting the interlocutor. Intimate

topics and the public discussion of personal problems are also subject to strict taboo, particularly in formal or mixed social settings.

Given the significant influence of Islamic ethical norms in Uzbekistan, shaped historically by religious traditions associated with Islam, speech behavior is closely regulated by moral considerations. Openly offensive language, especially in the presence of elders or women, is strongly condemned. Euphemization serves as one of the key mechanisms for mitigating taboo illocutions. The use of fixed politeness formulas and respectful address forms helps maintain communicative harmony and prevent conflict, reinforcing social cohesion within the community.

### **Taboo Speech Acts in English-Speaking Culture**

In English-speaking linguoculture, taboo speech acts are largely shaped by the principles of political correctness and the protection of individual rights. Racist, sexist, and discriminatory statements are strictly prohibited in public discourse and may entail serious social and professional consequences. In countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, public communication is strongly influenced by anti-discrimination norms and inclusive language policies.

At the same time, English-speaking culture is characterized by a relative directness of expression, particularly in business and academic communication. Clear articulation of opinions, criticism, and disagreement is often considered a sign of professionalism and efficiency. However, this directness is balanced by a well-developed system of politeness strategies aimed at mitigating potentially face-threatening illocutions. Modal verbs, hedging devices, and softening expressions (e.g., *might*, *perhaps*, *I'm afraid that*, *with all due respect*) are widely used to reduce communicative tension.

Euphemization is actively employed to replace taboo topics related to illness, death, disability, and social inequality. For example, expressions such as *passed away* instead of *died*, or *economically disadvantaged* instead of *poor*, reflect the tendency to avoid lexical items that may be perceived as harsh or socially insensitive. In this way, taboo speech acts in English-speaking culture demonstrate a balance between communicative clarity and sensitivity to social norms.

### **Taboo Speech Acts in Japanese Culture**

Japanese linguoculture is characterized by a high degree of indirectness and a strong orientation toward maintaining social harmony. Direct expression of emotions, refusal, or criticism is considered undesirable and is often replaced by hints, circumlocutions, or silence.

The system of *keigo* (honorific language) plays a key role in regulating speech taboos, allowing the speaker to precisely indicate their social position and their attitude toward the addressee. Proper use of *keigo* helps avoid face-threatening acts and ensures that communicative norms of respect and hierarchy are maintained.

Silence in Japanese culture carries significant illocutionary force and can convey disagreement, respect, or protest without explicit verbalization. In many situations, what is left unsaid communicates as much meaning as what is spoken, reflecting the culture's emphasis on subtlety, non-confrontation, and the preservation of interpersonal harmony.

### **Methodology and Research Corpus**

In accordance with the requirements of journals indexed in Scopus and Web of Science, this study is based on a clearly structured methodological model. The research material consists of a mini-corpus including:

1. Excerpts from literary works (Russian, Uzbek, English, and Japanese);

2. Examples from everyday oral communication (as described in linguistic studies);
3. Examples from public and institutional discourse (media, interviews, official statements);
4. Fixed speech formulas and paremiological units.

The total corpus comprises approximately 450 contexts, selected according to the presence of taboo illocutions. The analysis is conducted using the following methods:

- Pragmatic analysis (identifying illocutionary and perlocutionary force);
- Comparative method;
- Linguocultural analysis;
- Contextual analysis.

The scientific novelty of this study lies in treating taboo speech acts not only as deviations from linguistic norms but also as strategic communicative resources. They allow speakers to construct power relations, social distance, and group identity across different cultures, demonstrating the complex interplay between language, culture, and pragmatics.

### **Real Linguistic Examples of Taboo Speech Acts Russian Linguoculture**

In Russian linguoculture, taboo is closely associated with religious, moral, and social norms, as has been repeatedly noted in studies on linguoculturology and communicative behavior. [7] This phenomenon is particularly evident in the domain of swear words, curses, and direct insults. The use of obscene language is traditionally considered socially unacceptable in official and intergenerational discourse; however, in informal communication, it can serve functions such as emotional release and group solidarity. For example, the utterance “Ты что, совсем с ума сошёл?” (“Have you completely lost your mind?”) is formally a interrogative sentence, but at the pragmatic level, it performs the illocutionary act of reproach or accusation, accompanied by a high degree of expressiveness. Such a discrepancy between the formal structure and the pragmatic illocution is a characteristic feature of taboo speech acts in Russian discourse. [1,2].

In Russian culture, a direct refusal or open criticism toward elders and superiors is also considered taboo, which leads to the frequent use of softened expressions, euphemisms, and indirect speech acts. [7] For example, a direct refusal such as “I will not do this” in an institutional context is transformed into expressions like “I’m afraid this is not possible at the moment” or “Unfortunately, it is not feasible right now.” Formally, these statements perform the act of informing, but pragmatically they function as indirect directives of refusal, reducing the potential conflict of the illocutionary act. Similarly, a critical remark like “You are wrong” is often replaced by a construction such as “It seems to me that another point of view is possible here,” where mitigation is achieved through modality and the subjectivization of the evaluation.

Silence occupies a special place in Russian linguoculture as an implicit tabooed speech act. The absence of a verbal response in a dialogical situation (— “Do you agree?” — ...) formally carries no illocutionary intention, yet on a pragmatic level it can be interpreted as an expression of disagreement, resentment, or covert protest. [5] Thus, silence functions as an independent communicative act, allowing the addressee to avoid a direct violation of a speech taboo while preserving the perlocutionary effect.

### **Tabooed Speech Acts in Uzbek Culture**

Uzbek linguoculture is characterized by a high degree of respect for age, social status, and family values, which is directly reflected in the system of speech taboos. [8] In this regard, speech acts that violate norms of hierarchy and politeness are considered taboo, in particular, direct objections to elders, open criticism of parents, or public discussion of intimate topics. For instance, a direct statement like “Yo‘q, bu noto‘g‘ri” (“No, this is wrong”), which formally expresses an act of disagreement, is pragmatically perceived as a sign of disrespect and communicative aggression. In actual practice, it is replaced by indirect expressions, such as “Balki boshqa yo‘li bordir” (“Perhaps there is another way”), where a supposition is formally expressed, but pragmatically it functions as a softened act of disagreement.

Silence occupies a special place in Uzbek culture, often serving the functions of respect, modesty, and acknowledgment of the interlocutor’s authority. In situations where a younger person does not respond to an elder’s remark, the absence of a verbal reaction formally carries no illocutionary intention, yet pragmatically it is interpreted as a sign of agreement or deference. [7] Indirect speech acts, euphemization, and implication are widely used to express potentially conflictive illocutions, allowing social harmony to be maintained. Violating these norms—for example, through a direct refusal or public criticism of elders—is perceived as a serious communicative and ethical breach, capable of leading to negative social consequences.

#### **Tabooed Speech Acts in English-Speaking Culture**

In English-speaking communication, taboo is largely contextual and is determined by social, institutional, and ideological factors. [6] Direct insults, as well as racist or sexist statements, are strictly taboo in public discourse and are considered violations of political correctness, whereas in private communication the permissibility of such acts depends on the level of closeness and the agreed-upon communicative roles of the participants.

Of particular interest are politically correct speech acts, in which taboo leads to the active use of euphemisms. For example, the statement “He is disabled” is formally a neutral message, yet in contemporary public discourse it is often replaced with the expression “He is a person with disabilities,” which reduces the potentially negative illocutionary force of the utterance. Directness, traditionally associated with English-speaking culture, is mitigated by politeness strategies and consideration of the addressee’s negative face, allowing communicative conflict to be avoided while maintaining institutional propriety. [3]

#### **Tabooed Speech Acts in Japanese Culture**

Japanese linguoculture demonstrates one of the most complex and formalized mechanisms for taboos in speech acts, based on the principles of social harmony and the preservation of “face.” [9] Direct expression of emotions, refusal, or open criticism is considered highly undesirable and is in most cases replaced by indirect speech acts. For example, the direct refusal いいえ (ie) formally conveys negation, yet in actual communication the expression ちょっと難しいですね (“It’s a bit difficult”) is more commonly used; formally it represents an assessment of the situation, but pragmatically it functions as a refusal.

Silence in Japanese culture often carries significant illocutionary force. In a dialogical situation, the absence of a response can express disagreement, doubt, or refusal without verbalization, allowing one to avoid a direct violation of a speech taboo. The use of the keigo system (polite forms of speech) serves as a key tool for regulating tabooed illocutions and maintaining social hierarchy. Violating these norms can lead to

the loss of social trust and the symbolic “loss of face,” underscoring the high pragmatic significance of tabooed speech acts in Japanese discourse. [5]

### **Comparative Analysis and Discussion**

A comparative analysis of tabooed speech acts in Russian, Uzbek, English-speaking, and Japanese linguocultures reveals both universal and culture-specific mechanisms of their functioning. In all the cultures under consideration, taboo primarily serves a regulatory and norm-establishing function, limiting acceptable ways of verbally expressing potentially conflictive illocutions, such as refusal, criticism, insult, or the expression of negative emotions. However, the degree of permissible directness, as well as the pragmatic status of silence and indirectness, differs significantly.

In Russian and English-speaking cultures, violations of taboo often take the form of expressive strategies used to enhance emotional expressiveness or demonstrate informal solidarity. In these cases, the illocutionary force of tabooed utterances is frequently reinforced through context and intonation rather than formal linguistic means. In contrast, Uzbek and Japanese linguocultures favor a strategy of illocutionary restraint, in which potentially face-threatening acts are systematically mitigated or entirely replaced by indirect expressions and silence.

The pragmatic status of silence is of particular interest. While in Russian and English-speaking communication silence may be interpreted as a communicative failure, a form of passive aggression, or disagreement, in Uzbek and especially Japanese culture it often functions as a full-fledged speech act with high illocutionary force, expressing respect, agreement, avoidance of confrontation, or social distance. Thus, silence is not an absence of communication but a culturally conditioned form of it.

Taboo violations in all cultures can be considered deliberate communicative strategies; however, their pragmatic interpretation depends on the cultural expectations of the addressee. In English-speaking and Russian discourse, tabooed language may be used to signal group identity or demonstrate emotional closeness, whereas in Uzbek and Japanese cultures similar behavior is more often perceived as a serious ethical and social transgression. In this context, tabooed speech acts serve as indicators not only of linguistic norms but also of deeper cultural values related to hierarchy, collectivism, and the maintenance of social harmony.

Thus, intercultural comparison shows that tabooed speech acts are not exclusively negative or marginal phenomena. On the contrary, they represent a flexible pragmatic tool through which language users regulate social relations, manage interpersonal distance, and construct identity within specific communicative contexts.

### **Conclusion**

The comparative analysis shows that tabooed speech acts serve a universal regulatory function, yet the ways they are realized vary significantly. Russian and English-speaking cultures allow greater variability in informal discourse, whereas Uzbek and Japanese cultures emphasize strict hierarchy and indirectness.

Violation of taboo can function as a pragmatic strategy for expressing emotions, demonstrating power, or constructing group identity. The study demonstrates that tabooed speech acts are an important element of the communicative system in any culture. Their analysis provides deeper insight into the mechanisms of intercultural interaction and contributes to the development of speech act theory and pragmatics.

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## ПОЭЗИЯ

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**Аннотация:** В статье рассматривается поэзия русской литературы первой половины XX века как уникальное художественно-культурное явление, отразившее сложные исторические процессы эпохи. Анализируются основные этапы развития поэзии - модернистский расцвет Серебряного века, революционный и послереволюционный период, а также время утверждения социалистического реализма. Особое внимание уделяется жанровому многообразию, эстетическим новациям, роли исторического контекста и цензуры в формировании поэтического дискурса. Рассматривается вклад ведущих поэтов - А.Блока, В.Маяковского, А.Ахматовой, О.Мандельштама, С. Есенина, М.Цветаевой, А.Твардовского, К.Симонова - в развитие русской поэзии. Делается вывод о том, что поэзия данного периода стала отражением духовных поисков эпохи и сохранила художественную ценность несмотря на идеологическое давление.

**Ключевые слова и выражения:** русская поэзия XX века, Серебряный век, модернизм, символизм, акмеизм, футуризм, социалистический реализм, революция 1917 года, цензура, репрессии, жанровое разнообразие, лирика, поэма, поэтический дискурс.