RUSSIAN JOURNAL OF LINGUISTICS

2025 Volume 29 No. 2

Founded in 1997
by the RUDN University

Научный журнал

Издается с 1997 г.

Издание зарегистрировано Федеральной службой по надзору в сфере связи, информационных технологий и массовых коммуникаций (Роскомнадзор)
Свидетельство о регистрации ПИ № ФС 77-76503 от 02.08.2019 г.
Учредитель: Федеральное государственное автономное образовательное учреждение высшего образования «Российский университет дружбы народов имени Патриса Лумумбы»

DOI: 10.22363/2687-0088-2025-29-2

RUSSIAN JOURNAL OF LINGUISTICS

ISSN 2687-0088 e-ISSN 2686-8024

Publication frequency: quarterly.
Languages: Russian, English.
Indexed/abstracted in Scopus, Web of Science Core Collection (ESCI), RSCI, DOAJ, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory: http://www.ulrichsweb.com, Electronic Journals Library Cyberleninka, Google Scholar, WorldCat.

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E-mail: **lingj@rudn.ru**

4 выпуска в год.
Языки: русский, английский.
Входит в перечень рецензируемых научных изданий ВАК РФ.
Включен в каталог периодических изданий Scopus, Web of Science Core Collection (ESCI), RSCI, DOAJ, Ульрих (Ulrich's Periodicals Directory: http://www.ulrichsweb.com).
Материалы журнала размещаются на платформе РИНЦ Российской научной электронной библиотеки, Electronic Journals Library Cyberleninka, Google Scholar,WorldCat.
Подписной индекс издания в каталоге агентства Роспечать: 36436.

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Журнал строго придерживается международных стандартов публикационной этики, сформулированных в документе *COPE* (*Committee on Publication Ethics*) **http://publicationethics.org**.

Правила оформления статей, архив и дополнительная информация размещены на сайте: **http://journals.rudn.ru/linguistics**.

Электронный адрес: **lingj@rudn.ru**

Подписано в печать 15.06.2025. Выход в свет 28.06.2025. Формат 70×108/16.
Бумага офсетная. Печать офсетная. Гарнитура «Times New Roman».
Усл. печ. л. 22,4. Тираж 500 экз. Заказ № 775. Цена свободная.
Отпечатано в типографии ИПК РУДН: 115419, Москва, Россия, ул. Орджоникидзе, д. 3

Printed at the RUDN Publishing House: 3, Ordzhonikidze St., 115419 Moscow, Russia,
+7 (495) 955-08-61; e-mail: publishing@rudn.ru

Review editor ***Konstantin V. Zenkin***
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Tel.: +7 (495) 434-20-12; e-mail: lingj@rudn.ru

Адрес редакции:
115419, Москва, Россия, ул. Орджоникидзе, д. 3
Тел.: +7 (495) 955-07-16; e-mail: publishing@rudn.ru

Почтовый адрес редакции:
117198, Москва, Россия, ул. Миклухо-Маклая, д. 10, корп. 2
Тел.: +7 (495) 434-20-12; e-mail: lingj@rudn.ru

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Russian Journal of Linguistics
ISSN 2687-0088 (Print), ISSN 2686-8024 (Online)

2025 Vol. 29 No. 2 218–249
http://journals.rudn.ru/linguistics

https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-41329
EDN: ITFPNA

Research article / Научная статья

The cleft construction: A formal definition

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Abstract
The paper addresses the task of systematizing linguistic notions and corresponding terminology: it presents a rigorous definition of the notion of cleft construction. The study is carried out in the theoretical framework of the Meaning-Text approach. The substantive and formal requirements on a rigorous linguistic definition are formulated. The cleft construction in English is described as a basis for the definition: the semantic [SemR], the deep-syntactic [DSyntR] and the surface-syntactic [SSyntR] representations of three English cleft sentences are given, as well as five formal DSyntR ⇔ SSyntR rules for the expression of a focalized Rheme by the cleft construction. The cleft construction is defined as a particular type of linguistic sign; it is a grammatical (surface-syntactic) idiom, headed by a lexeme of the copula verb 'be' with fairly complex syntactics. An overview of cleft constructions in several languages structurally different from English—French, Spanish, German, Irish, Kinyarwanda, and Mandarin Chinese—follows. Finally, pseudo-cleft sentences are considered; in contrast to cleft sentences, they are special only from a semantic, but not from a syntactic viewpoint (there is no term **pseudo-cleft construction*): they present a particular organization of the starting meaning. The results of the paper: 1) It proposes a formal notion of cleft construction, which allows the researchers to distinguish—in various languages—syntactic phenomena that serve the same informational purpose (namely, the expression of a focalized Rheme or Theme), but are structurally different; in this way the paper contributes to General syntax. 2) It provides a sketch of a formal description of the cleft construction in English, thus contributing to English studies.
Keywords: *formal linguistic notions, syntax, cleft construction, pseudo-cleft sentences, English, Kinyarwanda, Mandarin Chinese*

For citation:
Mel'čuk, Igor. 2025. The cleft construction: A formal definition. *Russian Journal of Linguistics* 29 (2). 218–249. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-41329

Расщепленная конструкция: формальное определение

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Аннотация
В статье решается задача систематизации лингвистических понятий и соответствующей терминологии: дается строгое определение понятия «расщепленная конструкция». Исследование проводится в рамках теоретического подхода «Смысл–Текст». Формулируются содержательные и формальные требования к строгому лингвистическому определению. В качестве базы определения описывается расщепленная конструкция в английском языке: даются семантические [SemR], глубинно-синтаксические [DSyntR] и поверхностно-синтаксические [SSyntR] представления трех английских расщепленных предложений, а также пять формальных DSyntR ⇔ SSyntR правил для выражения фокализованной ремы конструкцией с расщеплением. Данная конструкция определяется как особый тип языкового знака; это грамматическая (поверхностно-синтаксическая) идиома, в которой синтаксической вершиной является глагол-связка 'быть' с достаточно сложной синтактикой. Представлен обзор расщепленных конструкций в нескольких языках, структурно отличных от английского, – во французском, испанском, немецком, ирландском, киньяруанда и современном китайском. Затем рассматриваются псевдо-расщепленные предложения, которые, в отличие от расщепленных, являются особенными только с семантической, но не с синтаксической точки зрения (термин **псевдо-расщепленная конструкция* не используется): в них представлена особая организация исходного значения. В статье предложены: 1) формальное определение расщепленной конструкции, которое позволяет исследователям различать в разных языках синтаксические явления, служащие одной и той же информационной цели (а именно выражению фокализованной ремы или темы), но являющиеся структурно различными; 2) краткое формальное описание расщепленной конструкции в английском языке. Таким образом, работа вносит вклад в исследования общего и английского синтаксиса.
Ключевые слова: *формальные лингвистические понятия, синтаксис, расщепленная конструкция, псевдо-расщепленные предложения, английский язык, язык киньяруанда, современный китайский язык*

Для цитирования:
Mel'čuk I. The cleft construction: A formal definition. *Russian Journal of Linguistics.* 2025. Vol. 29. № 2. P. 218–249. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-41329

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1. Introduction: Toward a formal definition of cleft construction

As is well known, one of the serious obstacles to the development of, and progress in, linguistics is the absence of a unified notional system of the type that exists in hard sciences. Many futile discussions are provoked by mutual misunderstandings and/or by different interpretations of even the most current terms. That is why I have been tackling this problem for almost half a century: an attempt to create a system of formal notions for linguistic morphology was made in (Mel'čuk 1982, 1993–2000, 2006), for semantics and syntax—in (Mel'čuk 1988, 2012–2015, 2021), and for phraseology—in (Mel'čuk 2023). Speaking of syntax, such syntactic notions as syntactic actant, surface-syntactic subject, government and agreement, passive construction, ergative construction, relative clause and pseudo-relative clause have been formally introduced. Here, another syntactic notion is considered: the cleft construction.

☛ The name of a linguistic notion (= a technical term) on its first mention is printed in Helvetica; if need be, the notion is explained either in the subsequent text or in Appendix 1, pp. 244–245.

What follows is couched in terms of the Meaning-Text approach (e.g., Mel'čuk 1974, 2012–2015, 2016, 2018, among others).[1] The three main pillars of this approach are as follows:

• The description of a linguistic entity is carried out in the direction from Meaning to Text; it shows how a given meaning is expressed by this entity (rather than how this entity is understood).

• All formal representations of utterances are stated in terms of dependency—semantic, syntactic and morphological.

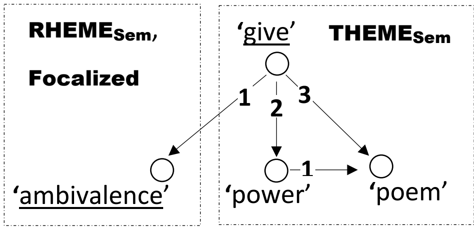
• Two levels of syntactic representation are distinguished: the deep-syntactic representation [DSyntR], which is closer to meaning, and the surface-syntactic representation [SSyntR], closer to text. The DSynt-structure [DSyntS] contains only semantically full lexical units (no grammatical lexical units), while the SSynt-structure [SSyntS] is made up of all actual lexemes of the utterance (including grammatical lexemes).

[1] A more complete list of publications on the Meaning-Text approach, as well as a brief overview of them, is presented in (Ivanova & Larina 2022).

The exposition presupposes sufficient familiarity of the reader with the conceptual apparatus and formalisms of the Meaning-Text approach. However, short explanations are provided wherever it seems necessary.

The prototypical cleft construction is illustrated in (1a), where its three lexical components are boldfaced; for a rigorous definition, see Section **4**, pp. 235–236. In (1b) a (simplified) semantic representation [SemR] of sentence (1a) is given.

(1) a. ***It is*** *ambivalence* ***that*** *gives the poem its power.*
b.



☛ The <u>underscoring</u> of a semanteme within a communicative area in a semantic representation (in this case, of the semantemes '<u>ambivalence</u>' and '<u>give</u>') indicates its communicative dominance.

The cleft construction serves to express the focalization of the semantic Rheme [**RHEME$_{Sem}$**] of a sentence; in (1b) it is the semanteme '<u>ambivalence</u>' that is focalized. In other words, the cleft construction plays a strictly communicative role: it marks on the surface the communicative value Focalized of the communicative category **Focalization** (see **Appendix 1**, p. 245).

The **RHEME$_{Sem}$** of a sentence is expressed on the deep-syntactic level by its **RHEME$_{DSynt}$**. Therefore, what is discussed in this paper is the expression of the focalized **RHEME$_{DSynt}$**.

NB: For the semantic-communicative structure of sentences adopted here, see (Mel'čuk 2001).

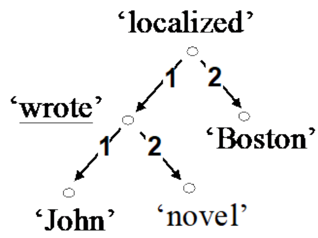
A sentence including a cleft construction is called a cleft sentence. (The expression *cleft clause*, encountered in the literature, is to be avoided: it is a sentence that can be "cleft," i.e. cleaved, into two clauses.)

The nature of the cleft construction in English was established by Otto Jespersen (1937: 83–89). Jespersen's description was developed in a huge number of studies: a Google search (2024.02.09) for "cleft sentences" produced 6,250,000 hits! Here I will mention just a few studies that have been most useful for myself. Thus, the classical English grammar (Quirk et al. 1985/1991: 1383–1387) offers a detailed characterization of English cleft constructions; see also (Sornicola 1988), (Collins 1991) and (Davidse 2000). The available information on cleft constructions in English, German and French is elegantly summarized in (Lambrecht 2001), an article that is basic for any study of clefts, including, of course, the present paper. I do not introduce new facts; all my data are borrowed from published research.

However, no rigorous general definition of the cleft construction as a particular type of linguistic unit has been supplied. It is this lacuna that I will be trying to fill.

It is convenient to start with a simple example. Let there be semantic structure [SemS] (2)—the depiction of a particular propositional meaning:

(2)



NB The SemS (2), as all the SemSs cited further, is incomplete: the meanings of grammemes (nominal number, verbal mood and tense) are not shown.

This SemS contains the communicatively dominant predicate semanteme—'wrote', its two Sem-actants—'John' and 'novel', and a semantic modifier—'in [= localized.in] Boston'. Accordingly, from SemS (2) it is possible to produce several sentences with different semantic-communicative structures without focalization of the rhematic meaning; see, for instance, (3):

(3) a. [*John*]$_{\textbf{Sem-Theme}}$ [*wrote this novel in Boston*]$_{\textbf{Sem-Rheme}}$.
b. [*This novel,*]$_{\textbf{Sem-Theme, Focalized}}$ [*John wrote it in Boston*]$_{\textbf{Sem-Rheme}}$.
c. [*In Boston,*]$_{\textbf{Sem-Theme, Focalized}}$ [*John wrote this novel*]$_{\textbf{Sem-Rheme}}$.
d. [*This novel was written by John*]$_{\textbf{Sem-Theme}}$ [*in Boston*]$_{\textbf{Sem-Rheme}}$.
e. [*This novel was written in Boston*]$_{\textbf{Sem-Theme}}$ [*by John*]$_{\textbf{Sem-Rheme}}$.

(All these sentences are, of course, supposed to be uttered with the neutral prosody.)

At the same time, SemS (2) also underlies the cleft sentences in (4), where the focalized rhematic phrase is boldfaced:

(4) a. *It is **John** that/who wrote this novel in Boston*.
b. *It is **this novel** (that) John wrote in Boston.*
c. *It is **in Boston** that John wrote this novel.*

The following fact is crucial:

All the sentences in (3) and (4)—the cleft and non-cleft ones—are produced from the same starting SemS: (2). In other words, all of these sentences have the same propositional meaning and differ only in their communicative organization.

> The goal of this paper is a rigorous definition of the notion "cleft construction" and a formal characterization of this construction.

Thus, the paper constitutes another contribution to the long-term work on the notional system of linguistics mentioned above, at the beginning of this section.

2. What is a rigorous linguistic definition?

Since my aim is a rigorous definition of cleft construction, it is necessary to formulate first the requirements imposed on rigorous linguistic definitions. The most important class of linguistic definitions is that of deductive definitions; I think that the cleft construction must be defined deductively, and therefore I will characterize here deductive definitions only.[2]

A definition of a linguistic entity **E** should satisfy two sets of requirements: substantive ones and technical ones.

Three substantive requirements on a linguistic definition

1) A linguistic definition must be **strictly deductive**: when formulating a definition, the researcher proceeds from the more general to the more particular.

Usually, what is an **E** is intuitively more or less clear in central cases, but for many marginal specimens the answer is far from obvious; therefore, the notion of **E** must be sharpened. For this, it is necessary to define the most general notion of which **E** is a particular case. Attention: what is meant is the **most general notion**, not *genus proximum*, i.e. not 'the nearest kind': the notion the researcher is after must represents the most inclusive class of items to which **E** belongs, along, of course, with many other items, which are similar to, but essentially different from, **E**. This "superclass" must then be partitioned into the biggest subclasses available (ideally, into two subclasses), and this operation is repeated again and again, until we get a class that consists only of entities **E**.

Substantive requirement No. 1 ensures that the place of **E** among other similar notions (in terms of class inclusion) is well established.

2) A linguistic definition must strive for **maximal "narrowing" of E's defining properties**: these properties must be distinguished and separated as much as possible, thus creating finer-grained notions. The researcher is supposed to place under the notion of each property as little as he can, so that **E** is defined by the maximal set of the finest possible relevant properties.

Substantive requirement No. 2 guarantees that the notion will be the least inclusive, i.e., the narrowest possible.

3) A linguistic definition must **be based on the prototypical cases** of **E**. This approach essentially follows what Charles Hockett (Hockett 1956) proposed about 70 years ago for the concept of grammatical case. Namely, "(grammatical) case" must be defined strictly on the basis of a prototypical case system, for instance, that of Latin or Ancient Greek, and then the notion has to be reasonably generalized—

[2] Two other types of linguistic definitions are inductive definitions (such as those of syntactic clause elements—subject, direct object, etc.) and enumerative definitions (such as that of lexical unit: a lexeme or an idiom).

such that new phenomena subsumed under the definition thus obtained are sufficiently similar to the Latin case.

No Eurocentrism is implied here. It is not that the Latin concept of case should be imposed on a completely different language. On the contrary, the name *case* should be used strictly for phenomena that are similar enough in criterial ways to the Latin case. If the phenomenon considered is not sufficiently similar to what we call *case* in Latin it simply should not be called *case*.

Substantive requirement No. 3 pushes the researcher towards intuitively more attractive notions.

Four technical requirements on a linguistic definition

A linguistic definition must be:

1) **Formal**—it should be applicable automatically, that is, literally.

2) **Rigorous**—it should contain only previously defined notions and/or else undefinable notions (*indefinibilia*), which must be listed as such. More precisely, it should be a definition of the axiomatic type: *per genus proximum et differentia specifica* 'by the nearest kind and specific differences', as established by Boethius (480–524), who was following the ideas of Aristotle.

3) **Sufficient and necessary**—it should cover all the phenomena that are perceived as being subsumable under the corresponding notion, and nothing but such phenomena.

4) **Logically universal**—it should be applicable to any relevant item of any language in order to check whether this item satisfies the given definition or not. (But this item itself as well as the entities in its definition are not meant, of course, to be necessarily language-universal.)

I use the cleft construction in English as a prototypical representative of cleft constructions in all languages. If a particular construction in a given language does not satisfy the proposed definition, it is not similar enough to the English cleft construction and therefore should not be called *cleft construction*.

3. The cleft construction in English

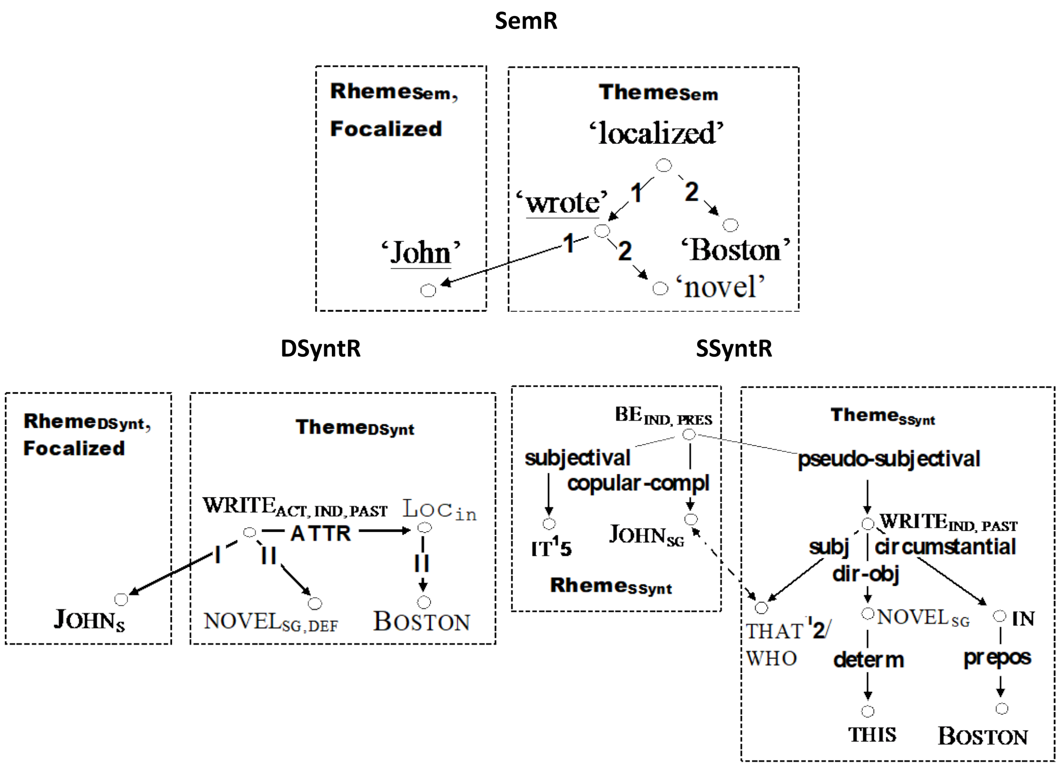
The English cleft construction will be characterized in two steps. First, the semantic, the deep-syntactic and the surface-syntactic representations of three illustrative cleft sentences—that is, sentences containing a cleft construction–are given (**3.1**). Second, the syntactic rules that ensure the expression of the focalization of a Rheme by a cleft construction are introduced (**3.2**).

3.1. The formal representations of three English cleft sentences

Here are the semantic [SemR], the deep-syntactic [DSyntR] and the surface-syntactic [SSyntR] representations of the cleft sentences in (5).

☛ A dashed two-headed arrow ◂┈┈┈▸ in a Synt-structure shows a coreference link between two lexemes.

(5) [= (4a)] *It is John that/who wrote this novel in Boston.*



For the DSynt- and SSynt-relations, see (Mel'čuk 2021: Ch. 2).

Comments

1) As stated above (p. 221), a focalized Sem-Rheme corresponds to the focalized DSynt-Rheme, so that the cleft construction marks, strictly speaking, the focalization of the deep-syntactic Rheme.

2) The lexeme IT^1**5** is a semantically empty pronoun, appearing as a dummy SSynt-subject; THAT^1**2** is a relative pronoun: ≅ WHICH. (Lexicographic numbering here and below follows *Longman's Dictionary*.)

3) The subordinate clause in a cleft sentence depends on the copula verb BE by the **pseudo-subjectival** SSynt-relation (Mel'čuk 2021: 51–52). This is the SSyntRel used for all cases where a dummy SSynt-subject IT^1**5** appears with the copula BE (or a similar verb such as SEEM or HAPPEN), the latter governing an expression that is, so to speak, "coreferential" with this IT^1**5**:

It←**subjectival**–*is*–[*convenient*]–**pseudo-subjectival**→*to use the following technique.*

or

It←**subjectival**–*is*–[*known*]–**pseudo-subjectival**→*that John is in town.*

4) The relative pronouns THAT¹**2** and WHO need the indication of coreference with their source (in this case, with the noun JOHN), since the grammatical number of this source noun controls the form of the Main Verb (WRITE) of the pseudo-subjectival subordinate clause of a cleft sentence:

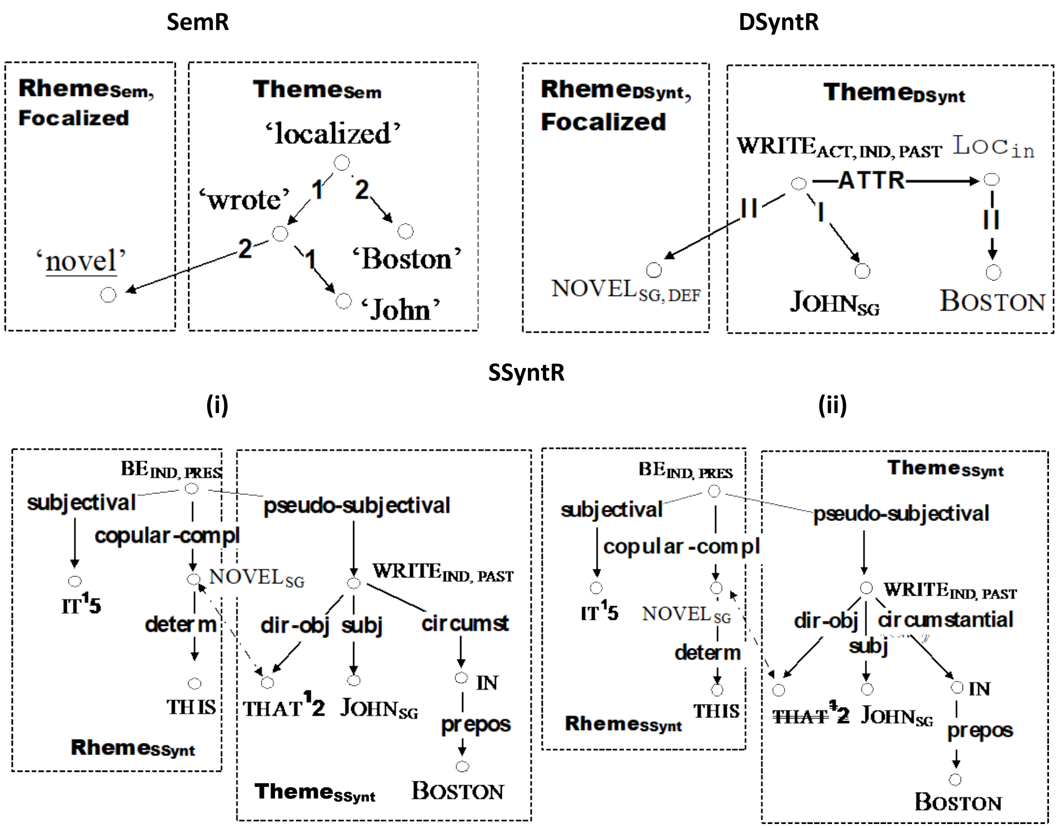
It is this ***person*** *that/who*←***is*** *writing the novel.*

vs.

It is these ***people*** *that/who*←***are*** *writing the novel.*

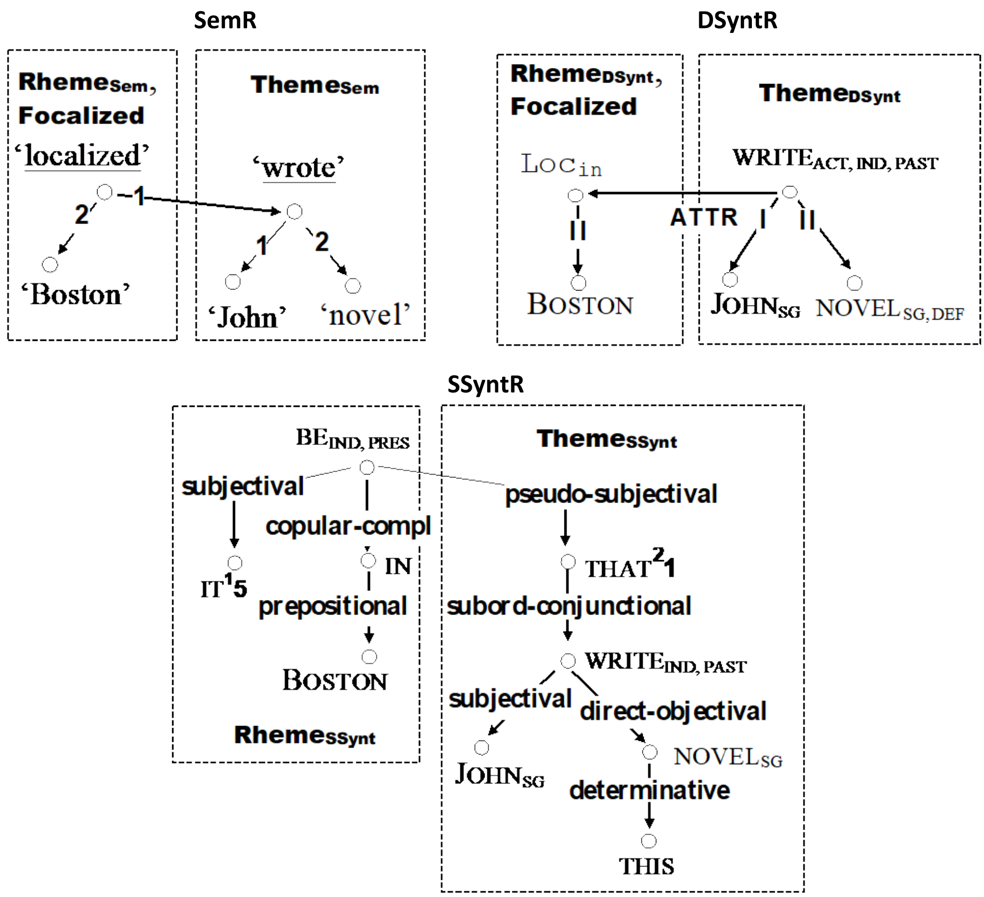
In some other languages that have the cleft construction, the Main Verb of the subordinate clause in a cleft sentence also reflects the person and gender of the relative pronoun's source (see Section **4**, the examples (18) and (19)), so that the indication of coreference is justified.

(6) [= (4b)] *It is this novel* (*that*) *John wrote in Boston*.



In the SSyntR of (6-ii) the pronoun THAT¹**2** is elided, which happens typically when it is the direct object of the Main Verb in the subordinate clause of the cleft sentenlausece. (The elision is shown by double strikethrough, which indicates that this lexeme does not appear in the morphological string, that is, in the deep-morphological representation.)

(7) [= (4c)] *It is in Boston that John wrote this novel.*



Now I can spell out the deep-syntactic rules (rules of the DSyntS ⇔ SSyntS form), which establish the correspondence between the DSynt- and the SSynt-structures of a cleft sentence. These rules, from now on, are referred to as Foc-Cleft rules.

3.2. Expression of a focalized Rheme by means of the cleft construction

The English Foc-Cleft rules given below claim neither exhaustiveness nor high accuracy: the goal is not to provide an ideal and exhaustive description of the English cleft construction, but only to offer a representative illustration of the proposed formalisms. (For factual details, see the titles mentioned in Section **1**.) The English cleft construction subsumes a series of more or less marginal, slightly deviant cases, which cause doubts among speakers. I am unable to sort out the relevant facts and will rely on the intuition of my few informants.

The Foc-Cleft rules are presented in order to show how my formalisms can be used for the description of various expressions of this kind; these rules are more about the formal notion of cleft construction rather than about the real cleft construction in English.

Five Foc-Cleft rules are needed according to the SSynt-role that the focalized rhematic element L_1 plays in the corresponding sentence without such focalization.

— Rule 1: L_1 is an SSynt-actant expressed by a prepositionless noun or an adjective; that is, it is a SSynt-subject, a direct object or a copular complement.

— Rule 2: L_1 is an SSynt-actant expressed by a preposition-introduced noun; that is, it is a surface-syntactic indirect or oblique object.

— Rule 3: L_1 is a possessor complement of a subject or a direct object.

— Rule 4: L_1 is a possessor complement of an indirect or oblique object.

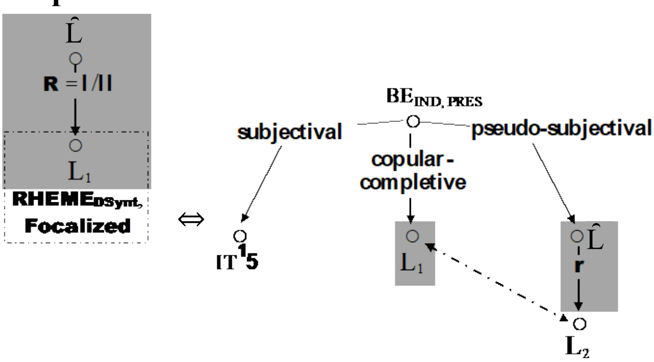
— Rule 5: L_1 is a circumstantial.

These rules represent a rather rough picture of the cleft construction in English; the simplifications and omissions accepted are indicated on p. 231.

Foc-Cleft rules for English (DSyntR ⇔ SSyntR)

☛ The symbol $\hat{L}$ stands for the lexeme L that is the syntactic head of the sentence.
The symbols **R** and **r** stand, respectively, for a particular DSynt-relation and a particular SSynt-relation.
Shading indicates the context of the rule—that is, the components of the manipulated structures that are not affected by the rule, but whose presence is necessary for the rule to apply correctly.

Foc-Cleft rule 1: Focalizing subjects, direct objects and copular complements



1) no: L_1←**II**–BE
2) **r** = **subjectival**, **direct-objectival**, **copular-completive**
3) L_2 = THAT[1]**2** or WHO | **if** L_1 = «human»

(i) *It is food*$_{L_1}$ *that*$_{L_2}$←**subj**–*determines*$_{\hat{L}}$ *the shape of the mind.*

(ii) *It is McGregor*$_{L_1}$ *and Househoffer that/who*$_{L_2}$←**subj**–*determine*$_{\hat{L}}$ *our plans.*

(iii) *It is food*$_{L_1}$ *that*$_{L_2}$←**dir-obj**–[*we*]–*consider*$_{\hat{L}}$ *to be the determining factor.*

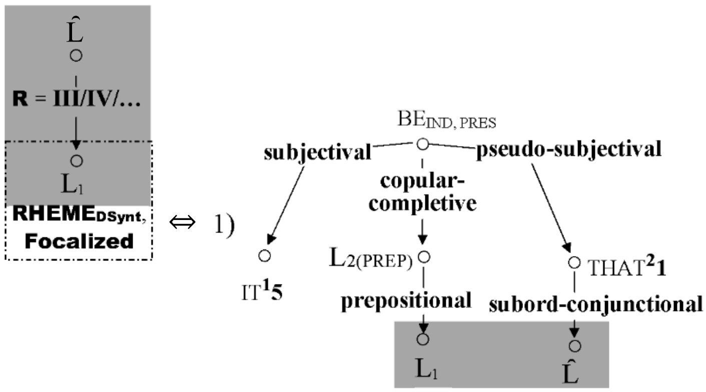
(iv) *It is McGregor*$_{L_1}$ *that/who*$_{L_2}$←**dir-obj**–[*we*]–*consider*$_{\hat{L}}$ *to be the determining factor.*

(v) **It is American*$_{L_1}$*, not British, that*$_{L_2}$←**cop-compl**–[*McGregor*]–*is*$_{\hat{L}}$. [Condition 1)]

vs.

It is American$_{L_1}$*, not British, that*$_{L_2}$←**cop-compl**–[*McGregor*$_{L_1}$]–*became*$_{\hat{L}}$.

Foc-Cleft rule 2: Focalizing indirect and oblique objects

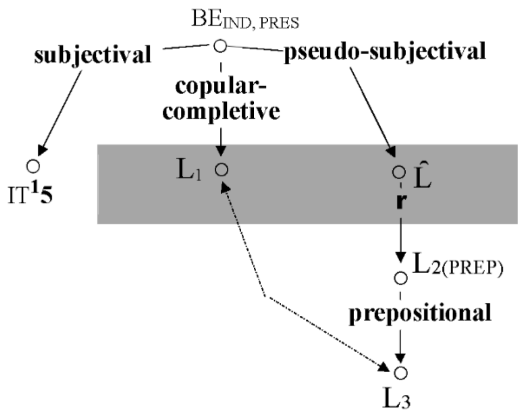


$L_{2(\text{PREP})} = L_{(\text{PREP})}([\mathbf{R}(\hat{L})])$

☛ The expression $L_{(\text{PREP})}([\mathbf{R}(\hat{L})])$ means "the preposition that is indicated in the column **R** of L̂'s government pattern as a possible surface means marking the corresponding SSynt-actant."

(vi) IndirO: *It is to*$_{L_2}$ *McGregor*$_{L_1}$ *that*–[*we*]–**subord-conj**→*gave*$_{\hat{L}}$ *the book.*
(vii) OblO: *It is on*$_{L_2}$ *this aid*$_{L_1}$/*on*$_{L_2}$ *McGregor*$_{L_1}$ *that*–[*we*]–**subord-conj**→*depend*$_{\hat{L}}$.

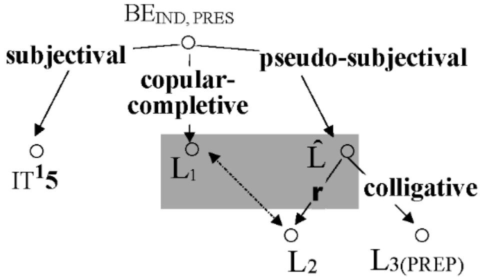
⇔ 2)



1) **r = indir-objectival, oblique-objectival**
2) $L_{2(\text{PREP})} = L_{(\text{PREP})}([\mathbf{R}(\hat{L})])$
3) L_3 = WHICH | **if** $L_1 \neq$ «human»
or
WHO | **if** L_1 = «human»

(viii) IndirO: *It is McGregor*$_{L_1}$ *to*$_{L_2}$–**prepositional**→*whom*$_{L_3}$ *we gave*$_{\hat{L}}$ *the book.*
(ix) OblO: *It is McGregor*$_{L_1}$ *on*$_{L_2}$–**prepositional**→*whom*$_{L_3}$ *we depend*$_{\hat{L}}$.
(x) OblO: *It is these promises*$_{L_1}$ *on*$_{L_2}$–**prepositional**→*which*$_{L_3}$ *we depend*$_{\hat{L}}$.

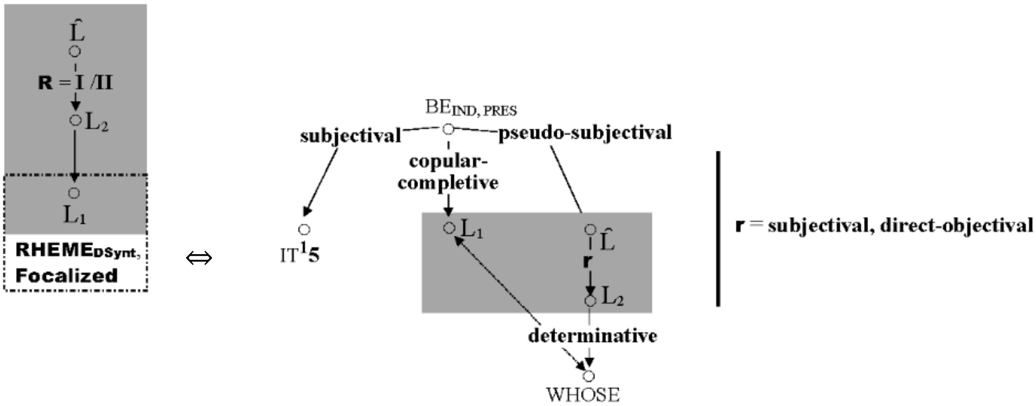
⇔ 3)



1) **r = indir-objectival, oblique-objectival**
2) L_2 = THAT¹**2 or**
WHO | **if** L_1 = «human»
3) $L_{3(\text{PREP})} = L_{(\text{PREP})}([\mathbf{R}(\hat{L})])$

(xi) IndirO: *It is McGregor*$_{L_1}$ *that/who(m)*$_{L_2}$ *we gave*$_{\hat{L}}$–[*the book*]–**colligative**→*to*$_{L_3}$.
(xii) OblO: *It is these promises*$_{L_1}$ *that*$_{L_2}$ *we depend*$_{\hat{L}}$–**colligative**→*on*$_{L_3}$.

Foc-Cleft rule 3: Focalizing the possessor complement of the subject or the direct object

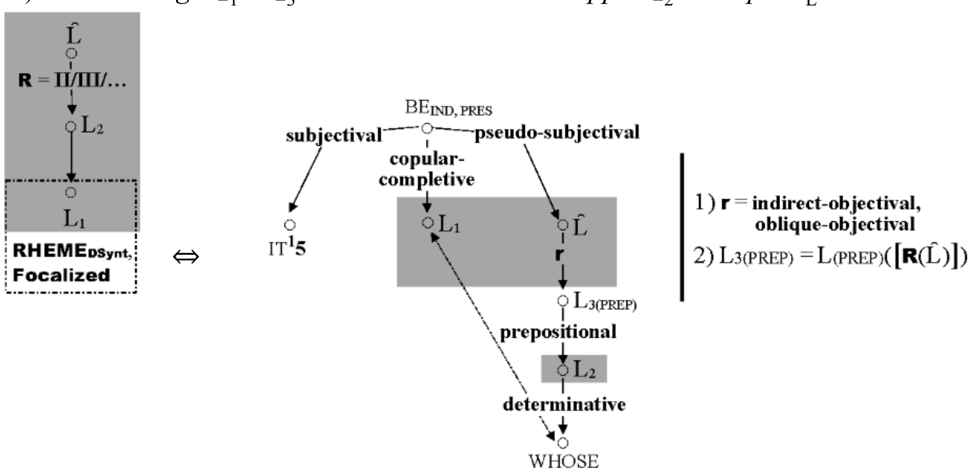


(xiii) *It is McGregor*$_{L_1}$ *whose*←**determinative**–*intervention*$_{L_2}$ *saved*$_{\hat{L}}$ *the day.*

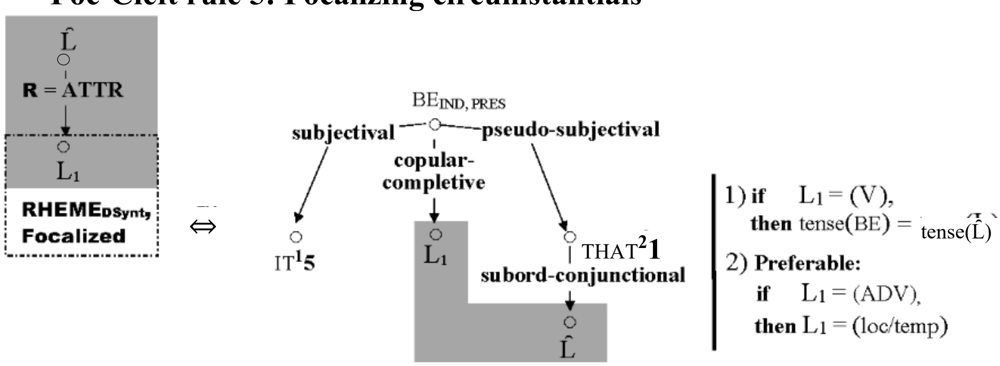
(xiv) *It is McGregor*$_{L_1}$ *whose*←**determinative**–*paintings*$_{L_2}$ *we adore*$_{\hat{L}}$.

Foc-Cleft rule 4: Focalizing the possessor complement of the indirect or oblique object

(xv) *It is McGregor*$_{L_1}$ *on*$_{L_3}$ *whose*←**determinative**–*support*$_{L_2}$ *we depend*$_{\hat{L}}$.



Foc-Cleft rule 5: Focalizing circumstantials



(xvi) *It is just there*$_{\mathrm{L_1}}$ *that*–[*we*]–**subord-conj**→*met*$_{\hat{\mathrm{L}}}$ *McGregor.*
(xvii) *It is yesterday*$_{\mathrm{L_1}}$ *that*–[*we*]–**subord-conj**→*met*$_{\hat{\mathrm{L}}}$ *McGregor.*
(xviii) *It is with*$_{\mathrm{L_1}}$ ⟨*together*$_{\mathrm{L_1}}$ *with*⟩ *McGregor that*–[*we*]–**subord-conj**→*visited*$_{\hat{\mathrm{L}}}$ *Boston.*
(xix) *It is on*$_{\mathrm{L_1}}$ *"The National" that*–[*we*]–**subord-conj**→*saw*$_{\hat{\mathrm{L}}}$ *this news.*
(xx) *It is because*$_{\mathrm{L_1}}$ *of McGregor that*–[*we*]–**subord-conj**→*are*$_{\hat{\mathrm{L}}}$ *late.*
(xxi) **It is to see*$_{\mathrm{L_1}}$ *McGregor that*–[*we*]–**subord-conj**→*came*$_{\hat{\mathrm{L}}}$ *to Boston.* [Condition 1)]
vs.
It is to see$_{\mathrm{L_1}}$ *McGregor that*–[*we*]–**subord-conj**→*come*$_{\hat{\mathrm{L}}}$ *to Boston.*
and
It was to see$_{\mathrm{L_1}}$ *McGregor that*–[*we*]–**subord-conj**→*came*$_{\hat{\mathrm{L}}}$ *to Boston.*
(xxii) ?*It is carefully*$_{\mathrm{L_1}}$ *that*–[*McGregor*]–**subord-conj**→*opened*$_{\hat{\mathrm{L}}}$ *the box.* [Condition 2); cf. examples (xvi) and (xvii)]
vs.
It is with$_{\mathrm{L_1}}$ *care that*–[*McGregor*]–**subord-conj**→*opened*$_{\hat{\mathrm{L}}}$ *the box.*

Comment

Condition 1): In case of the focalization of a circumstantial, if this circumstantial is a verb (an infinitive of purpose), the tense of the subordinate clause must the same as the tense of the superordinate clause (= the tense of BE).

Condition 2): If $\mathrm{L_1}$ is an adverb, it preferably is locative or temporal; for instance, *It is **far away** that John lives* or *It is very **early** that John begins his day*, but ?*It is very **warmly** that John was received there*. However, qualitative adverbs are also possible: *It was **sadly** that he smiled* or *It was very **slowly** that he answered*.

Simplifications adopted in the Foc-Cleft rules

The Foc-Cleft rules presented above gloss over the following four important properties of the English cleft construction.

1) The cleft construction readily appears also in negative and interrogative sentences:

(8) a. *It is not John who insists on our leaving.*
b. *Is it John who insists on our leaving?*
c. *Is it not John who insists on our leaving?*

Our Foc-Cleft rules ignore this fact.

2) The verb BE in the superordinate clause of a cleft sentence is not necessarily in the present tense (contrary to what is indicated in our Foc-Cleft rules):

(9) a. *It **was** John who brought the booze.*
b. *From day one, it **has been** the Americans who politicized the issue.*
c. *If we fail, it **will be** overconfidence that is our undoing.*

3) If $\mathrm{L_1}$—the rhematic element to be focalized—does not depend immediately on the syntactic head $\hat{\mathrm{L}}$ of the sentence, the copular complement in the subordinate clause must be the highest SSynt-governor of $\mathrm{L_1}$ that depends directly on $\hat{\mathrm{L}}$. For instance, in the sentence *John reads only*←**restrictive**–$\boxed{\textit{very}_{\mathrm{RHEME,\ Foc}}}$ *short stories* the focalized rhematic element is the adverb VERY; then the corresponding cleft sentence is *It is only* ***VÉRY*** *short stories that John reads*, where the copular complement is the head of the phrase *very←short←stories*, and the focalized element is marked by prosody (phrasal stress). This particularity is also not reflected in the Foc-Cleft rules.

4) $\hat{\mathrm{L}}$ in a Foc-Cleft rule can be not a single lexeme $\mathrm{L}_{(\mathrm{V})}$, but is instead a standard syntactic subtree (Mel'čuk & Pertsov 1987: 193–195, 485–491), a.k.a. a verbal nucleus (Kahane 2001), that is, a syntactic chain of subsequently subordinated lexemes that is syntactically equivalent to a simple verb; for instance, instead of *John* ***wrote***$_{\hat{\mathrm{L}}}$ *this text* one may encounter *John* ***might***$_{\hat{\mathrm{L}}}$***→have→written*** *this text*. Such a standard subtree can be transferred from the subordinate to the superordinate clause of a cleft sentence *salva significatione* (replacing, of course, the label of the terminal node by the corresponding form of the verb BE):

(10) *John*$_{\mathbf{RHEME,\ Foc}}$ ***might***$_{\hat{\mathrm{L}}}$ ***have written*** *this text*. ~
It is John who ***might have written*** *this text*. ≡
It ***might have been*** *John who wrote this text.*

Moreover, some adverbials (mostly, parentheticals) can be transferred from the subordinate to the superordinate clause of a cleft sentence:

(11) *John*$_{\mathbf{RHEME,\ Foc}}$ ***probably*** **⟨*, as you know,*⟩** *wrote this text*. ~
It is John who ***probably*** **⟨*, as you know,*⟩** *wrote this text*. ≡
It is ***probably*** **⟨*, as you know,*⟩** *John who wrote this text.*

However, our Foc-Cleft rules do not account for this operation.

Similarly, the copula verb in the cleft construction can also be the terminal component of a syntactic standard subtree, as, for instance, in (12):

(12) a. *It* ***can be*** *these moments that keep us from speaking up*.
b. *It* ***seems to be*** *these people who were incarcerated.*

This possibility is not accounted for, either.

Our rules ignore as well three syntactic phenomena that are not specific to the cleft construction:

• The possible omission (= ellipsis) of the relative pronoun THAT^{1}**2**/WHO that plays the SSynt-role of the direct object or of a dangling preposition's object, as seen in *It is the last statement* ⟨*McGregor*⟩ ~~*that*~~ ⟨~~*who*~~⟩ *we believe* or *It is the last statement* ⟨*McGregor*⟩ ~~*that*~~ ⟨~~*who*~~⟩ *we believe in*, and of the conjunction THAT^{2}**1**, as in *It is there* ~~*that*~~ *we met McGregor*.

• The choice between lexemes WHO and THAT^{1}**2**/WHICH in case L_1 is a human noun.

• The choice between morphological forms *who* and *whom*, which is fluctuating in English.

3.3. The cleft construction as a linguistic sign

The cleft construction is a complex linguistic sign—a member of the huge family of linguistic signs that includes lexical units, morphological markers of inflectional and derivational significations (see the table of morphological signs in

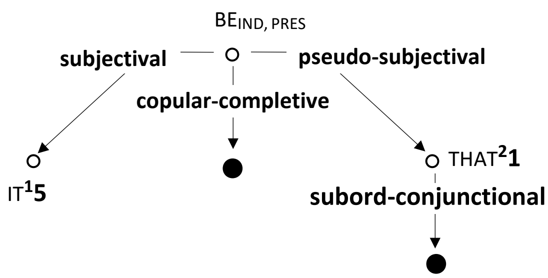
Appendix 2, p. 246), meaning-carrying SSynt-relations, etc. It must be described as all signs are—by specifying its three components: signified, signifier, syntactics.

The **signified** of the cleft construction is unproblematic: it is the DSynt-communicative value **Focalized**, characterizing the **RHEME$_{\mathbf{DSynt}}$** of the sentence and expressing the Sem-Comm-value **Focalized** (see above, p. 221); there is a general consensus concerning this point. The expression of communicative values by segmental means—in this case, by the phrase of the type *It is* [X] *that/who…*—is rather infrequent in the world's languages, but nonetheless it is well known. Some stock examples include the English idiom ⌜AS FOR⌝ [X] and the lexeme SPEAKING [*of* X], which express the DSynt-communicative value **Focalized** characterizing the **THEME$_{\mathbf{DSynt}}$** of the sentence, the equivalent Russian idiom ⌜ČTO KASAETSJA⌝ [X-*a*], or Russian lexemes—particles ÈTO^{3} [X], expressing the focalization of the **RHEME$_{\mathbf{DSynt}}$** (***Èto*** *Ivan prišël* 'This is Ivan who has arrived'), and [X]-TO^{4}, which expresses the focalization of the **THEME$_{\mathbf{DSynt}}$** (*Ivan-**to** pridët* 'As for Ivan, he'll come').

☛ The top corners ⌜ ⌝ enclose an idiom (= a non-compositional phraseme).

The **signifier** of the Foc-Cleft construction is, as said above, the phrase *It is* [X] *that/who…*; formally speaking, it is a SSynt-subtree of one of the two following forms:

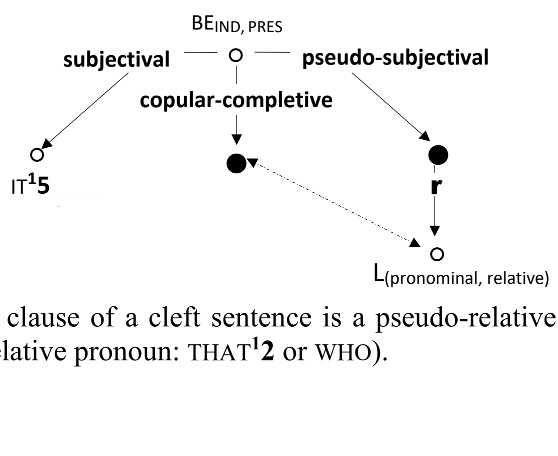
(13) a.



(the subordinate pseudo-subjectival clause of a cleft sentence is a regular clause introduced by the conjunction THAT^{2}**1**)

or

b.



(the subordinate clause of a cleft sentence is a pseudo-relative clause introduced by the corresponding relative pronoun: THAT^{1}**2** or WHO).

☛ The blackened nodes of the above subtrees are "the contact points": by means of these nodes the Foc-Cleft substructure is joined to the SSynt-structure of the cleft sentence under production.

These two cleft construction subtrees are approximate and schematic, in the sense that they illustrate the cleft construction along very general lines. Strictly speaking, for English, it is necessary to consider all the variants of the Foc-Cleft subtrees represented by the seven subrules in Subsection **3.2**: these are, so to say, seven "allo-clefts" of one "clefteme," distributed as function of the DSynt-context.

The **syntactics** of the cleft construction is quite involved: the way it is hooked up to the rest of the SSynt-structure of the sentence under construction cannot be spelled out by a series of sufficiently simple statements. (In any case, for the time being I am unable to do so.) It has to be specified by a set of complex conditions distributed between the five above rules.

Now that the sign under consideration is formally characterized, I have to answer an obvious question:

‖What type of linguistic sign is the cleft construction?

It is not a morphological sign—that is, its signified is not expressed within a wordform. [3] It is a syntactic sign: its signified is expressed within an SSynt-structure, in other words, within a sentence. It is, thus, similar to DSynt-relations, which are also expressed by SSynt-subtrees, except that the cleft construction carries a communicative rather than a syntactic signification. The type of a sign is established by the type of its signifier, and syntactic signs have just three possible types of signifiers: 1) segmental signifiers, i.e. lexical units; 2) prosodies; and 3) linear order, specified by SSynt-relations.

In a language with flexible word order, such as Russian, a communicative value of a phrase can control the linear implementation of an SSyntRel: thus, the SSynt-configuration

IVAN←**subjectival**–VSTAT′$_{\text{PAST}}$ 'Ivan stood up'

surfaces as *Ivan vstal* if the lexeme IVAN is the Synt-Theme, and as *Vstal **IVÁN*** (with prosodic emphasis on *Ivan*) if IVAN is the Synt-Rheme. Hungarian presents a more complex case: if a given clause has no focalization, a prefixed Main Verb appears in its SSyntS as such; but if focalization of a sentence element is present, the prefix of the verb splits from it and is linearly positioned according to fairly complex rules. For instance, consider the verb BE+JÖT(-*ni*) 'enter, come into' in sentences (14):

[3] For a better orientation of the reader, a table of possible morphological expressive means and possible types of morphological signs, for which there exists a rigorous calculus, is presented in Appendix **2**.

(14) a. *Maria be+jötött a szobába* 'Maria came.into the room'.
vs.
b. *Maria jötött*–**prefixal-auxiliary**→*be a szobába*
'**MARÍA** [and not somebody else] came into the room'.

In (14b), MARIA constitutes a focalized Rheme, and this communicative value is expressed by the introduction (into the SSyntS) of a new node–a split prefix **be**-, which syntactically depends on the lexical part of the verb and is positioned by the **prefixal-auxiliary** SSyntRel.

The signifier of the cleft construction is, we have seen, segmental: it is a phrase, and this phrase is semantically non-compositional. Therefore, this sign is a lexical unit. More precisely, it seems to be an idiom: ˹IT IS [X] THAT/WHO …˺.

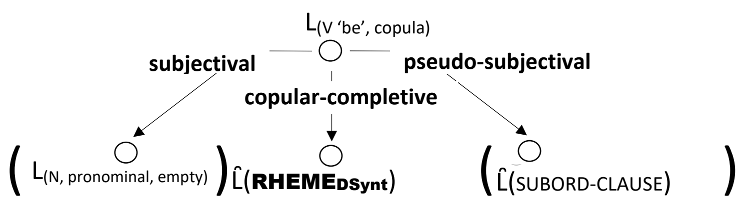
True, ˹IT IS [X] THAT/WHO …˺ is quite an unusual idiom: normally, an idiom appears as a label on one of the nodes in a DSyntS, while ˹IT IS [X] THAT/WHO …˺ does not. This idiom is a surface grammatical lexical unit—like, for instance, another English idiom, ˹AS FOR˺ [X], and the similar Russian units mentioned above. As an idiom, it exists only in the lexicon, because it never appears in the DSyntS; and in the SSyntS its separate components appear individually. **NB:** This conclusion is made more precise in the next section.

4. The notion of cleft construction

Given its communicative role—marking the focalization of the DSynt-Rheme—and its quite complex syntactics, the expression ˹IT IS [X] THAT/WHO …˺ is specific enough to merit a special name—the *cleft construction*. Let us proceed to the main goal of the paper—a formal definition of the notion "cleft construction," applicable universally. In other words, this definition based on the English cleft construction as the prototypical case must be good for Language in general.

Definition: cleft construction

A cleft construction is a grammatical lexical unit, namely, a surface-syntactic idiom, that expresses the focalization of the sentence's **RHEME$_{\mathbf{DSynt}}$** and whose signifier is an SSynt-subtree of the following general form:



where:
L$_{(\mathrm{V\ 'be'})}$ is a particular lexeme of the copula verb (with the meaning 'be').
L$_{(\mathrm{N,\ pronominal,\ empty})}$ is a dummy pronoun such as Eng. IT^{1}[5] (Fr. IL, Ger. ES or a zero lexeme—$\text{Ø}^{\mathrm{EMPTY}}_{\mathrm{SG}}$, e.g., in Spanish and Italian); the paretneses indicate that it can be absent (as, e.g., in Chinese).

$\hat{L}$(**RHEME$_{\mathbf{DSynt}}$**) is the lexeme that constitutes the **RHEME$_{\mathbf{DSynt}}$** or is the SSynt-head of the phrase that constitutes the **RHEME$_{\mathbf{DSynt}}$**.
$\hat{L}$(SUBORD-CLAUSE) stands for the SSynt-head of the subordinate pseudo-subjectival clause, this SSynt-head being:
– either an empty complementizer, such as Eng. THAT^{2}**1** (Fr. QUE, Ger. DASS);
– or a finite verb that is the syntactic head of this subordinate clause and that has a particular relative pronoun as a dependent, such as Eng. THAT^{1}**2** or WHO; the parentheses mean that the complementizer and/or the relative pronoun can be absent (as, e.g., in Chinese).

As one sees, in a language where both the pronoun $L_{(N,\ pronominal,\ empty)}$ and the relative pronouns are absent, the cleft construction is reduced to just a grammatical lexeme: one of the lexemes of the copula verb. Roughly (in plain English):

The cleft construction is a grammatical (more precisely, surface-syntactic) idiom headed by the copula verb, similar to Eng. BE; the lexical entry of this verb contains a complete characterization of the cleft construction.[4] In a particular language this idiom can be reduced to a single lexeme—to a lexeme of the copula verb.

NB According to (Andrade 2019), in colloquial Brazilian Portuguese even the copula verb SER 'be'of a cleft sentence can be elided on the morphological surface (but the complementizer is preserved):

(15) *O João que eu vi* '(It was) John that I saw'.
the John that I saw

Thus, the goal of the paper, formulated on p. 222, is reached.

The proposed definition of cleft construction corresponds to the requirements formulated in Section **2**. On the one hand, it is strictly deductive (the cleft construction is defined as a particular subclass of linguistic signs, more precisely, a subclass of grammatical lexical units), its defining features are separated enough (its signified, its signifier and its syntactics are characterized separately), and it is based on a well-known prototypical case—the English cleft construction. On the other hand, it is formal, rigorous, necessary and sufficient, and logically universal. (To avoid a possible confusion, let it be reminded that entities mentioned in the definition are not language-universal, just like the cleft construction itself; however, they are defined without mentioning specific features of a particular language.)

A cleft sentence is a complex sentence: it consists of two full-fledged clauses—the superordinate and the subordinate ones.

• The superordinate clause has the following SSynt-structure:

$L_{(N,\ pronominal,\ empty)}$←**subjectival**–$L_{(V,\ copula)}$ 'be'–**copular-completive**→$\hat{L}$(**RHEME$_{\mathbf{DyntS}}$**)

[4] This formulation corrects a previous attempt to describe the cleft construction: (Mel'čuk 2001: 180–190), where it was proposed to represent the cleft construction in the DSyntS by a fictitious lexeme «IT_BE» (instead of a particular lexeme of the vocable BE).

• The subordinate clause is introduced, as indicated above, either by an empty subordinating conjunction (such as THAT^2**1** in English), or by a relative pronoun (such as the THAT^1**2** and WHO in English), or else it has no explicit marker, as in Chinese, see examples (27) and (28). The subordinate clause introduced by THAT^1**2** or WHO is formally similar to a relative clause; however, these two clause types are essentially different.

It is useful to indicate some of the surface-syntactic differences observed in English between the subordinate clause of a cleft sentence with focalized rhematic noun L (16a) and a genuine restrictive relative clause modifying the noun L that depends on the verb BE (16b):

(16) a. *It is*—[*this gentleman*$_L$]–**pseudo-subj**→*who told me about the trip*. ~
b. *This is the gentleman*$_L$–**relative**→*who told me about the trip.*

These differences have been discussed by many authors, so that there is nothing original in the table below: I simply have collected and systematized well-known facts.

Table 1

Cleft sentence	Sentence with a restrictive relative clause
1. L—the copular complement of 'be'—is the focalized rhematic element.	1. L—the copular complement of 'be'—is a noun modified by a relative clause.
2. The subordinate clause depends on the verb 'be', that is, on the Main Verb of the superordinate clause, by the **pseudo-subjectival** SSyntRel.	2. The subordinate clause depends on L by the **relative** SSyntRel.
3. *It* is the empty pronoun IT^1**5**; it does not alternate with anything.	3. *It* is the demonstrative pronoun IT^1**1** 'this/that thing/situation'; it is referential and alternates with THIS/THAT: *It/This/That is a novel that John is reading.*
4. *That* is the conjunction THAT^2**1**: *It is tomorrow **that** I am leaving.*	4. *That* is a relative pronoun THAT^1**2**, which is coreferential with its antecedent; it alternates with WHO and WHICH.
5. L can be a proper name or personal pronoun: *It is **John/him** that* [= THAT^2**1**] *I want to talk to.*	5. L cannot be a proper name or a personal pronoun: **This (man) is **John/him** that* [= THAT^1**2]** *I want to talk to.*
6. The verb BE agrees with IT (BE is in the singular, even if L is a noun in the plural): *It **is** novels that John enjoys reading.*	6. The verb BE agrees with L; if L is in the plural, a plural demonstrative pronoun *these* has to be used: ***These are** novels that John enjoys reading.*
7. The tense of the Main Verb of the subordinate clause of a cleft sentence constrains the tense of the Main Verb BE of the superordinate clause; thus, if the former is in the present, the latter cannot be in the past: **It **was** the novel that John **is** still **reading**.*	7. The tense of the Main Verb of the relative clause does not constrain the tense of the Main Verb BE of the superordinate clause: *This **was** the novel that John **is** still **reading**.*
8. L carries a rising intonation and the subordinate clause, a falling one; a pause is possible between L and the subordinate clause: ↗ ↘ *It is **the dish** || that John enjoys.*	8. L and its relative clause carry a single falling intonation; a pause is possible between THIS and the rest of the sentence: ↘ *This || is **the dish that John enjoys**.*

Differences between cleft sentences with a focalized noun L and sentences with a relative clause that depends on the copular complement L of BE

The proposed definition of cleft construction excludes from this notion other constructions that express focalization of the Rheme as well, but have a completely different syntactic structure. For instance, the Russian construction with focalizing particle ÈTO[3] (see subsection **3.3**, **Signified**, pp. 233) should by no means be called "cleft construction": it features no clefting. In the same vein, a pseudo-cleft shows no syntactic clefting, so its name is misleading.

5. The cleft construction in languages of the world

The following remarks are far from being a serious typological overview of cleft constructions in languages other than English; they are meant to be but a preliminary hint to wet the appetite of prospective researchers.

Besides English, the cleft construction is richly represented in French (see Doetjes et al. 2004):

(17) French

a. *C'est*	***Jean***	*qui*	*a*	*écrit*	*ce*	*roman*	*à*	*Paris.*
this is	Jean	who	has	written	this	novel	in	Paris
b. *C'est*	*ce*	***roman***	*que*	*Jean*	*a*	*écrit*	*à*	*Paris.*
this is	this	novel	that	Jean	has	written	in	Paris
c. *C'est*	***à***	***Paris***	*que*	*Jean*	*a*	*écrit*	*ce*	*roman.*
this is	in	Paris	that	Jean	has	written	this	novel

The French cleft construction has several surface differences with respect to the English one:

• Instead of a dummy pronoun IL, a regular equivalent of the Eng. IT, the demonstrative pronoun CE 'this' is used.

• Instead of the contrast between the relative pronouns THAT[1]**2** [with any source] ~ WHO [with a human source only], French features another contrast: *qui* 'which'-nominative case ~ *que* 'which'-accusative case.

• In French the Main Verb of the subordinate clause of a cleft sentence whose SSynt-subject is a relative pronoun agrees in person and number with the source of this pronoun, while in English the Main Verb of such a subordinate clause agrees with this pronoun only in number (i.e., it is invariably in the 3rd person):

(18) a. Fr. *C'est **moi** qui **suis*** *responsable pour cet effet.*
be-IND.PRES.**1.SG**

vs.

b. *Eng. It is **me** who **is*** *responsible for this effect.*
be-IND.PRES.**3.SG**

• In French, the Main Verb of the subordinate clause of a cleft sentence—more specifically, the past participle in the compound tenses (19a)—and its copular complement (19b) agree with the source of the relative pronoun also in gender:

(19) a. *C'est ce **roman** que nous avons **compris+Ø**.*
vs.
*C'est cette **nouvelle** que nous avons **compris+e**.*
b. *C'est ce **roman** qui est **intéressant+Ø**.*
vs.
*C'est cette **nouvelle** qui est **intéressant+e**.*

A similar type of cleft construction is found in Italian, Spanish and Portuguese (but not in Romanian—see Gheorghe 2017: 2). For instance:

(20) Spanish

a.	*Fue*	***Juan***	*quien*	*escribió*	*esta*	*novela*	*en*	*Paris.*	
	was	Juan	who	wrote	this	novel	in	Paris	
b.	*Es*	*esta*	***novela***	*la*	*que*	*Juan*	*escribió*	*en*	*Paris.*
	is	this	novel	the	that	Juan	wrote	in	Paris
c.	*Es*	***en***	***Paris***	*donde*	*Juan*	*escribió*	*esta*	*novela.*	
	is	in	Paris	where	Juan	wrote	this	novel	

This construction existed already in pre-classical Latin (Dufter 2009: 1):

(21)	*Non*	*ego*	*sum*	*qui*	*te*	*dudum*	*conduxi*	[Plautus 254 – 184 BC]
	not	I	am	who	you	just.now	I.hired	

'It is not me who hired you just now'.

Besides English, the cleft construction is found in other Germanic languages—German, Dutch and all Scandinavian languages (see Fischer 2009); for instance:

(22) German

a.	*Es*	*war*	***Johann,***	*der*	*diesen*	*Roman*	*in*	*Paris*	*geschrieben*	*hat.*
	it	was	Johann	which	this	novel	in	Paris	written	has
b.	*Es*	*war*	*dieser*	***Roman,***	*den*	*Johann*	*in*	*Paris*	*geschrieben*	*hat.*
	it	was	this	novel	which	Johann	in	Paris	written	has
c.	*Es*	*war*	***Paris,***	*wo*	*Johann*	*diesen*	*Roman*		*geschrieben*	*hat.*
	it	was	Paris	where	Johann	this	novel		written	has

NB In languages with a relatively flexible word order—such as Spanish, Italian and German—clefts are considered by purists as superfluous, since word order and prosody can do the job, that is, express focalization quite well.

The cleft construction is typical of Celtic languages; thus, we find it in Irish (Stenson 2020: 67–70):

(23) a.	*Is*	***mise***	*a*	*d'oscail*	*an*	*doras*	'It is me that opened the door'.
	is	me	REL	I.opened	the	door	

NB The lexeme A, glossed as REL(ator) ≈ 'that', is a subordinator—a particle?—introducing a relative or a pseudo-relative clause.

b.	*Ba*	***go***	***Gaillimh***	*a*	*chuaigh*	*sé*	'It was to Galway that he went'.
	was	to	Galway	REL	he.went	he	
c.	*Is*	***róchliste***	*atá*	*Seán*	lit. 'It is too clever that John is'.		
	is	too.clever	REL.is	John [*atá* ⇐ *a* + *is*]			

d. *Is é* ***gur cheannaigh*** *Seán carr a chreideann Máire*
is it that bought John car REL believes Mary
lit. 'It is that John bought a car that Mary believes'.

Examples (23c–d) are from (Maki & Ó Baoill 2014); the word-for-word equivalents of these Irish sentences are ungrammatical in English. The authors indicate that in Irish focalization clefting is much freer than in English, which allows one to speculate that the prevalence of the cleft construction in English might be due to the Celtic substratum.

It is worth emphasizing that the cleft construction is absent from Slavic languages—with the exception of Czech and Ukrainian:

(24) a. Czech (Reeve 2012: 167)
Je to ***manželka****, kdo rozhoduje* 'It is the wife who decides'.
is that wife who decides
b. Ukrainian (Duma 2022: 1)
To je ***spadok****, ščo xvyljuje joho* 'It is the inheritance that worries him'.
that is inheritance that worries he-ACC

NB: Example (24b) is dubious. My colleague, linguist-Ukrainist Dr. Volodymyr Trub, in his personal communication (2025.06.21) denies the existence of the cleft construction in Ukrainian.

Turkic and Finno-Ugric (Finnish, Estonian, Hungarian) languages lack the cleft construction as well. However, it is found in Africa, in particular, in Bantu languages, for instance, in Kinyarwanda.

(25) Kinyarwanda (Kimenyi 1980: 70–72; the relativization of a clause is expressed by the high tone ´ on the stem of its Main Verb)
a. *Na* ***ábá+ana*** *b+a* +$\boxed{\textit{gií}}$ *+ye kw' iishuûri*
be II child II PAST go.REL COMPL(etive) to school
'{It} is the children who went to school'.
b. *N'i* ***í+kárámu*** *umu+koôbwa y+a* +$\boxed{\textit{haá}}$ *+ye úmw+áana*
be IX pen I girl I PAST give.REL COMPL I child
'{It} is the pen that the girl gave to the child'.
c. *Ni* ***ku maguru*** *umw+áana y+a +gií +ye*
be on feet I child I PAST go.REL COMPL
'{It} is on foot that the child went'.

And now, to the cleft construction on the other side of the globe: in Mandarin Chinese.

The situation with the cleft construction in Chinese is controversial—in the sense that the dozens of researchers who have discussed it have not been able to come to a (more or less) unanimous conclusion as to what is and what is not a cleft construction in this language. Nevertheless, one of the candidates for the title of cleft construction corresponds to the definition of Section **4**, representing its extreme, or "limiting," case; therefore, it seems necessary to consider this construction here.

Because of my ignorance of Chinese facts, I am not in a position to participate in the discussion; I will simply adopt the most neutral position (following, although not fully and not literally, Teng 1979 and Paul & Whitman 2008) and use only the least controversial examples.[5] (26) gives the underlying—non-cleft—sentence; the sentences in (27) provide typical examples of the Chinese cleft construction in the strict sense of our definition—with the copula verb SHÌ 'be' taking the focalized Rheme (boxed in the examples) as its complement:

(26) *Wǒ zuótiān gěi Lì dǎ-le diànhuà* 'I called Li yesterday'.
I yesterday to Li hit COMPL(etive) phone

(27) a. ***Shì***→$\boxed{\textit{wǒ}}$ *zuótiān gěi Lì dǎ-le diànhuà* 'It is me who called Li yesterday'.
be I yesterday to Li hit COMPL phone

b. *Wǒ zuótiān* ***shì***→$\boxed{\textit{gěi Lì}}$ *dǎ-le diànhuà* 'It is Li that I called yesterday'.
I yesterday be to Li hit COMPL phone

c. *Wǒ* ***shì***→$\boxed{\textit{zuótiān}}$ *gěi Lì dǎ-le diànhuà* 'It is yesterday that I called Li'.
I be yesterday to Li hit COMPL phone

NB 1. The underscoring identifies the subordinate pseudo-relative clause. The absence of a subordinating conjunction and of a relative pronoun in this clause corresponds to the nature of Chinese syntax: the absence of explicit subordinators in several types of subordinated clauses.

2. *Wǒ zuótiān* in (27b) and *wǒ* in (27c) are SSynt-prolepses, which express the Theme ('speaking of ...'); a pause is possible after them. Chinese being a strongly Pro-Drop language, the repetition of WǑ as the SSynt-subject of the verb DǍ is elided.

The sentences in (27) consist each of two full-fledged finite clauses: the superordinate clause with the copula verb SHÌ 'be' and the subordinate pseudo-relative clause; this represents the clefting. The verbs in both clauses readily accept the negation—BÙ or MÉI—and a modal verb such as KĚNÉNG 'may'; this demonstrates the genuine verbal finite character of both clauses.

NB BÙ negates stative facts, and MÉI, dynamic ones that did not take place in the past; BÙ changes its falling tone to the rising one and becomes BÚ, when followed by a syllable with the falling tone (tonal dissimilation); MÉI does not combine with the marker of the completive, *-le*.

(28) a-i. ***Bú*** *shì wǒ zuótiān gěi Lì dǎ-le diànhuà*
It is not me who called Li yesterday'.

ii. ***Kěnéng*** *shì wǒ zuótiān gěi Lì dǎ-le diànhuà*
'It may be me who called Li yesterday'.

b-i. *Shì wǒ zuótiān* ***méi*** *gěi Lì dǎ diànhuà*
'It is me who did not call Li yesterday'.

ii. *Shì wǒ zuótiān* ***kěnéng*** *gěi Lì dǎ-le diànhuà*
'It is me who may have called Li yesterday'.

[5] The Chinese examples (26) – (29) have been verified, corrected, reverified, recorrected and reverified again by Li Liu, who I kindly ask to receive my most heartfelt gratitude.

Thus, it can be concluded that a cleft construction as defined in Section **4** does exist in Chinese.

However, what about a different type of sentence used in Chinese for the focalization of the Theme, but currently subsumed also under the name of "cleft construction"? I mean the sentences like those in (29):

(29) a. *Zuótiān gěi Lì dă-le diànhuà-de shì wŏ*
yesterday to Li hit COMPL phone NOMINALIZER be I
'[The one who called Li yesterday]$_{\textbf{THEME, Foc}}$ is me'.
b. *Wŏ gěi Lì dă-le diànhuà-de shì zuótiān*
I to Li hit COMPL phone NOMINALIZER be yesterday
lit. '[That I called Li]$_{\textbf{THEME, Foc}}$ is yesterday'.

NB The marker *-de* is a nominalizer used to form a particular type of relative and pseudo-relative clauses. It means '(the one) who…' or '(the fact) that…'.

The sentences in (29) are nothing else but so-called pseudo-cleft sentences, which are treated immediately below.

6. Pseudo-cleft sentences

Cleft sentences are commonly opposed to, but as a rule considered together with, so-called pseudo-cleft sentences (a detailed overview of pseudo-cleft sentences of various types is found in Collins 1991 and De Cesare 2017):

(30) a. ***The person*** *who wrote this novel in Boston is John.*
b. ***What*** *John wrote in Boston is this novel.*
c. ***The place*** *where John wrote this novel is Boston.*

NB The examples in (30) illustrate only one of several types of pseudo-cleft sentences, but what is stated about this type holds about other types, too.

It is said that a pseudo-cleft sentence can also be used for focalization, but rather than the focalization of the DSynt-Rheme, pseudo-clefting expresses that of the DSynt-Theme (boldfaced in (30)). This is absolutely correct. But in sharp contrast with a cleft sentence, a pseudo-cleft sentence does not feature a particular syntactic construction to express focalization: it is absurd to speak about **pseudo-cleft constructions*—and nobody does.

To see better how the focalization of the Theme in pseudo-clefts is done, let us return for a moment to the sentences in (3). The focalization of the Rheme in them is shown by means of cleft constructions; but what about the focalization of the Theme? It is expressed by the syntactic operations of (linear) Fronting and the introduction of the corresponding pronoun:

(31) a. *John*$_{\textbf{THEME, Foc}}$*,* ***he*** *wrote this novel in Boston.*
b. *This novel*$_{\textbf{THEME, Foc}}$, *John wrote* ***it*** *in Boston.*
c. *Boston*$_{\textbf{THEME, Foc}}$, *John wrote this novel* ***there****.*

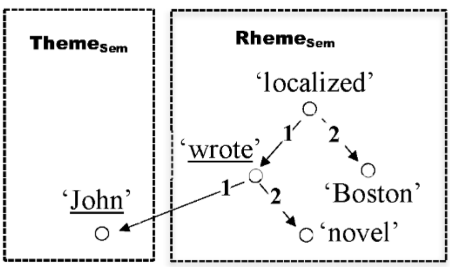
These operations do not, of course, impact the starting meaning. But with pseudo-clefts, the picture is completely different—the focalization of the Theme is expressed, so to speak, in a much "deeper" way.

In a pseudo-cleft sentence the focalization of the Theme is expressed through a particular organization of the starting meaning, not by a syntactic construction.

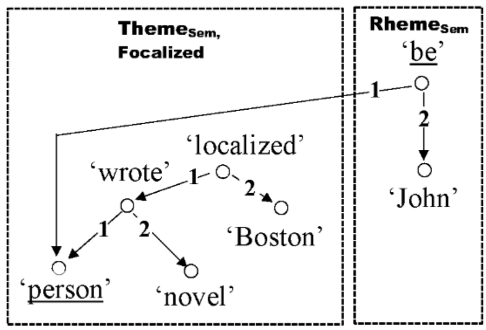
A cleft sentence **has the same propositional meaning** as the corresponding communicatively neutral sentence; yet a pseudo-cleft sentence **does not have the same propositional meaning** as the corresponding communicatively neutral sentence. In other words, the sentences (32a) and (32b) are produced from different semantic structures; this can be seen from the corresponding SemRs:

(32)

a. *John wrote this novel in Boston.*



b. *The person/The one who wrote this novel in Boston is John.*



The semantic difference between (32a) and (32b) is buttressed by the fact that (32b) implies the uniqueness of John ('John, and nobody else'), while (32a) does not carry this implication.

The sentence (32b) has a lot of "semantic" variants: *The person* ⟨*The guy*, *The author*, *The intelligent traveler*, ...⟩ *who wrote this novel...* Focalization of the semantic Rheme 'σ_1' is done by imposing on the expression of 'σ_1' a special SSynt-construction: the cleft construction. But focalization of the semantic Theme 'σ_2' is done by reformatting this 'σ_2' itself into 'σ_2''' and then expressing 'σ_2''' by means of standard syntactic rules. As a result, pseudo-cleft sentences should not be considered in syntax as a special case: from a syntactic viewpoint, they are the most usual sentences. In other words, cleft sentences must be described in syntax, and pseudo-cleft sentences, in semantics. It is not for nothing that pseudo-clefts exist in all languages, while clefts exist only in a small number of them.

It is true that sentences (4a) and (30a) are approximately equivalent:

(33) [(4a)] *It is John who wrote this novel in Boston.* ≅
[(30a)] (*The one*) *who wrote this novel in Boston is John.*

But in what sense are they equivalent? Not semantically, since they have different propositional meanings and different Sem-communicative organizations.

They are equivalent in the same sense that the following pairs of sentences are equivalent:

(34) a. *Two and three make five.* ~ *Adding three to two you obtain five* [2 + 3 = 5].
b. Eng. *Ten to three (o’clock).* ~ Rus. *Bez desjati tri* lit. ‘without ten three’ [14:50].

The sentences in (33), (34a) and (34b) are **conceptually** equivalent: they carry the same information about extralinguistic reality. However, **linguistically** they are not equivalent. To sum up:

> One can, of course, consider pseudo-clefts in parallel with genuine clefts, but it is necessary to make absolutely clear their essential difference.

7. Conclusions

The results of this study can be summed up as follows.

• With respect to general linguistics: a new notion—that of cleft construction—is added to the inventory of formal syntactic notions. This is a contribution to the construction of general syntax. The notion introduced is illustrated with the data of several languages. A brief comparison with pseudo-cleft sentences is offered; it is shown that pseudo-cleft sentences are essentially different from cleft sentences, being particular on the semantic rather than the syntactic level.

• With respect to English studies: the large bulk of factual knowledge about the cleft construction in English collected over the years by numerous researchers is represented as a formal model—by five Meaning-Text type DSyntR ⇔ SSyntR rules. This is a modest contribution to the task of elaborating a formal description of English syntax in terms of syntactic dependency (see the first attempt in this direction in Mel’čuk & Pertsov 1987).

Abbreviations and Notation

DSyntR	: deep-syntactic representation	**R**	: a given deep-syntactic relation
DSyntS	: deep-syntactic structure	SemR	: semantic representation
Foc-Cleft	: focalizing cleft	Sem-	: semantic
L	: a given lexical unit	SSyntR	: surface-syntactic representation
$\hat{\mathrm{L}}$(P)	: lexeme that is the syntactic head of the phrase P	SSyntRel	: surface-syntactic relation
PREP	: preposition	SSyntS	: surface-syntactic structure
‘$\underline{\sigma}$’	: communicatively dominant semanteme	$L_1 \longleftrightarrow L_2$	: lexical units L_1 and L_2 are coreferential
r	: a given surface-syntactic relation	⌜L_1 L_2 …⌝	: idiom L_1 L_2 …
		☛	: explanation of a notation

Acknowledgments

The previous drafts of this paper were read and criticized by D. Beck, I. Boguslavsky, L. Iordanskaja, I. Mackenzie, S. Marengo, J. Milićević and E. Savvina; the help of D. Beck was absolutely essential. Some finishing touches were put by the anonymous reviewers of the *Russian Journal of Linguistics* and T. Larina. Dear all, it is your constructive proposals that have helped me significantly improve my text; thank you so much!

Appendices

Appendix 1. Some linguistic notions relevant for this paper

communicatively dominant semanteme

The semanteme 'σ_1' in a configuration of semantemes '$\underline{\sigma_1}$–σ_2' is communicatively dominant if the whole configuration can be reduced to 'σ_1' such that the meaning conveyed is impoverished, but not distorted; the communicative dominance of 'σ_1' is shown by underscoring. Cf.:

'people←**1**–sing' ⇔ *People sing*. vs. 'people←**1**–sing' ⇔ *singing people*.

focalization

The Sem-configuration 'σ' is focalized if the Speaker presents it as being logically most prominent for him, that is, as being the focus of his statement. The denotation of 'σ' is singled out as a specific element of a class: 'exactly σ, and not something else'. For instance:

- in *It is John who brought the booze*, the Rheme 'John' is **Focalized** (in *The booze was brought by John* the Rheme 'John' is **Non-focalized**);
- in *John, he brought the booze,* the Theme 'John' is **Focalized** (in *John brought the booze* the Theme 'John' is **Non-focalized**).

grammatical lexical unit

A lexical unit (a lexeme or an idiom) is grammatical if it expresses either an inflectional meaning (e.g., 'after now [future tense]' ⇔ WILL), or a communicative value (e.g., **Focalized** [Theme] ⇔ ⌜AS FOR⌝), or else marks a syntactic dependency (e.g., governed prepositions such as TO in *secretary **to** the Minister*). Grammatical lexical units do not appear in the DSynt-structure and are introduced into the SSynt-structure by grammatical DSyntR ⇔ SSyntR rules.

pseudo-relative clause

A subordinate clause is pseudo-relative if it has the form of a relative clause, but is an actant rather than a modifier—that is, if it is a syntactic equivalent of a noun phrase; e.g., *Listen to **who he likes**!* Pseudo-relative clauses are often called *free* or *headless*. See (Mel'čuk 2021: 235*ff.*).

relative clause

A subordinate clause is relative if it is a modifier of a lexical element in the superordinate clause; e.g., *the things **you gave your life to*** [R. Kipling].

semantic representation

A formal object representing an utterance at the semantic level—a set of four structures: 1) a semantic structure [SemS], which specifies the propositional meaning of the utterance by means of a semantic network; 2) a semantic-communicative structure, which specifies the communicative characteristics of the utterance by means of such communicative values as **Rheme** ~ **Theme**, **Given** ~ **New**, **Non-focalized** ~ **Focalized**, etc., associated with particular areas of the SemS; 3) a rhetorical structure, which describes the stylistic/artistic properties of the utterance; and 4) a referential structure, identifying the referents of semantic components in the SemS. See Mel'čuk (2012–2015: vol. 1, 125–128).

source of a pronoun

A lexical unit in the DSyntS that is replaced in the SSyntS and in the sentence by the corresponding pronoun; e.g., in the sentence *John saw* ***his*** *son*, the source of the pronoun *his* is JOHN, seen in the DSynt-configuration JOHN←**II**–SON.

Appendix 2. Logically possible morphological expressive means and morphological signs

Table 2

Morphological expressive means	Morphological signs	Examples
I. Segmental means		
segment	1. radical	compounding: It. *capo*+***divisione*** lit. 'head [of] division'
	2. affix	affixing: *book*+***s***, ***re***+*read*
II. Suprasemental means		
prosody	3. suprafix	suprafixing: Ngbaka IMPERF high tone ´ : *mī gɔ́mɔ́* 'I am.cutting' POSITIVE PERF middle tone¯ : *mí gɔ̄mɔ̄* 'I have.cut' NEGATIVE PERF low tone ` : *mí gɔ̀mɔ̀ gɔ̄* 'I have.cut not'
III. Operational means		
• Applicable to signifieds:		
metasemy**1**	4. metasemy**2***	metasemizing: TWO**1** 'number 2' (*two plus two*) ~ TWO**2** 'in quantity of 2' (*two books*)
• Applicable to signifiers:		
replication**1**	5. replication**2**	reduplicating: Ancient Greek PRES *tla*+*ō* 'I.suffer' ~ PERF ***te****tlāk*+*a* 'I.have.suffered' PRES *graph*+*ō* 'I.write' ~ PERF ***ge****graph*+*a* 'I.have.written'
alternation –in a segment	6. segmental apophony	vowel substitution: Yiddish SG *št**a**t* 'city' ~ PL *št**e**t* 'cities' SG *z**u**n* 'son' ~ PL *z**i**n* 'sons'
–in prosody	7. suprasegmental apophony	stress substitution: *addréss*$_{(V)}$ ~ *áddress*$_{(N)}$, *expórt*$_{(V)}$ ~ *éxport*$_{(N)}$
• Applicable to syntactics:		
conversion**1**	8. conversion**2**	part of speech substitution: *bomb*$_{(N)}$ ~ *bomb*$_{(V)}$

* See (Mel'čuk 2024). A metasemy is a linguistic sign whose signifier is a substitution operation on the signified of the target lexeme. Thus, in the sentence *John saw two excellent Rembrandts* the noun [*a*] REMBRANDT '[a] painting by Rembrandt' is derived from the proper noun REMBRANDT by one of several productive English metasemies.

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Article history:
Received: 29 October 2024
Accepted: 25 January 2025

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Russian Journal of Linguistics
ISSN 2687-0088 (Print), ISSN 2686-8024 (Online)

2025 Vol. 29 No. 2 250–271
http://journals.rudn.ru/linguistics

https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-39695
EDN: JNZLJU

Research article / Научная статья

Polyphonic parenting debate in Russian social media: A pragmatic perspective

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Abstract
The article examines the evolution of a new language for discussing private and personal matters in the public space of Russian social media. The goal of the study is to reveal the formats of talk that may serve the manifestation of the new public language, reflected in multiple discourses through which Russian parents position themselves in the Internet parenting forum debate. The data for the research were obtained from the conversation analysis of parents' posts on *Alpha Parenting,* a popular Russian Facebook community platform. The study aimed to analyze more than 400 posts of parents of young children (6-12 years old) uploaded from 2017 to 2019. The emerging formats of talk are examined from a perspective of pragmatic communicative acts that shape the interactional situation in a chat forum. An interplay of the multiple forms of talk in the online forum is understand through the prism of Bakhtin's analytical apparatus, which is based on the concepts of *voice* and *polyphony*. The results illustrate the simultaneous presence of different languages in public discussions of private life. These may pertain either to everyday informal communication constituted in the private and interpersonal sphere, to discursive practices of authoritative talk, to the meta-ways of discourse monitoring and management, or no less important, to the therapeutic public emotional talk about one's private inner world and emotional experience. The study suggests that the ways of communicating about emotions represent an emerging emotional therapeutic attitude and language that has been regulating and reshaping Russian Internet communication.
Keywords: *Russian social media, virtual parenting debate, formats of talk, mutivoicedness, emotionalization, Bakhtin*

For citation:
Zbenovich, Claudia. 2025. Polyphonic parenting debate in Russian social media: A pragmatic perspective. *Russian Journal of Linguistics* 29 (2). 250–271. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-39695

Полифоническая дискуссия родителей в российских социальных сетях: прагматический аспект

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Аннотация
В статье рассматривается эволюция нового языка для обсуждения приватных и личных вопросов в публичном пространстве российских соцсетей. Целью исследования является выявление форматов беседы, служащих проявлением нового публичного языка, посредством которых российские родители позиционируют себя в дебатах на интернет-форумах по вопросам воспитания детей. Данные для исследования были получены в результате анализа родительских дискуссий на Alpha Parenting, популярной российской платформе сообщества Facebook[1]. В ходе исследования было проанализировано более 400 постов родителей детей 6-12 лет в период с 2017 по 2019 г. Форматы виртуальной беседы рассматриваются с точки зрения речевых актов, формирующих коммуникацию родителей в онлайн чат-форуме. Взаимодействие множественных форм разговора понимается через призму аналитического аппарата М. Бахтина, основанного на концепциях голоса и полифонии. Результаты иллюстрируют одновременное присутствие разных форматов и стилей в публичных обсуждениях приватного и личного. Эти дискурсивные стили могут относиться к повседневной неформальной коммуникации, принятой в межличностной сфере, либо к дискурсивным практикам авторитетного разговора, либо к метаспособам мониторинга и управления дискурсом, или, что не менее важно, к терапевтическому публичному эмоциональному разговору о внутреннем мире и эмоциональном опыте. Исследование показывает, что различные варианты разговора об эмоциях представляют формирующуюся эмоциональную терапевтическую установку, влияющую на язык и регулирующую и преобразующую российскую интернет-коммуникацию.
Ключевые слова: *российские социальные сети, виртуальные дебаты о родительстве, форматы беседы, многоголосие, эмоциональность, Бахтин*

Для цитирования:
Zbenovich C. Polyphonic parenting debate in Russian social media: A pragmatic perspective. *Russian Journal of Linguistics*. 2025. Vol. 29. № 2. P. 250–271. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-39695

Introduction

What kind of language is being created in the public field of Russian social media to discuss personal matters? Which discursive formats are predetermined in the virtual talk about the private realm and which new modes of communication is the new language developing? These questions regarding an emerging public language have become extremely intriguing with the increasing role of social networks. Indeed, for the past decade, the Internet debate has become the main platform for a new public conversation about private issues. The most interesting discussions about relationships, individuality, feelings and emotions have come

[1] Признана экстремистской организацией и запрещена на территории РФ.

from social networks,[2] and undoubtedly, the ways of talking about these and other important personal topics both mirror and shape this new discourse in the public sphere (Lerner & Zbenovich 2016a, 2016b, 2017, Vakhtin & Firsov 2016, Wahl-Jorgensen 2019).

Having followed these debates during recent years, however, we have noticed that the boundaries between symbolic private and public space have become very blurred. The public discussion exposes us to language that would previously have been hidden deep in the intimate sphere of human consciousness, but which has now come to the surface and has become everyone's property, thereby often creating the impression that one is eavesdropping on someone else's private conversation. Furthermore, the emotionalization processes have become increasingly dominant in the domains of social media, imbuing contemporary public talk with psychological emotional content (Lerner & Zbenovich 2013, Prihod'ko et al. 2020, Zappettini et al. 2022) and questioning conventionally accepted distinctions between private and public modes of expression. [3] No less important is the current weak and under-developed condition of Russian public language which, until fairly recently, did not have its own apposite register, which might have been used to express more subtle messages, going beyond merely voicing strong personal emotion or bureaucratic clichés (Kharkhordin 2016: 281). During the last decade, people were only just beginning to learn to overcome their intrinsic inability to speak publicly. Thus the current participation in public discussion by novice public speakers may often end in virulent disagreement, resulting in injurious language aimed toward the addressee.

In the context of the formation of personal publicity in social networks, the emerging discursive forms of talk about private space are ubiquitous in any kind of web-based communication. In this work, I will purposely inquire into the language of parenting forums, since this social media area invites a special interest in following the discursive private-public interplay of internet debate. Parental communication puts together both public formal and private informal spheres, elucidates public-private topics, and is emotionally and morally loaded. The very issue of parenting is private, since it presents individual perceptions and practices; however, it is concomitantly social, collective and public because of its strong interrelation with cultural conceptions and beliefs. [4] While the inherent private

[2] See, for example, the flash mob *I'm not afraid to say*, discussions about the well-known Moscow school # 57 and scandals related to LGBT topics in 2016. For a look at the ways in which the space of public social media debate began to change in Russia, see the conversation between Olga Strakhovskaya and Mikhail Medvedev in the *I Can Speak* educational series hosted by the *InLiberty* project on November 2, 2016.

[3] The ways in which psychological emotional language shapes public, collective and institutional talk were discussed at the International workshop "Emotionalization of public domains in cross-cultural perspective: Russia, Israel, USA" convened in May, 2019 at Van Leer Institute in Jerusalem, Israel.

[4] It should be emphasized that the public performance of parenthood and negotiation of its important conceptions would arouse interest in any society as a whole. In Russia, the field of parenthood

status of a parent determines the informal and intimate language register in sharing her position, certain modes of communication are also expected to attest to the strategic and authoritative discourse of the official public sphere.

Different formats of talk in parenting forums show themselves through particular modes of verbal interaction, speakers' communicative intentions and the use of certain linguistic means. At a more general level of the discursive performance, the parental talk breaks down into multiple frames of discourses related to a social self, a context of interaction, or to a way one imagines her virtual partner for communication and correlates oneself with the unfamiliar "Other", anticipating her reaction and interpretation. The parenting debate thus invites a multifaceted reading on the level of complexity of discourses and layers of interaction embedded within the discussion. Inspired by the works of Mikhail Bakhtin (1981, 1984) I suggest understanding the multiple forms of talk in the online forum through the prism of Bakhtin's analytical apparatus, which is based on the concepts of *voice* and *polyphony*. I propose to extend Bakhtin's notion of *voice* to the discursive formats of talk rooted in the virtual debate and serving the important constituent elements of a new public language about private matters. In this respect, the article is guided by the following research goals:

- To reveal the essential formats recruited by the interactants to speak about their private lives, internal relationships and inherent emotional experiences.
- To uncover, which linguistic resources and communicative pragmatic acts generate the current nature of the forum debate.

To examine these discursive constituents and represent the structures that operate in the online community debate, I argue for the need of incorporating a cultural and pragmatic analysis of the linguistic form that accompanies the examination of communicative modes and styles as well as of key cultural concepts. I essentially inquire into the functioning of language in the discussion of personal issues that takes place in today's public social media.

2. Literature review

The language of social media has long been an important focus of research in sociolinguistics and communication studies. For the last decade, it has received special attention due to the participation of a broader audience in discussion platforms and the appearance of a rich source of data based on different languages and virtual locations. International scholarly literature has primarily approached the ways of discursive construction of virtual identity and the problems of language choice for building community relations in social network sites (e.g., Reyes 2019, Rhee 2023, Seargeant & Tagg 2014). Scholars have also largely emphasized the emotionality of the social media language, discussing the norms for expressing emotions and revealing the linguistic emotional cues in media texts (Waterloo et al.

provokes particular interest since it has recently undergone a transformation from a common dominant educational model to different styles connected with different social groups.

2014). The emotionality of language has been further addressed from the perspective of social sharing (John 2017, Rodriguez 2015), as this mode of participation in the internet debate undeniably underlies the current general tendency to recount and share emotional experiences, and to manage emotions through interactions with distant acquaintances by receiving their support and validation.

On the Russian scene, the same issues seem particularly relevant and have motivated wide-ranging research. The studies have examined the style and normativity of the blogosphere discourse, focusing on creative language production and exploring digital verbal aggression (Kunstman 2010). Sociolinguists were concerned about the digression of internet language from the conventional norms and orientation towards sensuality, which might have a possible destructive effect on the user (Trofimova 2010). More recently, however, new laws regulating freedom of expression on the Internet have come into force in Russia, and new means have been developed for restricting various kinds of digital discord. Current research accentuates the speech democratization of online communication and characterizes the social media discourse as a new, hybrid form of language originating in the written form, but approaching the oral variety of language as a result of the ever-increasing degree of synchronicity, colloquialism and emotionality (Krylova 2016, 2019, Trofimova 2019).

With consideration of the insights gained by these studies into the liberation of Internet language, its emotionality and expressiveness, I intend to take a different angle, switching the focus of the current analysis to the discursive organization of a virtual talk. I view the online debate as an interaction (though asynchronous) of distinct perspectives and stances assembled into the structured system of a particular discussion. Talking in a virtual public space thus adopts the original Bakhtinian idea of a dialogic relationship between the voices in a literary text. In Bakhtin's view, a *polyphony* refers to the multiplicity of consciousnesses and meanings within a text; it generates a dialogic relationship between the voices, introducing new elements into the discussion and orienting the talk to the perspective of the other (Park-Fuller 1986). I believe that the idea of multivoicedness is particularly true for the speech situation of the virtual forum debate wherein the concept of *voice* can be interpreted in two different albeit closely interrelated ways: in a literal sense and in a communicative pragmatic one. The latter affords a linguo-pragmatic line of a virtual talk inquiry and is the one I will be using for my analysis.

Within the literal frame, the multi-voiced reality in the forum is created by the interchanging of speakers' discourses that is essentially polyphonic: while all communicants constantly attempt to retain their stances in the debate, each voice affects the voice of the other participant (Langleben 1998) and becomes part of the other's discourse. I believe, however, that what in effect causes parental talk to manifest itself in different voices are the speakers' discursive positions predetermined by the forum domain and embedded in the structure of the interaction. The roles that forum members adopt may relate to the explicit level of discussing personal matters (e.g., sharing problems or giving advice), or, alternatively, refer back to the discourse itself, identifying dissonances and reviewing the flow of negotiation. Furthermore, the intention of one speaker will be always interpreted by her interlocutor, and the meaning of the original message will be incorporated into the other speaker's intentional frame, giving it new articulations. I found that in view of their structural-discursive positions, parents express their voices within certain formats of talk which embody different speakers' intentions, content and forms of expression.

In this article, I seek to explain how the discussion of private and personal issues in the virtual public space reveals itself in particular formats of talk. I examine the emerging parental voices from the perspective of pragmatic communicative acts that shape the interactional situation in a chat forum. It is important to highlight that speakers' voices interact within a special speech situation of indirect, computer-mediated written communication in which the role of deciphering the interlocutor's message significantly increases. The anonymity of the communicants and their assumptions about the others just on the basis of the interpretation of the received messages underlies the dynamics of interaction. I found it contingent on the conversational goals of the speakers, encoded in their speech acts (SA) and expressed in different communicative patterns. Concomitantly, the flow of discussion is highly shaped by emotional language. I show that the talk about private matters in the virtual forum incorporates emotionalized and therapeutic type of discourse in different ways, configures the relationships between the voices within public discussion, and integrates the culture specific tenets into the act of talking.

In the following sections, I present the formats of talk common to the public virtual debate and discuss each parental voice in detail.

3. Data and methodology

The study was developed as part of a research project on emerging therapeutic emotional discourse in Russia, and continuous work with Russian social media.[5] My insights on formats of talk were derived from inquiry into discussions in *Alpha Parenting,* a popular Russian Facebook community for parents that enables a conversation on various issues related to child raising.[6] For my analysis, I have viewed 400 posts of parents of young children, 6–12 years old, out of more than

[5] The research entitled "Post-Soviet translations of the therapeutic culture in Russian everyday life and media discourse" was supported by a grant from the Israeli Science Foundation (ISF 496/16). It was conducted in collaboration with Dr. Julia Lerner in 2016–2020.

[6] The group created in 2012, consists of more than 20000 members, predominantly mothers, and is managed by the administrator. A thread of a virtual talk is composed as a main posting and associated responses where the participants signal their attention, co-presence and partaking in exchanging details of their experiences. Posts are directed at any particular person, and both posts and comments can receive feedback.

2600 posts uploaded from 2017 to 2019. I use some posts with their corresponding threads of discussion that serve as the best representative samples of different parental voices, complementing them by other instances taken from different threads of the forum to reinforce certain formats of talk. The parenting posts analyzed are originally in Russian, and I provide translated examples while preserving specific words and expressions in their original form.

I have first singled out the patterns of utterances that constitute the interactional mode of discussion, and through which the communicants realize their conversational goals. I trace how the speakers' voices are linguistically indexed through SAs and show which linguistic structures may be additional indicators of messages that different voices demonstrate in the process of discussion. I argue that a particular voice embodies a verbal communicative intention of a speaker, and may be in part an outcome of interactional negotiation, in part a construct of others' perceptions and representations, and in part an outcome of underlying messages or broader socio-cultural situations. In this way, I have identified four formats of talk that organize the interaction in parental debate. They are the voices of *Calling for Help*, *Support Group*, *Authoritative Knowledge* and *Discourse Monitoring and Management (Meta-Talk Voice).* Considering discursive linguistic forms of the forum discussion as constitutive of a new public language about private matters, I investigate patterns of discourse with an emphasis on the social use of language, drawing on conversational analysis and speech act theory (Austin 1962, Grice 1975). I explore Russian emotional linguistic scripts, including attributes of self-expressions and key concepts, as markers that contextually generate the new public language of social media in parenting forums. I question the meaning of these linguistic forms and their pragmatic function in a particular format of the online talking as well as within the broader discursive formats grounded in their cultural tradition of the Russian Soviet and post-Soviet discursive universe.

4. Results

4.1. The voice of calling for help

Many parents experiencing personal struggles turn to the online community to speak about their situations and seek advice or encouragement from their peers. Their posts often start with a request for help and support. Across a range of requests, the majority are hearer-oriented ones in a form of an explicit directive. In the examples (1–3), one can see the typical instances of such appeals.

(1) G*irls, help! I argue and argue with my husband*. (March 12, 2017)
(2) *Talk to me! Only this group I trust.* (May 7, 2018)
(3) *Tell me how to react ... I'm on the brink.* (February 2, 2019)

The language in which the requests are cast may be too forthright and categorical for our ordinary perception of requesting, but both situational and cultural factors influence the use of the directive request strategy. First, it can conceivably be accounted for the cases of emergency (3), when the circumstances call for immediate action. In addition, the directness of requests seems to agree with general trends in digital interaction in forums that feature parity and reciprocity. There is a certain degree of obligation in carrying out the request while being part of a community and undergoing a similar situation. The level of directness assumes a specific degree of familiarity between the interlocutors; indeed, more casual explicit requests with less mitigation are more common between friends and would otherwise be considered face threatening acts with a large rank of imposition.[7]

At the same time, however, the users in effect solicit help from people who are almost strangers. Though they direct the requests to the intended virtual recipients, their addressees are distant in time and space, with little or no knowledge about them. In Bakhtin's terms, they "turn to the other" (Bakhtin 1984: 267) with their problems, anticipating the response from the alien someone and generating a dialogical relationship with an unknown interlocutor whose perspectives might fit with their own understandings. The omnipresence of the invisible "Other" as a source of a judgment seems to be an inherent nature of the discussion format in the virtual community.

The help request in the parental posts obviously entails making public one's own private experience. In this sense, the act of sharing one's appeal represents a form of emotional therapeutic communication (John 2017: 98–99)[8] since it reveals one's private self by conveying emotional content and embodies a type of talk through which communicants gain emotional encouragement from one another. Thus an expression of self, communicated in the *Calling for Help* voice serves both as a means of construction of public intimacy, and as a means of getting a better sense of self which will resonate with others' perspectives by showing their empathy and understanding.

The initial requests are followed by authentic personal stories that occur in everyday life with the aim of strengthening the self and receiving informational and emotional support. The act of online sharing is revealed in the following example of a post by N*. The following information about N* is available – she is 35 years old, married and has 3 kids. Her position of being a mother feels like an overwhelming and incredibly stressful job.

(4) (a) *I am mad at my daughter, and I suffer with a sense of guilt. (b) I ask for support and advice. (c) And the main question is not even a question, but just whining about what a terrible mother I am! (d) I have already forgotten about my hobbies; there is simply no strength for anything, no enthusiasm and inspiration. (e) I only want that no one should touch me. (f) In short, the thought consoles me that one day I will hand over*

[7] A great body of research in linguistic pragmatics focus on requests as face threatening acts with a high level of imposition on the hearer, and as a threat also posed to the speaker's face (e.g. Brown & Levinson 1987). The risks associated with performing a direct request include both a possible refusal on the part of the hearer to grant the request and an infringement upon the hearer's freedom of action (Sifianou 2012).

[8] John defines sharing as "making private stories into public communicative acts" (p. 98), emphasizing the fact that therapeutic social sharing is central to public discourse of social media.

everyone to the kinder-garden and begin to live! (g) Maybe I just want to hear that I'm not exactly a terrible mother. (September 17, 2017)

The post (4) revolves around the author's lack of confidence regarding her performance as a good mother, framing her frustration within the act of "whining" – *nyt'yo* (c), a long-term complaint suggesting no constructive solution exists and that the only remedy is to seek sympathy through sharing. By asserting her state, expressing needs emphasized by the modifier *prosto* – "only" (e), and revealing her wants (f), she clarifies what she expects from sharing: a need for reassurance and emotional support. This pursuit has shaped the post's style, focused on the poster's emotional state, highlighting the intimate talk based on personal experiences and relationships.

Though the discursive code in online communities seems to allow for, and even encourage greater intimacy in public social interaction than would be considered appropriate in other situations of public discourse , the post (at least for someone who is not part of the community) might create a feeling of being exposed to information that is not meant for the public ear and is to be said only in a private conversation. Private talk that presupposes sharing personal information about oneself with only a few selected close others, occurring between the communicants behind allegedly closed walls, turns out to be a public discussion taken to a virtual venue that is open to anyone.

The need of being selective in regard to what aspects of their private talk the communicants wish to make public might be the reason that the act of sharing is not obvious to all members of virtual group. The Voice of Calling for Help sometimes becomes more cautious as people tend to be reticent about sharing their private matters in a public group discussion:

(5) *I'm not sure if my personal topic is quite in the spirit of the discussion here ... but I'll take a chance* (March 20, 2017).

Some of the group members also exhibit a lower level of self-disclosure because of the fear of a judgmental attitude about the intimate information they are to share:

(6) *It's very scary to write. Probably in this group there will be few people who can relate to my situation* (November 30, 2017).

On the whole, this voice is produced by the continuum of discursive consciousness that incorporates the explicit directives for support, the acts of sharing and/or the practices of reservation and qualms. In the following sections, I will discuss other voices evoked by the discourse of seeking help and analyze how they operate in the group discussion once the chat has started.

4.2. The voice of support group

In the next stage, the community members start expanding on their peer's post through an actively unfolding discussion that interlaces voices of different discursive rhetoric. Among them one can discern the conspicuous mode of talk that evokes encouragement and demonstrates a cooperative way of speaking, thus resembling the discourse of support groups (Carbaugh 1988, Wuthnow 1994). In the parenting forum, the voice of a support group intertwines the basics of a therapeutic approach and a group solidarity in providing a safe discursive environment where fellow parents who have common problems can be inspired by each other's journeys and share personal experiences. Concomitantly, the format of a support talk corresponds to the informal private chat "among friends" that constitutes an important channel in Russian cultural and social life. It demonstrates a very short distance in communication and is manifested in the private and informal frames of talk related to individuals and their inner emotional states. Talking to a friend includes a discussion of intimate everyday details of members' private lives (Larina 2015), involves the acts of complaints and lamentations (Ries 1997), and is based on expressions of sincerity and "speaking from the heart". It seems that communicating friendliness is already inseparable from the sharing and support mode and is built into the therapeutic approach.

To begin with, the voice of a support group is manifested in the use of SAs of acknowledgement and praise realized via different linguistic strategies, from affirmative exclamatory sentences (7) to conditional statements (8):

(7) *You are brilliant!* (May 21, 2018)
(8) *Your child is sensitive, and if her mother is understanding, then this is the best thing that could happen to her* (July 10, 2018).

The illocutionary force of the acknowledging acts is that of the reassurance and strengthening other parents in their adequate routine practices.

Support is mostly realized via the SA of advice whereby the post's writer expresses solidarity with support seekers and encourages their activities. The adviser believes her advice would benefit the interlocutor[9] and signals to her peer that a future action that was previously not obvious to her could work. The act of advice can manifest linguistic strategies of directness or indirectness. Direct advice is indicated through a pragmatically transparent expression of advice, either a performative verb denoting advice "I advise you", or a noun of advice "My advice is" used in declarative sentences:

(9) *My favorite advice is: get enough sleep, eat well, and pamper yourself. Get your 15–20 minutes a day* (June 10, 2018).

The most frequent form of direct advice in the parenting forum is the use of bare imperatives, either positive or negative:

(10) *Try to hear yourself. Don't listen to anyone. Take your time and know that this choice is yours.* (March 12, 2018).

[9] Following Searle's (1969) theory of directive speech acts, by giving advice the speaker attempts to change the hearer's actions and believes that the advice serves the interest of the recipient "telling you what is best for you". For further discussion of the act of advising, see also (Bach & Harnish 1979, Locher 2006, Locher & Limberg 2012).

Indirect advice can include the linguistic realizations of probability signaled by the phrase "It would be better" (*luchshe by*):

(11) *It would be better to say goodbye to the feeling of guilt* (March 15, 2018).

It is also expressed in rhetorical questions (12) or by sharing the adviser's own experience (13):

(12) *Is it fine to pass the baton to the dad when your emotions run high?*
(13) *With my elder child, only the articulation of his feelings works, the ability to listen to him and just accept him as he is.* (May 6, 2017).

The nature of friendly advice in online communities can be attributed to the close distance between I and the Other in Russian culture. The advice-giving is a culturally embedded behavior in Russian communication, traditionally offered "out of the best of motives" (Larina 2020) in private and public realms of interaction. It is perceived as readiness to help, demonstrating closeness and the importance of communication and contact (Wierzbicka 2012). In the frame of the supporting Voice, advice often comes from the position of a "family member" or a close friend, demonstrating a significant degree of involvement:

(14) *Take care of yourself to begin with. Check thyroid hormones, go to a psychologist, if necessary, to a psychotherapist for pills. Get yourself into some kind of sports for relaxation and release. You are not alone, believe me.* (March 16, 2017)

The advice pertains to the interlocutor's deeply private sphere of her physical and mental state. The possible imposition is neutralized by expressing empathy and solidarity in admitting that the others have the same or very close experiences with the advisee: "you are not the only one". The imperative *"believe me"* (*pover'te mne*) operates at the perlocutionary level Austin (1962: 101) and adds to the chain of imperatives a convincing dimension of advancing the realization that something can really be done and is well worth the effort.

At the content level, the post suggests a therapeutic logic that advances the idea of "working on oneself". Drawing on popular psychology self-help discourse, the message offers a specific pragmatics for change and a new language for understanding the self by shifting the focus toward keeping one's own life under control. Therapeutic talk is deeply anchored in the language of self-care, articulating emotions and condition of self while borrowing from psychological postulates and concepts.

The new therapeutic language is offered as a means of managing not only the communicants' private and emotional experience, but also their parenting approach. The psychological emotional content based on consideration of the child's personal needs may be implicit advice (13) or explicitly expressed within imperative acts that entail a repertoire of new emotional language.

(15) *Observe how to give your child the feeling that everything is fine with your connection, that he is dear, loved, and has a place in your life! ... talk to him, play, walk, read. When he asks for help - help, and don't help if he doesn't ask for it.* (October 7, 2019)

Providing positive reinforcement, maintaining the emotional bond with the child, and addressing her personal choices appear to be an integral part of the online supporting Voice.

Last, but not the least element of this voice, are the acts of well-wishing and reassurance, both directed to the future. The encouraging messages demonstrate a desire to provide confidence wishing the best for what lies ahead:

(16) *Get great strength! Good luck and patience to you!* (May 16, 2019).

The statements of reassurances, routinely contain the lexis of certainty, thereby offering a friendly "guarantee" to the addressee. This guarantee can be understood in terms of a speaker's desire not only to remove her peer's doubts or fears, but also to offer a future credit to the fellow-parent:

(17) *You will succeed, do not even hesitate! You will be all right!* (May 26, 2017).

To conclude, the Voice of Support Group exhibits interaction patterns for positive responding and sharing and creates the dynamics of encouragement by combining discursive practices that reinforce the interlocutor in her parenting role. The performative language of this format of talk is governed by the use of direct and indirect acts of acknowledgement, implementing various advice strategies, and recruiting different levels of therapeutic emotional expression oriented to the discourse of self-needs.

4.3. The voice of authoritative knowledge

This voice reveals another format of advice that arises from the adviser's position of presupposed authority and expertise. The authoritative dimension of the advice is based on the stylistics of fundamental universal postulates on how things "should be" within parenting or life in general. The expertise–related advice is rarely realized via personally directed performatives. Instead, it is performed through the impersonalized form of infinitive addressed to a generalized subject, is of considerable demonstrative importance and as such carries more persuasive force than a direct act.

The following advice is an example of a universally applicable assertion, introduced through the use of the linguistic form "one should + infinitive" (*sleduet*) as a way of referring to anyone, not someone specifically:

(18) *One should look after one's children and set an example for the rest of what a family should be!* (February 20, 2017)

In this format, the advisory act carries the illocutionary force of an admonitive instruction and a critical comment that teaches interlocutors about right and wrong (Zbenovich 2023, Zbenovich et al. 2024). The normative belief is clothed in the form of a concrete image (looking after one's own family, thereby setting the example for others), with compliance or non-compliance serving as a principle for such moral judgement. Moreover, this format of advice echoes advising practices about children in Russian discourse in general, [10] where personal experience automatically qualifies one to give unsolicited guidance (Zbenovich & Lerner 2013).

Common truth knowledge can also be conveyed through declarative assertions similar to proverbial phrases. These statements appear as traditional sayings based on common sense or experience, performing a hortative moralistic function and using formulaic language. This is evident in the following example of indirect advice that illustrates the preceptive nature of folk wisdom:

(19) *If one doesn't punish children in childhood, one will be punished by them in old age.* (May 24, 2018)[11]

The illocutionary potential of the utterance is that of the admonition, presented through the syntactic structure and stylistics of a prophetic wisdom that pertains to a standard expression of a conventional proverbial slogan. In this framework, the realization of the first phrase shapes essential condition for the future and emphasizes sequencing of educational actions and their interdependence. Though the advice lacks the metaphorical nature of a true proverb, it represents the moralizing prescript of adhering to the proper "cause-consequence" progression in parenting and suggests a ready-made philosophy of life.

In transmission of the normative universal beliefs an important role is played by the rhetoric of persuasiveness – argumenting by means of using peremptory language that doesn't leave a shadow of a doubt (Lerner & Zbenovich 2013, Zbenovich & Lerner 2013). The author's confidence in her own righteousness is manifested in a rigid style of categorical judgments and in the use of evaluative vocabulary to strengthen her position, e.g., "it is clear that" and "there can be no two opinions". Some patterns of unequivocal knowledge are demonstrated in the following example:

(20) *It is clear that children must learn to understand the boundaries of their own space and that of others. There can be no two opinions. Without respecting someone else's boundaries, one won't be able to defend her own later!* (December 10, 2018)

[10] In the Russian cultural context, fostering advice regarding children can be attributed to the fact that childhood is viewed as a common social responsibility in both private and public spheres where a third person's opinion on the questions of education and discipline is generally considered acceptable. This can also be accounted to cultural models of social relationships in Russia that promote unsolicited advice due to the relative absence of a minimal zone of personal autonomy in public spaces.

[11] Compare this, for example, with the same structure of a customary proverb "Without feeding the horse, one won't go far" (*Ne nakormiv loshad', daleko ne uyedesh'*).

The fact that the statement concerns categorical language is obvious. What is interesting, however, is that the therapeutic matter emerges within the authoritative form. The authoritative advice becomes psychologized through articulation of one's "space boundaries", which refers to a baseline level of general fundamental truths. Though the use of authoritative language seems to be conditional upon many factors on the individual level such as gender, age and position within the social hierarchy (Andreeva 2008), the recruited categorical lexis along with the psychologized content in the parental post attests to the current manner of talking about children in the public space in Russia. This often aligns with the psychological language used by parents, as they learn to self-reflect and manage their emotions and relations with their children.[12]

Conversely, the categorical form of impersonalized advice emphasizes even more the harshness of the language when it lacks a therapeutic approach and is hostile in its content:

(21) *With a strap on the butt, once but hard! Or make one stand in the corner! We all were standing… And all these conversations with the psychologist, and mother's monotonous moral teaching will flow away forever without leaving anything in memory* [...]. (April 19, 2018)

What immediately attracts attention in this post, is the cancellation of the function of "talk" in general, including therapeutic talk, combined with the encouragement of authority and power of physical acts, directed to and evocative of physical experience. In this sense one discerns a non-acceptance and even a critique of therapeutic talk. The act of advice gets a dual illocutionary force (Searle 1975), both direct and indirect. While it drives its force from the explicit directive to foreground rough disciplinary practices, the indirect call for the abolition of therapeutic approach framed within the SA of a prediction ("will flow away forever"), is equally important. In effect, the advice acquires an additional negative connotation of disrespect for a third party as it employs rhetoric of irreverence towards children, insisting on views based on categorical accusations of children and corporal punishment (partly reflecting the author's childhood experience). The attitudes toward family and school educational policies in Russia, however, have changed greatly in recent decades, providing clear evidence of higher tolerance and consideration regarding children.[13] Disciplinary measures as were used in the past have been gradually substituted by new therapeutic modes of talk to a child and talking about children in general.

[12] The psychologized content of the posts resonates with the child-oriented therapeutic emotional language of support group. Articulating therapeutic practices in online public space on two different discursive levels that pertain either to the personalized friendly encouragement or to the authoritative discourse of normative beliefs, highlights the idea of the growing emotional psychological awareness among Russian parents.

[13] For new tendencies in Russian parenthood see Kukulin & Maiofis (2010), among others.

The language associated with a coarse attitude towards a child, both in form and intent of the message, is perceived by other forum members as inappropriate verbal behavior that arouses disagreement in the context of today's increasingly psychologically directed educational policies. The "different speaking" thus evokes meta-controlling acts on part of the interlocutors' posts that counteract the discursive style of the original message within the boundaries of expected suitable ways of talking. In the next section, we will consider in detail such instances of monitoring the style of communicants' speaking as it is reflected in the responses to their posts.

4.4. The voice of discourse monitoring and management (Meta-talk)

In the discursive texture of the parenting forum, one can recognize the voice that departs from the actual development of discussion and provides feedback on the manner of the interaction. The control over the interaction is revealed in communicants' evaluations and comments that suggest what kind of communication should be used in the context of the forum debate and serve the discursive indicators on non-acceptability of the interlocutors' way of posting.

The following responses to the preceding post (21) illustrate the idea:

(22) *Your inappropriate style of talking falls out of bounds of the community.* (April 19, 2018)

(23) *Here is ridiculous and incompetent nonsense, starting from the first phrase*. (April 19, 2018)

(24) *As it is written, it's some kind of blather.* (April 20, 2018)

The fact that each of the above concerns speech monitoring is obvious in (22) and apparently more forthright in (23) and (24). The first response reveals the most frequent metapragmatic strategy of disapproval regarding the interlocutor's discursive behavior: the post's inappropriateness is signaled by a critical remark. This judgment serves an instructive purpose, directing the discourse according to virtual talk norms. Although the metapragmatic comment does not explicitly command a response, performing such control acts (Blum-Kulka 1983) requires addressees to consider them and encourages cooperative reactions.

In the next two examples, the metapragmatic voice conveys unmitigated and even harsh disagreement with the interlocutor's manner of writing the post, undermining her intention with disparaging remarks about the form of the message. In assessing the discursive style of the post as clearly flawed, the authors of these meta-comments themselves sound impolite. It's interesting to note that the concepts of "nonsense" and "blather" used in the response and indicating foolish talk without real substance, conveyed in a silly and annoying way, bring the form of talk and the content to work together. The coarse vocabulary used in the response doesn't attempts to mask its offensive nature – we see no motive to maintain face for the interlocutor in the interaction. Responding in a way that brands the post as unacceptable, inadequate and even absurd hardens a serious charge against its author for not meeting the criteria of therapeutic talk considered normative in the current parenting debate.

The analysis of the metapragmatic mode of discussion in different genres has traditionally referred to the flow of discourse, focusing on the comments as signals for conversational appropriateness (Silverstein 1993: 34–42) and the discursive conditions that make language use understandable and effective[14]. In the Russian virtual parenting space, metapragmatic discourse addresses various issues, primarily how language associated with emotional therapeutic way of talking is interpreted and negotiated by others. It furthermore highlights other voices by taking a stance towards them. While each voice represents a discursive position indexed by specific language, the meta-voice targets another's discourse, and is indexed by critique language to language. For example, the interlocutor uses the comment in a critical way, positioning herself against the message that the other voice, say, the Voice of Authoritative Knowledge has communicated conceptually. From a Bakhtinian perspective then, this refers to a basic dialogue opened by the use of the meta-comment where any speaker almost inevitably enters into a dialogue of social positioning when commenting on ongoing discourse, and implicitly providing a relative representation of what another said (Bakhtin 1984: 185).

The therapeutic logic not only represents the authority in meta-pragmatic comments, but can also embody a set of moral guidelines. The offending verbal act can be turned back to the interlocutor, instructing her about the need to learn adequate attitude reflected in her language as a condition of remaining part of the group:

(25) *As a moderator, I ask you to refrain from disparaging remarks addressing kids, otherwise it is better to leave the group. When you learn to express yourself reasonably, come back.* (April 19, 2018)

Though ascribing therapeutic content to the act of making moral judgements is mostly typical of the group moderator, the emotional therapeutic modes of interaction are also discussed by other participants. The following meta-comment explicates that things should be said with the adherence to a proper tone (*tonal'nost'*) in communication in order to allow others to feel secure in the discursive environment:

(26) *It is very important to choose the right tone. It is very important that the group remains a truly safe space.* (January 25, 2017)

This statement takes two facets of the advisory act: it implicitly reflects on the problem and attempts to benefit the other party, advising her about the need to abide by the appropriate style of interaction. Here the concept of 'safe' for all is

[14] For meta-linguistic means for registering objection to a previous utterance see Horn 1985: 121–74; for communicative impact of metalinguistic commentaries used in court see Jacquemet 1994: 299–321.

accentuated as a condition of being included in communication and protected from humiliation for speaking up.

The metapragmatic discourse also specifies under which conditions the interaction in forums should occur. The participants comment on whether an anonymous communicative option best fits the context of the online discussion. The issue of anonymity in the virtual public interaction is controversial, and evokes discontentment in the author of the following comment:

(27) *Is it just me starting to get annoyed by the number of anonymous questions? We don't give anonymous answers, after all.* (April 12, 2018)

The speaker points out the asymmetrical linguo-pragmatic nature of the encounter: while the verbal acts of a party seeking for help cannot be traced to a specific person, the response of other party who provides judgements comes from a real person like her. By contrast, the author of the next comment implicitly supports an anonymous forum community member and believes that a person seeking advice opts to stay impersonalized because of her vulnerability:

(28) *The author is in a vulnerable position enough as it is, asking us for advice, and the post's anonymity further emphasizes this.* (November 18, 2017)

It is interesting, that negotiating anonymity goes in both directions: even though insecurity underlies the anonymous way of posting to a forum, what's more important is that the issue of anonymity stresses the emotional state of vulnerability ("enough as it is") and thus opens an implicit call facilitating consideration. Although both comments do not explicitly link the appearance of the post to the language use, they undeniably signal pragmatic implications of anonymity on the emotional language touching on how the way of posting generates the way of talking about emotions.

In discussing parenting issues, the meta-pragmatic voice ostensibly stands alone since meta-control acts switch the focus to the verbal behavior and hinder the discussion. At the same time, however, the comments employed by the interlocutors reveal pragmatic norms that govern socialization in forum discussion, create alternative discursive relationships between the communicators, and emphasize new therapeutic emotionality.

5. Discussion

Speakers' voices, or the formats of their talk, shape the discussion of private and personal matters and are predetermined by the very structure of the public forum debate, where a certain voice is necessarily tied to the speaker's stance and is indexed by the use of particular communicative pragmatic acts. The forum discussion illustrates the simultaneous presence of different such voices that pertain to informal friendly communication constituted in the private and interpersonal sphere, to discursive practices of categorical language based on authoritative knowledge and common truths, as well as to the meta-regulation and monitoring of conversational appropriateness. Recognizing these formats in a parenting forum is essential for understanding current discursive condition of Russian public debate in general, where the division of speakers' discursive roles is not only repeated, but also strengthened and sharpened by today's Russian political and social context. I believe that the formation of the ways of talking about personal experience in the virtual public space along with the articulation of emotional expression that has been emerging in recent years, has already functioned as a germ and forerunner of what makes today's harsh personal language possible in public. Through the mechanism of voices, we can more vividly see how in today's arena we are entering a political and very personal debate about the war and conflict.

On the digital discursive scene, the emotionality of the debate language is increasingly apparent. As the realm of parenthood is in itself an emotionally loaded issue, constructing and negotiating voices in the context of online discussion is thus accomplished mainly through emotion-related communication. With the culture of social sharing that calls into question earlier conventional distinctions between private and public, emotional sharing in the public parenting debate appears to be a linguistic behavior, a mode of participation and a type of therapeutic talk that supports the expression of self and maintains public intimacy.

Though different formats of talk reveal different levels of emotionality, all the voices are governed by the emotional therapeutic interaction that prevails in the discussion. The forum debate incorporates the logic of a therapeutic consultation and adopts psychological emotional language in merging the formats of asking for help, teaching self-help and providing support from the group, as well as inculcating authoritative knowledge. All of these act as structural communicative and discursive positions; they are intrinsic to this type of forum and to any forum discussion of personal issues.

Thus the Voice of Calling for Help embodies the act of emotional sharing, while the Voice of the Support Group reveals the dynamics of the global discourse of group therapy. This discourse is based on acts of affirmation and positive reinforcement on the one hand, and the language of counselling on the other. Similarly, the Voice of Authoritative Knowledge provides forum participants with a therapeutic psychological agenda. Although the expertise here is foregrounded by the position of authority on the issue of parenthood, this voice clearly demonstrates that the therapeutic logic can be articulated either by the form of the utterance or by its content. Interestingly, the unconditional language of common truth knowledge doesn't undermine therapeutic logic – instead, it strengthens and reinforces it by the authoritative form of the utterance.

The structure of therapeutic consultation in parenting forums coexists with other voices. The pragmatics of this coexistence can be clearly seen in the criteria for conversational appropriateness revealed by the Meta-Pragmatic Voice of Discourse Monitoring and Management. This voice undermines any discursive formats which do not belong to the therapeutic logic, situates them on a differential position, identifies their dissonances and shows how they should be sanctioned or removed. In the case of the parenting forum, the meta-voice considers which practices of talking to a child and about children in general are those that determine the type of verbal behavior that would be considered appropriate for the parenting debate.

I suggest that the interaction in the forum discussion is for the most part built within the framework of the act of therapeutic advice. Its content and structure may be different, however it will always be formed by the discursive position of the speaker – that of emotional consultation and counseling. In generating private personal talk, the SA of advice creates different dynamics in discussing parenting and individual experiences, and acquires a different illocutionary force. More specifically, the advice in a support group is realized via explicitly performed acknowledging acts that reinforce an interlocutor in her position of parenting. Contrary to this mode of discursive sharing, the impersonalized formal advice given to instruct other parents within the context of debate, implies or overtly suggests the interlocutor's parenting inadequacy.

6. Conclusion

To conclude, a pragmatic analysis of virtual talk, along with its reading via the application of Bakhtin's concept of *voice*, has provided a tool for examining the polyphonic discursive state of online parenting communication in Russian social media. First, the voices jointly construct the fabric of the discussion and orient a speaker's intent toward the others – prospective interlocutors who play at least as important a role. Furthermore, the existing discursive formats of talking about private issues in the public virtual discussion are mostly organized by therapeutic emotional language. The polyphonic interplay in forum communication, however, is not limited to the discourses that underlie the emotional therapeutic approach. These voices are frequently heard in combination with non-therapeutic formats of talk that may contest the messages of the therapeutic discursive logic in the parenting debate. The understanding of how the latter will coexist with the emerging emotional therapeutic formats, and which other voices will be activated in the private-public Internet debate in Russian virtual space, is closely connected to the speakers' intentions in performing a specific communicative act within the cultural and social context underlying Russian Internet communication.

The findings contribute simultaneously to three research fields: Russian studies, studies of media linguistics and sociolinguistics. By exploring the emerging public talk about private matters and tracing its presence in the Russian cultural reality, the study contributes to the understanding of change in Russian emotional language and culture. The study also elucidates the significance of communicative acts and their pragmatic implications in virtual talk and reveals how various linguistic strategies such as emotional therapeutic language and non-therapeutic formats coexist and contest each other in online discourse. Moreover, by presenting the analysis of the roles and voices in the parenting forum the research sheds light on dynamics of sociolinguistic interactions in contemporary digital communication – social behaviors, norms, and the ways individuals negotiate their identities and experiences in a digital public space.

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Article history:
Received: 27 June 2024
Accepted: 25 January 2025

Bionote:

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Клавдия ЗБЕНОВИЧ (PhD) — доцент кафедры английского языка в колледже Хадасса, (Иерусалим, Израиль). Ее исследовательские интересы лежат в области коммуникативной прагматики, анализа диалога, эмоционального дискурса и использования языка в межкультурном контексте. В 2016–2020 годах она участвовала в международном исследовательском проекте по терапевтическому эмоциональному языку и культуре, финансируемом научным фондом Израиля.
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Russian Journal of Linguistics
ISSN 2687-0088 (Print), ISSN 2686-8024 (Online)

2025 Vol. 29 No. 2 272–295
http://journals.rudn.ru/linguistics

https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-40334
EDN: JYCNTV

Research article / Научная статья

The strategic use of metaphor in political discourse: Critical Metaphor Analysis

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Abstract
Political discourse is increasingly shaped by crisis events that demand immediate rhetorical responses from leaders. While metaphors have been extensively studied in political communication, understanding their strategic deployment during crisis moments remains understudied. This gap is particularly significant given the potential impact of crisis-driven metaphorical framing on public perception and policy outcomes in democratic societies. This study aims to identify how metaphorical language is strategically deployed in political crisis communication and its role in shaping public perception and policy debates. The research focuses on Donald Trump's 2024 nomination acceptance speech following an assassination attempt, offering a unique case study of crisis-response rhetoric in a high-stakes political context. The methodology combines Critical Metaphor Analysis with metaphor scenario identification, employing the Pragglejaz Group's Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) modified for political discourse. The 12,287-word speech transcript was analyzed to identify and categorize metaphorical expressions and scenarios. Inter-coder reliability was ensured through Cohen's kappa coefficient measurements and consensus meetings. The findings reveal sophisticated applications of interlinked metaphor scenarios that serve multiple rhetorical functions. Key scenarios identified include SURVIVAL AS DIVINE INTERVENTION, IMMIGRATION AS INVASION, and NATION AS CONSTRUCTION PROJECT, creating coherent narrative arcs linking personal crisis to national renewal. The analysis demonstrates how these scenarios simplify complex issues, evoke emotional responses, and construct leadership narratives. This research contributes to crisis communication theory by demonstrating how metaphor scenarios are strategically deployed to shape public perception during pivotal political moments. The findings have important implications for media literacy education and the development of ethical guidelines for metaphor use in political communication, particularly during crisis events.

Key words: *political discourse, critical metaphor analysis, crisis rhetoric, campaign narrative, Trump's rhetoric*

For citation:
Atmawijaya, Tito Dimas. 2025. The strategic use of metaphor in political discourse: Critical Metaphor Analysis. *Russian Journal of Linguistics* 29 (2). 272–295. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-40334

Стратегическое использование метафоры в политическом дискурсе: критический анализ

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Аннотация
Политический дискурс все чаще формируется кризисными событиями, требующими от лидеров немедленной риторической реакции. Хотя метафоры широко изучались в политической коммуникации, их стратегическое использование в кризисные моменты не получило должного внимания. Этот пробел особенно значим с учетом потенциального влияния обусловленных кризисом метафорических фреймов на общественное восприятие и политические последствия в демократических обществах. Цель данного исследования – определить, как метафорический язык используется стратегически в политической кризисной коммуникации и какова его роль в формировании общественного восприятия и в политических дебатах. Материалом послужила речь Дональда Трампа на церемонии согласия на номинацию в 2024 году после покушения на его жизнь, которая представляет собой уникальный пример кризисной риторики в значимом политическом контексте. Использовался критический анализ метафор с идентификацией метафорических сценариев, а также модифицированная для политического дискурса процедура идентификации метафор группы Pragglejaz. Для выявления и категоризации метафорических выражений и сценариев был проанализирован транскрипт речи объемом 12287 слов. Надежность межэкспертной оценки обеспечивалась измерениями коэффициента каппа Коэна и дальнейшим согласованием. Полученные результаты свидетельствуют об усложненном применении взаимосвязанных метафорических сценариев, выполняющих множество риторических функций. Были выявлены ключевые сценарии: ВЫЖИВАНИЕ КАК БОЖЕСТВЕННОЕ ВМЕШАТЕЛЬСТВО, ИММИГРАЦИЯ КАК ВТОРЖЕНИЕ и НАЦИЯ КАК СТРОИТЕЛЬНЫЙ ПРОЕКТ, которые связывают повествование, соединяя личный кризис с национальным обновлением. Анализ показал, как эти сценарии упрощают сложные вопросы, вызывают эмоциональную реакцию и конструируют нарративы лидерства. Исследование вносит вклад в теорию кризисной коммуникации, демонстрируя, как метафорические сценарии стратегически используются для формирования общественного восприятия в ключевые политические моменты. Результаты способствуют повышению медийно-информационной грамотности и могут найти применение при разработке этических рекомендаций по использованию метафор в политической коммуникации, особенно во время кризисных событий.

Ключевые слова: *политический дискурс, критический анализ метафор, кризисная риторика, нарратив кампании, риторика Трампа*

Для цитирования:
Atmawijaya, T.D. The strategic use of metaphor in political discourse: Critical Metaphor Analysis. *Russian Journal of Linguistics.* 2025. Vol. 29. № 2. P. 272–295. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-40334

1. Introduction

Discourse refers to the structured use of language in communication, encompassing both spoken and written forms. It involves the organization of words, phrases, sentences, and larger units of meaning into coherent texts that convey specific messages within particular contexts. Discourse analysis examines how language is used in various contexts to construct meaning, establish identities, and negotiate relationships (Fairclough 2013, Eslami et al. 2023, Wagemans 2016, and among many others). This approach highlights the dynamic nature of language as it interacts with social, cultural, and ideological forces.

Understanding discourse is crucial because it reveals how language shapes our perception of reality. It uncovers the implicit assumptions and power relations embedded in communication, showing how language can influence thought and behavior (van Dijk 2008, Reyes 2011, Zappettini et al. 2021, and among many others). By analyzing discourse, researchers can identify the ways in which language perpetuates social norms, reinforces power structures, and reflects cultural values. This analysis extends beyond mere linguistic features to consider the broader socio-cultural and political contexts in which language is used.

Political discourse is a specialized form of discourse that occurs within the realm of politics. It includes speeches, debates, policy documents, media coverage, and other forms of communication related to governance, political ideologies, and public affairs. Political discourse is inherently strategic and persuasive, aiming to influence public opinion, mobilize support, and legitimize authority (Chilton 2004, Dillard & Pfau 2002, Konstantinova 2022, Musolff 2016). It plays a pivotal role in shaping political realities, constructing social identities, and framing issues to align with particular agendas.

In political discourse, language is a powerful tool used to construct and convey political messages. Politicians and political actors use rhetorical strategies to persuade, inform, and manipulate their audiences. These strategies often involve the use of metaphors, narratives, and other figurative language to simplify complex issues, evoke emotions, and create compelling visions of the future (Boeynaems et al. 2017, Charteris-Black 2011, Khedri et al. 2022, Kövecses 2018, and among many others). Analyzing political discourse helps to uncover the techniques used by politicians to shape public perception and influence political outcomes.

A metaphor is a figure of speech that involves understanding one concept in terms of another. It functions by highlighting similarities between two different entities, allowing complex or abstract ideas to be communicated through more familiar or concrete terms. Metaphors are not just linguistic decorations but fundamental cognitive tools that shape our understanding and perception of the world (Lakoff & Johnson 1980). They enable us to grasp abstract concepts by relating them to everyday experiences.

Metaphors play a significant role in shaping thought and language. They structure our conceptual systems and influence how we perceive and interact with reality. For example, describing time as money (e.g., "saving time," "spending time”) frames time in economic terms, affecting how people value and manage it. By examining metaphors, researchers can gain insights into the underlying cognitive processes and cultural frameworks that shape human thought and communication.

In political discourse, metaphors are powerful tools for framing issues, shaping public perception, and persuading audiences. They provide cognitive shortcuts that simplify complex political realities, making them more accessible and emotionally resonant (Charteris-Black 2011, Ferrari 2007, Sopory 2006, and others). By mapping familiar experiences onto political concepts, metaphors can evoke strong emotional responses and reinforce ideological positions. For instance, referring to a political campaign as a “battle” or “race” invokes competition and urgency, influencing how the public engages with the political process.

Metaphors in political discourse serve multiple functions. They help to create compelling narratives, simplify policy proposals, and mobilize support by connecting with the audience’s emotions and experiences. Metaphors can also obscure or highlight certain aspects of reality, shaping how issues are perceived and debated (Musolff 2004, Mio et al. 2005, Sun et al. 2021, and others). By analyzing the use of metaphors in political discourse, researchers can uncover the cognitive and rhetorical strategies employed by politicians to influence public opinion and achieve their political goals.

Previous research has extensively explored the role of metaphors in political discourse, demonstrating their ability to frame issues, construct political realities, and influence public opinion. Studies have shown that metaphors can shape voters’ perceptions of candidates, policies, and national identity. Researchers like Lakoff and Johnson (1980) have highlighted the pervasiveness of metaphors in everyday language and thought, while Charteris-Black (2004), Musolff (2006), and others have specifically examined their use in political rhetoric. These studies reveal how metaphors contribute to the persuasive power of political language.

Building on these foundational works, contemporary research has demonstrated that metaphors are integral to political communication, serving to simplify complex issues, evoke emotions, and shape public perception. For instance, Lakoff’s (1996) work on moral politics illustrates how metaphor’s structure political ideologies, while Musolff’s (2004) studies on the European Union reveal how metaphors influence perceptions of international relations. Contemporary scholarship has continued to expand this understanding, examining how metaphor power correlates with opinion expression in political narratives with Kalinin and Ignatenko (2024), and Mujagić (2024) investigating metaphor use in migration discourse across British and Bosnian-Herzegovinian contexts. These studies highlight the complex interplay between metaphorical language and political persuasion across diverse cultural contexts.

Studies focusing on the emotional dimensions of political discourse (Bull 2016, Bull & Waddle 2021, Carver & Pikalo 2008, Goode & Bull 2020, Karin 2019, Ponton et al. 2024, Zappettini et al. 2021, and among many others) have further enriched our understanding of metaphor's persuasive power. They reveal how the emotionalization of media discourse through metaphorical language serves to shape public opinion and political attitudes and demonstrates how emotional resonance created through metaphorical framing can influence audience perception and engagement with political messages. Examination of political discourse in social media shows how metaphorical expressions function as powerful tools for mobilizing public opinion and constructing political narratives, particularly in digitally-mediated communication contexts (e.g., Konstantinova 2022).

Despite the extensive research on metaphors in political discourse, gaps remain in understanding how metaphors are used in response to specific events and crises. There is limited research on how political leaders employ metaphors to address and frame sudden, high-stakes situations, such as assassination attempts. Additionally, the role of metaphors in constructing narratives of resilience and destiny in political rhetoric has not been thoroughly explored. This gap presents an opportunity to examine how metaphors are strategically used in moments of crisis to influence public perception and reinforce leadership (Flusberg et al. 2018).

Further, while much research has focused on the use of metaphors in Western political contexts, there is a need for more studies examining their use in diverse cultural and political settings. Understanding how metaphors function in different contexts can provide a more comprehensive view of their role in political discourse. Addressing these gaps can enhance our understanding of the cognitive and rhetorical mechanisms that underpin political communication and contribute to more effective political analysis and strategy (Ponton 2020, Zappettini et al. 2021, and among many others).

In the context of the 2024 US elections, Donald Trump's use of metaphors in his nomination acceptance speech following an assassination attempt offers a unique case study. His speech, delivered in a high-stakes political environment, is rich with metaphorical language that frames his candidacy, the state of the nation, and his vision for the future. Analyzing this speech provides insights into how metaphors are employed to construct narratives of strength, resilience, and renewal, and how they shape public perception during critical moments in political campaigns (Wodak & Forchtner 2018).

This research aims to deepen our understanding of how metaphors function strategically in political discourse, particularly during crisis events and high-stakes political moments. The study focuses on examining how metaphorical language shapes public perception, constructs political narratives, and influences policy debates. This research addresses the gap by examining how metaphors are used in Trump's speech to respond to a crisis and frame his political narrative. It offers a unique opportunity to explore the intersection of metaphor, political discourse, and crisis communication. By analyzing Trump's speech through the lens of Critical Metaphor Analysis and metaphor scenarios, this study contributes to our understanding of the cognitive and rhetorical strategies employed in political discourse (Musolff 2016). It reveals how metaphors function as tools of persuasion and framing, shaping public perception and influencing political outcomes. To achieve this aim, the following research questions are addressed:

1. How are metaphors strategically deployed in political discourse to frame leadership and legitimacy during crisis events?

2. What metaphorical scenarios are employed in political speeches to construct narratives of national security and societal renewal?

3. How do crisis-oriented metaphor scenarios in political discourse influence public perception and shape policy debates?

2. Theoretical framework

This study is grounded in the theoretical approaches of Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) and the concept of metaphor scenarios, which provide robust tools for examining the use of metaphorical language in political discourse.

Critical Metaphor Analysis, as developed by Charteris-Black (2004, 2011), combines insights from cognitive linguistics, critical discourse analysis, and pragmatics to examine how metaphors shape our understanding of social and political issues. Recent work by Zibin and Solopova (2024) has expanded this understanding by examining metaphor's role across languages and cultures, demonstrating its universal yet culturally-specific nature in discourse. CMA posits that metaphors are not merely linguistic ornaments but cognitive devices that structure our conceptual systems and influence our perceptions and actions. This approach allows for a comprehensive exploration of the interplay between language, thought, and ideology in political rhetoric.

One of the key principles of CMA is that metaphors are both cognitive and ideological. They reflect and shape how we think about abstract concepts, often in ways that align with particular ideological positions (Lakoff & Johnson 1980, Charteris-Black 2004, and among many others). As demonstrated by Martín de la Rosa (2023) in her analysis of Brexit discourse, image schemas and metaphorical framing play crucial roles in constructing political narratives and mobilizing public opinion. This dual nature of metaphors means they can subtly reinforce or challenge dominant ideologies, making them powerful tools in political discourse. By analyzing metaphors used in political speeches, we can uncover underlying ideological biases and their impact on public perception.

Another important principle of CMA is the persuasive power of metaphors. By framing issues in certain ways, metaphors can influence public opinion and policy preferences (Charteris-Black 2005, Thibodeau & Boroditsky 2011, and others). For example, describing immigration as a "flood" evokes a sense of danger and urgency, potentially swaying public opinion towards stricter immigration policies. Research by Zibin et al. (2024) demonstrates how metaphorical framing devices in media discourse can shape public perception of complex political conflicts. This framing effect highlights the importance of metaphor choice in shaping political narratives and their reception by the audience.

The context-dependent nature of metaphor choice is also a crucial aspect of CMA. The selection and effectiveness of metaphors depend on the sociocultural context and the specific communicative goals of the speaker (Semino 2008). This means that metaphors that resonate in one context may not have the same impact in another. Understanding the context in which metaphors are used is essential for interpreting their meaning and effectiveness in political discourse.

Building on CMA, Musolff's (2006, 2016) concept of metaphor scenarios provides a more nuanced framework for analyzing complex metaphorical structures in political discourse. A metaphor scenario is a set of assumptions about prototypical aspects of a source situation, including its participants and their roles, typical events, and evaluation standards. This approach, further developed in contemporary research on cross-cultural metaphor analysis (Zibin & Solopova 2024), allows for a detailed examination of how metaphors create coherent and persuasive narratives.

One of the key aspects of metaphor scenarios is their narrative structure. Scenarios often have a mini-narrative or script-like quality, making them particularly effective for political storytelling (Musolff 2006). Martín de la Rosa's (2023) analysis of Brexit discourse demonstrates how image schemas and metaphor scenarios work together to construct compelling political narratives that evoke strong emotional responses. This narrative aspect helps to create compelling and memorable stories that can influence public perception and behavior. For instance, framing a political campaign as a "journey" can evoke notions of progress, struggle, and ultimate success.

The evaluative dimension of metaphor scenarios is also significant. Scenarios typically carry implicit or explicit evaluations of the target domain, influencing how issues are perceived (Musolff 2016). The research on emotionalization in media discourse shows how metaphorical scenarios can shape public attitudes towards specific policies or political figures. For example, describing a policy as a "lifeline" suggests it is essential and beneficial, while describing it as a "burden" implies it is costly and undesirable.

Another key aspect is the flexibility and elaboration of metaphor scenarios. Scenarios can be extended, modified, or contested in discourse, allowing for dynamic framing of issues over time (Semino et al. 2018). Recent studies have shown how this adaptability manifests across different cultural and linguistic contexts (e.g., Zibin & Solopova 2024), enabling politicians to respond to changing circumstances and audiences while maintaining the relevance and impact of their metaphors.

In analyzing Trump's nomination acceptance speech, we will use CMA to identify and interpret key metaphors, particularly those related to the assassination attempt, national security, and American renewal. This approach, informed by recent work on metaphor power in political discourse (Sun et al. 2021), will help us uncover the cognitive and ideological underpinnings of Trump's rhetoric, providing insights into how he frames these issues to support his political positions.

We will also examine how these metaphors are integrated into broader scenarios that structure Trump's narrative and argumentation. Special attention will be paid to the primary source domains Trump draws upon, such as war, journey, and construction, and their implications. Building on Zibin and colleagues' (2024) work on framing devices in political discourse, we will analyze how these source domains help create vivid and relatable images that resonate with the audience's experiences and emotions.

The framing effects of these metaphors and scenarios will be analyzed to understand how they shape public perception and support Trump's political positions. By examining how metaphorical language evokes emotional responses and creates a sense of shared identity with the audience, we can gain insights into the persuasive power of Trump's rhetoric. This analysis aligns with research on emotionalization in political and media discourse (Bull 2016, Bull & Waddle 2021, Carver & Pikalo 2008, Goode & Bull 2020, Karin 2019, Zappettini 2021, and others) and the role of metaphor in shaping public opinion.

Finally, we will consider the policy implications of metaphorical framing, exploring how it may influence public understanding of policy proposals and their perceived effectiveness. Building on both traditional frameworks of metaphor analysis and recent developments in cross-cultural metaphor research (Zibin & Solopova 2024), this study aims to reveal the cognitive and rhetorical strategies employed in political communication, particularly in response to a crisis event. This analysis will contribute to our understanding of how metaphor and narrative function in political discourse to shape public perception and policy preferences.

3. Data and methodology

The primary data source for this study is the official transcript of Donald Trump's nomination acceptance speech delivered at the Republican National Convention on July 19, 2024. This particular speech was selected for analysis because it represents a unique moment where personal crisis (assassination attempt) intersects with high-stakes political communication, offering rich potential for examining how metaphors function in crisis-response rhetoric. While Trump delivered numerous campaign speeches, this nomination acceptance speech was chosen due to its pivotal nature, comprehensive scope, and the extraordinary context in which it was delivered. The speech's timing immediately following an assassination attempt provides an unprecedented opportunity to examine how metaphorical language is deployed to frame both personal and national narratives in a moment of crisis.

The corpus consists of the full text of Trump's speech, containing approximately 12,287 words, obtained from The New York Times (https://www.nytimes.com/2024/07/19/us/politics/trump-rnc-speech-transcript.html). While focusing on a single speech may limit the generalizability of findings, this limitation is balanced by the speech's exceptional nature and comprehensiveness. The decision to analyze one extensive speech in depth, rather than multiple shorter speeches, allows for a more nuanced examination of how metaphorical patterns develop and interact within a complete rhetorical unit.

Our analysis employs a qualitative approach combining Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) and metaphor scenario identification. The methodology involves several systematic steps, beginning with multiple close readings of the transcript by two independent researchers, followed by preliminary identification of potential metaphorical expressions and development of coding protocols. It is illustrated in figure 1.

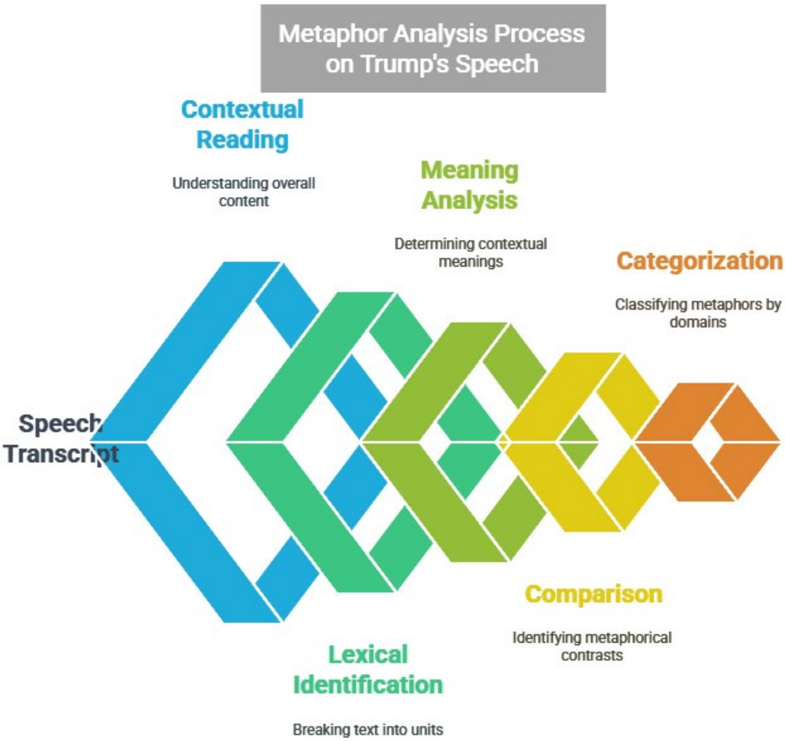

Figure 1. Metaphor Analysis Process on Trump's Speech

The Pragglejaz Group's (2007) Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) has been modified to accommodate political discourse analysis. The procedure includes complete text reading for general comprehension, lexical unit identification, contextual meaning analysis, basic meaning comparison, and metaphorical use determination. For example, in analyzing the phrase "we will build a wall," we examine its contextual meaning (creating immigration policy) against its basic meaning (physical construction) to determine its metaphorical use as part of the NATION AS CONSTRUCTION PROJECT conceptual metaphor. The details are illustrated in the table 1.

Table 1. **Metaphor Analysis Process on Trump's Speech**

No	Analytical Steps	Example: "We will build a wall"
1.	Lexical unit identification	"build" (verb)
2.	Contextual meaning	Creating and implementing restrictive immigration policies and border control measures
3.	Basic meaning	To construct a physical structure by putting parts together
4.	Meaning comparison	The contextual meaning (policy creation) contrasts with the basic meaning (physical construction), but it can be understood through comparison with it
5.	Metaphorical determination	YES - The verb is used metaphorically
6.	Source domain	CONSTRUCTION
7.	Target domain	IMMIGRATION POLICY
8.	Conceptual metaphor	NATION AS CONSTRUCTION PROJECT
9.	Metaphorical function	Simplifies complex policy into concrete, familiar terms; evokes physical barrier imagery

Identified metaphors are systematically categorized based on their source domains (e.g., war, journey, construction) and target domains (e.g., politics, economy, national security). This categorization process helps organize the metaphors systematically and allows for the identification of dominant themes and patterns in Trump's rhetorical strategies. Understanding these domains provides insights into how complex political concepts are framed and communicated to the audience.

To ensure methodological rigor and reliability in analyzing Trump's nomination acceptance speech, we implemented a comprehensive inter-coder reliability procedure. Two researchers independently coded 20% of the speech transcript (approximately 2,457 words), focusing particularly on metaphorical expressions related to the assassination attempt, national security, and leadership themes. For metaphor identification and categorization, we calculated Cohen's kappa (κ) to measure agreement beyond chance. The initial coding resulted in $\kappa = 0.82$ for metaphor identification and $\kappa = 0.78$ for scenario categorization, indicating strong inter-coder agreement (where $\kappa > 0.80$ represents strong agreement, 0.60–0.79 represents moderate agreement).

Discrepancies in coding Trump's metaphorical expressions were resolved through a three-stage process. First, each coder conducted an individual review, documenting their rationale for identifying metaphors such as "we will build a wall" and "drain the swamp," using a standardized form that captured the contextual and linguistic basis for their interpretations. Then, coders met for joint discussion sessions to compare analyses and discuss differences, particularly focusing on complex metaphorical scenarios like SURVIVAL AS DIVINE INTERVENTION AND NATION AS CONSTRUCTION PROJECT. Finally, a consensus-building phase involved working through disputed items with reference to documented examples from similar studies of crisis rhetoric in political discourse.

For cases where agreement could not be reached through the standard resolution process (approximately 5% of coded items), a third senior researcher with expertise in political discourse and metaphor analysis was consulted to make final determinations. This systematic approach to ensuring inter-coder reliability strengthens the validity of our findings while maintaining methodological transparency throughout the research process.

Following Musolff's (2006) approach, we identify recurring metaphorical themes that form coherent scenarios by analyzing how individual metaphors cluster around specific narrative structures or conceptual frames. The identified metaphors and scenarios are then examined through CMA, considering their ideological implications, potential persuasive effects, issue framing, and relationships to specific policy proposals. This critical analysis helps reveal the deeper cognitive and ideological dimensions of the speech.

The analysis is situated within multiple contextual layers: the immediate context of the assassination attempt, the broader campaign context of the 2024 presidential election, and the larger framework of contemporary American political discourse. This contextual interpretation allows us to understand the speech not just as a standalone text, but as part of a larger political and social narrative, helping explain how Trump's metaphors resonate with the current political climate and public sentiments.

Several limitations of this methodology must be acknowledged. First, while this study focuses on a single speech, this choice was deliberate and strategically motivated. The nomination acceptance speech following an assassination attempt represents a unique confluence of personal crisis and political rhetoric that is unparalleled in contemporary political discourse. We chose not to analyze other speeches by Trump during this period because they lacked the distinctive combination of high-stakes personal narrative and formal political communication that makes this particular speech valuable for studying crisis-response metaphors. Additionally, the speech's length (12,287 words) and comprehensive coverage of multiple themes provides sufficient data for in-depth analysis of metaphorical patterns. Nevertheless, we acknowledge that this focus on a single speech may limit the generalizability of findings to broader political discourse. Second, although we employ systematic procedures and inter-coder reliability measures, the interpretation of metaphors inherently involves some degree of subjective judgment. Finally, while we can analyze the rhetorical functions of metaphors, this study does not measure their actual impact on audience perceptions, suggesting an opportunity for future research combining discourse analysis with reception studies.

By applying this rigorous methodology to Trump's nomination acceptance speech, we aim to provide a detailed and nuanced analysis of metaphor use in political crisis communication. This approach enables us to examine how metaphorical language is strategically deployed to frame political issues and shape public perception, particularly in response to unprecedented events. The findings will contribute to our understanding of how metaphor and narrative function in political discourse during moments of personal and national crisis.

4. Findings

4.1. The DIVINE and WARRIOR Mission in Politics Metaphor Scenario

Trump uses the recent assassination attempt as a central metaphor scenario, weaving it throughout his speech to frame his candidacy and the state of the nation. This event serves as a pivotal narrative device, allowing Trump to cast himself in various symbolic roles that resonate with his audience. By integrating this incident into his broader political message, he reinforces key themes of resilience, divine favor, and protective leadership. The metaphorical portrayal of the assassination attempt not only underscores his personal narrative but also aligns with larger ideological and cultural frames that appeal to his supporters.

Trump portrays his survival as miraculous, invoking religious imagery:

(1) I stand before you in this arena only by the **grace of almighty God**.

This statement sets the tone for a narrative steeped in divine intervention, suggesting that his survival is part of a higher plan. By framing his continued presence as a result of divine grace, Trump implicitly positions himself as a chosen leader, predestined to guide the nation through tumultuous times. This metaphor scenario of POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AS DIVINE MISSION taps into deep-seated cultural beliefs about providence and destiny, making his leadership seem both inevitable and sanctified.

The use of religious language serves multiple purposes in Trump's rhetoric. It not only appeals to the religious sensibilities of his base but also elevates the political stakes, suggesting that his leadership is not merely a matter of human choice but divine will. Consider example (2):

(2) We live in a **world of miracles**. None of us knows God's plan...

This framing can mobilize religious and spiritual sentiments, transforming political support into a kind of faith-based loyalty.

Trump describes the assassination attempt in visceral detail, emphasizing his physical resilience:

(3) **Bullets were continuing to fly** as very brave Secret Service agents rushed to the stage.

This vivid depiction not only highlights the danger he faced but also frames him as a figure of physical courage and endurance. The narrative constructs a POLITICIAN AS WARRIOR metaphor, positioning Trump as a leader who physically endures threats to protect the nation.

By casting his survival as an act of divine intervention, Trump also deflects attention from the political and social conditions that may have contributed to the assassination attempt. Instead of addressing potential systemic issues, as shown in example (4):

(4) This is **God's plan** unfolding before us, not the work of mere mortals.

This approach simplifies the narrative, turning a complex socio-political event into a straightforward tale of good versus evil, with Trump as the divinely protected protagonist.

This framing of divine intervention also helps to create a sense of inevitability around Trump's political agenda, as evident in example (5):

(5) We are **chosen** to lead this great nation back to its rightful destiny.

If his leadership is seen as part of a divine plan, opposition to his policies can be framed as opposition to divine will.

Moreover, the warrior metaphor extends to his supporters, as shown in example (6):

(6) Together, we are **soldiers** in this great battle for America's soul.

This collective warrior narrative creates a sense of shared mission and solidarity among his team and supporters. The metaphor provides a rationale for strong, sometimes extreme, measures, aligning them with the narrative of protection and defense.

The POLITICIAN AS WARRIOR metaphor also serves to justify aggressive political strategies and policies, as demonstrated in example (7):

(7) We must **fight** with everything we have to protect our borders.

This framing can be used to legitimize hardline stances on issues like national security and immigration, presenting them as part of a protective strategy against external threats.

The combination of divine and warrior metaphors is particularly evident in example (8):

(8) God has **armed us** with the strength to defend our nation.

This narrative promises not just protection, but active defense against perceived threats, reinforcing loyalty and support among those who feel marginalized or threatened by current societal changes.

The warrior metaphor culminates in a call to collective action, as shown in example (9):

(9) Every American must become a **warrior** in this fight for our country's future.

Furthermore, this warrior metaphor resonates deeply with Trump's base, many of whom may feel under siege by changing social and political landscapes. By positioning himself as a warrior leader, Trump taps into feelings of vulnerability and fear among his supporters, offering them a sense of security and assurance.

Analysis of the examples above demonstrates how the combination of DIVINE MISSION and WARRIOR metaphors in Trump's speech creates a powerful narrative framework. The integration of religious language with heroic imagery enables Trump to position himself as a leader who is not only divinely chosen but also possesses the physical strength and courage to protect the nation. This rhetorical strategy proves highly effective in creating emotional resonance with his support base.

Furthermore, the fusion of these two metaphors allows Trump to establish dual legitimacy for his leadership and policies. On one hand, the DIVINE MISSION metaphor frames any opposition to his policies as resistance to divine will. On the other hand, the WARRIOR metaphor justifies the use of extreme measures as necessary components of a 'battle' to protect the nation. These two dimensions work in tandem to create a highly persuasive narrative that transforms political support into both a sacred mission and a heroic struggle.

4.2. The America Under Siege: INVASION and CRIME metaphors

In the second major metaphorical framework of his speech, Trump employs two interrelated metaphor scenarios: IMMIGRATION AS INVASION and CRIME AS DISEASE/URBAN DECAY. These scenarios work together to create a comprehensive narrative of a nation under threat from both external and internal forces. The metaphors serve to justify aggressive policy measures while positioning Trump as both defender and healer of the nation. Through careful analysis of specific examples, we can see how these metaphorical frameworks are constructed and deployed for maximum rhetorical effect.

The IMMIGRATION AS INVASION metaphor is prominently featured in Trump's rhetoric. This metaphorical framing portrays immigration as a direct threat to national security, as evident in example (1):

(10) The greatest invasion in history is taking place right here in our country.

This metaphor frames immigration as an assault on the nation, casting immigrants as hostile forces intent on breaching national borders. The language of invasion invokes imagery of warfare and conflict, suggesting that the country is under siege and requires defensive action. This framing not only heightens the perceived threat but also primes the audience to support stringent immigration policies as necessary defensive measures.

By describing immigrants as invaders, Trump taps into deep-seated fears and xenophobic sentiments:

(11) They're **coming from prisons**. They're **coming from jails**. They're **coming from mental institutions** and **insane asylums.**

This narrative dehumanizes immigrants, portraying them not as individuals seeking better lives but as a monolithic threat to public safety and national security. This dehumanization makes it easier to justify harsh measures and policies aimed at restricting immigration.

Trump further reinforces the invasion narrative through militant language:

(12) We must **defend** our borders against this **onslaught**.

The invasion metaphor extends to portraying America as a nation under attack:

(13) Our country is being **invaded** on all fronts, and we need to **fight back**.

This framing fosters a sense of unity and purpose among his base, positioning them as part of a collective struggle to protect their homeland. It also polarizes the political landscape, portraying opponents of Trump's immigration policies as traitors who are undermining national security.

Trump connects this invasion narrative to his role as protector:

(14) I will be your **shield** against those who seek to **destroy** our way of life.

By framing immigration as an invasion, Trump can justify extreme measures such as border walls, increased deportations, and travel bans.

When discussing urban issues, Trump employs metaphors of CRIME AS DISEASE:

(15) The discord and division in our society must be **healed**. We must **heal** it quickly.

This metaphor frames crime as a pathological condition afflicting the nation, requiring urgent and decisive intervention.

The URBAN AREAS AS WASTELANDS metaphor is evident in:

(16) We will **restore** and **renovate** our nation's once-great cities, making them safe, clean, and beautiful again.

Trump reinforces the disease metaphor through medical terminology:

(17) Crime is a **cancer** eating away at our cities.
(18) We need to **diagnose** the problem and provide the **cure**.

These metaphors evoke a sense of urgency and crisis, compelling the audience to support drastic measures to restore order.

The wasteland imagery is further developed in:

(19) Our cities have become **wastelands**, **ravaged** by crime and neglect.
(20) These once-proud neighbourhoods are now **decaying** and **rotting** from within.

By framing his approach in terms of healing and renewal, Trump offers contrasting visions of decay and restoration:

(21) Together, we will **transform** these **dangerous** areas into thriving communities.
(22) We will bring **life** back to these **dying** cities.

Based on the examples analyzed above, Trump's rhetoric employs two primary metaphorical frameworks to discuss domestic issues: IMMIGRATION AS INVASION and CRIME AS DISEASE/URBAN DECAY. The invasion metaphors (examples 10–14) create a narrative of external threat that requires militant response, while the disease and decay metaphors (examples 15–22) construct an image of internal deterioration requiring aggressive intervention. These metaphorical frameworks work in tandem to present Trump as both a warrior defending against external threats and a healer capable of curing internal ailments.

The strategic combination of these metaphors serves multiple rhetorical purposes: it dehumanizes immigrants through militant language, pathologizes urban issues through medical terminology, and positions Trump as both protector and restorer of the nation. This dual framing allows him to justify aggressive policies toward immigration while promising transformation and renewal of urban areas, creating a comprehensive narrative of threat and salvation that resonates strongly with his base's fears and hopes for the nation's future.

4.3. The RENEWAL and RESTORATION Metaphors

Trump's vision of national renewal is constructed through three primary metaphorical frameworks: NATION AS CONSTRUCTION PROJECT, HISTORY AS CYCLICAL, and NATION AS BODY. These interconnected metaphors work together to create a compelling narrative of transformation, restoration, and unity. Through careful analysis of specific examples, we can see how these metaphorical frameworks support his campaign message and policy proposals.

The NATION AS CONSTRUCTION PROJECT metaphor is central to Trump's campaign narrative, most prominently displayed in his signature slogan:

(23) **Make** America **Great** Again.
(24) We will very quickly **make** America great again.
(25) We're going to **turn** our nation around and we're going to do it very **quickly.**

These construction metaphors position the nation as something that can be built, repaired, and improved through deliberate effort and leadership. The metaphor resonates particularly well with Trump's personal brand as a real estate developer, lending credibility to his claims of being able to "build" a better America.

The HISTORY AS CYCLICAL metaphor is evident in Trump's promises of restoration:

(26) Americas on the **cusp** of a new **golden age**, but we will have the courage to **seize** it.
(27) We will **return** to our greatest days of prosperity and strength.

The NATION AS BODY metaphor forms the third major framework, emphasizing unity and collective strength:

(28) We **rise** together. Or we **fall** apart.
(29) The **heart** of our nation must beat as one.
(30) We must **heal** the divisions that have weakened our national **body**.

These organic metaphors frame the nation as a living entity requiring care and unity to maintain its health and vitality.

Trump extends the construction metaphor to specific policy areas:

(31) We will **rebuild** our economy from the ground up.
(32) Together, we'll **construct** a new foundation for American greatness.
(33) It's time to **repair** the damage done to our nation's **infrastructure**.

The cyclical history metaphor is further reinforced through references to past glory:

(34) We will **reclaim** our forgotten greatness.
(35) The **spirit** of American excellence will **rise** again.

Finally, the body metaphor is applied to national challenges:

(36) Our borders are like open **wounds** that must be **healed**.
(37) The **lifeblood** of our economy has been **drained** away.

The analysis of these examples reveals how Trump's renewal and restoration rhetoric is carefully constructed through three interlocking metaphorical frameworks. The NATION AS CONSTRUCTION PROJECT metaphors (examples 23–25, 31–33) create a tangible, action-oriented vision of national renewal that aligns with Trump's persona as a builder and developer. These construction metaphors transform abstract political challenges into concrete tasks that can be addressed through direct action and practical expertise.

Meanwhile, the HISTORY AS CYCLICAL metaphors (examples 26–27, 34–35) tap into a powerful narrative of historical destiny and national redemption. By framing America's future as a return to past glory, these metaphors create an emotional connection with voters' nostalgia while promising inevitable success under Trump's leadership. The combination of construction and cyclical history metaphors presents national renewal as both achievable through concrete action and historically destined.

Finally, the NATION AS BODY metaphors (examples 28–30, 36–37) unite these themes by presenting the nation as a living organism requiring unity, healing, and proper leadership to flourish. This organic framing transforms political unity from an abstract concept into a vital necessity for national survival and renewal. Together, these three metaphorical frameworks create a comprehensive narrative that positions Trump as builder, restorer, and healer of the nation, capable of leading America back to greatness through practical action, historical destiny, and collective unity.

5. Discussion

The analysis of Donald Trump's nomination acceptance speech reveals a sophisticated use of metaphor scenarios to frame key issues and construct a compelling narrative. These findings offer several important insights into the role of metaphor in political discourse, particularly in relation to Critical Discourse Analysis and contemporary metaphor studies.

Trump's framing of the assassination attempt demonstrates how political leaders can leverage crises to reinforce their image and message. By constructing a metaphor scenario of SURVIVAL AS DIVINE INTERVENTION, Trump not only portrays himself as resilient but also as chosen or destined for leadership. This aligns with previous research on the use of religious imagery in American political rhetoric (Domke & Coe 2008) and shows how personal narratives can be elevated to mythic proportions in campaign discourse. This metaphorical framing creates an emotional connection with the audience through shared trauma, positions Trump as both vulnerable (relatable) and invincible (leader-like), and sets up a broader narrative of national peril and potential redemption (Lakoff & Johnson 1980).

The prominent use of invasion and siege metaphors to describe immigration aligns with previous studies on the militarization of immigration discourse (Cisneros 2008, Santa Ana 2002). These metaphors have demonstrable long-term impacts on policy formation, influencing everything from budget allocations for border security to international diplomatic relations. The IMMIGRATION AS INVASION metaphor, combined with vivid descriptions of criminals and "insane asylum" residents entering the country, serves to heighten the sense of urgency and danger, justify extreme policy measures as necessary for national security, and position Trump as a protector figure, echoing his personal narrative of surviving an attack. This demonstrates how metaphor scenarios can be used to create coherence between personal narrative, threat perception and policy proposals (Musolff 2015).

The ethical implications of such metaphorical framing are particularly concerning in an era of rapid information dissemination. Media outlets can implement several practical strategies to promote critical analysis of metaphorical language, including developing fact-checking protocols specifically for metaphorical claims, incorporating metaphor analysis segments in news coverage, training journalists to identify and contextualize potentially harmful metaphorical frameworks, and creating public education initiatives about the power of political metaphors. These strategies could help mitigate the potential harm caused by manipulative metaphorical framing, such as the dehumanization of immigrant communities or the oversimplification of complex policy issues.

This analysis contributes to Critical Discourse Analysis by demonstrating how metaphor scenarios function as tools of power and persuasion in political discourse. It extends current metaphor theory by showing how crisis events can trigger specific metaphorical framings that shape both public perception and policy outcomes. The findings particularly advance our understanding of how metaphorical language operates at the intersection of personal narrative and political messaging.

The interplay between metaphors of decay and renewal in Trump's speech reflects a common theme in populist rhetoric: the promise of returning to a mythical golden age (Taggart 2000). The NATION AS CONSTRUCTION PROJECT metaphor, encapsulated in the "Make America Great Again" slogan, has specific policy implications across multiple domains. In economic policy, it justifies protectionist trade measures and infrastructure spending. In environmental policy, it often leads to deregulation framed as "removing obstacles to growth." In social policy, it supports traditional value systems under the guise of "rebuilding." This framing taps into what Higgs (2005) calls "crisis narrative" in American politics, where periods of perceived decline set the stage for transformative leadership.

The prevalence of crisis-oriented metaphors raises critical concerns about democratic deliberation. While such metaphors can mobilize public support, they may also have detrimental effects on democratic discourse. These metaphors tend to polarize public opinion by creating artificial urgency, oversimplify complex policy challenges, limit the range of acceptable policy solutions, and create obstacles to compromise and negotiation. Trump's use of bodily metaphors to discuss national unity (e.g., "We rise together. Or we fall apart.") is particularly interesting in this context, suggesting an attempt to reframe unity not as harmony or agreement, but as collective resistance against perceived threats. This framing of UNITY AS SHARED STRUGGLE aligns with previous research on how threat perception can increase group cohesion (Willer 2004).

To address these challenges in educational settings, we propose several concrete steps for enhancing media literacy. Educational institutions should focus on integrating metaphor analysis into language arts curricula, developing critical thinking modules focused on political rhetoric, and creating student workshops on identifying and analyzing metaphorical framing. These educational initiatives would help develop a more critically aware citizenry capable of navigating complex political discourse, particularly given how metaphors can make complex issues more accessible while potentially oversimplifying or inflaming emotions in ways that may hinder rational debate.

The media and public policy sectors also have crucial roles to play in this effort. Media organizations should establish guidelines for metaphor use in political reporting, provide context and analysis for prominent political metaphors, and create dedicated spaces for examining rhetorical strategies. On the public policy front, initiatives should focus on developing media literacy programs for adults, supporting research on metaphor impact in political communication, and creating public awareness campaigns about rhetorical manipulation. These combined efforts across different sectors would help create a more informed and discerning public better equipped to engage with political rhetoric.

The analysis extends current metaphor theory in several important ways. First, it demonstrates how crisis events can trigger specific metaphorical networks that shape both immediate responses and long-term political narratives. Second, it shows how personal and political metaphors can be strategically interwoven to create compelling narrative arcs. Third, it reveals how metaphor scenarios function differently in crisis communication compared to routine political discourse. These findings contribute to our understanding of metaphor's role in political communication and crisis rhetoric.

The findings suggest several promising avenues for future research in metaphor studies. Researchers should conduct longitudinal studies examining how crisis-triggered metaphors evolve over time and comparative analyses of metaphor use in different cultural and political contexts. Additional research is needed on how different audiences interpret and respond to political metaphors, how digital media affects the spread and impact of political metaphors, and the relationship between metaphorical framing and policy implementation. These research directions would significantly advance our understanding of metaphor's role in political discourse.

Based on these findings, we suggest several practical applications across different sectors. In political communication, the focus should be on developing ethical guidelines for metaphor use in crisis situations, creating frameworks for responsible rhetorical strategies, and establishing standards for transparent political communication. Media organizations should implement metaphor analysis in political reporting, create tools for tracking metaphorical patterns, and develop strategies for balanced coverage of rhetorical framing. Public education initiatives should focus on designing media literacy programs, creating resources for understanding political rhetoric, and developing critical thinking tools for evaluating political communication.

In conclusion, this analysis demonstrates the central role of metaphor scenarios in shaping political narratives and framing policy debates. Trump's speech offers a case study in how personal experience, national challenges, and policy proposals can be woven together through metaphor to create a coherent and emotionally resonant campaign message. Understanding these rhetorical strategies is crucial for both scholars of political communication and engaged citizens in navigating the complex landscape of contemporary democratic discourse. While metaphors serve as powerful tools for political communication, their use carries significant ethical responsibilities and potential consequences for democratic dialogue in an increasingly complex political landscape.

6. Conclusion

This study set out to investigate how metaphorical language is strategically deployed in political crisis communication and its role in shaping public perception and policy debates. Through a detailed analysis of Trump's nomination acceptance speech following an assassination attempt, we have demonstrated the sophisticated use of metaphor scenarios in crisis-response rhetoric and their implications for political discourse.

The analysis reveals how Trump uses interlinked metaphor scenarios to create a compelling narrative arc: from personal survival of an assassination attempt, through a nation under threat, to a promised restoration of greatness. These scenarios, including SURVIVAL AS DIVINE INTERVENTION, IMMIGRATION AS INVASION, and NATION AS CONSTRUCTION PROJECT, serve multiple rhetorical functions. They simplify complex issues, evoke strong emotions, and position Trump as a divinely appointed, warrior-like leader capable of protecting and rebuilding the nation. The strategic integration of personal and political narratives through metaphorical framing proves particularly effective in creating emotional resonance with audiences while justifying specific policy positions.

The prevalence of conflict-based metaphors (invasion, siege, war) across different policy areas suggests an overall framing of politics and governance as fundamentally adversarial. This framing has significant implications for how policies are conceptualized and debated in the public sphere. Our analysis demonstrates that such metaphorical framing affects multiple domains: economic policy through protectionist metaphors, environmental policy through obstacle-removal imagery, and social policy through reconstruction narratives. These findings highlight the need for greater attention to how metaphorical language shapes policy discussions and influences public understanding of complex political issues.

The study contributes to both theoretical understanding and practical applications in political communication. Theoretically, it advances our knowledge of how crisis events trigger specific metaphorical networks and how these networks shape both immediate responses and long-term political narratives. Practically, it underscores the need for enhanced media literacy and ethical guidelines for metaphor use in political communication. These findings suggest that while metaphors serve as powerful tools for political communication, their use carries significant ethical responsibilities and potential consequences for democratic discourse.

This research opens several avenues for future investigation, particularly regarding the long-term effects of crisis-oriented metaphor scenarios on public policy preferences and political polarization. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for maintaining healthy democratic dialogue and informed public debate in an increasingly complex political landscape.

Acknowledgements

The author would like acknowledge the Center for Higher Education Funding (BPPT / Balai Pembiayaan Pendidikan Tinggi), and the Indonesia Endowment Funds for Education (LPDP / Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan) that have fully supported this article.

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Article history:
Received: 09 August 2024
Accepted: 22 January 2025

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Russian Journal of Linguistics
ISSN 2687-0088 (Print), ISSN 2686-8024 (Online)

2025 Vol. 29 No. 2 296–319
http://journals.rudn.ru/linguistics

https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-41802
EDN: KBWYSL

Research article / Научная статья

Phraseological patterns supporting effective academic writing rhetoric: The case of pedagogy research paper introductions

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Abstract
The present paper presents pilot investigation of the role of phraseological patterns in conceptualizing rhetorical moves and their steps in pedagogy research paper introductions. It addresses a gap regarding utilizing these patterns and their rhetorical function within the knowledge transfer in pedagogy. The study aims to identify recurring phraseological patterns, delineate their functions in expressing rhetorical moves, and demonstrate how they contribute to the overall coherence and effectiveness of the text. The main research question explores how phraseological patterns contribute to the presentation of rhetorical moves and steps in pedagogy research paper introductions. Employing a corpus-based approach, the paper analyzes ten research papers from the Journal of Pedagogical Research published in 2023. The methodology involves identifying phraseological patterns, analyzing their rhetorical functions, examining their discourse functions, and characterizing their structural nature. The present study identifies phraseological patterns as recurring in pedagogy research papers while acknowledging their non-exclusivity to the field. Research findings reveal four key moves: establishing a thematic territory, surveying previous research, creating a research niche, and occupying the research niche. Each move utilizes specific phraseological patterns to achieve distinct rhetorical purposes. The study highlights the distribution of contiguous and non-contiguous patterns and their multifunctional nature in conveying complex research-related ideas and issues. It uncovers how these patterns interact with rhetorical moves to create cohesive and persuasive introductions. This pilot investigation lays the groundwork for future research on phraseological patterns in scholarly papers, offering insights into the intricate relationship between language patterns and rhetorical structure in academic writing.

Keywords: *academic writing rhetoric, phraseological patterns, discourse functions, research paper introductions, pedagogy, rhetorical moves and steps*

For citation:
Vaňková, Ingrida. 2025. Phraseological patterns supporting effective academic writing rhetoric: The case of pedagogy research paper introductions. *Russian Journal of Linguistics* 29 (2). 296–319. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-41802

Фразеологический паттерн как средство эффективной риторики академического письма: на примере научной статьи по педагогике

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Аннотация
В данной статье представлено пилотное исследование роли фразеологических паттернов в концептуализации риторических ходов, выполненное на материале текстов введения к научной статье по педагогике. Оно заполняет существующий пробел, связанный с риторической функцией этих паттернов и их использованием в процессе передачи знаний по педагогике. Цель исследования – выявить повторяющиеся фразеологические паттерны, определить их функции в выражении риторических ходов и продемонстрировать, как они способствуют общей связности и эффективности текста. Используя корпусный подход, автор анализирует десять научных статей из журнала «Journal of Pedagogical Research», опубликованных в 2023 г. Методология исследования включает выявление фразеологических паттернов, анализ их риторических и дискурсивных функций и характеристику их структурной природы. В ходе исследования выделены фразеологические паттерны, повторяющиеся в научных работах по педагогике, однако признается возможность их использования и в других областях. Выявлены четыре ключевых хода: установление тематической территории, обзор предыдущих исследований, создание исследовательской ниши и занятие исследовательской ниши. Каждый ход использует особые фразеологические паттерны для достижения определенных риторических целей. Обращается внимание на распределение смежных и несмежных паттернов, подчеркивается их многофункциональная природа в представлении сложных идей и исследовательских вопросов. Показано, как эти паттерны взаимодействуют с риторическими ходами для создания связных и убедительных текстов. Полученные результаты закладывают основу для будущих исследований фразеологических паттернов в научных статьях, демонстрируя сложную взаимосвязь между языковыми паттернами и риторической структурой в академическом письме.

Ключевые слова: *риторика академического письма, фразеологические паттерны, функции дискурса, вступление к научной статье, педагогика, риторические ходы и шаги*

Для цитирования:
Vaňková, Ingrida. 2025. Phraseological patterns supporting effective academic writing rhetoric: The case of pedagogy research paper introductions. *Russian Journal of Linguistics*. 2025. Vol. 29. № 2. P. 296–319. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-41802

1. Introduction

Phraseology in academic writing has become a focal point of scholarly interest in recent years, reflecting its crucial role in effective knowledge transfer and successful academic communication. As academic writing evolves, understanding the linguistic devices and phraseological patterns (PPs) used by scholars has become increasingly crucial to effective knowledge transfer. Phraseology plays a vital role in successful academic communication and contributes substantially to the overall quality and coherence of research papers (e.g. Dinca & Chitez 2021).

In academic writing, phraseology helps establish a writer's credibility and familiarity with the conventions of their discipline. Defined as the characteristic ways of expressing ideas and concepts within specific disciplines, it encompasses various aspects, such as specialized vocabulary, terminology, formulaic expressions, discipline-specific language patterns and conventional sentence structures employed by scholars in their written discourse (cf. Biber & Gray 2010, Vincent 2013, Davis & Morley 2018, Hyland & Jiang 2019, Kačmárová 2019, Oakey 2020, Dinca & Chitez 2021, Boginskaya 2022, Lu et al. 2021, Jacob 2024). In academic writing, besides the other aspects of phraseology listed above, routine discipline-specific language patterns and conventional sentence structures merit particular attention for their role in enhancing the cohesion and effectiveness of the text. For the purposes of this study, the term phraseological pattern refers to conventional and routine prefabricated patterns and sentence structures employed by scholars in their research papers. Existing research indicates that PPs contribute significantly to effectively communicating academic content (cf. López Arroyo & Méndez-Cendón 2007, Khamkhien & Wharton 2020, Leng Hong 2024).

Despite notable advances in the exploration of rhetorical techniques and their articulation in research paper introductions (cf. Del Saz Rubio 2011, Sutrisno & Ramadhanty 2022), a significant knowledge gap persists regarding the specific utilization of PPs in research paper introductions, particularly across disciplines. For instance, a study by Leng Hong (2024) focuses on the structural nature of PPs in the discussion section of microeconomics research papers. However, this study is limited to the discussion section and four-word phraseological units, potentially overlooking longer PPs that could provide deeper insights into academic writing rhetoric (see also Richter, Gaskaree & Mirzai 2022). To date, little attention has been paid to the specific use of PPs in research paper introductions in pedagogy or their contribution to the overall structure and coherence of the text. This calls for an examination of the role of PPs in presenting moves and steps in research paper introductions in pedagogy and an assessment of their contribution to the overall coherence and effectiveness of the text. The present paper aims to address this knowledge gap by examining the use of PPs in research paper introductions in pedagogy and their impact on the presentation of moves and steps of academic writing rhetoric, as proposed by Jian (2010) in his *Schematic Structure of Literature Review in Research Articles of Applied Linguistics* (Jian 2010).

This pilot study employs a corpus-based approach to identify and analyze recurring PPs, thereby establishing the rhetorical strategies employed in research paper introductions in pedagogy. The research objectives include uncovering recurring PPs, delineating their function in expressing individual rhetorical moves and steps, determining their discourse functions, characterizing their contiguous or non-contiguous nature, and demonstrating how these patterns align with and support the established structure of research paper introductions. This pilot study lays the groundwork for future research on the role of phraseological patterns in pedagogy research papers, thus potentially facilitating more effective knowledge transfer in the field.

2. Literature review

To fully recognize the importance of PPs in academic writing, it is essential to have a comprehensive understanding of the academic writing conventions. Fang (2021) asserts that academic rhetoric encompasses a range of strategies and devices employed by scholars to present their work in an effective and persuasive manner. He (ibid.) defines academic rhetoric as a functional linguistic approach that goes beyond ensuring grammatical correctness in knowledge transfer. This perspective views academic writing as a process of constructing meaning, with language choices at its core. Furthermore, academic writing rhetoric can be understood as a means of conveying information, constructing arguments, incorporating viewpoints, engaging readers, and organizing text across different genres and disciplines (cf. Alharbi 2021, Golebiowski 2018). Yuvayapan and Yakut (2023) contend that rhetorical patterns in academic writing are critical in structuring texts, facilitating author-reader interactions, and establishing an authorial stance within disciplinary norms. Research paper manuscripts are expected to present information in compliance with specific rhetorical patterns (Adnan 2008, Suryiani et al. 2014). Failure to comply with these standards may result either in unfavourable reviews or even rejection of research papers. The quality of research papers can be adversely affected by an imbalance in rhetorical patterns due to various factors, including insufficient attention paid to language and style.

As the utilization of PPs in research paper introductions in pedagogy is yet to be delineated, it is essential to situate the moves and steps employed in the introduction within the broader structure of the research paper. López Arroyo and Méndez-Cendón (2007) provide an overview of the rhetorical structure in their paper *Describing Phraseological Devices in Medical Abstracts: An English/Spanish Contrastive Analysis*. The authors present the rhetorical distribution of the moves and steps of the rhetorical sections of the research paper as follows (Table 1).

The academic rhetoric of the research paper introduction has been the subject of several studies that have identified a recurring pattern of rhetorical moves and steps (e.g. Swales 2004, Jian 2010, Del Saz Rubio 2011, Golebiowski 2018, Alharbi 2021, Sutrisno & Ramadhanty 2022, Richter, Gaskaree & Mirzai 2022, Yuvayapan & Yakut 2023). The rhetoric in research paper introductions typically follows a structured pattern designed to establish the significance of research and persuade readers of its importance. According to the *Create a Research Space (CARS) model* proposed by Swales (2004), research paper introductions generally employ specific rhetorical moves and steps. The CARS model (Swales 2004: 6 – 8) consists of three main moves and several steps within each move for structuring research paper introductions:

Table1. **Academic rhetoric organization**

Academic rhetoric organization		
Introduction	Moves	Steps
	1. Background information (References to)	Established knowledge in the field
		Main research problems
	2. Reviewing related research (References to)	Previous research
		Limitations of previous research
	3. New research	Research purpose
		Main research procedure
Materials and methods	4. Data collection procedure	Source of data
		Data size
		Criteria for data collection
	5. Experimental procedure	Research apparatus
		Experimental process
		Criteria for success
	6. Data-analysis procedure	Terminologies
		Data classification
		Analytical instrument/procedure
		Modification to instrument/procedure
Results (Indicate, Highlight, Report, Present)	7. Consistent observation	Overall observation
		Specific observation
		Accounting of observation made
	8. Non-consistent observation	Negative results
Discussion (Explain, Highlight, State, Interpret)	9. Overall research outcome	
	10. Specific research outcome	State
		Indicate significance
		Interpret
		Contrast present and previous
		Limitations
	11. Research conclusions	Implications
		Further research

Source: López Arroyo and Méndez-Cendón 2007: 509–511.

Move 1: Establishing a territory – This move provides the foundation for the research by presenting context about the research topic. It may include one or more of the following steps:

Step 1: Claiming centrality – The author uses this step in order to convince the scholarly community that their research contributes to a particular field of study. This approach is particularly common in the humanities and the social sciences.

Step 2: Making topic generalizations – The scholar offers insights into the current knowledge, practices, or phenomena related to the research topic.

Step 3: Reviewing previous items of research – The author utilizes this step to present a critical evaluation of existing resources and findings relevant to the research topic.

Move 2: Establishing a niche – The second move in academic writing involves identifying areas for further investigation within the existing body of knowledge. The scholar employs several strategies to achieve this:

Step 1A: Counter-claiming – The scholar presents claims that compromise or contradict already existing research findings.

Step 1B: Indicating a gap – The author draws attention to specific areas where existing studies have not adequately addressed the issues under consideration.

Step 1C: Question-raising – The researcher formulates inquiries about current research, suggesting that additional exploration is necessary to advance understanding.

Step 1D: Continuing tradition –The scholar frames their study as a continuation or extension of existing research traditions.

Move 3: Occupying the niche – The author transitions from identifying the research gap to presenting their contribution. This section demonstrates how the author will address the previously established niche in the field. The author achieves this through the following steps:

Step 1A: Outlining purposes – The author presents the primary objectives of their research.

Step 1B: Announcing present research and... – The author describes in detail the research conducted in the present study.

Step 2: ...announcing principal findings – The author presents the main conclusions drawn from their research.

Step 3: Indicating RA structure – The author previews the structure of the paper.

In critically reevaluating this structure, Jian (2010) modified the proposed sequence of moves and steps. These modifications included the addition of new steps and the reordering of the existing steps. Motlagh and Pourchangi (2019) provide an overview of the similarities and differences between the two models in a summary table as follows (Table 2).

Rhetorical patterns, moves and steps in academic discourse are produced through the strategic use of linguistic devices. These devices typically manifest themselves as habitual word combinations or prefabricated phraseological patterns that scholars across disciplines use to communicate knowledge and engage with their readership effectively. The structural properties and discursive functions of PPs have been key areas within the development of individual moves and steps in academic writing rhetoric.

From a structural standpoint, Leng Hong (2024) identifies two categories of PPs: i.e. contiguous and non-contiguous expressions. Adjacent phraseological structures are contiguous expressions, such as "...argue that..." or "...findings provide new and promising insights into....". Non-contiguous expressions are separated phraseological structures, such as “After reviewing..., we focus on...”, “The importance of... has been recognized...” or “The significance of... has been acknowledged...”.

Table 2. **Structures of the rhetoric of academic writing according to Swales (2004) and Jian (2010)**

Jian’s move model (2010)		**Swales’s CARS model (1990)**	
Move 1	**Establishing a thematic territory**	**Move 1**	**Establishing a territory**
S. 1A	Making topic generalizations	Step 1	Claiming centrality and/or
S. 1B	Claiming centrality	Step 2	Making topic generalization(s) and/or
T. 1C	Giving background information	Step 3	Reviewing items of previous research
Move 2	**Surveying and summarizing previous research**		
S. 2A	Constructing reference to the published work		
S. 2B	Making positive/negative evaluation		
S. 2C	Making general/summary statement		
Move 3	**Creating a research niche**	**Move 2**	**Establishing a niche**
S. 3A	Counter-claiming	Step 1A	Counter-claiming or
S. 3B	Gap-indicating	Step 1B	Indicating a gap or
S. 3C	Question-raising	Step 1C	Question-raising or
S. 3D	Asserting the relevancy	Step 1D	Continuing a tradition
S. 3E	Establishing theoretical framework or position	**Move 3**	**Occupying the niche**
Move 4	**Occupying the research niche**	Step 1A	Outlining purposes or
S. 4A	Announcing aims/research questions	Step 1B	Announcing present research and...
S. 4B	Announcing theoretical framework or position	Step 2	...announcing principal findings
S. 4C	Indicating RA structure	Step 3	Indicating RA structure

Source: Motlagh and Pourchangi 2019: 72.

In terms of discourse functions, PPs fall into three main categories as defined by Simpson-Vlach and Ellis (2010). The categories of PPs include referential expressions, which provide specific information, describe entities, or define concepts within the text; stance expressions, which convey the author’s attitudes, judgments, or evaluations regarding the research topic; and discourse organizing expressions, which facilitate text structure. These patterns enhance the overall coherence and effectiveness of academic writing.

Available sources emphasize the critical role of PPs in structuring research paper introductions across various disciplines. However, the utilization of these patterns within research papers in pedagogy remains relatively under-researched. This research gap calls for a comprehensive examination of how PPs contribute to presenting rhetorical moves and steps in research paper introductions in pedagogy, guiding the present paper's methodological approach.

3. Methodology

The present research paper represents a pilot investigation since, to the best of my knowledge, there has not been comprehensive research on academic writing rhetoric in either research papers in pedagogy or their introductions.

The aim of the present paper is to identify the role of phraseological patterns in presenting moves and steps in research paper introductions in pedagogy and to demonstrate how these patterns improve the overall coherence and effectiveness of the text. To achieve this research aim, the present study addresses the following partial objectives:

Objective 1: Identify recurring phraseological patterns in research paper introductions in pedagogy.

Objective 2: Establish the function of the identified phraseological patterns in expressing rhetorical moves and steps.

Objective 3: Determine the discourse functions (referential, stance, or discourse-organizing) of the identified phraseological patterns.

Objective 4: Characterize the contiguous or non-contiguous nature of the identified phraseological patterns and quantify their frequency.

Objective 5: Demonstrate how the analyzed phraseological patterns comply with and contribute to the established structure of research paper introductions in pedagogy.

The following research questions were formulated to address the main research aim and objectives:

1. How do phraseological patterns contribute to the presentation of rhetorical moves and steps in research paper introductions in pedagogy?
2. What is the distribution of contiguous and non-contiguous phraseological patterns across different moves in research paper introductions in pedagogy, and how does this distribution impact the coherence and effectiveness of the research paper?
3. How do the discourse functions (referential, stance, and discourse-organizing) of phraseological patterns interact and combine to enhance the overall rhetorical structure of research paper introductions in pedagogy?
4. To what extent do the phraseological patterns identified comply with the established structure of research paper introductions in pedagogy?
5. How do phraseological patterns facilitate the transition between different moves and steps in research paper introductions in pedagogy?
6. What role do multifunctional phraseological patterns play in conveying comprehensive research-related ideas and relationships between concepts in research paper introductions in pedagogy?

To achieve the main research aim and objectives, and to answer the research questions, the following steps were taken using these methods:

1. Corpus compilation: A suitable journal was selected based on pragmatic criteria, including representativeness, popularity, accessibility, and availability of an electronic format (cf. Méndez-Cendón 2007). The criteria of representativeness, popularity, and accessibility imply that the journals be in English as a lingua academica (on the term cf. Kačmárová, Bilá & Vaňková 2023). A specific journal was chosen based on its impact factor and Q2 quartile ranking for 2023.

2. Research paper selection: Ten papers published in 2023 were extracted from the Journal of Pedagogical Research. The selection process for papers no longer distinguishes between native and non-native speakers, owing to the availability of journal metrics data. This approach is justified by the fact that journal rankings and the pragmatic criteria employed in selecting journal ensure that all authors adhere to the conventions of English as a lingua academica. This applies regardless of whether the authors are native or non-native speakers of English in academic writing.

3. Text extraction: Introductions from selected papers were isolated for analysis.

4. Phraseological pattern identification: In identifying phraseological patterns, Méndez-Cendón's (2007) definition of phraseological units and patterns was adopted and adapted. Since the term 'phraseological unit' encompasses various linguistic elements such as collocations, irreversible couplets, idioms, routine formulae, and combinatorial patterns, the present study specifically examines commonly occurring routine word formulae or phraseological prefabricated patterns in academic writing. As a result, the term 'phraseological pattern' is deemed more appropriate for the present study. Phraseological patterns were identified based on their recurrence in pedagogy research paper introductions. However, this does not imply that they are used exclusively in academic discourse in pedagogy. Therefore, their exclusive association with the field of pedagogy is not substantiated.

5. Rhetorical moves and steps analysis: The function of identified phraseological patterns in expressing rhetorical moves and steps was analyzed using Jian's moves model (2010).

6. Discourse function examination: Phraseological patterns were categorized as referential, stance, or discourse-organizing, and combinations of discourse functions were identified. The term 'discourse' in the context of the discourse-organizing function refers not only to the text of the research paper but also to the wider discourse of the research project on which the paper reports. Therefore, the phraseological pattern employed in the examined paper can be considered a discourse-organizing pattern since it verbalizes the procedure and organization of the paper and the process of research presented in this paper.

7. Structural analysis: The contiguous or non-contiguous nature of phraseological patterns was examined.

8. Frequency calculation: The occurrence of contiguous and non-contiguous phraseological patterns was quantified.

9. Comparative analysis: The findings were compared with the framework of research paper introductions as defined by López Arroyo and Méndez-Cendón (2007).

10. Interpretation: A corpus-based approach was employed to examine the role of phraseological patterns in conceptualizing rhetorical moves and steps in pedagogy research paper introductions.

This pilot study aims to provide initial insights into academic writing rhetoric in pedagogy research paper introductions, facilitating more comprehensive research in the field.

4. Research findings

This study identified four key moves in research paper introductions, each serving a unique purpose in establishing the research context and objectives. The analysis of PPs in research paper introductions yielded both contiguous and non-contiguous structures that serve various discourse functions.

Move 1, Establishing the territory, encompasses several steps and associated PPs that authors use to introduce their research topic and context.

Table 3. **Phraseological patterns employed to verbalize Move 1 – Establishing the territory. Structural nature and discourse function(s) of PPs in Move 1**
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Move 1 Establishing the territory			
Step	**Phraseological pattern**	**Discourse function**	**Contiguous/ Non-contiguous PP**
S.1A Making topic generalizations	"On a daily basis, people must..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"[Topic] is increasingly included within [field/context]..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	"The prevalence of... is growing..."	Referential	Non-contiguous
	"... has generally been described as..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"[Topics] require..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"We have been witnessing..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"...has the potential to enhance..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"As we move further into..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	"...is a pedagogical a roach for..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"There has been a worldwide shift towards..."	Referential	Contiguous

Move 1 Establishing the territory			
Step	**Phraseological pattern**	**Discourse function**	**Contiguous/ Non-contiguous PP**
S.1B Claiming centrality	"...is a key factor in ... and is widely recognized as..."	Referential	Non-contiguous
	"It is important to investigate [aspect] to sort [outcome]..."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"...is an inherently transdisciplinary view of ... that centers on..."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"[Topic] provides challenges and goals, involving users in the [field]."	Referential	Contiguous
	"Not much is known about..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"At the core, many argue that..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"... are being asked to include..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"The issue of... is of growing importance..."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"The examined issue is of paramount importance in..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"The importance of... has been recognized..."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"More recently, this recognition has materialized in..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
S.1C Giving background information	"Organizations such as ... believe that..."	Referential	Non-contiguous
	"[Location/Context] has a history of [relevant information]..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"The integration of... is on the rise in..."	Referential	Non-contiguous
	"...plays essential roles in..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"There has been long-standing and recent sound research that..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"The term... has been adopted and adapted across..."	Referential	Non-contiguous
	"Its genesis in ... was..."	Referential	Non-contiguous
	"More recently, this recognition has materialized in..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous

Resource: The author's research output.

Move 1, establishing the territory, plays a key role in situating research in its broader context. Step S.1A, making topic generalizations, involves introducing the research topic by highlighting its relevance and importance in the field. This step is intended to attract the reader's attention by presenting the research topic relevance. Examples include prefabricated word combinations such as "On a daily basis, people must..." or "The prevalence of... is increasing...". These generalizations facilitate the establishment of a common understanding with the target readership and provide a comprehensive framework for the subsequent presentation of the specific research.

Step S. 1 B, claiming centrality, emphasizes the critical role of the research topic within its field. This strategy is particularly useful when research deals with a critical issue or contributes to a discussion of paramount importance in the field. Examples of claiming centrality include phraseological patterns such as '...is a key factor in ... and is widely recognized as...' or 'It is important to investigate [aspect] to support [finding]...'. By employing this step, the authors showcase the significance and relevance of their work in furthering knowledge and understanding within their field, thereby supporting the rationale behind their research.

The third step, S.1C, provides background information and offers a historical context or relevant facts about the research topic. This strategy helps readers understand the broader context of the research. Examples include statements such as "organizations such as ... believe that..." or "[Location/Context] has a history of [relevant information]...". By offering this background, the authors can demonstrate the evolution of ideas or practices related to their research topic, highlight gaps in the current understanding, and show how their research builds upon existing knowledge.

The analysis of Move 1 revealed 29 identified PPs, with 20 (68.97%) contiguous and 10 (31.03%) non-contiguous. Regarding the manifestation of each step in the research papers under examination, it is noteworthy that steps S.1A (making topic generalizations) and S1.B (claiming centrality) were evidenced in all 10 research papers examined. Conversely, step S1.C (giving background information) did not emerge in the introductions of the 2 research papers in pedagogy.

From the perspective of their discourse functions, the selected PPs can be grouped into three main categories: referential, stance, and discourse-organizing PPs. Referential PPs are used in S.1A to introduce the research topic and highlight its relevance, in Step S.1B to characterize entities and elucidate key concepts, and in Step S.1C to incorporate citations of specific studies and scholars. Stance PPs were used in Step S.1A to highlight the importance of the research area through the use of evaluative language, in Step S.1B to express opinions on the current state of knowledge, and in Step S.1C to convey agreement, disagreement, or the relative significance of the referenced works. Discourse-organizing PPs serve to structure the text, guide readers through a logical flow, indicate progression between steps, organize information presentation, and connect the establishment of territory with subsequent moves in the introduction. Multifunctional PPs combine referential and stance functions to provide specific information while conveying the author's evaluation and integrating referential and discourse-organizing functions to offer factual content while structuring logical progression. The effective use of these expression types across Move 1 enables the establishment of the research territory, establishes the study's centrality, and provides necessary background information.

Table 4. **Phraseological patterns employed to verbalize Move 2 – Surveying and summarizing previous research. Structural nature and discourse function(s) of PPs in Move 2**

Move 2 Surveying and summarizing previous research			
Step	**Phraseological pattern**	**Discourse function**	**Contiguous/ Non-contiguous PP**
Constructing S.2A Constructing reference to the published work	"According to research by..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"Recent studies have demonstrated that ..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"Both national and international researchers..., scientists..., and theorists... argue that..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"According to Author (year)..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"Recent studies have extended..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"This research dates back to..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"[Author] describes... as..."	Referential	Non-contiguous
	"Author A (year), Author B (year) maintain that"	Referential	Contiguous
	"[Authors] report that..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"[Authors] suggest that a significant portion of literature has focused on..."	Referential	Contiguous
S.2B Making positive/ negative evaluation	"However, ... often do not include ... or, if ... do include ..., it is not..."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"The results of the study found [negative aspect], including [specific details]..."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"X is positively related to Y [Author year]"	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"These results provide new and promising insights into..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"Nevertheless, ... still remains not straightforward and generates many practical challenges"	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"Unlike [Author A], [Author B] provides positive account of"	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"... seem to act as a catalyst..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"What is promising is that..."	Stance	Contiguous
S.2C Making general/ summary statement	"Gamification in [the field] requires careful planning and..."	Referential	Non-contiguous
	"Taken together, the results show that..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	"These diverse approaches ... point to different understandings of..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Non-contiguous
	"... may integrate but is distinct from..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	"In sum, literature on... is emerging, with..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Non-contiguous

Resource: The author's research output.

While Move 1 focuses on establishing a broader context, Move 2 narrows the focus to specific previous research by utilizing distinct PPs to achieve this shift.

Move 2 (Surveying and summarizing previous research) consists of three main steps: constructing reference to published work, making positive/negative evaluations, and making general/summary statements. Each step employs specific PPs to communicate ideas effectively and engage with existing relevant sources.

In step S.2A, the authors referenced published sources using standardized phraseological prefabricated patterns such as "According to research conducted by..." and "Recent studies have demonstrated that [finding] (Author, Year; Author, Year)...". These PPs enable efficient integration of citations while maintaining a smooth flow of ideas.

Step S.2B involves making positive or negative evaluations of the previous research and highlighting its strengths and limitations. Examples include "The study's findings revealed a negative aspect, including specific details..." and "A critical analysis of the methodology employed by Researcher et al. (Year) reveals potential limitations in..." These PPs allow authors to engage with existing literature critically and position their research.

In step S.2C, authors make general or summary statements using common word combinations, such as 'A comprehensive review of the literature reveals a consensus among researchers that...', 'The body of evidence accumulated over the past decade suggests that...', and 'An analysis of the existing research landscape reveals a growing trend towards...'.

The analysis of PPs yielded 23 distinct patterns. The results showed that 65.22% of the patterns were classified as contiguous, while 34.78% were identified as non-contiguous. This distribution reflects the relative occurrence of adjacent and separated phraseological patterns within the analyzed corpus. In examining the manifestation of each step in the analyzed research papers, it is notable that step S.2A (Constructing reference to published work) was evident in all 10 research papers, while step S.2B (Making positive or negative evaluation) was present in 8 papers. Step S2.C (Making general/summary statement) was not included in the introductions of the five research papers in the field of pedagogy.

In Move 2, PPs serve three principal discourse functions: referential, stance, and discourse-organizing. Referential PPs provide the basis for a literature review and introduce relevant studies and researchers. Stance PPs allow authors to evaluate and interpret the cited research critically. While not specifically exemplified, discourse-organizing PPs typically serve to summarize, compare, or transition between ideas, thereby ensuring coherence and structure within the text. Some PPs in Move 2 serve multiple functions. For instance, PPs that integrate referential and stance functions provide specific information on a study and highlight its significance. Similarly, PPs that introduce research while organizing the flow of information serve both referential and discourse-organizing functions. The effective use of these PPs enables the author to create a dynamic and engaging literature review. This is achieved by summarizing and evaluating previous research while positioning the current study within the existing body of knowledge.

The transition from surveying previous research to creating a research niche is supported by PPs highlighting gaps or raising questions in existing literature.

Table 5. **Phraseological patterns employed to verbalize Move 3 – Creating a research niche. Structural nature and discourse function(s) of PPs in Move 3**

Move 3 Creating a research niche			
Step	**Phraseological pattern**	**Discourse function**	**Contiguous/ Non-contiguous PP**
S.3A Counter-claiming	"However, many of the early studies focused on..."	Referential	Contiguous
S.3B Gap-indicating	"Though much has been studied about..., there are few clear answers about..."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"No articles discussed [specific combination of topics], which provided certainty that [study contribution]..."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"While most of the research on... targets..., this study explores..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Non-contiguous
	"Author et al. (year) concluded, therefore, that there is a need for..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"Although the magnitude of ... seems to have grown manifold..., not much is known about..."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"With the continuing increase of..., more research is needed to..."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"Relatively little is understood about..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"This may be attributed to gaps in..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	"However, little is known about..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
S.3C Question-raising	"The question of ... is thus not an easy one."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"The challenge this presented was..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"In this paper we address the question of..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
S.3D Asserting the relevancy	"Such information is important because..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"With... appearing, issues related to... are particularly urgent"	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"... also remains a valuable tool for..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous

Move 3 Creating a research niche			
Step	**Phraseological pattern**	**Discourse function**	**Contiguous/ Non-contiguous PP**
S.3E Establishing theoretical framework or position	"The aim of this paper is to address the identified research need through..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	"This study used ... as a lens through which to..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Non-contiguous
	"For the purposes of this study, [number] theoretical frameworks that [relevance] will be discussed. These being [list of frameworks]..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Non-contiguous
	"We framed this study in..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	"The theoretical base for this study is..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	"This paper draws on several theoretical perspectives including..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous

Resource: The author's research output.

Move 3, creating a research niche, is divided into five steps. Each step employs a specific habitual formula to justify the need for further research within the existing body of knowledge. These steps include counter-claiming, gap-indicating, question-raising, asserting relevancy, and establishing a theoretical framework or position.

Counter-claiming challenges existing research. This is illustrated by PPs, such as "However, many of the early studies focused on..." Gap-indicating identifies gaps in current research, using expressions such as "Though much has been studied about ..., there are few clear answers about..." or "No articles discussed [specific combination of topics], which provided certainty that [study contribution]...". Question-raising poses questions or highlights areas that require further investigation. In this step, habitual word combinations, such as "However, little is known about..." or "Understanding [specific aspect] is particularly important in [context]..." are employed. Asserting relevancy emphasizes the importance of the research, using phraseological prefabricated patterns such as "Such information is important because..." or "The aim of this paper is to address the identified research need through..." Finally, establishing a theoretical framework or position defines the study's theoretical approach. This is illustrated by examples such as "This study used ... as a lens through which to..." or "For the purposes of this study, [number] theoretical frameworks that [relevance] will be discussed."

The study revealed 22 PPs, comprising 13 (59.09%) contiguous and 9 (40.91%) non-contiguous patterns. This finding indicates a slight inclination towards contiguous structures. In terms of the occurrence of each step in the ten research papers that were subject to scrutiny, it is worth noting that step S.3B (gap-indicating) was present in all of them. Notably, step S.3A (counter-claiming) was absent from 9 research paper introductions. Furthermore, only 6 papers included S.3C (question-raising), five included S.3D (asserting the relevancy), and 5 included S.3E (establishing a theoretical framework or position) within the field of pedagogy.

The PPs under Move 3 serve various discourse functions, including referential, stance, and discourse-organizing. PPs with dual functions are instrumental in verbalizing Move 3, establishing a research niche, and delineating its constituent steps. These patterns effectively combine the presentation of specific information with the author's perspective or text organization, thereby enhancing the overall impact of establishing a research niche. In counter-claiming (S.3A), patterns like "However, many of the early studies focused on..." serve a referential function by pointing to previous research while simultaneously expressing a stance that implies a limitation in existing studies. Patterns such as "Though much has been studied about ..., there are few clear answers about..." and "While most of the research on... targets..., this study explores..." effectively indicate gaps in existing research. They combine referential information about existing research with a stance highlighting knowledge gaps. The latter example also serves the function of organizing discourse by transitioning to the focus of this study. Question-raising patterns (S.3C) such as "The question of ... is thus not an easy one" combine information about a specific research question with a suggestion from the author that it is complex. "In this paper we address the question of..." serves both referential and discourse-organizing functions by introducing the research question and outlining the paper's structure. When asserting relevancy (S.3D), patterns such as "Such information is important because..." and "With... appearing, issues related to... are particularly urgent" combine referential information about the research topic with a stance emphasizing its significance or urgency. To establish a theoretical framework or position (S.3E), patterns such as "The aim of this paper is to address the identified research need through..." and "This study used... as a lens through which to..." combine referential information about the study's approach with the discourse-organizing functions that structure the paper's argument.

These dual-function patterns effectively communicate the research niche. This is arrived at by providing context (referential function), expressing the author's evaluation of existing research or the importance of their study (stance function), and guiding the reader through the logical progression of the argument (discourse-organizing function). Such a combination allows authors to create a compelling narrative that justifies their research and positions it within broader academic discourse.

As the authors progress from creating a research niche to occupying it, they employ PPs that clearly articulate the aims and theoretical framework of their study.

The interplay of various patterns in Move 4, occupying the research niche and its associated steps, is vital in scholarly writing. These patterns enable researchers to communicate their study objectives, conceptual frameworks and paper structure effectively. By employing these patterns, authors can effectively and accurately present their research as a valuable insight within the academic discourse.

Table 6. **Phraseological patterns employed to verbalize Move 4 – Occupying the research niche. Structural nature and discourse function(s) of PPs in Move 4**

Move 4 Occupying the research niche			
Step	**Phraseological pattern**	**Discourse function**	**Contiguous/ Non-contiguous PP**
S.4A Announcing aims/research questions	"To contribute to this emerging area, we report on..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"This... enables the exploration of how..."	Referential	Non-contiguous
	"We pursue... research questions related to..."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"This ... focuses on ... and aims at providing..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Non-contiguous
	"In this study, we have designed..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	"The purpose of this study was to..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	"This study sought to establish [research objective]..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"The research question asked is: What is the result of..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	"To address this purpose, we posed the following research questions:"	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
S.4B Announcing theoretical framework or position	"Given the meaning of the theory and the roots it has in ..., it was appropriate to view ... through this lens because..."	Referential, stance and discourse-organizing	Non-contiguous
	"For the examined theory I have to a large extent relied on..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"The... provide evidence of an approach"	Referential, stance and discourse-organizing	Non-contiguous
S.4C Indicating research paper structure	"To analyze the data, we began with..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	"First, you will be presented with..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	"Of the numerous proposals received, ... papers are included... These papers focus mainly on..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Non-contiguous
	"This paper presents..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"This paper will briefly discuss..."	Discourse-organizing and referential	Contiguous
	"After reviewing..., we describe... We then present..."	Discourse-organizing and referential	Non-contiguous

Resource: The author's research output.

For step S. 4A, announcing aims/research questions, the examined papers offer various PPs. Authors frequently employ introductory habitual formulas such as “To contribute to this emerging area, we report on...” or “This study focuses on... and aims at providing...”. They clearly state their research objectives using these formulas. These formulations establish the study’s focus and situate it within the broader context of the field. Similarly, expressions like “The purpose of this study was to...” or “This study sought to establish...” directly communicate the research goals, while phrases such as “We pursue... research questions related to...” or “To address this purpose, we posed the following research questions:” introduce specific research questions guiding the research paper.

Step S.4B, announcing the theoretical framework or position, is represented by fewer but equally important PPs. Authors use phrases like “Given the meaning of the theory and its roots in..., it was appropriate to view... through this lens because...” to justify their theoretical approach. Other expressions, such as “For the examined theory, I have to a large extent relied on...” or “The... provide evidence of an approach,” help establish the theoretical foundation of the research while explaining the chosen perspective and its relevance to the present research.

Finally, Step S.4C, indicating the research paper structure, is well represented by various PPs that guide readers through the content and methodology of the research paper. Habitual word strings like “To analyze the data, we began with...” or “First, you will be presented with...” provide a clear roadmap of the paper structure. Other phraseological patterns, such as “This paper presents...” or “This paper will briefly discuss...” offer an overview of the content, while “After reviewing..., we” signal transitions between different sections of a research paper.

In examining the manifestation of each step in the analyzed research papers, it is notable that step S.4A (Announcing aims/research questions) was evident in 9 research papers, while step S.4B (Announcing theoretical framework or position) merely in 3 papers. Step S4.C (Indicating research paper structure) was included in the introductions of the 6 research papers in the field of pedagogy. These PPs provide scholars with a valuable toolkit, enabling them to effectively communicate their research goals, theoretical foundations and paper structure. Using these PPs enables authors to enhance the clarity and coherence of their academic writing, thus facilitating better understanding and engagement with their work.

The study identified 18 PPs, with 11 (61.01%) contiguous and 7 (38.99%) non-contiguous. This distribution demonstrates a clear predominance of contiguous patterns, which may enhance the clarity and coherence of written content. However, the notable presence of non-contiguous patterns (nearly 39%) indicates that writers also employ more elaborate and flexible structures in their compositions. The combination of contiguous and non-contiguous patterns in academic writing likely provides clarity and complexity, contributing to effective scholarly discourse.

The PPs under Move 4 (occupying the research niche) serve multiple discourse functions, including referential, stance, and discourse-organizing functions. Most patterns contain referential elements and provide specific research information. For example, "To contribute to this emerging area, we report on..." refers to the research area and the study's contribution. Several patterns express the author's stance, such as "We pursue... research questions related to...," which indicates the author's active engagement in the research procedure. Many patterns also help structure the text, guiding the reader through the article structure, as seen in "First, you will be presented with...".

Interestingly, many patterns simultaneously fulfil multiple functions. Some combine referential and stance functions, like "This study sought to establish [research objective]..." which provides information about the research while conveying the author's active role. Others integrate referential and discourse-organizing functions, such as "This paper presents..." which refers to the paper itself while indicating its structure. Some patterns even combine all three functions, as exemplified by "Given the meaning of the theory and the roots it has in..., it was appropriate to view... through this lens because..." This pattern refers to theory, expresses the author's judgment, and organizes the discourse.

5. Discussion

PPs are essential in the presentation of Moves 1–4 and their steps in pedagogy research paper introductions. They provide authors with standardized language structures or prefabricated patterns to communicate their ideas. This contributes to the overall coherence and effectiveness of the academic writing.

In Move 1 (establishing the territory), PPs are employed to establish the research topic. Furthermore, they are of key importance in making generalizations about a topic, asserting its centrality, and providing background information. Such patterns facilitate the introduction of the research topic, highlight its relevance, and contextualize it within a wider field of study.

Move 2 (surveying and summarizing previous research) involves using PPs to construct references to published research. In addition, they are utilized to make evaluations and present summary statements. These prefabricated patterns provide authors with an effective means of engaging with existing literature and positioning their research within the current body of knowledge.

In Move 3 (creating a research niche), PPs are used for various purposes, including counter-claiming, indicating gaps, raising questions, asserting relevancy, and establishing theoretical frameworks. The aforementioned patterns assist the authors in clearly articulating the necessity for further research within the existing body of knowledge.

Move 4 (occupying the research niche) employs PPs to communicate the research objectives, present the theoretical frameworks, and provide an overview of the structure of the research paper. These patterns allow researchers to clearly and concisely present their research aims and objectives while providing readers guidance through content.

The discourse functions of PPs in Moves 1–4 play a significant role in establishing academic writing rhetoric in research paper introductions. These functions can be classified into three main categories: referential, stance, and discourse-organizing. Referential phraseological patterns provide particulars on research topics and existing studies. Stance phraseological patterns express the author's perspective on the research topic and any evaluations they have made. Discourse-organizing phraseological patterns assist in structuring a text and guiding readers through the logical flow of ideas.

The present research demonstrates that numerous PPs serve multiple functions concurrently. For instance, some patterns combine referential and stance functions, providing specific information while conveying the author's perspective. Others combine referential and discourse-organizing functions, providing factual content while structuring the logical progression of the research discourse. This multifunctionality reinforces the overall coherence and effectiveness of the research paper introduction.

The contiguous and non-contiguous nature of PPs has implications for their use and effectiveness. Contiguous patterns form most of all four moves and provide clear and concise expressions that enhance readability and comprehension. While less common, non-contiguous patterns offer greater flexibility and complexity in expression, thus enabling authors to convey more subtle nuances and relationships between concepts.

The present research findings demonstrate a clear alignment with the structure of research paper introductions, as outlined by López Arroyo and Méndez-Cendón (2007) within the framework of academic rhetoric organization. The identified PPs support the presentation of established knowledge in the field (Move 1), main research problems (Move 3), previous research (Move 2), limitations of previous research (Move 2 and 3), research purpose (Move 4), and the main research procedure (Move 4). This alignment demonstrates how PPs contribute to the effective organization and presentation of information in research paper introductions, thereby enhancing their overall coherence and impact.

6. Conclusion

The present paper, which serves as a pilot investigation, offers insights into the role of phraseological patterns in academic writing rhetoric, specifically in pedagogy research paper introductions. The findings identify four key moves in the research paper introduction, each serving a specific purpose. These include establishing the research topic and aim, the research context and research gap, and other key components instrumental in establishing the research.

The research demonstrates how phraseological patterns align with and enhance the established structure of research paper introductions in pedagogy. Furthermore, it demonstrates their role in facilitating transitions between different moves and their steps, particularly in establishing a research territory, surveying and summarizing previous research, creating a research niche, and occupying that niche.

The present study also underscores the importance of multifunctional phraseological patterns in conveying comprehensive ideas and relationships between research-related concepts.

The present findings provide useful insights into the rhetorical aspects of academic writing and offer practical recommendations for developing more effective academic writing. Scholars in pedagogy can enhance the clarity and impact of their introductions by using standardized phraseological prefabricated patterns to clearly state their research aim, objectives, research questions, and research paper structure. This strategy also involves balancing contiguous and non-contiguous patterns and employing multifunctional patterns for information presentation, stance expression, and discourse organization.

This pilot study lays a solid foundation for future research by providing a methodological framework for analyzing phraseological patterns in academic writing. It identifies areas for further investigation, such as the relationship between phraseological patterns and specific rhetorical moves and their steps across various disciplines. The findings can inspire future research on the role of phraseology in academic discourse, potentially leading to more effective and coherent knowledge transfer and scholarly communication.

Finance and Acknowledgements

The present research has been conducted within the author's research activities in the following project: VEGA1/0173/24 entitled Research providing grounds for establishing a new subfield – writing-for-translation stylistics. KEGA 023PU-4/2025 Education online platform for the development of specific/edge translation/interpreting competencies of future and practising translators/interpreters.

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Article history:
Received: 04 December 2024
Accepted: 25 March 2025

Bionote:

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Russian Journal of Linguistics
ISSN 2687-0088 (Print), ISSN 2686-8024 (Online)

2025 Vol. 29 No. 2 320–338
http://journals.rudn.ru/linguistics

https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-41632
EDN: KFXUSM

Research article / Научная статья

Gendered use of hedges in the discussion and conclusion sections of research articles

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Abstract
Following Lakoff's (1975) claim that women hedge in speech more often than men, a large number of studies have investigated the role of gender in academic discourse and produced limited evidence, indicating the need for more research to highlight the role of gender in academic writing. The aim of this study was to cross-culturally examine how gender may affect the use of hedges in the *discussion* and *conclusion* sections of research articles. For this purpose, the study adopted Salager-Meyer's (1997) taxonomy of hedges to qualitatively and quantitatively examine the types, frequency and gendered use of hedges in a small-scale corpus of research articles produced by 20 Saudi male and female researchers. The overall results showed that both genders employed Salager-Meyer's taxonomy of hedges and used more hedges in the *discussion* than in the *conclusion*. Males hedged more than females, but the difference was not statistically significant except in certain cases, such as the use of two modal lexical verbs (*indicate* and *seem*) and the modal auxiliary verb (*must*). Moreover, the results revealed a marginal significant difference in the use of *adjectival*, *adverbial* and *nominal* phrases. Females tended to employ more of these hedges than their male counterparts. The findings contribute to a better understanding of the relationship between gender and hedging in academic discourse, and may guide postgraduate students towards the appropriate use of hedging devices in their research development. They also emphasize the need for further research on the role of gender across disciplines, languages and cultures.
Keywords: *discourse analysis, academic discourse, hedges, gender, research articles*

For citation:
Alhuqbani, Lamya & Mohammed Alhuqbani. 2025. Gendered use of hedges in the discussion and conclusion sections of research articles. *Russian Journal of Linguistics* 29 (2). 320–338. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-41632

Влияние гендера на хеджирование в разделах «обсуждение» и «заключение» научных статей

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Аннотация
Утверждение Робин Лакофф (1975) о том, что женщины прибегают к хеджированию в речи чаще, чем мужчины, способствовало появлению большого количества исследований, посвященных изучению роли гендера в академическом дискурсе. Однако было приведено ограниченное количество доказательств, что указывает на необходимость проведения дальнейших исследований для выявления роли гендера в академическом письме. Данное кросс-культурное исследование нацелено на выявление того, как гендер может влиять на использование хеджирования в разделах «обсуждение» и «заключение» научных статей. Материалом послужил корпус научных статей, написанных 20 саудовскими исследователями – мужчинами и женщинами. Качественное и количественное изучение типов, частоты и гендерного использования хеджей проводилось на основе таксономии хеджей Салагера-Мейера (1997). Общие результаты показали, что представители обоих полов употребляют различные типы хеджей и в большей степени они встречаются в «обсуждении», чем в «заключении». При этом мужчины прибегали к хеджированию чаще, чем женщины, хотя разница статистически несущественная, за исключением использования глаголов *indicate* и *seem*, а также модального глагола *must*. Кроме того, результаты выявили незначительную разницу в использовании прилагательных, наречий и именных словосочетаний, которые использовались женщинами чаще, чем мужчинами. Полученные результаты способствуют лучшему пониманию взаимосвязи между гендером и хеджированием в академическом дискурсе и могут быть полезны при написании научных работ. Они также свидетельствуют о необходимости дальнейших исследований в области гендера в разных дисциплинах, языках и культурах.
Ключевые слова: *дискурс-анализ, академический дискурс, хеджирование, гендер, научные статьи*

Для цитирования:
Alhuqbani L., Alhuqbani M. 2025. Gendered use of hedges in the discussion and conclusion sections of research articles. *Russian Journal of Linguistics*. 2025. Vol. 29. № 2. P. 320–338. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-41632

1. Introduction

The use of hedges in research articles (henceforth *RAs*) has received a great deal of attention in the past three decades (e.g., Hyland & Tse 2004, Navrátilová 2013). There is no single agreed-upon definition of hedging because it has been approached from different perspectives by different researchers over the last three decades (Bonyadi et al. 2012). For example, Varttala (2001) defined hedging as a strategy by which researchers employ expressions relating to vagueness, uncertainty, or tentativeness. Hyland (2005) described hedges as expressions used to avoid responsibility for the certainty of a proposition inferred from the findings.

There seems to be no one exact definition of hedging in the literature, however, Fraser (2010: 22) concluded that despite variation in terminological issues between various studies, there is a general agreement that hedging is "a rhetorical strategy, by which the speaker, using a linguistic device, can signal a lack of commitment to either the full semantic membership of an expression or the full commitment to the force of the speech act being conveyed." Fraser's definition summarizes the main function of hedging, as almost agreed upon by all researchers, that is; hedges are used to "mitigate or reduce the strength of the assertions that speakers or writers make" (Martín-Martín 2005: 96).

Lakoff (1975) brought women's language vs. men's language to the forefront. Since her publication of *Language and Woman's Place* (1975), a plethora of research has been carried out in the field of linguistics and gender. According to her, certain linguistic features such as indirect request and hedges are used less frequently by men because these features signal uncertainty. This contradicts the expectation that men's speech is powerful, while women's speech is tentative and uncertain (Coates 2004). One of the features that Lakoff (1975) saw as prominent in women's language is the utilization of lexical hedges as a class of devices employed to soften and add uncertainty to their utterances. Women were found to use hedges more than men in conversations. However, Lakoff's claim was based on her self-analysis and, therefore, represents a methodological weakness (Dousti & Rasekh 2016). More specifically, she collected her data by means of informal conversations within her private social network, without taking into account social factors or controlling for equal distribution of men and women (Pellby 2013).

Following Lakoff's (1975) seminal research on gender differences in language use, several studies have shown different results regarding the gendered use of hedges in discourse. For example, Holmes (1995) found that men used hedges in their apologies to serve epistemic goals as tentativeness and imprecision, which contradicted Lakoff's (1975) conclusion that women use hedges more than men to express uncertainty. Similarly, Pellby (2013) addressed Lakoff's (1975) claim that women hedge to signal uncertainty. She found that women hedged more than men for different reasons. According to her, the occurrences of these hedges in women's speech mostly included the epistemic modal function and shields suggesting uncertainty about the utterance and certainty about the utterance respectively. As a result, Pellby refuted Lakoff's conclusion that women use hedges simply to express uncertainty and tentativeness.

Several studies (e.g., Basturkmen 2012, Tran & Duong 2013) have shown that hedges are frequently used in academic writing across languages and disciplines. According to Swales (1990), *RAs* are generally subdivided into four main sections (*introduction*, *methods*, *results*, and *discussion*), with each one serving distinct rhetorical purposes. Hedges were found to appear more in the *discussion* section (Behnam et al. 2012, Navratilova 2013) because it is the place in the *RAs* where researchers critically discuss their findings and attempt to situate their arguments within their discourse community. They employ hedges in their *RAs* as metadiscourse markers to cautiously present their findings, and leave more space for negotiation (Tran & Duong 2013). According to Hyland (1998), hedges present new claims for endorsement and shape the *RA* as the principal vehicle for new knowledge. Salager-Meyer (1997) argued that hedges serve three main strategies; minimizing threat and avoiding absolute claims; reflecting the certainty of knowledge; and creating respect between authors and editors. Myers (1989) pointed out that any statement that carries a claim but is not hedged is most likely not a statement of new knowledge. He argued that hedging in scientific discourse is the reaction to the actual or assumed interaction between the author and audience.

A number of researchers suggested various taxonomies of hedges in *RAs*. These hedging taxonomies are neither totally comprehensive nor categorically watertight, and different conceptualizations of hedging classifications among researchers provide clear evidence that interpreting results should be approached with caution. For instance, Hyland (1998) proposed two alternative categories as main realizations of hedges in *RAs*: lexical and strategic hedges. Another well-known taxonomy in the literature was the one advanced by Salager-Meyer's (1997) who suggested seven-taxonomy types: *modal auxiliary verbs* (e.g., can) *modal lexical verbs* (e.g., to indicate), *adjectival*, *adverbial*, and *nominal modal phrases* (probability adjectives: e.g., possible; nouns: e.g., claim; adverbs: e.g., presumably), *approximators of degree*, *quantity*, *frequency* and *time* (e.g., about, often), *introductory phrases* (e.g., it is our view that), *if clauses* (e.g., if true) and finally *compound hedges* (e.g. could be suggested). Salager-Meyer's taxonomy of hedges was adopted in this study due to its adequacy, popularity and tested validity in several previous studies.

To conclude, hedging has been claimed to be a strategy used to express certainty or uncertainty and has been shown more often by female writers than by male writers (Ansarin & Bathaie 2011, Lakoff 1975). To our best knowledge, there has been no study that investigated the gendered use of hedges in the *discussion* and *conclusion* of *RAs* produced by Saudi scholars in the field of applied linguistics, making the conduct of this study a necessary and important contribution to the literature on women's language. Therefore, the rationale of this study is to bridge this gap in the literature by investigating the types, frequency and gendered use of hedges in the academic writing of Saudi scholars within Salager-Meyer's (1997) seven-taxonomy types of hedges. Accordingly, the current study addressed the following three research questions:

1. How frequently do Saudi males and females employ hedges in *the discussion and conclusion* sections of their *RAs*?

2. What are the types and frequencies of hedges used by Saudi males and females in the *discussion and conclusion* sections *of* their *RAs*?

3. How significantly does gender affect the use of hedges in the *discussion* and *conclusion* sections of Saudi researchers' *RAs*?

2. Previous research on gendered use of hedges

The question of whether women and men differ in their academic use of language has received considerable attention over the last three decades in various disciplines, including language studies. However, there is still a striking shortage in the number of studies that investigated the gendered use of hedges in academic discourse.

Ansarin and Bathaie (2011) examined the linguistic realizations of the identifications mirrored in male and female scholars' choices for hedges in 130 one-authored *RAs* in applied linguistics. They found that women hedged in *RAs* more than men because female authors detached themselves from the commitments to the truth value of their findings, showing hedging as an indicator of the scholars' gender.

Serholt (2012) investigated whether there were gender related differences in the overall frequency of hedges in the academic writing of Swedish advanced learners of English. She found that male students used hedges more frequently than female students. However, both groups showed a substantially higher use of hedges and frequently employed the modal verbs *might, could*, and *may,* and the lexical verbs *seem* and *suggest* regardless of gender. Serholt concluded that gender didn't seem to be a determining factor for Swedish advanced learners' academic writing.

Farahani and Hassani (2014) investigated the differences between Iranian males and females in the use of hedges in 60 applied linguistics *RAs*. They found that males employed more hedges than their female counterparts, hence refuting Lakoff's (1975) claim that women use more hedges than men. Furthermore, the study identified that the discussion section of the *RAs* contained more hedges than the introduction section, thus supporting previous studies (e.g., Hyland 1996, Varttala 2001).

Yeganeh and Ghoreyshi (2015) examined gender differences in the abstract and discussion sections of forty English *RAs* written by native speakers of Persian. They concluded that females preferred to use more hedges than males to express the data they provided. This conclusion was not supported by Hidayat et al. (2017) who found that male writers hedged as much as females, and attributed this to the similarity of the genre of the academic texts because they have the same convention that should be adhered to by both male and female authors.

More recently, Gul et al. (2020) investigated the gendered use of hedges in 100 Pakistani engineering *RAs*. The findings showed that male writers used more hedges than female writers in expressing their statements, whereas female writers used a smaller number of hedges in stating their findings.

Argina and Ijabah (2022) examined 40 *RAs* written in English by Indonesian male and female postgraduate students majoring in English Education to identify if there were any differences between them in using hedges in *RAs*. The results demonstrated that although Indonesian male English students employed hedges in their *RAs* more frequently than Indonesian female English students did, there was no significant effect of gender on the use of hedges in *RAs*. However, the result showed a significant effect of gender on the use of some types of hedges such as adverb of frequency and quantifiers, with male students using these types of hedges more than female students.

In another study, Motlagh (2021) analyzed the introduction and discussion sections in 66 academic papers by male and female writers in applied linguistics. Contrary to Lakoff's claim, male writers employed hedges more than female writers. The discussion section was hedged more than the introduction section. Male writers used *modal verbs* and *adjectives* more often, while female writers used *lexical verbs*, *adjectives* and *modal verbs* more frequently in their *RAs*.

In a more recent study, Ajmal et al. (2023) compared the use of hedges by male and female native English writers in several genres, such as academic papers, newspaper articles, and fictional works. The findings indicated that female writers used hedges more than male writers, and that such use varied across different genres of writing.

To summarize, the existing research findings suggest a limited connection between the use of hedges and gender in academic discourse. Hence, there is insufficient evidence supporting Lakoff's (1975) claim that women hedge more than men, making the conduct of this study a significant contribution to the literature on gender and academic discourse.

3. Materials and methods

3.1. Research design

Our study employed a mixed research design. It analyzed the data both qualitatively and quantitatively. To achieve this, the types and frequencies of hedges were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively on the basis of Salager-Meyer's (1997) taxonomy of hedges, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. **Salager-Meyer's (1997) taxonomy of hedges**

Hedges	Examples
1. Modal auxiliary verbs	may, can, would, should
2. Modal lexical verbs	to indicate, to believe, to appear.
3. Adjectival, adverbial, and nominal modal phrases	a) probability adjectives: e.g., probable, possible, b) nouns: e.g., assumption, claim, c) adverbs: e.g., presumably, perhaps, likely.
4. Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency, and time	approximately, usually, roughly, generally, often
5. Introductory phrases	it is our view that, to our knowledge, I believe
6. If clauses	If true, if anything
7. Compound hedges:	double hedges (it may suggest), triple hedges (it seems reasonable to assume that) and quadruple hedges (it would seem somewhat unlikely that)

3.2. Corpus

A corpus of 20 *RAs,* produced by ten Saudi male and ten female authors from the field of applied linguistics, were collected and analyzed. These *RAs* were selected from peer-reviewed journals to ensure their quality and originality. Only the *discussion* and *conclusion* sections of these *RAs* were analyzed for the use of hedges because researchers usually employ them more frequently in these two sections to contribute to their discourse community and gain approval. The *RAs* were drawn from the following peered-reviewed journals: *Studies in Literature and Language*, *English Language Teaching*, *International Journal of Linguistics*, *Arab Word English Journal* (AWEJ) and *Journal of King Saudi University Languages and Translation*.

3.3. Data collection procedures and analysis

Only single-authored *RAs* were selected to ensure commitment to the main goal of this study which was to investigate how gender affects the use of hedges in the sections of *discussion* and *conclusion* of *RAs*. Co-authored *RAs* were ruled out if the co-authors were from both sexes because it is impossible to figure out the role of gender in the writing process. The researchers selected and focused on the *discussion* and *conclusion* sections of the *RAs* because researchers usually contribute new knowledge in these two sections, which may make them use more hedges to soften their language and avoid disagreeing with their discourse community. To allow comparison, the *RAs* were selected so that they treated similar subject matters in applied linguistics and were published in journals with similar research interests.

The *discussion* and *conclusion* sections were meticulously read word by word by each author in order to identify and locate the hedges. To ensure code validity and reliability, the two researchers separately underlined and coded the hedges in each *RA* and then decided together on what a hedge was and then listed these hedges according to their types. *RAs* were assigned a number from 1 to 10 for each gender to refer to them every time the hedges were counted and recounted. Afterwards, the hedges which appeared in the *discussion* and *conclusion* sections were carefully and meticulously listed under each category and then analyzed in accordance with Salager-Meyer's (1997) taxonomy of hedges, as demonstrated in Table 1 above. Their frequencies were statistically tabulated to show the total number of hedges by targeted researchers.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (*SPSS*) was employed to statistically analyze and present the data. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in terms of the frequency and percentages of hedges used in the targeted *RAs* presented in tables and figures. Additionally, to check if the differences between females and males were statistically significant, an independent t-test was employed. Leven's test for Equality of variance was employed to indicate variances for gender.

4. Results

4.1. Distribution of hedges

Table 2 below displays the overall distribution of hedges as used by male and female writers in the *discussion* and *conclusion* sections of their *RAs*. The analysis of the results showed that both male and female writers used more hedges in the *discussion* section (73%) than in the *conclusion* section (27%). Male writers used more hedges than female authors in

Table 2. **The distribution of hedges in the discussion and conclusion sections by male and female researches**

Section	Male F %	Female F %	Total N %
Discussion	469 52.3	428 47.7	897 73
Conclusion	177 53.3	155 46.7	332 27
Total	647	583	1230

** F=Frequency, N=Number*

both sections with a total number of 647 hedges compared to 583 hedges by female writers. To examine whether the difference between the two groups is statistically significant, an independent t-test was conducted. The t-test indicated that the ten female writers had a mean of 47.7 and the ten male writers had a mean of 52.3 in the *discussion* section. The mean did not differ significantly at the $p<.05$ level ($p=.611$). Similarly, the two groups did not differ significantly in the *conclusion* section. The female group had a mean of 15.4 and the male group had a mean of 17.6 in the *conclusion* section. The mean did not differ significantly at the $p<.05$ level ($p=.611$). Levene's Test for Equality of Variance indicated that variance for the two groups did not differ significantly from each other in the *discussion* section ($F=1.114, p=.305$) and in the *conclusion* section ($F=.560, p=.464$).

4.2. Types and frequency of hedges

4.2.1. The discussion section

Table 3 below demonstrates the types, frequency and percentages of hedges in the *discussion* section as used by both male and female authors. The analysis of the results indicated that both groups used more *approximators* with a total number of 384 hedges, followed by *modal lexical verbs* with a total number of 218 hedges and *modal auxiliary verbs* with a total number of 148 hedges. The hedges least used by both groups in the *discussion* section were *introductory phrases* with a total number of only four hedges.

Table 3. **Types and frequency of hedges in the discussion section by male and female researchers**

Types	Male F %	Female F %	Total
Modal Auxiliary Verbs	76 51.4	72 48.6	148
Modal Lexical Verbs	117 53.7	101 46.3	218
Adjectival, adverbial, and nominal modal phrases	39 41.9	54 58.1	93
Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency, and time	203 52.9	181 47.1	384
Introductory phrases	3 75	1 25	4
If clauses	7 63.3	4 36.4	11
Compound hedges	26 63.4	15 36.6	41
Total	471	428	899

** F=Frequency*

To find out whether the two groups differ significantly in the use of hedges in the *discussion* section, an independent t-test was carried out. They did not differ significantly from each other in the use of Salager-Meyer's (1997) seven types of hedges. However, there seemed to be marginal significance between the two groups in the use of *adjectival*, *adverbial*, and *nominal modal phrases*. Levene's Test for Equality of Variance showed that variance for the two groups differed marginally from each other (*F=4.041*), (*p=.060*). Female writers used more of these hedges than male writers in the *discussion* section. Moreover, the results identified a marginal significance between the two groups in the use of both *introductory phrases* and *if clauses*. Levene's Test for Equality of Variance indicated that variance for the two groups differed marginally from each other in the *introductory phrases* (*F=3.415*), (*p=.081*), and in *if clauses* (*F=3.413*), (*p=.081*). Male writers used more of these hedges than their female counterparts.

4.2.2. The conclusion section

With regard to the *conclusion* section, Table 4 below displays the types, frequency and percentages of hedges as used by male and female authors. As in the *discussion* section above, both male and female writers used more *approximators* with a total number of 117 hedges in the *conclusion* section, followed by *modal auxiliary verbs* with a total number of 114 hedges. Similar to the *discussion* section, the least hedges employed by the two groups in the *conclusion* section were the *introductory phrases* (only one hedge) and *if clauses* (only five hedges).

A t-test was conducted to find out whether the two groups (males v. females) differed significantly in their use of hedges in the *conclusion* section. Overall, there was no significant difference between the two groups in terms of the types and frequency of hedges in the *conclusion* section.

Table 4. **Types and frequency of hedges in the conclusion section by male and female researchers**

Types	Male F %	Female F %	Total
Modal Auxiliary Verbs	61 53.5	53 46.5	114
Modal Lexical Verbs	30 55.6	24 44.4	54
Adjectival, adverbial, and nominal modal phrases	10 34.5	19 65.5	29
Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency, and time	66 56.4	51 43.6	117
Introductory phrases	1 100	00	1
If clauses	2 40	3 60	5
Compound hedges	6 54.5	5 45.5	11
Total	176	155	331

** F=Frequency*

4.3. Salager-Meyer's (1997) taxonomy of hedges

4.3.1. Modal auxiliary verbs

Table 5 below shows the frequency and percentages of the different *modal auxiliary verbs* used by male and female writers in both the *discussion* and *conclusion* of their *RAs*. The analysis of the data showed that male writers used more *modal auxiliary verbs* in the *discussion* and *conclusion* sections with a total number of 137 hedges than female authors who employed 125 *modal auxiliary verbs* in the two sections. The descriptive analysis of the results revealed that male writers used the auxiliary verb *may* more frequently than any other modal auxiliary verbs with a total frequency of 36 times. In contrast, female writers preferred to use the auxiliary verb *can* more than any other modal auxiliary verbs with a frequency of 39 times. However, *can* was the most commonly used auxiliary verb (F= 65) in both the *discussion* and *conclusion* sections by male and female writers, followed by the auxiliary verb *may* (F= 64). The least used auxiliary verb was *must* with a frequency of eight times. Unlike *may* and *might* which imply that the propositions can also be wrong, *must* leave almost no doubt that the author judges the claim to be true. It reflects a stronger commitment to the proposition than *may* or *might.* With regard to the modal auxiliary verbs *could*, *would* and *should*, the use of *should* was equally distributed among both genders. Nevertheless, *could* and *would* were used slightly more by Saudi males.

To examine whether the two groups differ significantly in the use of modal auxiliary verbs, a t-test was conducted. There was no significant difference between the two groups in the use of modal auxiliary verbs *may, can, might, should, could* and *would*. However, there was a significant difference in the use of the auxiliary verb *must* at the level of .05. Levene's Test for Equality of Variances showed that variance for the two groups differed significantly ($F=10.830$), ($p=.004$). Male authors used *must* more than female authors.

Table 5. **Frequency and percentages of modal auxiliary verbs**

Modal Verbs	Male F %	Female F %	Total
May	36 56.2	28 43.8	64
Might	12 52.2	11 47.8	23
Can	26 40	39 60	65
Could	22 57.9	16 42.1	38
Would	16 57.1	12 42.9	28
Should	18 50	18 50	36
Must	7 87.5	1 12.5	8
Total	137	125	262

** F=Frequency*

4.3.2. Modal lexical verbs

With respect to *modal lexical verbs*, Table 6 below displays the frequency and percentages of the different *modal lexical verbs* in both the *discussion* and *conclusion* sections of male and female authors' *RAs*.

Table 6. **Frequency and percentages of modal lexical verbs**

Modal Lexical Verbs	Male F %	Female F %	Total
Indicate	32 66.7	16 33.3	48
Show	32 57.1	24 42.9	56
Believe	6 46.2	7 53.8	13
Suggest	8 44.4	10 55.6	18
Seem	22 71	9 29	31
Tend	9 64.3	5 35.7	14
Report	8 44.4	10 55.6	18
Appear	6 50	6 50	12
Reveal	4 36.4	7 63.6	11
Others	20 39.2	31 60.8	51
Total	147	125	272

**F=Frequency*

The results showed that the three lexical verbs *show* (*F=56*), *indicate* (*F=48*) and *seem* (*F=31*) are the most commonly used by male and female authors in the discussion and conclusion sections of their *RAs*. However, male authors used these lexical verbs more frequently than female authors, with a frequency of 147 for males and 124 for females. Other lexical verbs such as *suggest* (*F*=18), *report* (*F*=18), *tend* (*F*=14) were used less by the two groups. An independent t-test showed no significant difference between male and female authors in the use of lexical verbs except two lexical verbs *indicate* and *seem*. Levene's Test for Equality of Variance revealed that male authors differ significantly from female authors in the use of the verb *indicate* at the level of .005. Levene's Test for Equality of

Variance suggests that males used this modal lexical verb more than females (*F=13.434), (p=.002*). There was also a significant difference between the two groups in the use of the lexical verb *seem*. Levene's Test for Equality of Variance indicated that male authors differ significantly from the female authors in the use of the verb *seem* at the level of .005 (*F=4.288), (p=.053*).

4.3.3. Adjectival, adverbial and nominal modal phrases

Table 7 below presents the frequency and percentages of *adjectival*, *adverbial* and *nominal modal phrases* as used by male and female writers in both the *discussion* and *conclusion* sections of male and female writers' *RAs*.

Table 7. **Frequency and percentages of adjectival, adverbial and nominal modal phrases**

Types	**Male F %**	**Female F %**	**Total**
Adjectival Phrases	20 44.4	25 55.6	45
Adverbial Phrases	6 50	6 50	12
Nominal Phrases	23 35.9	41 64.1	64
Total	49	72	121

F=Frequency

The analysis of the data showed that female writers used more *adjectival*, *adverbial*, and *nominal modal phrases* than male writers with a total number of 72 hedges, in comparison to 49 hedges by male writers. However, both groups employed more *nominal phrases* (*F=64*), followed by *adjectival phrases* (*F=45*). *Adverbial phrases* were the least used hedges by the two groups (*F*= 12). An independent t-test analysis of the results demonstrated no significant difference between the two groups in terms of the *adjectival*, *adverbial*, and *nominal modal phrases*.

4.3.4. Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency and time

Table 8 below presents the types, frequency, and percentages of *approximators of degree*, *quantity*, *frequency*, and time in both the *discussion* and *conclusion* sections of male and female writers' *RAs*.

Table 8. **Frequency and percentages of approximators of degree, quantity, frequency and time**

Approximators	**Male F %**	**Female F %**	**Total**
Degree	32 64	18 36	50
Quantity	160 51.1	153 48.9	313
Frequency	67 54.9	55 45.1	122
Time	10 62.5	63 7.5	16
Total	269	232	501

**F=Frequency*

The analysis of the data revealed that both groups employed more *approximators of quantity* (*F*=313), followed by *approximators of frequency* (*F*=122). *Approximators of degree* (*F*=50) and time (*F*=16) were found to be the least used hedges by both male and female writers. Overall, the descriptive analysis of the results showed that male writers used more *approximators* (*F*=269) than female writers (*F*=232). An independent t-test revealed no significant difference between the two groups in the use of *approximators of degree*, *quantity*, *frequency*, and *time*.

4.3.5. Introductory phrases, if clauses, and compound hedges

Finally, Table 9 below demonstrates the other types of hedges suggested by Salager-Meyer (1997): *introductory phrases*, *if clauses*, and *compound* hedges in both the *discussion* and *conclusion* sections of male and female writers' *RAs*.

Table 9. **Frequency and percentages of introductory phrases, if clauses, and compound hedges**

Hedging Devices	**Male** F %	**Female** F %	**Total**
Introductory Phrases	4 80	1 20	5
IF Clauses	9 56.2	7 43.7	16
Compound Hedges	32 61.5	20 38.5	52
Total	45	28	73

**F=Frequency*

The data analysis indicated that male authors employed more of these hedges in both the *discussion* and *conclusion* sections *(F=45*), as compared to female authors (*F=28*). However, the results indicated that both male and female authors used *compound* hedges more frequently (*F=52*) in comparison to *introductory phrases* (*F=5*), with *if clauses* in the middle (*F=16*). An independent t-test was conducted to find out any significant differences between the male and female writers in terms of these three types of hedges. Levene's Test for Equality of Variance showed statistical significance for *introductory phrases* between the two groups (*F=6.612*), (*P=.019*) and marginal significance for *if clauses* (*F=3.925*), (*P=.063*). As for *compound* hedges, there was no significant difference between the two groups (*P=.686*).

5. Discussion

With regard to the first research question of this paper, which addressed how frequently Saudi males and females employ hedges in *the discussion and conclusion* sections of their *RAs,* the overall results support previous studies (e.g., Behnam et al. 2012, Hashami & Shirzadi 2016, Hyland 1998, Salager-Meyer 1994, Varttala 2001) in that the *discussion* section is more heavily hedged compared to other sections in the RAs, including the *conclusion* section. The results of study showed that the bulk of hedges in the written discourse of Saudi male and female researchers was located in the *discussion* section. The high occurrences of hedges in the *discussion* section were expected and reflected the rhetoric purpose of this section (Navrátilová 2013). A possible interpretation is that the *discussion* section is the place where writers emphasize their findings, state their own reading of the results in relation to other studies in the literature, attempt to avoid certainty and save the face of other fellow researchers. In this regard, Hyland (1998: 154) summarizes the motivation for the large number of hedges in the *discussion* section by stating that authors make their claims, consider relevance of results and speculate about what they might mean, going beyond their data to offer the more general interpretations by which they gain their academic credibility. The level of generality, and therefore the density of hedges, is much higher here, as writers explore the ramifications of their results.

Another possible interpretation of why the *discussion* section is heavily hedged is that it is usually longer and denser than the *conclusion* section as noted in the collected data of this study. In contrast, the *conclusion* section in the selected *RAs* ranged from one paragraph to five short paragraphs. This possibly made the use of hedges incomparable in number to the *discussion* section, which is usually a summary of the findings and hence researchers are not in a position to critically elaborate on the findings and make claims.

To answer the second research question, which was concerned with the types and frequencies of hedges used by Saudi male and female writers in the *discussion* and *conclusion* sections of their *RAs*, the results showed that *approximators* (e.g., degree: *frequently*, *sometimes; quantity: more, some; frequency: significantly, mainly; time: still, already*) were the most frequently used hedges in both sections. This result is consistent with previous studies such as those of Salager-Meyer's (1994) in that *approximators* are the most frequently used type of hedges in *RAs*. They are commonly used to manipulate precision in quantification, and *adverbs* of this type are also used to hedge the effect of the predicate, reducing the force of the verb.

Modal lexical verbs followed *approximators* as the second most commonly used hedges in the data. *Modal auxiliary verbs* came third. This result is consistent with the conclusions of Salager-Meyer (1994) and Serholt (2012) who found that *modal auxiliary verbs* (e.g., *may*, *can*, *could*, *would*, *might*, *should*, *must*) and *modal lexical verbs* (e.g., *seem*, *indicate*, *show*) are commonly used in *RAs*. These modals are usually used by writers to express doubt and evaluation of their results. They occurred in the data of this study as markers of tentativeness in reports of the writer´s own work and also indicated the limits to accuracy or applicability of the presented information. In several cases, they occurred in the sentences with inanimate subjects, such as *study*, *findings*, *data* or *results*.

The remaining hedges (*adjectival*, *adverbial*, and *nominal modal phrases*, *introductory phrases*, *if clauses*, *compound hedges*) were used less in the 20 *RAs*. This is inconsistent with Salager-Meyer's (1994) findings that *compound* hedges are among the most frequently used hedges in discourse, and with Winardi's (2009) findings that showed high occurrences of *adjectival*, *adverbial*, and *nominal phrases*, *introductory phrases*. A possible interpretation of the limited number of these hedges in the current study is that they are "first and foremost the product of a mental attitude and a decision about the function of a span of language is bound to be subjective" (Salager-Meyer 1997: 108). That is to say, the use of these hedges is influenced by the author's way of thinking and subjectivity. Let alone, the sample used in this study was relatively small and its focus was only on the *discussion* and *conclusion*, which may have affected the actual number and distribution of hedges in the selected *RAs*.

As seen above in the data analysis, both *may* and *can* were found to be the most commonly used modal auxiliary verbs in the data. *Might* was found to be used less than *may* and other *modal auxiliary verbs* except *must*. According to Hyland (1996), *may* can be considered as having a less tentative meaning than *might*. Thus, *may* expresses that the probability of a claim being true is higher, but *might* conveys that the probability of a claim being true is lower. The most noticeable feature of this category of hedges in data was the high incidence of *can*, which was frequently employed in a way similar to *may* or *might*– to present the information less strongly. *Could* in its epistemic sense expresses a more tentative possibility than the non-epistemic *can*. The usage of *should* refers typically to the future and consequently has a more tentative meaning than *would* which means that it expresses a less confident assumption of probability based on known facts (Hyland 1996: 263). *Should* is used in the data to refer to a future event to mitigate their prediction in case it is proved to be wrong. The modal verb *must* had a perceptibly lower frequency in the data than the other modal verbs. *Must* is a marker for "inferential confidence" which would also explain why the modal is less used in the texts (Hyland 1996: 264). In other words, *must* is used by authors to judge the claim to be true. It reflects stronger commitment.

With regard to the third research question which was concerned with the effect of gender on the use hedging in the *discussion* and *conclusion* sections of Saudi authors' *RAs*, the findings should be approached with caution due to several reasons. First, the sample was relatively small because the number of Saudi females publishing in applied linguistics was relatively small at the time of conducting the study, which made it difficult to locate more studies. Second, as of today there has not been an agreement among researchers on what hedges are, which makes analyzing hedges and reaching conclusive interpretations a remote prospect (Varttala 2001). However, the results in general revealed variations with regard to gender differences in the use of hedges in Saudi academic discourse. The results did not show significant differences between male and female writers in their use of Salager-Meyer's (1997) taxonomy of hedges, except for certain hedges. The modal auxiliary verb *must* and the two modal lexical verbs *indicate* and *seem* were found to be used more by male writers. In contrast, female writers used more *adjectival*, *adverbial* and *nominal modal phrases* than male writers. However, the overall results showed that male writers tended to use more hedges in six types of Salager-Meyer's (1997) taxonomy (*modal auxiliary verbs*, *modal lexical verbs*, *approximators*, *introductory phrases*, *if clauses*, and *compound* hedges). Therefore, the findings are not consistent with previous studies (e.g., Ansarin & Bathaie 2011, Lakoff 1975), which concluded that women use more hedges than men in their *RAs*. A possible interpretation of why Saudi male writers produced more hedges than female writers is that they produced detailed *discussion* and *conclusion,* allowing them to hedge more to make claims. Another possible reason could be a socio-cultural one. Saudi female researchers are new to publishing *RAs* in peered-review journals because Saudization of academic positions for women holding Ph.D. degrees in higher education took place a decade ago. The results of this study are consistent with the findings of Holmes (1995) and Serholt (2012), who concluded that men tended to use more hedges than women. However, it is not clear from the results why Saudi female authors used *adjectival*, *adverbial*, and *nominal modal phrases* more than their male counterparts. However, since these hedges reflect probability, it could be that Saudi female researchers used them as a matter of writing style not related to the use of hedges in written discourse.

6. Conclusion and implications

To conclude, this study examined the frequency, types and gendered use of hedges in academic written discourse by Saudi males and females using the theoretical framework of Salager-Meyer's (1997) taxonomy of hedges. It focused on two sections of their *RAs*: the *discussion* and *conclusion*. The overall results did not support Lakoff's (1975) claim that women tend to use more hedges than men in their language to soften and add uncertainty to their utterances. Lakoff and her proponents largely based their claim on oral communication skills "typically examining conversational dominance and largely concluding that men and women make different use of linguistic resources available to them in interactions" (Tse & Hyland 2008: 1233). The present study, along with other analogous research, indicates that the practice of hedging in RAs is influenced by a multitude of factors beyond mere gender. These factors encompass the researcher's socio-cultural background, discipline, and experience in publishing, amongst others.

This study has some important pedagogical implications for language instructors, particularly in second language and foreign language context. They suggest that graduate students should be acquainted with the role and importance of hedges in academic writing. Graduate students should be aware that learning to use hedges properly is an important communicative resource for them since hedges may help them develop academic arguments and establish a relationship with their discourse community. Furthermore, new researchers should be directed to use hedges more effectively to gain acceptance for their arguments by presenting appropriate and cautious statements as well as negotiating the perspective that helps their discussion and conclusions to be accepted by their fellow researchers.

This study only focused on Saudi male and female authors' use of hedges in Saudi written academic discourse drawn from the field of applied linguistics. Future research on the use of hedges should focus on comparative linguistic studies where the use of hedge is compared in different text genres (Yu & Wen 2022). That is, there is still a need for more research on how male and female writers use these hedges across disciplines such as medicine, education, science, etc. in order to better understand the relationship between gender and language use. Moreover, the current study relatively included a small sample of *RAs*, which may limit its findings to its context, and hence may not help us fully understand how gender may affect the use of hedges in written discourse. Therefore, larger samples of *RAs* are needed to help us better understand the assumed relationship between gender and hedging in academic writing.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Lamya Alhuqbani: Conceptualization, Visualization, Data collection, Data analysis, Writing original draft; **Mohammed Alhuqbani:** Conceptualization, Critical revision of the manuscript, Proofreading, Supervision.

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Article history:
Received: 22 November 2024
Accepted: 25 March 2025

Bionotes:

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Russian Journal of Linguistics
ISSN 2687-0088 (Print), ISSN 2686-8024 (Online)

2025 Vol. 29 No. 2 339–361
http://journals.rudn.ru/linguistics

https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-40535
EDN: KIZLKS

Research article / Научная статья

Teachers' responses to students' homework complaints in e-mailcommunication: A cross-cultural perspective

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Abstract
While language teachers may assign additional homework based on their educational beliefs and institutional policies, learners' responses, particularly complaints, are shaped by underlying cultural norms and expectations. The way teachers respond to such complaints reflects culture-specific styles of teacher–student interaction. This study aims to explore the lingua-cultural factors shaping teachers' perspectives on homework, their complaint response strategies (CRSs), and the linguistic features of these strategies. Accordingly, this study examined the perspectives of 32 native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) and 54 Turkish non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) on homework, as well as their strategies for addressing student complaints about homework in the Turkish educational context. Data were collected using a survey and a discourse completion task. Results indicated that both groups valued homework for reinforcing learning and improving achievement. NESTs prioritized student autonomy and self-directed learning, while NNESTs favored structured, guided assignments tailored to student needs. In responding to complaints, NESTs often used commiseration strategies, whereas NNESTs employed authoritative approaches, using imperatives, passive voice, and modal verbs. Despite these differences, both groups relied on guidance and explanation as their primary strategy, promoting constructive dialogue and resolving concerns. Results highlight the significance of considering the diverse pedagogical approaches adopted by NESTs and NNESTs, as well as the distinct linguistic choices they make in complaint responses, which reflect underlying cultural interactional norms and have implications for intercultural communication in language classrooms. It is important to appreciate these differences in order to foster a collaborative and culturally sensitive educational environment.

Keywords: *e-mail communication, teacher – student communication, speech act of complaint, complaint response, strategies, EFL*

For citation:
Deveci, Tanju. 2025. Teachers' responses to students' homework complaints in e-mailcommunication: A cross-cultural perspective. *Russian Journal of Linguistics* 29 (2). 339–361. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-40535

Ответ на жалобу на домашнее задание в электронной коммуникации преподавателя и студента: кросс-культурный аспект

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Аннотация
Преподаватели иностранных языков задают студентам дополнительные домашние задания, исходя из своего профессионального понимания и институциональной политики. Реакция на них учащихся, особенно жалобы, как и ответная реакция преподавателей, формируются под влиянием базовых культурных норм и ожиданий и отражают культурно-специфические стили взаимодействия преподавателя и студента. Цель данного исследования – выявить лингвокультурные факторы, формирующие взгляды преподавателей на домашнее задание, их стратегии реагирования на жалобы студентов и языковые особенности реализации этих стратегий в турецком образовательном контексте. Респондентами явились 32 преподавателя-носителя английского языка и 54 турецких преподавателя английского языка. Сбор данных осуществлялся с помощью опроса и задания на завершение дискурса. Результаты показали, что обе группы считают домашние задания важным инструментом, так как они закрепляют знания и повышают успеваемость учащихся. При этом преподаватели – носители английского языка отдавали предпочтение автономии и самостоятельному обучению, а отвечая на жалобы студентов, часто использовали стратегию сочувствия. Турецкие преподаватели предпочитали структурированные и направляющие задания, соответствующие потребностям учащихся, а в ответах на жалобы применяли авторитарные подходы, используя пассивный залог, императив и модальные глаголы. В то же время обе группы полагались на объяснение как основную стратегию, способствующую конструктивному диалогу и разрешению проблем. Полученные результаты подчеркивают важность рассмотрения педагогических подходов, применяемых носителями и неносителями английского языка, а также исследования языковых средств, используемых в ответах на жалобы студентов. Выявленные различия определяются базовыми культурными нормами взаимодействия преподавателей и студентов. Их знание способствует межкультурной коммуникации и пониманию в мультикультурной образовательной среде.

Ключевые слова: *электронная коммуникация, общение преподавателя и студента, речевой акт «жалоба», ответ на жалобу, коммуникативные стратегии, английский язык как иностранный*

Для цитирования:
Deveci T. Teachers' responses to students' homework complaints in e-mailcommunication: A cross-cultural perspective. *Russian Journal of Linguistics.* 2025. Vol. 29. № 2. P. 339–361. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-40535

1. Introduction

Language teachers' cultural backgrounds can significantly influence their educational orientations, including their approaches to communicating with students from different cultures (Zbenovich et al. 2024, Zhou & Larina 2024), both during and outside class hours, whether in their native culture or a host culture (Deveci et al. 2023). These factors highlight the need for cultural awareness, which involves understanding how members of the host country think and behave.

Teachers' and students' attitudes toward educational practices like homework are strongly influenced by their cultural and educational backgrounds. For instance, research shows that native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) and non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) often differ in their perspectives on homework, reflecting broader distinctions between Western and Eastern educational values (Hassan & Jamaludin 2010, Kartal & Balçikanli 2019).

Cultural differences in perceptions of homework may lead to student resentment, prompting some to voice complaints. Cultural differences can influence how teachers respond to such complaints. Mishandling a student complaint can hinder effective communication (Aporbo et al. 2024, Kramsch 1993). Not only does this have the potential to negatively impact students' engagement and learning outcomes, but it also affects the teacher's positive face (the desire to be liked and respected) and negative face (the desire for autonomy and freedom from imposition) (Brown & Levinson 1987). Handling complaints sensitively, therefore, is crucial to maintaining a positive and effective communication dynamic between teachers and students. That is, teachers' utilization of Complaint Response Strategies (CRSs) can either threaten or save students' face. Thus, comparing how NESTs in a host country and NNESTs handle student complaints could provide valuable insights. Ultimately, communication is typically easier among individuals sharing the same socio-cultural background (Deveci & Midraj 2021). In addition, a speech act is a cultural act before it is a linguistic one and effective intercultural communication requires pragmatic competence to navigate and execute various speech acts appropriately in diverse cultural contexts (Litvinova & Larina 2023).

Considering these dynamics, this research compares NESTs' and NNESTs' perspectives on homework, CRSs, and the linguistic features of CRSs within the Turkish cultural context. By doing so, the study aims to explore culture-specific styles and strategies that shape teachers' perspectives on homework, their responses to student complaints, and the linguistic and communicative features of these responses in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings.

Research questions are as follows:

1. How do the opinions of NESTs and NNESTs on homework compare to each other?
2. How do CRSs used by NESTs compare to those used by NNESTs when faced with complaints about the amount of homework assigned?
3. How does the utilization of linguistic devices in CRSs differ between NESTs and NNESTs?

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Homework and student complaints

Supporters of homework view it as a tool for reinforcing previously learned material and preparing students for upcoming lessons (Hong & Milgram 2000). However, those skeptical about it contend that it may cause students to be bored with school and reduce the amount of time dedicated to leisure activities teaching important life skills (Cooper 1987). Such perceptions can be shaped by various factors, including cultural norms that define what constitutes valuable knowledge and appropriate behavior within educational settings (Qi 2024). Research indicates significant variations in teachers' perceptions of homework across different cultures. For example, Sayers et al. (2022) observed that while English and Swedish teachers shared some common views, they also held distinct opinions. The former typically regarded homework as crucial to educational practice, emphasizing its role in improving learning outcomes and fostering parental involvement. In contrast, the latter showed more ambivalence towards homework, influenced by cultural norms that prioritize educational equity and minimize parental influence on school-directed learning activities. In the Turkish context, Ogur et al. (2022) observed that teachers generally view homework as essential, citing its role in enhancing reading and writing skills, diversifying writing tasks, and supporting learning outside the classroom. Conversely, according to Yıldız and Kılıç (2020), some Turkish teachers are concerned that excessive homework burdens students and diminishes their enthusiasm for school.

Many students in various contexts have a negative attitude towards homework thinking it is not beneficial (Turanli 2009) and their needs are not necessarily reflected in the assigned homework (Deveci 2019). Also, the amount of homework students are assigned often creates stress (Morales 2019). Laden with such feelings, students may choose to express their negative thoughts to their teachers in the form of a complaint, a speech act where "the speaker (S) expresses displeasure or annoyance – *censure* – as a reaction to a past or going action, the consequences of which are perceived by S as affecting her unfavorably" (Olshtain & Weinbach 1993: 108). It can serve as a means for students to voice their concerns and seek redress for perceived injustices or problems. Given its nature as a face-threatening act, a complaint may challenge the positive and negative face of the interlocutor (Brown & Levinson 1987).

To complain, students may use various strategies and communication channels, influenced by cultural factors (Wierzbicka 1985), their understanding of politeness - both a universal concept and culture-specific phenomenon (Eslami et al. 2023), interpersonal dynamics (Cupach & Carson 2002), and the perceived severity of the issue (Fang et al. 2022). Additionally, students may express complaints in various ways, as outlined by Kasper (1997): direct verbal complaints during or after class, indirect verbal cues like sarcasm or hints, non-verbal expressions through body language, and written complaints via email.

Tsoumou (2024) points out that email has emerged as a primary mode of communication in academic contexts, particularly for interactions between teachers and students outside of the classroom. He notes that email communication encompasses communicative strategies, discursive practices, and interaction styles that are influenced by both situational and cultural contexts. In email communication between a teacher and a student, which involves an asymmetric interpersonal (and often intercultural) relationship, interactions can become quite sensitive, affecting the teaching and learning experiences of those involved. This sensitivity may particularly be evident when a face-threatening act, such as a complaint, is involved. Issues in intercultural communication, including communicative and linguistic variations, have become especially relevant with the rise of digital communication (Eslami et al. 2023).

2.2. Teachers' strategies in response to students' complaints

Despite its nature as a face-threatening act, a complaint plays a significant role in facilitating communication between students and teachers, allowing learners to express dissatisfaction with aspects of their learning experience (Deveci 2015, Murphy & Neu 1996), and seek clarification on issues related to coursework, assignments (Marbach-Ad & Sokolove 2001), and classroom dynamics. A student complaint can also offer valuable feedback to teachers, enabling them to address students' needs and improve instructional practices. In that sense, it creates teachable moments. By encouraging open communication through complaints, teachers can foster a supportive learning environment where students feel empowered to express their opinions and engage in constructive dialogue (Olshtain & Weinbach 1987), thus promoting a climate of trust and respect (Kowalski 1996).

Therefore, teachers' CRSs are of primary importance. Boxer (1993) identified six types of complaint responses among native speakers of American English: Joke/teasing, which is used to lighten the situation, often in service encounters, helping to establish rapport or make the conversation less serious; Nosubstantive Reply, consisting of minimal responses that either end the conversation or show disinterest, often due to social distance or status inequality; Question, which serves to clarify or challenge the validity of the complaint and encourages the speaker to elaborate; Advice/lecture, typically given by those of higher social status, offering suggestions or explanations, either before or after addressing the issue; Contradiction, where the responder disagrees with the complaint or defends the criticized object; and Commiseration, the most common response, offering sympathy, agreement, or reassurance to help the speaker feel understood and supported.

Other research identified four categories: acceptance, partial acceptance, rejection, and disregard (Laforest 2002). More recently, Thongtong (2022) developed a CRS system based on previous literature, incorportating apology, explanation, appeal, offer, and guarantee, each with politeness strategies adopted from Brown and Levinson (1987), including direct, hedge, indirect approaches.

The choice of response "can significantly promote further interaction. That is, depending on the type of response elicited, the complaint sequence can affirm or reaffirm solidarity among the interlocutors or alienate them from each other" (Boxer 1993: 286). This, then, suggests that how a teacher handles student complaints can influence students' willingness to engage in classroom activities and participate in discussions (Manes 2013). Zhou et al. (2023), too, note teachers' linguistic choices and communication styles impact students' emotional responses and engagement in a multicultural contexts; teachers' discourse including the tone, politeness strategies, and use of specific linguistic features, can significantly influence students' emotional states, such as motivation, comfort, and receptivity to learning. A teacher's positive response to complaints, therefore, shows commitment to addressing concerns, boosting emotional engagement and academic success (Li 2018). A welcoming demeanor fosters positive student-teacher relationships (Sabir 2015). Conversely, dismissive responses can damage these relationships and hinder communication, affecting students' motivation and social development (Kahveci 2023). Studies show that learners who face contradictions may resort to demanding solutions or criticizing teachers, which is inappropriate (Deveci 2010). Effective teacher responses lead to higher student satisfaction and persistence (Noble et al. 2021). Teachers also model communication and conflict resolution skills (Martínez 2016), teaching valuable life skills like listening, empathy, and problem-solving.

Accordingly, EFL teachers' choice of linguistic devices when responding to student complaints is an important area of investigation. As the global demand for English language instruction increases, so does the need for both native and non-native English teachers (Fitria 2023). This increase has caused comparisons between NESTs and NNESTs. NESTs, for instance, are often argued to have a superior command of the language, including idiomatic expressions, slang, and cultural nuances (Walkinshaw & Duong 2012). Although NNESTs may not possess the same level of fluency, they are frequently said to have a deeper understanding of grammar and a stronger ability to relate to students' learning challenges (Zhang & Solarz 2022). These differences likely influence their language use when responding to complaints as well. Investigating specific linguistic devices could reveal important differences in how NESTs and NNESTs use these tools, thus impacting student-teacher interactions and perceptions of teacher approachability and authority. For example, implicit politeness strategies like hedging may soften responses and be perceived as more appropriate in some cultures, whereas direct language, such as using the pronoun "you" with a modal verb (e.g., "should") or the passive voice, may establish an authoritative stance (Almahameed et al. 2022), potentially creating distance between the teacher and the student. The understanding of such devices in CRSs could inform teacher training programs, helping both NESTs and NNESTs better handle student complaints and enhance students' learning in multi-cultural settings in particular.

2.3. Rationale for the study

Although there has been much research on complaints and CRSs in various sectors, including online businesses (Ziro 2019), medical call centers (Dajem 2023), and the hospitality and tourism industry (Nghiêm-Phú 2019), the education sector has mainly focused on student complaints (El-Dakhs & Ahmed 2023) and student CRSs (Sulastri 2014). However, research on language teachers' opinions regarding homework assignments and their use of CRSs, particularly in the Turkish context, remains limited. This highlights a clear gap in understanding the factors influencing teachers' use of CRSs, with culture emerging as an important, yet under-explored factor.

Cultural attributes shape individuals' communicative behaviors and strategies, including their approaches to situations like student complaints. Larina (2020) argues that these cultural factors influence the use of linguistic features in communication. For example, she suggests that the "sense of privacy" in English-speaking cultures leads speakers to favor indirectness, hedging, and formality. In contrast, Russian-speaking cultures, with their "sense of elbow," tend to prioritize directness and openness. This contrast in cultural orientations can significantly affect how teachers respond to complaints, providing further insight into the need to investigate these strategies in teacher-student interactions.

Other research has also explored the linguistic choices made by native and non-native speakers of English when issuing complaints (Chen, Chen & Chang 2011, Wei 2024). While some studies have focused on CRSs used by native speakers of English, these have not generally focused on teachers (Eslami 2005). Notably, such studies often concentrated on strategic choices rather than the specific linguistic devices employed by interlocutors. Consequently, there is a significant gap in the literature concerning the comparison of CRSs between NESTs and NNESTs, particularly in terms of the linguistic choices made by the two groups. The current study addresses this gap by investigating the linguistic devices employed by NESTs and NNESTs in responding to student complaints. This focus on specific linguistic features provides valuable insights into the role of language use in shaping teacher-student interactions in EFL settings and has implications for teacher training programs aimed at enhancing intercultural communication and pedagogical effectiveness.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

Eighty-six EFL teachers participated in the study. Among them, 54 (63%) were NNESTs, while 32 (37%) were NESTs. Regarding gender, 64 (74%) of the participants were female and 22 (26%) were male. In regard to age groups, 46 of the teachers (53%) were in the age group of 41–60, 28 (33%) were in the 17–40 age bracket, and 12 (14%) were in the age group above 60.

3.2. Data collection tool and analyses

A survey, comprising three sections, was developed to collect data for this study. The first section gathered demographic information, and the second section requested a brief explanation of the participants' general perspective on homework. The final section included a Discourse Completion Task (DCT), asking participants to imagine receiving an email from a student in their pre-intermediate class complaining about the amount of weekend homework assigned. They were then asked to consider how they would respond and write the exact words they would use in their email reply to the student in a provided box.

To ensure the reliability of the survey, a pilot study was conducted with a small group of educators to test the clarity and coherence of the questions. Based on their feedback, the survey was refined to eliminate ambiguities and improve the overall flow. Although DCTs do not gather naturally occurring data, they enable researchers to collect data that may be challenging to obtain in real-life scenarios (Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig 1992) at a rapid pace.

To establish a comprehensive coding system for CRSs produced by teachers in response to student complaints, prior literature, specifically the frameworks proposed by Boxer (1993), Laforest (2002), and Thongtong (2022), was synthesized, along with integrated politeness strategies from Brown and Levinson (1987). Possible variations occurring in the data sets of the current study were also considered. The established coding system is presented in Table1.

The content validity of the coding scheme was established by employing two experts in applied linguistics and discourse analysis who reviewed the scheme to ensure that it adequately covered the range of possible teacher responses to student complaints. To ensure the reliability of the coding scheme, an inter-rater reliability test was employed. To that end, following a training session with an independent coder, we coded teacher responses independently. The inter-rater reliability was calculated using Cohen's kappa to measure the level of agreement between the coders. An initial value of 0.80 was achieved, followed by a meeting to discuss divergences until agreements were reached. Items without consensus were excluded from the data set.

Table 1. **Components of complaint response strategies**

Components		Explanation	Examples
Humor and teasing		Light-hearted or humorous response to diffuse tension	Well, if you do all the homework quickly, you might just become the next *Shakespeare*!
Substantive replies	Acceptance	Fully acknowledging the complaint	You're right, I was too ambitious with the amount of homework I assigned last week.
	Partial acceptance	Acknowledging part of the complaint	The homework I have assigned may be demanding, but it really is not unmanageable.
	Rejection	Denying the validity of the complaint	I don't think that much homework is too much.
Engagement and inquiry	Nonsubstantive reply	General, non-committal response	Thanks for your email.
	Appreciation	Acknowledging student's communication and the significance of his/her input	Thank you for your email and for sharing your concerns.
	Disregard	Ignoring the complaint with no response	
	Question	Seeking more information or clarification about the complaint	Can you tell me which specific assignments you're finding too challenging?
Support and solidarity (Commiseration)		Expressing empathy or sympathy towards the complainer	I know it can be overwhelming, but I am here to help you get through it.
Guidance and explanation	Advice/lecture	Offering guidance or instructive feedback	It's important to manage your time well. Try breaking down the tasks into smaller, more manageable pieces.
	Explanation	Providing a rationale or reasoning behind the issue	Homework is important and will help in understanding the work and to satisfy the course outcomes.
Rectification	Offer	Proposing a solution or compensation	How about we have a study session tomorrow to help you catch up with the assignments?
	Guarantee	Assuring the student that the issue will be resolved	I assure you, I will review the homework schedule to ensure it's fair and manageable for everyone.
	Permission	Allowing, or giving freedom to do (or not do) something	You are allowed not to do your homework because it is your own learning journey.
Disengagement- Warning		Issuing a cautionary statement to deter the complainer from repeating their behavior	You had better think twice before making a complaint.

A similar methodology was used to analyze teachers' opinions on homework and the linguistic devices present in their CRSs. Initially, emerging themes and linguistic devices were identified within the data sets separately. Subsequently, we held a meeting to compare the results. Cohen's kappa, used to assess the inter-rater reliability, resulted in a value of 0.82. We held further discussions to resolve discrepancies until we reached consensus.

A Z test for two population proportions was performed to statistically compare the data sets regarding opinions on homework, CRSs, and linguistic devices employed by the teachers. A p-value of less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

4. Results

The first research question asked how the opinions of NESTs and NNESTs on homework compare. Table 2 describes the six themes that emerged from the teachers' statements.

Table 2. **Opinions on homework**

Themes	NESTs (N=32)		NNESTs (N=54)		Z	p**
	Absolute frequency (n)	Relative frequency (%)*	Absolute frequency (n)	Relative frequency (%)*		
1. Importance of homework for learning and reinforcement	24	21	40	30	-1.543	0.1235
2. Purposefulness and intentionality of homework	22	19	35	26	-1.2402	0.21498
3. Customization and suitability of homework	20	18	24	18	-0.0482	0.9601
4. Student responsibility and accountability	20	18	12	9	2.0332	0.0423
5. Balancing homework with other responsibilities	16	14	10	7	1.7039	0.0891
6. Role of homework in assessment and feedback	12	11	14	10	0.0401	0.9681
Totals	*114*	*100*	*135*	*100*		

*Percentages are calculated from the total number of responses as the participants often expressed more than one opinion.

** p < .05

There were 114 responses from NESTs and 135 responses from NNESTs. The two most prevalent themes in both groups were the "Importance of homework for learning and reinforcement" and the "Purposefulness and intentionality of homework." For the first theme, NESTs provided 24 responses (21%), while NNESTs provided 40 responses (30%). Both groups acknowledged the importance of homework, with NNESTs slightly more likely to emphasize this point. However, the Z-test revealed no statistically significant difference between the groups (Z=-0.543, p=0.1235). For the second theme, both groups stressed that homework should be purposeful, meaningful, and aligned with classwork, rather than being mere busy work. This alignment was seen as essential to deepen students' understanding and prepare them for future lessons. NESTs contributed 22 responses (19%), and NNESTs provided 35 responses (26%). Although NNESTs were more inclined to highlight the importance of purposeful homework, the difference was not statistically significant (Z=-1.2402, p=0.21498).

The theme "Student responsibility and accountability" ranked fourth in frequency and was the only theme to show a statistically significant difference between the groups (Z=2.0332, p=0.0423). NESTs provided 20 responses (18%), compared to NNESTs' 12 responses (9%). NESTs emphasized student autonomy and responsibility in completing homework, viewing it as a self-directed activity. In contrast, NNESTs focused more on the need for guidance and structured assignments to maintain student engagement and ensure the benefits of homework.

Lastly, the "Role of homework in assessment and feedback" was the least frequently occurring theme, with a similar distribution across both groups. NESTs provided 12 responses (11%), while NNESTs contributed 14 responses (10%). Both groups acknowledged the role of homework in assessment and the importance of immediate feedback. No statistically significant difference was observed for this theme (Z=0.0401, p=0.9681).

The second research question aimed to compare CRSs employed by NESTs and NNESTs. The results are given in Table 3.

Table 3 shows that the most common component used by both NESTs and NNESTs was "Guidance and explanation," with "Explanation" being slightly more frequent among NESTs (43%) than NNESTs (41%). NNESTs often emphasized the role of homework in improving language skills and reinforcing lessons, while others focused on assessing understanding and providing feedback. Similarly, NESTs highlighted homework's importance for learning and practice but also noted the effort required for effective outcomes. A new theme mentioned was homework's preparatory role.

NNESTs offered "Advice or lectures" more often than NESTs (12% vs. 5%), employing strategies like encouraging engagement, flexibility, and goal setting. Persistence, effort, and routine were also emphasized. NESTs, by contrast, focused on time management, breaking tasks into manageable parts, and maintaining balance. Despite these differences, a Z-test revealed no statistically significant difference in the use of "Explanation" or "Advice" between the groups (Z=0.2039, p=0.8814; Z=−1.5599, p=0.1187).

The second most common component was "Rectification," with the subcomponent "Offer" accounting for 18% of responses from NESTs and 12% from NNESTs. Although not statistically significant (Z=1.2859, p=0.197), NESTs were more direct in offering solutions, while NNESTs adopted a detailed and empathetic tone, focusing on alleviating stress and providing personalized support. NESTs prioritized immediate assistance, while NNESTs offered long-term plans, such as feedback sessions.

Table 3. **Complaint response strategies**

		NESTs (N=32)		NNESTs (N=54)		Z	p**
		Absolute frequency (n)	Relative frequency (%)*	Absolute frequency (n)	Relative frequency (%)*		
Guidance and explanation	Explanation	33	43	53	41	0.2039	0.8814
	Advice/lecture	4	5	15	12	−1.5599	0.1187
Rectification	Offer	14	18	15	12	1.2859	0.197
	Guarantee	1	1	0	0	1.2925	0.197
	Permission	0	0	5	4	−1.7558	0.0784
Support and solidarity (Commiseration)		13	17	16	13	0.8721	0.3843
Engagement and inquiry	Question	5	6	6	5	0.5557	0.5754
	Appreciation	2	3	3	2	0.114	0.9124
	Nonsubstantive reply	0	0	1	1	−0.7775	0.4354
	Disregard	0	0	0	0	-	-
Substantive replies	Partial acceptance	3	4	1	1	1.5615	0.1187
	Rejection	2	3	11	9	−1.7061	0.0872
	Acceptance	0	0	1	1	−0.7775	0.4354
Disengagement- Warning		0	0	1	1	−0.7775	0.4354
Humor and teasing		0	0	0	0	-	-
	Totals	*77*	*100*	*128*	*100*		

*Percentages are calculated from the total number of components in CRSs as the participants normally utilized more than one component.
**p < .05

Empathy was notable in NNESTs' "Permission" responses (4%), while NESTs occasionally used "Guarantee." Neither difference was statistically significant (Z=−1.7558, p=0.0784; Z=1.2925, p=0.197). Both groups expressed "Commiseration," though NESTs used it slightly more often (17% vs. 13%, Z=0.8721, p=0.3843). Teachers from both groups demonstrated empathy and understanding, often paired with justifications for homework.

For "Engagement and inquiry," "Question" was similarly frequent in both groups (6% vs. 5%, Z=0.5554, p=0.5754). Teachers used questions to understand students' perspectives and collaborate on improving homework experiences. "Appreciation" appeared in comparable proportions (3% vs. 2%, Z=0.114, p=0.9124).

In "Substantive replies," "Acceptance" and "Partial acceptance" were rare, with no significant differences between the groups (Z=−0.7775, p=0.4354; Z=1.5615, p=0.1187). However, "Rejection" was more frequent among NNESTs (9% vs. 3%), though this difference was not significant (Z=−0.7775, p=0.4354). NNESTs' tone was more authoritative, stressing students' responsibilities, while NESTs maintained an institutional tone, encouraging time management and rationalizing homework policies.

The third research question asked how the utilization of linguistic devices in CRSs differ between NESTs and NNESTs. The results are given in Table 4.

Table 4. **Linguistic features in complaint response strategies**

Linguistic features		NESTs (N=32)		NNESTs (N=54)		Z	p*
		Absolute frequency (n)	Relative frequency (%)*	Absolute frequency (n)	Relative frequency (%)*		
Personal pronouns	'you'	62	44	117	42	0.3388	0.7278
	'I'	38	27	43	15	2.7928	0.0052
	The inclusive 'we"	7	5	6	2	1.5584	0.1187
The simple present tense for factual information		10	7	34	12	-1.6312	0.1031
The future tense for factual information		6	4	7	3	0.9625	0.337
Imperatives		6	4	22	8	-1.4249	0.1556
Adjectives as intensifiers		8	6	3	1	2.7722	0.0056
Modal(like) verbs		5	4	22	8	-1.7281	0.0836
Hedging		0	0	18	6	-3.0936	0.0022
The passive voice		0	0	6	2	-1.7601	0.0784
Adverbs as intensifiers		0	0	1	0	-0.7143	0.4777
	Totals	*142*	*100*	*279*	*100*		

* p < .05

The most notable finding in Table 4 is the varying frequency of personal pronoun usage between the two groups. The pronoun "you" was used 62 times (44%) by NESTs and 117 times (42%) by NNESTs, with no significant difference (Z=0.3388, p=0.7278). "I" appeared more frequently in NESTs' responses (f=38, 27%) compared to NNESTs (f=43, 15%), a statistically significant result (Z=2.7928, p=0.0052). The inclusive pronoun "we" was slightly more common in NESTs' responses (f=7, 5%) than NNESTs' (f=6, 2%), but the difference was not significant (Z=1.5584, p=0.1187). Both groups used "we" to express collaborative problem-solving.

Both groups employed the simple present tense to justify homework, with NESTs using it 10 times (7%) and NNESTs 34 times (12%) (Z=-1.6312, p=0.1031). The future tense was similarly used (NESTs: f=6, 4%; NNESTs: f=7, 3%; Z=0.9625, p=0.337).

Imperatives were more common among NNESTs (f=22, 8%) than NESTs (f=6, 4%), though the difference was not significant (Z=-1.4249, p=0.1556). NESTs often softened imperatives with “please,” using it to invite students to meetings. NNESTs used “please” less often, typically to mitigate the directness of imperatives.

Three devices were exclusive to NNESTs, but infrequent. Hedging was used 18 times (6%) and was statistically significant (Z=-3.0936, p=0.0022). The passive voice appeared six times (2%), and an adverb intensified an adjective once. Neither passive voice nor modal verb use showed significant differences (Z=-1.7601, p=0.0784; Z=-0.7143, p=0.4777).

Modal-like verbs were used five times (4%) by NESTs and 22 times (8%) by NNESTs. While NNESTs varied their usage, NESTs only used “need to.” The difference was not statistically significant (Z=-1.7281, p=0.0836).

5. Discussion

In response to the first research question, the analysis of teachers’ opinions on homework highlighted several key themes common to both NESTs and NNESTs, both of whom recognized the importance of homework for reinforcing learning and improving student achievement, reflecting a shared pedagogical belief in homework as a valuable educational tool. For instance, one NEST described homework as “the glue between the class input sessions,” emphasizing its role in connecting classroom instruction to independent practice. Similarly, a NNEST noted that “homework [is] a chance for students to practice what they have already learned,” highlighting the practical benefits of repetition.

This belief is supported by Hong and Milgram’s (2000) observation that homework tasks allow students to expand, elaborate, and deepen their understanding of previously acquired knowledge, as well as to preview and prepare for upcoming lessons. The NESTs’ focus on reinforcement aligns closely with this perspective, as evidenced by one teacher’s view that “homework reinforces and practices a point taught in a previous class.” Similarly, Ogur et al. (2022) found that Turkish teachers typically regard homework as essential since it contributes to improving literacy skills by diversifying writing assignments and reinforcing learning beyond the classroom environment. This aligns with the NNESTs’ emphasis on practice and revision, as one teacher stated, “The more they revise, the more they improve their English.”

From this perspective, NESTs and NNESTs had similar views on homework in the local EFL context. This is particularly relevant for intercultural communication in an educational setting; the convergence of educational values and practices suggests that effective teaching methodologies can transcend cultural differences, promoting smoother communication and collaboration among teachers from diverse backgrounds, thus contributing to unified educational standards and expectations. Teachers' sharing of similar beliefs about homework can also foster a collaborative environment where strategies, resources, and insights are easily shared. This can lead to improved professional development and a more supportive educational community. From the students' perspective, such consistent views can ensure a cohesive learning experience, reducing confusion and discrepancies in instructional approaches.

Despite their common ground, differences emerged in how teachers viewed the purpose and customization of homework. NESTs often emphasized student autonomy, promoting homework as a tool for fostering self-directed learning and academic independence. As one NEST stated, "Homework should be a duty of the student," reflecting a belief in encouraging responsibility and intrinsic motivation. Another highlighted its broader purpose, asserting that "in the end, homework should instill the principle of life-long learning." In contrast, NNESTs favored structured assignments designed to address specific student needs, reflecting a pedagogical approach that prioritizes guidance and support. For example, one NNEST noted, "Students need to be autonomous, yet unfortunately, they are not. Homework must be given regularly to follow the students' progress." This perspective underscores a pedagogical approach that prioritizes providing clear directions and consistent oversight to support student development.

These findings are consistent with cultural differences in educational philosophies, with Western norms typically valuing individual initiative and self-regulation (Hassan & Jamaludin 2010), while Eastern cultures focus on collective effort and guided learning experiences (Galip & Balçikanli 2019). The divergence in perspectives highlights how cultural contexts shape educators' approaches to fostering student learning through homework.

Moreover, the concern over balancing homework with other responsibilities was more pronounced among NESTs, highlighting cultural perceptions of workload and time management (Omosehin & Smith 2019). One NEST emphasized this concern by stating, "Students have to manage other things in their life apart from your homework," while another cautioned against assigning "busy work or meaningless tasks, as it limits students' time to carry out other responsibilities in their lives." These perspectives reflect a broader awareness of students' holistic development, recognizing the importance of balancing academic and non-academic aspects of life.

In contrast, NNESTs focused more narrowly on academic progress within the immediate learning context, emphasizing the role of structured and regular homework to monitor and support student progress. This disparity may have implications regarding the educational impact of homework and the broader societal expectations influencing educational philosophies. This is supported by

Juvonen and Toom (2023: 121), who argue that, "Society sets both explicit and implicit expectations for teachers... through a national curriculum, current policy aims, and the surrounding culture and norms." Taken together, these divergences, no matter how small, require cross-cultural sensitivity and adaptation to the local culture. Both local and non-local teachers may also need to align their teaching approaches with local educational philosophies and norms to effectively engage with students and meet academic and societal expectations.

The second research question focused on the utilization of CRSs. In addressing student complaints about homework, both NESTs and NNESTs used various CRSs to foster constructive dialogue and resolve student concerns. The analysis revealed that guidance and explanation were the predominant CRSs employed by both groups. NNESTs often emphasized the importance of homework in improving language skills and reinforcing classroom learning. For instance, one teacher stated, "I aim to extend my students' language contact time by assigning homework to reinforce the aspects covered in class," while another encouraged students by saying, "You will thank me later when you notice that your English has got better thanks to this extra work." Other NNESTs highlighted their role in assessing students' understanding, providing feedback, and tracking progress, as evidenced by remarks like, "Both you and I need to be sure whether the concepts were understood well or if any of them need to be repeated" and "This will give detailed feedback about your current proficiency and identify your needs." Similarly, NESTs acknowledged the necessity of homework for practice and skill improvement, aiming to motivate students to engage with their assignments. For example, one teacher stressed the preparatory role of homework, noting, "Doing the draft [homework] now will make it easier later." Others highlighted the time and effort required for effective learning, with statements such as, "For this class, you need to work for 1 to 3 hours a week outside of class." These findings support the literature indicating that complaints provide students with an opportunity to express concerns about coursework and seek assistance (Marbach-Ad & Sokolove 2001). They also illustrate how teachers use such moments to create teachable opportunities, engaging students in the learning process while clarifying the role and value of homework in their academic development.

Nevertheless, subtle differences emerged in how CRSs were deployed. NESTs were more likely to use commiseration as a strategy, showing empathy and solidarity with students' challenges while validating their concerns. For instance, NESTs expressed support through acknowledgment of communication, such as saying, "Thank you for your email about the homework. I am glad you told me your concerns." They also demonstrated understanding and empathy by recognizing the difficulties students face with homework, with statements like, "I know that many students don't like to do homework, and I understand their feelings about it." Boxer (1993) identifies this as a supportive attitude in responding to a compliment. Such an approach demonstrates a commitment to addressing students' concerns, which can enhance their emotional engagement and academic success (Li 2018). Hwang (2016: 161) notes that active listening and reflective empathy, which "focus on being more verbally direct and speaking in ways that are understanding and supportive," are components of Western communication embedded in commiseration. Commiseration is also an Eastern concept and present in teacher-student interactions (Ilaltdinova et al. 2017). However, it was used less frequently by the Turkish participants in the current study, who often responded to complaints with advice or lectures. This more authoritative strategy, however, can be regarded as a pedagogical approach that values mentorship and guidance in addressing student grievances (Brueggeman 2022), aligning with cultural expectations of authoritative teaching roles in educational settings. Although authoritative teachers try to control students, they listen actively and explain the reasoning behind their demands (Scarlett, Chin & Singh 2019). In this sense, the control is through positive encouragement, and the teacher is responsive, which may be perceived as a form of commiseration to some extent.

The linguistic analysis of CRSs, which was the focus of the third research question, revealed distinctive patterns in language use between NESTs and NNESTs. NNESTs' authoritative nature was evidenced by their use of certain linguistic devices. For example, their use of the passive voice appeared to reinforce their authority by emphasizing rules and procedures, as seen in statements like "Language is learned through practice" and "You need to be exposed to English through HW." This aligns with the observation that the passive voice can be used to impose regulations on students (Almahameed et al. 2022). Additionally, the frequent use of modal verbs by NNESTs, such as "You had better think twice before making a complaint," enhanced their authoritative tone by expressing necessity and obligation (Leech & Svartvik 1994). NNESTs also used imperatives more frequently, with statements like "Please attend a faculty course held in an auditorium, try and see if you can take notes effectively," conveying a sense of control and establishing authority and confidence in their directives. In contrast, NESTs used modal-like verbs less frequently, typically employing "need to" (e.g., "For this class, you need to work for 1 to 3 hours a week outside of class"). Their approach to authority was generally softer, as reflected in their use of commiseration and empathy in statements like "I know it isn't much fun to complete homework on the weekend," and "I know that many students don't like to do homework, and I understand their feelings about it." While NESTs also emphasized the importance of homework for learning and improvement, their tone suggested a more collaborative approach to student learning, emphasizing understanding of students' struggles while maintaining academic expectations.

Interesting to note is that hedging devices were used exclusively by NNESTs. Examples included phrases such as "It seems," and "probably," The use of hedging may be a strategy for NNESTs to soften their authoritative stance when providing explanations and guidance for homework. By doing so, they may have tried to avoid seeming too rigid and dismissive of students' feelings, an approach that helps maintain a positive atmosphere, makes students more receptive to feedback, and fosters mutual respect (Brown & Levinson 1987).

The simple present tense was used by both groups to emphasize the role of homework. NESTs' response, "I give homework so students practice grammar, memorize vocabulary, and practice speaking," and NNESTs' statement, "Out-of-class activities help you in improving your English," reflected the use of factual information to justify the educational purpose of homework. However, the groups also demonstrated differences in how they framed this information: NESTs often employed a direct and practical approach, while NNESTs highlighted the broader impact of homework on students' learning progress.

Personal pronouns were used by the two groups at varying frequencies. For instance, "I" was employed more frequently by NNESTs than by NESTs. This reflected NESTs' greater emphasis on personal engagement with students (e.g., "I know it isn't much fun to complete homework on the weekend, but …"), while NNESTs more often framed their responses in terms of students' learning processes (e.g., "The homework I gave has an important role in your learning progress"). Both groups frequently addressed students directly with "you," particularly when giving guidance and explanations, though NESTs used it slightly more often. Important to note is that the use of "you" pronouns in advice has been shown to be associated with a lower likelihood of it being followed and a lower rating of its quality (Van Swol, Erina & Andrew 2017). Lastly, the inclusive pronoun "we" was used more frequently by NESTs than by NNESTs, with both groups employing it to offer guidance and express a willingness to collaborate with students in resolving homework-related issues. For example, "We can discuss this at our next class' (NEST) and "Would you like to talk about the ways we can make it more interesting and motivating for you?" (NNEST). Indeed, framing advice in a more cooperative and inclusive manner using the pronoun "we" may reduce resistance to it (Van Swol, Erina & Andrew 2017).

Despite the importance of the findings from this study, certain limitations should be acknowledged. First, it focused on a specific cultural context and involved a relatively small sample size, which may have contributed to the statistical insignificance of some results and limits the generalizability of the findings. Future studies could address this by including a more diverse range of cultural settings and a larger participant pool to enhance statistical reliability. Additionally, examining how teachers' years of experience in the profession and their gender influence their approach to homework and CRSs could offer valuable insights. Furthermore, exploring students' perceptions of NESTs' and NNESTs' discourse in realizing CRSs, along with their linguistic choices, could shed light on how these factors affect students' engagement in dialogue with teachers and their overall learning experience. Lastly, the use of a DCT as a data-collection tool presents certain limitations, primarily because it fails to capture naturally occurring data, which may present a more accurate picture of real-world interactions. Future research could consider collecting such data to enhance the validity and applicability of the findings.

6. Conclusion

With its focus on the importance of understanding both intra-lingual and intercultural aspects of communication within EFL settings, the study showed that the perspectives of NESTs and NNESTs on homework reflect their respective cultural and educational backgrounds, which influence their approaches to teaching and responding to student complaints. Results showed that while NESTs often emphasize student autonomy and use strategies like commiseration to address complaints, NNESTs tend to prefer structured guidance and authoritative responses. These differences are not indicative of one approach being superior to the other. Instead, they highlight the need for an approach that considers local cultural characteristics to foster effective communication and encourage student engagement. By appreciating and integrating these diverse perspectives, educators can create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment that respects and leverages the strengths of both NESTs and NNESTs.

The linguistic analysis of CRSs highlighted both similarities and differences in language use between NESTs and NNESTs. While the former tended to employ linguistic features such as commiseration, the latter adopted a more authoritative tone, using passive voice, modal verbs, and imperatives to emphasize rules and necessity. Both groups utilized the inclusive pronoun "we" to signal a willingness to collaborate, with NESTs using it more frequently. This focus on inclusivity and collaboration through language can cultivate a more supportive learning environment, encouraging student engagement and reducing resistance to feedback. Similarly, training EFL students to understand the distinct linguistic orientations of NESTs and NNESTs can help them become more open to communication and more engaged in learning, both inside and outside the classroom. Exposing students to varied language approaches allows them to develop a deeper appreciation for diverse teaching methods and linguistic styles. This awareness promotes flexibility in their learning attitudes, fostering greater receptiveness to feedback and enhancing overall engagement with both teaching styles.

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Article history:
Received: 28 August 2024
Accepted: 25 January 2025

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Russian Journal of Linguistics
ISSN 2687-0088 (Print), ISSN 2686-8024 (Online)

2025 Vol. 29 No. 2 362–385
http://journals.rudn.ru/linguistics

https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-41045
EDN: KQVSDX

Research article / Научная статья

Invitations in Spanish and Russian communicative cultures: Sociocultural context and politeness strategies

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Abstract
The realization of the speech act of inviting is susceptible to situational and sociocultural context. To issue an appropriate invitation, speakers must respect cultural norms and use politeness strategies accepted in each communicative culture. The aim of this study is to identify conventionalized linguistic patterns and politeness strategies common in the realization of everyday invitations in Spanish and Russian. The analyzed corpus consists of 662 written samples collected through the Discourse Completion Task. The samples correspond to three communicative situations with different configurations of pragmatic parameters of social distance and power. The study offers a taxonomy of most productive invitation formulae in Russian and Spanish, grounded in the proposals of Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989) and García (2008). The analysis is based on the politeness theory of Brown and Levinson (1987) and supported by the worksheet of the ES.POR.ATENUACION project (Albelda Marco *et al.* 2014). The findings indicate the presence of similar tendencies in Spanish and Russian: when greater distance and/or higher status of the interlocutor is perceived, speakers give preference to deference politeness strategies, while solidarity politeness strategies prevail in situations of closer proximity. The predominant differences are observed in the selection of invitation sub-strategies. Despite being classified as solidarity cultures, each language exhibits distinct linguistic patterns.

Key words: *invitation, speech act, politeness, situational context, sociocultural context, Spanish, Russian*

For citation:
Shorokhova, Elena & Palma Peña-Jiménez. 2025. Invitations in Spanish and Russian communicative cultures: Sociocultural context and politeness strategies. *Russian Journal of Linguistics* 29 (2). 362–385. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-41045

Приглашения в русской и испанской коммуникативных культурах: социокультурный контекст и стратегии вежливости

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Аннотация
Реализация речевого акта «приглашение» обусловлена особенностями ситуативного и социокультурного контекста. Для того, чтобы приглашение соответствовало социокультурным нормам, говорящий должен использовать стратегии вежливости, принятые в данной коммуникативной культуре. Цель данного исследования – выявить конвенциональные языковые модели реализации речевого акта «приглашение» и стратегии вежливости, наиболее часто используемые в испанском и русском языках. В ходе исследования было проанализировано 662 приглашения, полученных посредством задания на завершение дискурсивного теста. Информантам анкетирования были предложены три коммуникативные ситуации с различной конфигурацией прагматических параметров социальной дистанции и дистанции власти. На основе полученных данных была разработана классификация наиболее продуктивных стратегий приглашения в русском и испанском языках, основанная на типологии директивных актов (Blum-Kulka et al. 1989) и приглашений (García 2008). В основе исследования лежит теория вежливости (Brown & Levinson 1987) и модель анализа средств хеджирования, предложенная участниками проекта ES.POR.ATENUACION (Albelda Marco et al. 2014). Результаты исследование показывают наличие сходных тенденций в испанском и русском языках: при наличии большей социальной дистанции и/или дистанции власти говорящие отдают предпочтение стратегиям вежливости дистанцирования, в то время как в приглашениях, адресованных близким друзьям, преобладают стратегии вежливости солидарности/сближения. Несмотря на то, что обе культуры относятся к культурам сближения, в каждом языке имеются свои культурно-специфические языковые модели реализации речевого акта «приглашение».
Ключевые слова: *приглашение, речевой акт, вежливость, испанский язык, русский язык, ситуативный контекст, социокультурный контекст*

Для цитирования:
Shorokhova E.S., Peña-Jiménez P. Invitations in Spanish and Russian communicative cultures: Sociocultural context and politeness strategies. *Russian Journal of Linguistics.* 2025. Vol. 29. № 2. P. 362–385. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-41045

1. Introduction

Every communicative act entails a locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary act and it is unequivocally intentional and has an implicit purpose (Peña-Jiménez 2024). Nonetheless, when performing the same speech act, representatives of different cultures employ different communicative patterns and use different politeness strategies.

Each speech act, including invitations, presents conventionalized communicative patterns accepted by a linguistic and cultural community. However, in the field of intercultural pragmatics, there are few studies that analyze sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic aspects of the realization of invitations in different communicative cultures. Thus, from a pragmatic perspective, invitations have been compared in British English and Japanese (Matsukawa 2024), English and Peninsular Spanish (Fernández-García 2024), Chinese and Peninsular Spanish (Liu 2023), American English and Peninsular Spanish (Barros García & Terkourafi 2014), Venezuelan Spanish and Argentinian Spanish (García 2008), Peninsular Spanish and French (Ruiz de Zarobe 2004), British English and Russian (Larina 2009), American English and Russian (Schelchkova 2013), and Peninsular Spanish and Russian (Shorokhova 2023).

The present study aims to compare the realization of the speech act of inviting in Spanish and Russian within the framework of politeness theory. In Shorokhova (in press), substantial differences have been identified in everyday invitations in these languages. Therefore, in this paper, we intend to extend the analysis and check the reliability of the results obtained from a different group of informants. This study addresses the following research questions:

1. Do invitations have conventionalized linguistic patterns in Spanish and Russian?
2. Which pragmalinguistic strategies can be used in Spanish and Russian to issue an invitation in different situational contexts?
3. Which politeness strategies can be employed to issue an invitation appropriate for the situational context?

This study is structured as follows. The theoretical framework is presented in the second section. It focuses on pragmatic variation and the relevance of sociocultural elements in language use. It also offers a brief review of the speech act of inviting and its relationship to politeness. In the third section, we describe the corpus and the parameters of analysis. In the fourth section, we present the obtained results, organized in two subsections, thus attending to the internal structure of the invitation. The fifth section discusses the main findings before providing concluding remarks.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Pragmatic variation and sociocultural elements

Studies on cross-cultural pragmatics reveal that when speakers of different languages interact, they perform the same communicative acts, but their realization and the selection of politeness strategies may vary widely across cultures (e.g. Haugh & Chang 2019, Litvinova & Larina 2023, Zbenovich et al. 2024). When interlocutors do not pay attention to each other's sociocultural norms, their communicative behavior may sometimes be interpreted as impolite, which may lead to misunderstandings, miscommunication or even deterioration of interpersonal relations. Therefore, in order to achieve communicative success, it is essential to behave in accordance with the sociocultural norms underlying the linguistic system of those involved in communicative exchange.

The advent of the first theories of linguistic politeness gave rise to the emergence of studies in cross-cultural pragmatics. These studies sought to disprove the existence of universal patterns of politeness use. Based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory, which identifies negative and positive politeness, authors drew a distinction between negative politeness cultures and positive politeness cultures (e.g. Larina 2009, Márquez Reiter 2000, Ogiermann 2009, Sifianou 1992). Thus, aiming to achieve the same communicative goals, representatives of cultures oriented towards negative politeness tend to use strategies based on respectful distancing, while in positive politeness cultures strategies that display solidarity and affection are predominantly used (Fernández-García & Ortiz Viso 2018).

In this study we focus on two cultures oriented towards solidarity and rapprochement where speakers feel the right to reduce the freedom of action of their interlocutor (Haverkate 2003, Zbenovich et al. 2024). According to recent studies, Spanish speakers seek to enhance group relations, while privacy and individuality are less important than in British culture, which is traditionally considered a distancing or negative politeness culture (Fernández-García & Ortiz Viso 2018). Consequently, *confianza* (trust) is highlighted as a basic need of the Spanish face and is associated with the idea that one is allowed to speak and act openly without fear of offence (Hernández Flores 2004). This can be especially shocking in interactions with representatives of distancing cultures.

Russian communicative culture is typified as a *we*-culture (Larina et al. 2017) where *sobornost'* (spiritual togetherness), collectivism, *obshchenie* (communication) and sincerity are the values that best describe the Russian face and underlie the use of this language (Larina & Ozyumenko 2016, Larina et al. 2017, Wierzbicka 2002). Hence, direct style is seen as a sign of sincerity, cordiality and solidarity, while indirect style and hints often suggest manipulation and generally give rise to mistrust (Larina 2009, Leech & Larina 2014, Ogiermann 2009).

Along with cultural factors, sociological features of the interlocutors and situational factors of the communicative act itself determine the use of politeness. When analyzing an utterance, the speaker's gender, age, socio-economic class, level of education and linguistic variety must be taken into consideration (Albelda Marco et al. 2014). In addition to the above, there are four factors related to the situational context (Albelda Marco 2008), namely:

1. The relations of power and solidarity that exist between speakers,
2. The degree of common knowledge and experience they possess,
3. The physical space in which they interact and their spatial position in it,
4. The subject matter of the communicative exchange.

Therefore, each communicative act must be adjusted to the relationship between the interlocutors, their roles and circumstances, the sociocultural norms and their constraints, which make the speaker know what is appropriate to do and say in a particular communicative situation (Spencer-Oatey & Kádár 2021). At the same time, the rights and obligations implied by interlocutors' roles are subject to their cultural variation.

2.2. Politeness in the speech act of inviting

Invitations are a frequent socializing act. Based on the work of Isaacs and Clark (1990), we distinguish between genuine/unambiguous and ostensible invitations. The essential components of an unambiguous invitation are (1) the reference to time and place and (2) the request for a response (Wolfson et al. 1983: 117). It means that invitations share some features with offers, but unlike offers, they leave less space for negotiation and thus require fewer turns (Yu & Wu 2018).

According to the speech act theory, invitations are considered directive speech act (Searle 1979), since by issuing an invitation, the speaker intends to influence the addressee's behavior and convince him/her to perform a future action. However, unlike purely directive speech acts, invitations are free from obligation, urgency and need (Drew & Couper-Kuhlen 2014, Margutti et al. 2018), making them a non-impositive directive speech act (Iglesias Recuero 2001). Owing to this characteristic, in some situational contexts, such as academia, requests for service can be performed as invitations (Bardovi-Harlig 2019). Another aspect that distinguishes invitations from purely directive acts is their optionality: acceptance by the addressee is a necessary condition for the performance of the activity (Barron 2017, Wierzbicka 1987).

In addition to the directive nature, invitations contain a commissive force: by extending an invitation, even if not explicitly, the inviter commits him/herself to a future action and generally bears the costs involved in preparing and carrying out the activity (Haverkate 1994, Pérez Hernández 2001). Due to their dual nature, authors describe invitations as a hybrid speech act or commissive-directives (e.g. Bella 2009, Margutti et al. 2018, Pérez Hernández 2001, Vlasyan & Kozhukhova 2019). Consequently, communicative success depends on the addressee agreeing to participate in the proposed activity and the speaker fulfilling his/her promise (Eslami et al. 2016).

Given the hybrid nature of the speech act of inviting, its relationship to politeness is complex, which affects its formulation. As a directive act, invitations can threaten the interlocutor's face and limit his/her freedom to act (Brown & Levinson 1987). On the other hand, inviting is a way of boosting social cohesion and increasing solidarity among interlocutors (Barros García 2010, Bella 2009, García 1999, 2008, Haverkate 1994, Margutti et al. 2018). Moreover, invitations help to enhance the addressee's face, because the inviter tries to satisfy invitee's tastes and interests and recognizes him/her as a group member (Barros García 2010, Barros García & Terkourafi 2014, Bella 2009, 2019).

Considering that inviting can be, at the same time, pleasant and annoying for the person receiving the invitation (Ruiz de Zarobe 2004), the speaker should strike a balance between politeness strategies to extend an invitation that could meet the addressee's expectations and thus ensure communicative success. In order to reduce the threat to the addressee's face and issue a less imposing invitation, the speaker can use negative/deference politeness and mitigation tools. Positive/solidarity politeness, on the other hand, can help to reinforce closeness and solidarity between the interlocutors and underline a positive attitude towards the other. It is worth mentioning that, to achieve the same ends, politeness strategies may vary from culture to culture (Eslami et al. 2023, Kordestanchi et al. 2023, Litvinova & Larina 2023, Margutti et al. 2018, Matsukawa 2024, Schelchkova 2013).

The invitations realization can be influenced not only by cultural norms but also by social variation. Fernández-García (2024) points out the different perception of direct and indirect invitations with respect to the level of academic education, with people without a university education being more likely to use direct strategies. There is also a difference between younger and older speakers: younger speakers tend to emphasize closeness and use positive politeness strategies, while older speakers try not to impose their will on the other and give more freedom to their interlocutor through interrogative constructions (Bella 2009, Fernández-García 2024). In this regard, it is noteworthy that the study by Vlasyan and Kozhukhova (2019), devoted to the analysis of invitations in Russian, concludes that younger people are also more likely to use the imperative, but unlike what happens in Greek and Spanish cultures, Russian adults do not avoid direct formulations and opt for performative utterances with the verb *приглашать* (to invite).

Based on these preliminary considerations, we aim in this paper to compare everyday invitations issued by young Spanish and Russian speakers, paying special attention to sociocultural elements.

3. Materials and methods

3.1. Participants

The corpus analyzed in this study consists of written samples of invitation, which were collected via an anonymous survey in spring 2022 in Spain and in autumn 2022 in Russia. The surveys were distributed in two formats, on paper and electronically through *Microsoft Forms*.

128 students from Rey Juan Carlos University (Madrid, Spain) and 130 students from RUDN University (Moscow, Russia) collaborated in this survey. All informants were native speakers of Peninsular Spanish or Russian from Russia. The ages of the participants ranged from 17 to 25 years old. The present study does not take into account the gender of the subjects, although it may influence the production of the speech act in question.

3.2. Data collection and preprocessing

Data collection was carried out by means of a Discourse Completion Task (DCT). DCT is a commonly used instrument in cross-cultural pragmatics' research, since, compared to natural corpora, it allows for a more rigorous control of variables and for obtaining comparable data across different languages or varieties of a language (Barron 2022, Kasper 2008, Ogiermann 2009, Schneider 2012). This method is also considered suitable for determining communicative patterns accepted in each culture to perform a speech act, as well as for analyzing the use of different pragmalinguistic resources in the expression of speech acts in each language (Bardovi-Harlig & Su 2023, Fernández-García 2022, Kasper 2008, Ogiermann 2009, Schneider 2012). In this regard, the data obtained through written questionnaires reflect what informants consider appropriate to say in a given situation. In other words, these data help us better understand what is socially accepted in different communicative cultures (Barron 2008: 43).

The present study approaches the speech act of inviting in three situations. Our informants had to extend an invitation for a coffee or equivalent to:

1. A close friend
2. A new colleague
3. The boss

The questionnaire provides a detailed description of the communicative situation including sociological characteristics of the addressee, the relationship between the interlocutors and the situational context. The English version of these questions appears below:

1. It's Friday evening. You're organizing a meet-up with your friends at your favorite bar in the city center. Now, you're either calling or messaging your best friend to invite him/her, and you say:

2. You work at company X. Every now and then, you and your colleagues like to go out for a coffee or drink after work. You're all about to head to the bar across the street, but there's a new colleague who doesn't know about your plan. It seems like a good opportunity to invite him/her. Your new colleague is about your age and seems friendly. So, you say:

3. You work at company X. Every now and then, you and your colleagues like to go out for a coffee or drink after work. You're all about to head to the bar across the street, and it seems like a good opportunity to invite your boss as well. Your boss has just stepped out of his/her office, and you say:

The situational factors were structured to enable the observation of how social distance and power relations influence the realization of invitations. Table 1 specifies the configuration of these pragmatic parameters in the three proposed situations. The symbols (+) and (-) define the social distance between the interlocutors. The symbols "S" and "H" represent the speaker and the hearer respectively, while the symbols (=), (<) and (>) indicate the power that one of the interlocutors has vis-à-vis the other.

Table 1. **Configuration of pragmatic factors of distance and power in each situation**

	Distance	Power
S1: close friend	-	S=H
S2: new colleague	+	S=H
S3: boss	-/+	S<H

Table 1 illustrates that familiarity, closeness and greater shared experience, as well as power equality describe the first situation. In the second situation, although neither of the interlocutors has more power vis-à-vis the other, there is more social distance and less shared experience. The third invitation is addressed to a superior, so there is a hierarchical relationship in which the speaker is in an inferior position. Unlike the two previous situations, the distance is not clearly defined, and it is the informants' responsibility to determine the degree of closeness to the boss.

Given the criticism that informants must adopt an unfamiliar role, we decided not to specify the characteristics of the person extending the invitation. All proposed roles and communicative situations were familiar and related to participants' daily live situations. Moreover, to encourage more natural behavior, we included the option of not inviting. In these cases, participants were asked to provide an explanation. This decision affected the number of invitations obtained in each communicative situation (see table 2), as some informant reported feeling unwilling (S1) and/or uncomfortable to perform the act due to the social distance (S2) and/or hierarchy (S3).

Table 2. **Distribution of informants' responses for each language and communicative situation**

	Spanish	Russian
S1	120	113
S2	128	118
S3	92	91
Total	340	322

3.3. Procedure

Politeness is a social phenomenon that helps speakers to ensure effective communication, to manage interpersonal relationships and to praise the interlocutor's face. In other words, politeness strategies not only serve to mitigate threats to the interlocutor's face posed by the realization of a threatening speech act (Brown & Levinson 1987), but they can also produce an enhancing effect (Bayraktaroğlu & Sifianou 2001, Hernández Flores 2004, among others). To distinguish between these two functions of politeness, we use the terminology proposed by Scollon and Scollon (1983): deference politeness and solidarity politeness. Thus, deference politeness strategies include respectful distancing strategies and help to avoid or mitigate threats to the hearer's face, whereas solidarity politeness strengthens interpersonal ties and appeals to in-group membership.

When analyzing the realization of invitation, all samples were divided into a head act and supportive moves (Blum-Kulka et al. 1989). The head act forms the core of the sequence, possessing the potential to independently fulfill the act's realization. Supportive moves function as adjuncts to the head act, serving to support, mitigate or intensify the speech act as external modifications. As a starting point, we used the politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) and the analysis worksheet developed by the ES.POR.ATENUACIÓN research group (Albelda Marco et al. 2014) to correctly identify the mitigation tools whereby deference politeness is achieved.

Indirect speech acts are traditionally associated with deference politeness (Brown & Levinson 1987) and represents a mitigation tool (Albelda Marco et al. 2014), while direct speech act realization can be considered a solidarity politeness strategy (García 1999, 2008). Therefore, in the first phase of the study, we adapted the classifications of head acts of requests (Blum-Kulka et al. 1989) and invitations (García 1999, 2008, Ruiz de Zarobe 2004) to our corpus. Following the proposal of Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), there are three levels of directness of invitation formulae, i.e. (1) direct or impositives, (2) conventionally indirect and (3) non-conventionally indirect strategies. For the sub-strategies, we used the terms proposed by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) and García (2008). The most productive sub-strategies found in our corpus are illustrated below.

Table 3. **Classification of sub-strategies for issuing an invitation in Spanish and Russian**

Sub-strategy	**Examples**	
	Spanish	**Russian**
Direct (IMP)		
Mood derivable	***Vente*** *a tomar algo.* *(Come for a drink (with us).)*	*Мы сегодня собираемся в бар,* ***приходи*** *тоже.* *(We're going to a bar tonight, come too.)*
Mood derivable 1Pl	***Vamos*** *a tomar algo.* *(Let's go for a drink.)*	***Пошли*** *с нами в бар.* *(Let's go with us to a bar.)*
Explicit performative	***Estás invitado****.* *(You're invited.)*	***Приглашаем*** *вас в бар.* *(We invite you to the bar.)*
Locution derivable	*¿****Te vienes*** *a tomar algo?* *(Will you come for a drink?)*	***Пойдёшь*** *с нами в бар?* *(Will you come to the bar with us?)*
Conventionally indirect strategies (CIS)		
Wish-question	*¿****Te apetece venirte*** *a tomar algo?* *(Do you want to come for a drink?)*	***Хочешь пойти*** *с нами в бар?* *(Do you want to come to the bar with us?)*
Suggestory formula	*¿****Por qué no*** *te vienes?* *(Why don't you come (with us)?)*	***Может*** *сходим в бар сегодня?* *(Maybe we'll go to a bar today?)*
Pseudo-conditional statement	*Jefe, nos vamos a bajar a tomar algo en breve* ***por si se quiere venir****.* *(Boss, we're going for a drink in a while in case you want to come.)*	-
Non-conventionally indirect strategies (NCIS)		
Hints	*¿Haces algo hoy? Me apetece salir.* *(Do you have plans for today? I want to go out.)*	*Что делаешь вечером?* *(What are you doing tonight?)*

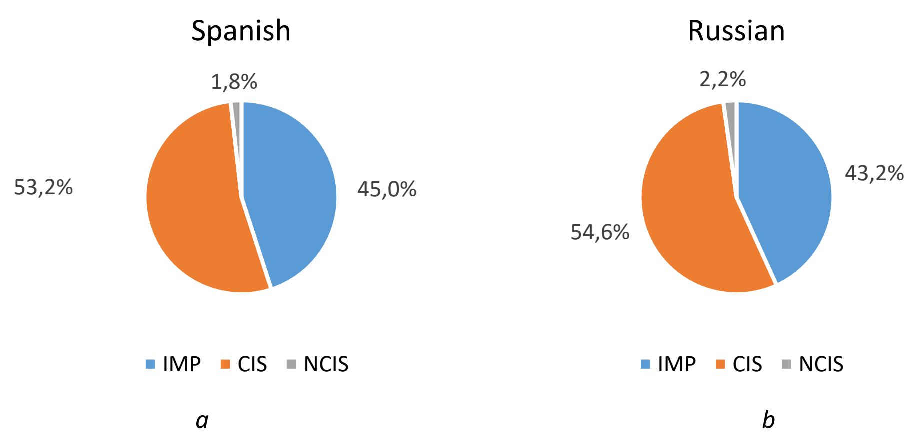
In addition to the invitation formula itself, supportive moves can produce the politeness social effect. While some moves, such as those that provide information about the event, are neutral to politeness, others represent deference or solidarity politeness strategies. Thus, preparators, grounders, minimizers, agreement-seeking expressions and apologies are associated with deference politeness, while insistences, promises of reward, expressions of understanding of and interest in the other, and emotional appeals reinforce interpersonal relationships and represent solidarity politeness strategies (García 2008).

Finally, in our analysis, we paid attention to the use of pronominal forms of address, as these not only reflect the degree of formality, but also convey established sociocultural dynamics. Accordingly, the informal T-form accounts for solidarity and familiarity, while the V-form signifies hierarchical relationship and deference (Zhou & Larina 2024).

4. Data analysis and main results

4.1. Analysis of politeness strategies in the head acts of invitation

Regardless of the invitee's profile, the overall results reveal similar tendencies across both corpora: most invitations were produced using conventionally indirect strategies, with no significant differences observed between Spanish and Russian speakers (SP: 53.2%; RU: 54.6%) (see figures 1a and 1b).



Figures 1a and 1b. Relative frequency of super-strategies used in each language

Table 4 presents the distribution of strategies employed by Spanish and Russian informants in relation to the communicative situation. The head acts are categorized as deference or solidarity politeness strategies. The table also illustrates the use of internal modifiers with either mitigating or aggravating effects. As shown, both corpora exhibit a similar tendency: solidarity strategies are more common in invitations to a close friend (SP: 75%; RU: 67.3%) and their frequency decreases with increased social distance between interlocutors (SP: 32.8%; RU: 32.2%) or when the invitee is a superior (SP: 25%; RU: 27.5%).

Table 4. **Relative frequency of invitation sub-strategies and internal modifiers in each communicative situation and language**

	S1		S2		S3	
	Spanish	Russian	Spanish	Russian	Spanish	Russian
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Head act						
Solidarity politeness	**75.0**	**67.3**	**32.8**	**32.2**	**25.0**	**27.5**
Mood derivable	20.0	2.7	13.3	-	3.3	3.3
Mood derivable 1Pl	2.5	38.0	-	16,1	-	4.4
Concealed command	2.5	4.4	0.8	-	1.1	-
Obligation statement	-	2.7	3.9	1,7	1.1	-
Performatives	-	1.8	-	1,7	4.3	7.7
Locution derivable	50.0	15.0	14.0	10,2	13.0	8.8
Want statement	-	2.7	0.8	2,5	2.2	3.3
Deference politeness	**25.0**	**32.7**	**67.2**	**67.8**	**75.0**	**72.5**
Ability-question	0.8	3.5	-	-	1.1	-
Wish-question	17.5	20.3	55.5	66.1	60.9	63.7
Agreement-question	-	2.7	-	0.85	1.1	3.3
Suggestory formula	-	2.7	2.3	0.85	-	2.2
Pseudo-conditional statements	2.5	-	8.6	-	11.9	-
Hints	4.2	3.5	0.8	-	-	3.3
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Internal modifiers						
Mitigators						
Conditional tense	-	1.8	10.9	4.2	25.0	26.4
Negative question	-	9.7	-	56.8	-	67.0
Conditional clause	3.3	4.4	9.4	-	3.2	2.2
V-form of address	-	-	-	2.5	30.4	95.6
Aggravators						
Intensifiers	-	1.8	-	-	2.1	-

Differences are evident in the selection of sub-strategies used to perform the speech act of inviting in each situation. For instance, when inviting a close friend, Spanish informants prefer locution derivable, which placed third in Russian (SP: 50%; RU: 15%). This is an interrogative formulation whereby the speaker tries to ensure the participation of the addressee in the proposed event. The verbs *venir* (come) in Spanish (1) and *пойти* (go) in Russian (2) are used for this purpose. In Russian, it is also possible to omit the verb *пойти* (go) without affecting the interpretation of the utterance (3).

(1) *Tía vamos a tomar unas cervecitas* ***te vienes****? (SP43_S1)*
(Dude, we're going to have some beers, ***will you come****?)*

(2) *Привет! Мы собрались компанией в бар,* ***пойдешь с нами?*** *(RU15_S1)*
(Hi! We're going out to a bar, ***will you go with us?****)*

(3) *Алё, привет. Мы сегодня в кафе,* ***ты с нами?*** *(RU82_S1)*
(Hello, hi. We're going to a cafe tonight, are you in?)

On two occasions these questions in Russian were intensified by the particle *же* [zhe], which increases the degree of insistence, since it conveys the speaker's conviction that the invitee intends to participate in the activity.

(4) *Привет, мы сегодня идём в кафе, ты* ***же*** *с нами? (RU4_S1)*
(Hi, we're going to a cafe today, you're coming, right?)

In Russian, the sub-strategy most used for inviting a close friend is the mood derivable (40.7%). In Spanish, imperative utterances are also common and are the second most common sub-strategy (22.5%). However, if they use the imperative, Spaniards prefer to direct it towards the invitee (SP: 20%; RU: 2.7%) (5), whereas Russian informants try to emphasize solidarity and therefore opt for the inclusive imperative (SP: 2.5%; RU: 38%) (6).

(5) ***Vente*** *bro que hemos quedado (SP119_S1)*
*(****Come*** *bro, we're meeting up.)*

(6) ***Пошли*** *в бар, отдохнём! (RU53_S1)*
*(****Let's go*** *to a bar, we'll relax!)*

In both groups, the use of these sub-strategies decreases when participants perceive more distance to the invitee (S2) or when they are in a lower hierarchical position (S3). In these two situational contexts, the most prevalent sub-strategy is the wish-question (7, 8) which represents a strategy of deference politeness (S2: SP: 55.5%, RU: 66.1%; S3: SP: 60.9%, RU: 63.7%). The Spanish corpus contains more lexical variety, where the verbs *querer* (to want), *gustar* (to like), *apetecer* (to feel like) or even a more colloquial one like *rentar* (to rent) are used. In Russian, informants expressed all wish-questions with the verb *хотеть* (to want).

The deference politeness effect of wish-questions can be intensified by means of mitigating linguistic tactics, i.e. the use of verb tenses as pragmatic modifiers and the negative formulation of the question. The first tactic appears in both corpora and consists in the substitution of the present tense by the conditional, so that the utterance is moderated. The analysis indicates that this mechanism is more common in Spanish (11.5%) than in Russian (9.6%) and its use is associated with a hierarchical relationship in both corpora (SP: 25%; RU: 26.4%). The following examples illustrate the use of this mitigating mechanism:

(7) *Buenas, (su nombre). ¿Qué tal el día de trabajo? Algunos de la oficina vamos a ir a tomar algo después del trabajo.* ***¿Te apetecería*** *venir****?*** *(SP33_S3)*
(Hi, (his/her name). How was your day at work? Some of us from the office are going for a drink after work. Would you like to come?)

(8) *NN, не* ***хотели бы вы*** *присоединиться к нам сегодня вечером? Мы идём в бар. (RU126_S3)*
(NN, wouldn't you like to join us this evening? We're going to a bar.)

Example 8 also shows the use of the negative particle *не* (not) in Russian, which denies the propositional content of the utterance and reduces the degree of imposition on the invitee. As a result, the addressee is given more freedom to refuse the invitation without damaging the speaker's face. Our Spanish participants formulated all invitations as a question in the affirmative way, whereas in Russian 85.9% of interrogative invitations addressed to the boss and 72.8% to a new colleague contain a negative particle *не* (not). In comparison, when inviting a close friend, Russian informants chose the negative formulation of the question 21.2% of the times.

Finally, it is essential to point out that in Spanish there is an invitation sub-strategy, absent in Russian, i.e. pseudo-conditional statements. Although Spaniards can employ it in all three communicative situations, its frequency is higher in invitations directed to the boss (S1: 2.5%; S2: 8.6%; S3: 11.9%). Unlike other sub-strategies, the core of the invitation is situated in the protasis, which allows the speaker to protect his/her own face and the invitee's face from undesirable intrusion (9):

(9) *Buenas tardes, mis compañeros y yo salimos ahora de la oficina y hemos quedado en el bar de enfrente, se lo comento* ***por si se quiere venir****. (SP58_S3)*
(Good afternoon, my colleagues and I are leaving the office now and we are meeting at the bar across the street, I'm telling you in case you want to come.)

As shown by this example, the clause with *por si* (in case/if) does not condition the content of the main sentence, but it gives meaning to the apodosis. This fact differentiates pseudo-conditionals from logical conditionals, which also appear in our study as mitigating internal modifiers. Logical conditional clauses restrict the scope of the head act and usually appeal to the invitee's desire (10) or availability (11), offering an excuse for refusing the invitation.

(10) *Oye tío, qué tal cómo te llamas?..... Pues vamos a ir a tomar algo* ***si te quieres venir*** *vente tío (SP123_S2)*
(Hey man, how are you? What's your name?... Well, we're going for a drink, if you want to come, come, man.)

(11) *Добрый вечер,* ***если у вас нет планов на вечер****, то предлагаю пойти после работы с сотрудниками в бар (RU33_S3)*
(Good afternoon, if you don't have plans for the evening, I suggest going to the bar after work with employees.)

Conditional clauses are less frequent in our corpora than the use of verb tenses as hedges or the negation of propositional content. In both languages, they can appear in all three situations, although they are more commonly employed in

Spanish invitations addressed to a new colleague (S1: SP: 3.3%, RU: 4.4%; S2: SP: 9.4%, RU: 0%; S3: SP: 3.2%, RU: 2.2%).

Finally, there is another internal modifier that reveals sociocultural differences between Spanish and Russian and distinguishes the realization of invitations to a superior in these languages. We refer to the selection of register. Our Russian informants formulated 95.6% of the invitations directed at the boss using formal address form *Вы* (*V*-form), while in Spanish the formal register is observed in only 30.4% of the invitations.

Other sub-strategies have emerged more sporadically and do not exhibit substantial differences between the two languages.

4.2. Analysis of politeness strategies in supportive moves

As an optional element, supportive moves are more frequent in Spanish corpus (73.5%) than in Russian (59.9%). In both languages, the most prevalent supportive move is providing information about the event, which helps the speaker to introduce the invitation head act (SP: 60.6%; RU: 37.6%), as shown in the next example:

(12) ***Мы сегодня идём в бар***, *хотите с нами? (RU129_S2)*
(We're going to a bar today, *do you want to come with us?)*

In addition to this unit, the informants in our study made use of supportive moves that produce a mitigating or enhancing politeness effect. According to the obtained results, supportive moves representing solidarity politeness strategies appeared in 20.8% of the total number of invitations in Russian and in 7.9% in Spanish. As for deference politeness strategies, they are also more common in Russian (15.2 %) than in Spanish (12.9 %).

Table 5 illustrates the distribution of supportive moves according to the group and communicative situation.

Table 5. **Relative frequency of politeness strategies in supportive moves in each communicative situation and language**

	S1		S2		S3	
	Spanish	Russian	Spanish	Russian	Spanish	Russian
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Solidarity politeness	**4.2**	**16.8**	**10.9**	**30.5**	**8.7**	**13.2**
Insistences	1.7	7.1	2.3	0.9	-	1.1
Promising reward	0.8	5.3	0	12.7	1.1	1.1
Expressing understanding/interest	-	-	-	-	3.3	2.2
Emotional appeals	-	3.5	-	4.2	-	3.3
Subjective grounders	1.7	0.9	8.6	12.7	4.3	5.5
Deference politeness	**13.3**	**12.4**	**10.2**	**11.0**	**16.3**	**24.2**
Preparators	5.8	6.2	0.8	5.9	2.2	9.9
Objective grounders	1.7	1.8	4.7	1.7	2.2	4.4
Minimizers	1.7	-	2.3	-	4.3	-
Agreement-seeking expressions	4.1	4.4	0.8	3.4	1.1	3.3
Apologies	-	-	1.6	-	6.5	6.6

There are similar tendencies in the two groups: deference politeness strategies external to the head act are associated with the existence of a hierarchical relationship (SP: 16.3%, RU: 24.2%), while solidarity politeness strategies are more common in invitations addressed to a new colleague (SP: 10.9%; RU: 30.5%). It is crucial to mention that, when there is a symmetrical relationship, Russians give preference to solidarity supportive moves (S1: 16.8 %; S2: 30.5 %), while in invitations addressed to a superior, they choose to highlight deference (S3: 24.2%). In Spanish, the percentages do not vary so much, so it is difficult to identify correlations.

The qualitative analysis enabled us to identify two types of grounders which, following Bella's proposal (2019), are called *objective* and *subjective*. In the first case, the speaker provides rational reasons that legitimize the issuing of the invitation, as the following examples show:

(13) *¡Hola! Oye, ¿te quieres venir a tomar algo cuando acabemos hoy?* ***Es que los viernes solemos ir los de la oficina al bar de enfrente*** *(SP38_S2)*
(Hello! Listen, do you want to come for a drink when we finish today? ***The thing is that on Fridays we usually go to the bar across the street****.)*

(14) *«Имя начальника»,* ***сегодня был загруженный день****, так что мы с коллегами идем в бар. Не хотите к нам присоединиться? (RU124_S3)*
("Boss's name", ***today was a busy day****, so my colleagues and I are going to the bar. Wouldn't you like to join us?)*

Subjective grounders underline the benefit for both interlocutors and generally aim to strengthen interpersonal relations. Hence, when issuing an invitation to a new colleague, informants in both groups seek to convey that he or she is a person they wish to get to know and bring into the group.

(15) *Hola, ¿qué tal te estás adaptando? Algunos vamos a tomar algo en un rato. Si quieres vente y* ***así nos conocemos todos un poco más****. (SP33_S2)*
(Hi, how are you settling in? Some of us are going for a drink in a while. If you want, come and ***we can get to know each other a little better****.)*

(16) *Не хочешь сходить с нами после работы в бар?* ***Заодно поближе познакомимся со всеми****. Будет весело (RU62_S2)*
(Don't you want to come to the bar with us after work? ***We'll get to know each other.*** *It'll be fun.)*

As can be seen in these examples, the use of subjective grounder shortens the distance and underlines the importance of common ground and is therefore considered an instrument of the solidarity politeness. Objective grounders, on the other hand, introduce a rational reason for inviting (13, 14) and thus minimize the possibility of the invitee feeling indebted (Bella 2019). In this way, they protect the addressee's face and are related to deference politeness.

In both groups, subjective grounders are more frequent in invitations to a new colleague (SP: 8.6%; RU: 12.7%). Objective grounders are less common in our corpora and do not exceed 5% in any communicative situation.

Among other solidarity politeness strategies, we emphasize the use of reward promises, expressions whereby the speaker stresses the benefits of accepting the invitation. Their use makes the invitation more attractive. This supportive move is more common in Russian, especially in invitations to a new colleague (12.7%) or a close friend (5.3%). There are two types of promises of reward: the speaker describes the atmosphere of the event (17) or refers to a joint activity (18). In both cases, the utterance is intensified, and the bonds of solidarity are strengthened.

(17) *Пойдем с нами, **будет весело** (RU11_S2)*
*(Let's go with us, **it'll be fun**.)*

(18) *Ты свободна вечером? Пошли сегодня в кафе, **отдохнем, поболтаем** (RU75_S1)*
*(Are you free tonight? Let's go to a cafe, **we'll rest and chat**.)*

In Spanish, this move appeared sporadically and has a similar pattern on both occasions.

Within the external modification with a mitigating function, our informants have resorted to preparators (19). It should be emphasized that in Spanish they are mainly used in contexts of greater familiarity (S1: 5.8%; S2: 0.8%; S3: 2.2%), whereas in Russian they can even be addressed to a superior (9.9%) or a less familiar person (5.9%).

Minimizers and agreement-seeking expressions appeared occasionally in our corpora, making it challenging to draw definitive conclusions about their use. Both mechanisms represent deference politeness strategies. In the case of minimizers, speakers may include expressions like *"Sin compromiso"* (No commitment), allowing the invitee to feel no obligation to attend the event. This mechanism is present only in Spanish. Agreement-seeking expressions, on the other hand, helps convey respect for the other's opinion, as the speaker tries to determine whether the proposed plan aligns with the addressee's interests and preferences.

5. Discussion

The analysis of invitations in Spanish and Russian has revealed some common tendencies, as well as distinct peculiarities in each language. When issuing an invitation, participants of both groups assess the degree of formality and closeness to their interlocutor, which determines the level of (in)directness of the utterance.

In both groups, impositives are more characteristic of invitations to a close friend. This result is in accordance with those obtained in other studies (Barros García 2010, Barros García & Terkourafi 2014, Fernández-García 2024, Larina 2009, Schelchkova 2013, Shorokhova in press, Vlasyan & Kozhukhova 2019) and further confirms the hypothesis that in both communicative cultures, the direct style is well tolerated and there is a right to reduce the freedom of the interlocutor. In this respect, the imperative is one of the main sub-strategies of inviting a close friend, since, in these cultures, it does not represent a threat to the addressee's face, but it can be a way of shortening distance and strengthening interpersonal relations (Barros García 2010, Larina 2009, Ruiz de Zarobe 2004).

In Russian, a direct style reflects sincerity, which represents an important sociocultural value (Larina & Ozyumenko 2016, Wierzbicka 2002). According to Russian sociocultural norms, the speaker is expected to issue a sincere invitation which conveys the wish that the addressee accepts the invitation. Consequently, involvement and solidarity are achieved through the first-person plural imperative, which also makes clear the tendency of Russian culture towards *we*-orientation (Larina et al. 2017). In the Russian corpus, an inclusive orientation appeared not only in invitations whose addressee is a close friend, but also a new colleague.

In line with recent research, we observed the predominance of interrogative productions in the Spanish corpus, regardless of the characteristics of the interlocutor (Barros García & Terkourafi 2014, Fernández-García 2024, Liu 2023, Ruiz de Zarobe 2004, Shorokhova 2023). However, when inviting a close friend, Spaniards give preference to the most direct question, i.e. locution derivable, regarded as a sign of solidarity politeness (García 1999, 2008). In Russian, interrogative sub-strategies are more associated with the existence of more distance and/or power (Vlasyan & Kozhukhova 2019). It is worth noting that interrogative utterances are considered suitable for the realization of invitations and offers because they emphasize the conditional nature of this communicative act (Leech 2014) and reflect respect for the interlocutor's autonomy (Fernández-García 2024). For instance, in wish-questions, the focus shifts to the invitee and his/her wishes and needs. As a mitigating tactic, the interrogative expression of the invitation offers more freedom to the addressee, prevents his/her face from possible damage and shows the speaker's respect for the invitee's interests and opinion. Therefore, interrogative utterances could be used not only in situations where the speaker perceives the need to soften his/her words and mitigate possible negative social effects, but also in situations of interpersonal closeness and linguistic relaxation, in order to preserve the balance of faces.

When inviting someone lesser known or a person with a higher status, participants in both groups resort to some mitigating internal modifiers to stress the deference politeness. In both languages, the use of the conditional tense is common, which helps to raise the degree of formality and to convey a greater respect for the invitee's autonomy. In Russian, it is also possible to include the negative particle in wish-questions. Brown and Levinson (1987) describe this mitigating tool as a negative politeness strategy: by denying the propositional content of the invitation, the speaker transmits pessimism and thereby grants the addressee greater flexibility to decline the invitation without harming the speaker's face. The use of this attenuating tactic has been mentioned by Vlasyan and Kozhukhova (2019) who indicate that young Russians are more likely to use it, especially in requests and invitations.

In connection with the sub-strategies of invitation, we should also mention that invitations in Russian are traditionally related to the performative verb *приглашать* (to invite). In our study, its use is rather low, which may be due to the analyzed type of invitation being close to a proposal. As other studies reveal, performatives are more common in *locus*-invitations, i.e. in invitations to an event (Rossikhina & Ikatova 2020, Shorokhova 2023, Vlasyan & Kozhukhova 2019). This sub-strategy can also be used to raise the formality of the invitation (Vlasyan & Kozhukhova 2019), as our Russian informants did.

The analysis has facilitated the identification of a sub-strategy that may lead to a misunderstanding in a Spanish-Russian intercultural interaction, i.e. pseudo-conditional statements. As example 9 illustrates, it is a conventionally indirect formula in Spanish that allows protecting the addressee's face from an intrusion into his/her private life. Its use may also be justified by the attempt to safeguard the speaker's own face, since this sub-strategy minimizes the illocutionary force and leaves it up to the addressee to interpret this utterance as an invitation. When conveyed to a Russian interlocutor, the utterance could be interpreted as lacking the speaker's enthusiasm, sincerity and interest, or it would not be understood as an invitation (Larina et al. 2017).

In addition to the head act, politeness strategies may appear as supportive moves. When issuing an everyday invitation, informants in both groups prefer to provide a description of the event that usually precedes the invitation itself. This supportive move is neutral to politeness and prepares the addressee for the invitation head act. Among the supportive moves with an enhancing effect, we can highlight subjective grounders and promises of reward. The latter is particularly relevant for the issuing of invitations in Russian, since it emphasizes the importance of a joint activity and common interests, and thus the addressee perceives that the invitation is sincere. In this language it is common for promises of reward to be oriented towards both interlocutors, and they can also refer to the value of communication in Russian culture (Shorokhova in press). Likewise, as Zagidullina et al. (2023) point out, distrust is inherent to Russian speakers; therefore, they tend to include additional elements to better persuade the interlocutor.

It is worth noting that, compared to other studies focusing on *locus*-invitations (Liu 2023, Shorokhova 2023, Vlasyan & Kozhukhova 2019), the informants in our study made less frequent use of insistences. This fact can be explained by the nature of the analyzed invitation: by issuing a non-impositive invitation close to a proposal to have a coffee, speakers do not feel the need to include supportive moves to convince the invitee to accept it. In this communicative situation, politeness strategies of solidarity become more relevant in order to approach a new colleague, create an alliance and introduce him/her to the collective.

External deference politeness strategies are more common in invitations to the boss. Here, informants can attract the superior's attention by means of apology. On the other hand, both groups used preparators, a tactic that helps to ensure the addressee's availability prior to issuing the invitation. It is pertinent to point out that both preparators and agreement-seeking questions are signs of respect for each other's opinion and autonomy and can therefore be conveyed to different interlocutors (Barros García & Terkourafi 2014).

6. Conclusions

Our study has aimed to identify the various sociocultural characteristics in the realization of the communicative act of inviting by Spanish and Russian speakers. To this end, we have analyzed invitation samples in contexts with different configurations of social distance and power. The obtained results indicate that, in both communicative cultures, the production of the invitation is susceptible to situational variation, which leads speakers to make use of different politeness strategies, highlighting deference or solidarity.

When faced with the situational factors of social distance and hierarchical relationship, similar tendencies can be observed in Spanish and Russian. In invitations to a higher-status person, deference politeness strategies are preferred in both languages, while solidarity politeness strategies are more common in invitations to a close friend. Moreover, to support the head act of invitation, Spaniards and Russians may resort to solidarity politeness strategies to shorten the distance, to demonstrate the benefit of a joint activity and to convey their interest in the invitee's participation.

Despite the existence of these common tendencies, there are certain cultural differences. In contexts of power equality, invitations in Russian reflect the orientation of Russian culture towards solidarity and involvement through an inclusive perspective, which differentiates the realization of the analyzed speech act between the two languages. The Spanish participants, by contrast, aim to maintain the face balance and therefore tend to prefer interrogative formulae, even in contexts of greater familiarity.

In conclusion, although Spanish and Russian communicative cultures are characterized as cultures with a tendency towards solidarity politeness, each language has its own culturally differentiated communicative patterns for issuing an invitation.

The results of this study contribute to a better understanding of the use of politeness in the speech act of inviting in Spanish and Russian and provide the linguistic patterns accepted in each of them. These data can help to design new teaching materials for the learning of these languages, considering sociocultural and contextual factors in order to develop communicative competence.

Acknowledgements

The completion of this research paper would not have been possible without the help of Prof. Dr. Viktor M. Shaklein, RUDN University, and the Department of Russian Language and Teaching Methods, who assisted us with the data collection.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Elena Shorokhova: Conceptualisation, Investigation, Data analysis, Writing – Original Draft, Visualization; **Palma Peña-Jiménez:** Conceptualisation, Data analysis, Supervision, Validation, Writing – Review & Editing

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Article history:
Received: 09 October 2024
Accepted: 25 March 2025

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Russian Journal of Linguistics
ISSN 2687-0088 (Print), ISSN 2686-8024 (Online)
2025 Vol. 29 No. 2 386–408
http://journals.rudn.ru/linguistics

https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-37907
EDN: KVNRMN

Research article / Научная статья

Impoliteness in Javanese: Beyond breaching honorifics

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Abstract
Despite extensive studies on the correlation between breaches of Javanese linguistic etiquette and perceived impoliteness, scant scholarly attention has been given to understanding impoliteness resulting from violations of *tata krama* ('proper social conduct'). The objective of this research was to identify the perspectives on impoliteness held by Javanese individuals, with a particular emphasis on the transgression of *tata krama*. Narrative inquiry was employed to collect the data of impoliteness events experienced by 158 native speakers of Javanese in Central Java, Indonesia. Semi-structured interviews were undertaken to examine impoliteness incidents they encountered in their daily lives. Thematic analysis, adopted from Braun and Clarke (2006), was utilised to analyse the collected data. The study found several overarching characteristics of impoliteness: breaches of honorifics, conduct against *andhap asor* ('self-deprecation'), conduct against *lembah manah* ('emotional restraint'), conduct against *empan papan* ('decorum'), conduct of *ora grapyak* ('unfriendliness'), conduct attacking self-worth and emotional well-being which formed the basis of Javanese impoliteness. This study reveals that impoliteness, as perceived by native Javanese, is characterised by a critical assessment of co-participants' linguistic behaviour resulting from violations of linguistic etiquette and a lack of understanding. It manifests in two categories: unintentional and intentional. The study contributes to the understanding of Javanese impoliteness by exploring aspects beyond honorific language violations. It demonstrates how breaches in social behaviours and language etiquette can affect emotional well-being and social standing, leading to impolite communication.
Keywords: *linguistic etiquette, linguistic etiquette violations, impoliteness, understanding of impoliteness, honorific transgressions, Javanese*

For citation:
Wijayanto, Agus. 2025. Impoliteness in Javanese: Beyond breaching honorifics. *Russian Journal of Linguistics* 29 (2). 386–408. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-37907

Невежливость в яванском языке: за пределами непочтительного обращения

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Аннотация
Несмотря на существующие исследования, посвященные взаимосвязи между нарушениями яванского речевого этикета и невежливостью, пониманию невежливости, возникающей в результате нарушения *tata krama* (‘надлежащего социального поведения’), уделяется недостаточно внимания. Цель данного исследования – выявить представления яванцев о невежливости с особым акцентом на нарушении *tata krama*. Для сбора данных о случаях проявления невежливости, с которыми столкнулись 158 носителей яванского языка в повседневной жизни, был использован нарративный опрос и полуструктурированные интервью. Собранные данные изучались с применением тематического анализа, заимствованного из (Braun & Clarke 2006). Исследование выявило несколько характеристик яванской невежливости, которые составляют ее основу: несоблюдение почтительного обращения; поведение, противоречащее *andhap asor* (‘самоуничижение’); поведение, противоречащее *lembah manah* (‘эмоциональная сдержанность’); поведение, нарушающее *empan papan* (‘приличия’); поведение *ora grapyak* (‘недружелюбие’); поведение, наносящее ущерб самооценке и эмоциональному состоянию. Результаты показывают, что в восприятии носителей яванского языка невежливость характеризуется критической оценкой речевого поведения собеседников в результате нарушения речевого этикета и отсутствия понимания. Она бывает двух типов: преднамеренная и непреднамеренная. Данное исследование расширяет понимание яванской невежливости, так как не ограничивается нарушением почтительного обращения, и демонстрирует, как нарушения социального поведения и языкового этикета могут влиять на эмоциональное состояние и социальное взаимодействие.
Ключевые слова: *речевой этикет, нарушение речевого этикета, невежливость, понимание невежливости, непочтительное обращение, яванский язык*

Для цитирования:
Wijayanto, Agus. Impoliteness in Javanese: Beyond breaching honorifics. *Russian Journal of Linguistics.* 2025. Vol. 29. № 2. P. 386–408. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-37907

1. Introduction

Reflecting social hierarchy, the Javanese language possesses three general distinct levels: *Krama, Madya,* and *Ngoko.* Each level functions as a social compass that directs speakers through social communication, which is informed by the shifting of respect, familiarity, and hierarchical relationships. *Krama* is at the top of this system, which is characterised by honorifics that consider the age, relative social status, and familiarity of the interlocutors. It is used in situations that demand the highest degree of deference, such as addressing elders or senior residents, religious figures, and high-status individuals. *Madya* conveys a gentle respect to those of lower social standing and it serves as a bridge between strangers who are not familiar with each other’s social status. It is also employed to acknowledge the standing of superiors while, at the same time, the speakers maintain a degree of ease in semi-formal conversations. Finally, *Ngoko* is the language of intimacy and informality, which is used in the interactions between peers, family members and close friends. This linguistic hierarchy is dynamic, with Javanese speakers skilfully switching between different levels. Their choices are influenced by various social factors, including age, status, relationship, and familiarity, as well as contextual settings, ranging from intimate home environments to formal public ceremonies.

The declining use of *Krama* among younger generations has raised concerns about their perceived impoliteness. Atmawati (2021) reported that young Javanese speakers often struggle with selecting and using *Krama* verbs correctly. This trend extends to the inappropriate use of *Ngoko* when addressing teachers, who are figures traditionally deserving respect (Setyawan 2018). Sujono et al. (2019) attributed the increasing use of mixed Javanese-Indonesian communication to limited *Krama* resources. Surprisingly, even Javanese language students struggle with *Krama alus* ('refined high level') (Wibawa 2005). These trends suggest a decline in the mastery of polite Javanese, which could affect its cultural and social significance. This is particularly concerning in light of Romelah's (2016) findings of incorrect speech level usage among adults. While scholars view these trends as potential signs of language shift (e.g., Subroto et al. 2008, Vander Klok 2019), they may reflect the evolving nature of societal norms, particularly among younger Javanese.

Despite extensive studies on the relationship between breaches of Javanese linguistic etiquette and perceived impoliteness, little is known about impoliteness stemming from a lack of mastery of proper social conduct, often referred to as *ora ngerti tata krama*. This study investigates impoliteness in Javanese, focusing on violations of both linguistic etiquette and social conduct. It also examines how impoliteness can harm *rasa* ('feelings') and *aji* ('self-worth'). Three research questions guide this investigation:

1. What communication strategies are perceived as transgressions of *unggah-ungguhing basa* ('linguistic etiquette')?
2. How do specific conducts violate *tata krama* ('proper social conduct')?
3. Which acts or behaviours inflict harm upon *rasa* and *aji*, the core emotional and self-respectful elements of Javanese social interaction?

The data of the present study was elicited from interviews with native Javanese in Surakarta, Indonesia, who were asked to recount impolite incidents they experienced in their daily lives. The collected data served as the foundation upon which the findings were constructed. Based on the interviews, this study found that impoliteness could manifest unintentionally and intentionally.

2. Literature review

2.1. Impoliteness: first-order and second-order

Within pragmatics, impoliteness plays a central role in representing acts that undermine an individual's face. It is defined in two ways: 'first-order' and 'second-order' applications. First-order impoliteness refers to how it is perceived and understood within speech communities, or the lay understanding of impoliteness. Second-order impoliteness, on the other hand, pertains to the theoretical frameworks researchers use to interpret impoliteness phenomena (Locher & Watts 2008, Watts 2003). Understanding the concept of impoliteness is complex, as it involves both social perceptions and academic approaches to its analysis.

In the study of second-order impoliteness, researchers determine what qualifies as impolite behaviour by interpreting both linguistic and non-linguistic data. A crucial aspect of second-order impoliteness is that face attacks must be deliberate, either in the speaker's intention or in the listener's perception of the intention (Culpeper 2005). Bousfield (2008: 132) emphasises that impoliteness is a calculated move. However, even though research has explored speakers' intentions, there needs to be more focus on the reasons and motivations behind their impolite behaviour. This could be due to the challenges of directly accessing intentions (Culpeper 2005: 39), as intentions are not always clear-cut. They are dynamically constructed throughout interpersonal interaction (Haugh 2010: 10). Therefore, what is perceived as an intention to attack another's face might be just an interpretation based on the understanding of the context or situation. However, in their subsequent publications, Culpeper (2011) and Bousfield (2010) present a different perspective that aligns more closely with first-order impoliteness. Culpeper (2011: 23) defines impoliteness as the consequence of negative evaluative judgments concerning behaviours and linguistic expressions by interlocutors based on their alignment with sociocultural contexts or societal norms. Bousfield (2010: 115) asserts that understanding impoliteness requires integrating theoretical approaches with the lay user's perception of impoliteness.

First-order impoliteness, central to the present study, refers to how impoliteness is understood and judged by members of a speech community in everyday interactions, without formal theoretical frameworks. Locher and Watts (2005) argue that judgments of im/politeness are shaped by the flow of conversation, context, and accumulated social norms. Watts (2003) adds that im/politeness is evaluated discursively by laypeople. These judgments evolve within a community and are reshaped by individual experiences, social norms, and prior observations. People's assessments of what is im/polite are influenced by mental blueprints of appropriate behaviour formed through social interactions (Locher & Watts 2008). Various frameworks are used as a foundation to evaluate first-order impoliteness, including norms of appropriateness (Locher 2006), benchmarks for acceptable behaviour (Allan 2016), social expectations (Culpeper 2011), group norms (Kádár & Haugh 2013), cultural schemata (Sharifian 2008), established cultural norms (Spencer-Oatey & Kádár 2016), and in this study, I aim to demonstrate *unggah-ungguhing basa* ('language etiquette') and *tata krama* ('social conduct').

Regarding intentionality, Locher and Watts (2008) argue that in the first-order approach, impoliteness is determined by how interactants perceive intentions, rather than the actual intentions themselves. Therefore, the interactants' perception plays a crucial role in assessing the politeness or impoliteness of an utterance. This highlights the role of expectations, desires, and social norms in shaping judgments of politeness or impoliteness. As Culpeper (2010) asserts, behaviour that deviates from what we expect or believe to be appropriate can lead to perceptions of impoliteness, underscoring the importance of perceived violations of social norms.

Impoliteness has received considerable scholarly attention across various discourse domains, including courtroom interactions (Mitchell 2022), mass media (de Marlangeon 2018), social networking site (SNS) communication (Rhee 2023), political debates (Kienpointner 2008), academic discourse (Larina & Ponton 2022), online communication (Tzanne & Sifianou 2019), and foreign language classrooms (Wijayanto 2019). In addition, its strategies, functions, and consequences have been examined across different cultures (e.g., Al Zidjaly 2019, Gao & Liu 2023, Larina & Ponton 2022, Van Olmen, Andersson & Culpeper 2023, Tzanne & Sifianou 2019). Continued research on im/politeness across different language and cultural contexts is necessary to further advance the theoretical and methodological understanding of im/politeness (Locher & Larina 2019).

2.2. Politeness and impoliteness in Javanese

Before discussing the complexities of impoliteness in Javanese, it is important to address its counterpart: politeness. Javanese politeness results from positive evaluative judgments about co-participant' behaviour, focusing on the manifestation of the three governing rules of social interaction, known as *Tri Panata*. These include managing speech (*panata basa*), managing feelings (*panata rasa*), and managing behaviour (*panata krama*), all of which are taught within families and communities.

Panata basa involves adherence to syntactic, morphological, and sociolinguistic norms, collectively known as *unggah-ungguhing basa* ('linguistic etiquette'), which plays a crucial role in polite communication (Atmawati 2021). It governs the use of speech levels: *Krama* ('high'), *Madya* ('intermediate'), and *Ngoko* ('low'), each suited to specific social contexts. This study extends the concept of *unggah-ungguhing basa* beyond speech level usage, arguing that proper pitch, intonation, and physical gestures also contribute to im/politeness. Mastery of *unggah-ungguhing basa* thus involves not only proficiency in *undha-usuk* ('speech levels') but also a comprehensive understanding of word variations, grammar rules, paralinguistic aspects, and their contextual applications.

Panata rasa focuses on ensuring the emotional well-being of others, known as *ngemong rasa*, and understanding their perspective and feelings or *tepa slira*. Emotional equilibrium is highly valued in Javanese society, with inflicting emotional pain seen as a serious offence (Geertz 1976). To protect others' feelings, speakers choose appropriate language levels and topics, avoiding anything that may cause harm to their emotional well-being. Consequently, anything that might trigger negative emotions tends to be concealed or repressed (Magnis-Suseno 1997) and indirect communication is highly valued (Lestari & Prayitno 2016, Prayitno 2010). When difficult or hurtful communication is unavoidable, Javanese speakers minimize the impact through *angon rasa* which involves carefully learning the feelings and psychological states of their interlocutors.

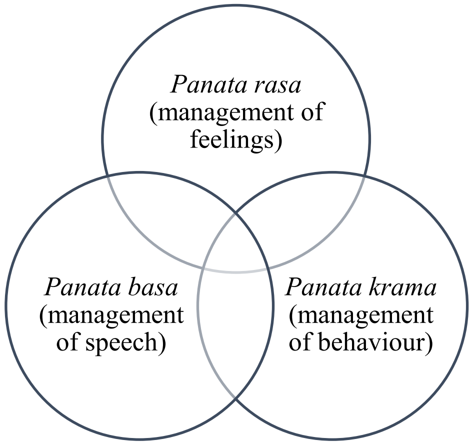

Diagram 1. Javanese politeness structure

Panata krama or *tata krama* constitutes a Javanese system of proper social conduct that governs individuals' social interaction. This includes humbleness or self-deprecation (*andhap asor*), modesty and emotionally restrained (*lembah manah*), respect (*ngajeni*), decorum or fitting in with social norms and expectations of a particular setting, situation and time (*empan papan*), and friendliness (*grapyak*). The embodiment of these elements in linguistic action produces politeness (Poedjosoedarmo 2017, Widiana et al. 2020).

Laypersons commonly define impoliteness in Javanese as *ora ngerti tata krama* ('unable to behave in a good manner'). Considering the data of the present study, I characterise impoliteness in Javanese as a critical assessment of co-participants' inappropriate linguistic behaviour, stemming from a lack of proficiency in adhering to linguistic etiquette (*ora ngerti unggah ungguhing basa*) and/or lack of awareness regarding proper social conduct (*ora ngerti tata krama*).

Drawing from the emerging data of the present study, impoliteness in Javanese manifests in two primary categories: unintentional and intentional. Unintentional impoliteness is categorised into one of the following sub-categories.

(1) Mismatch of speech level
Communication is marked by a mismatch between the speaker's chosen speech level and the addressee's social standing, potentially leading to the perception of disrespect, discomfort, or even offence.

(2) Misapplication of speech levels
The utilisation of proper social conduct within a conversation while simultaneously employing an inappropriate speech level relative to the addressee's social status can create a discordant communication dynamic, undermining the intended politeness.

(3) The dissonance between linguistic etiquette and delivery
Instances where an appropriate speech level is utilised, yet the speaker's tone of voice, body language, or other nonverbal cues contradict the intended courteousness. This incongruence can negate the intended politeness.

(4) Inappropriate topic selection
The discussion of sensitive, offensive, or taboo topics in contexts considered inappropriate by social norms or situational expectations can have negative consequences. In such instances, the selection of an inappropriate topic can override even the most refined speech level.

(5) Converging impoliteness
The unfortunate combination of both an inappropriate speech level and improper conduct results in the most severe form of disrespectful communication. This confluence of linguistic and non-linguistic transgressions can create an unfavourable communication environment.

Intentional impoliteness is often observed in open conflicts or heated quarrels (*padu*) and it is used as a tool for emotional manipulation and social subversion to deliberately hurt others. Unlike unintentional impoliteness which typically arises from unawareness of appropriate social norms and/or linguistic etiquette, intentional impoliteness seeks to purposefully undermine an opponent's *rasa* ('feelings') and *aji* ('self-worth'). Given the fundamental importance of emotional equilibrium and self-worth in Javanese social life, these two aspects become particularly vulnerable to attacks. Violating *unggah-ungguhing basa* and *tata krama* creates a confrontational space for emotional sparring.

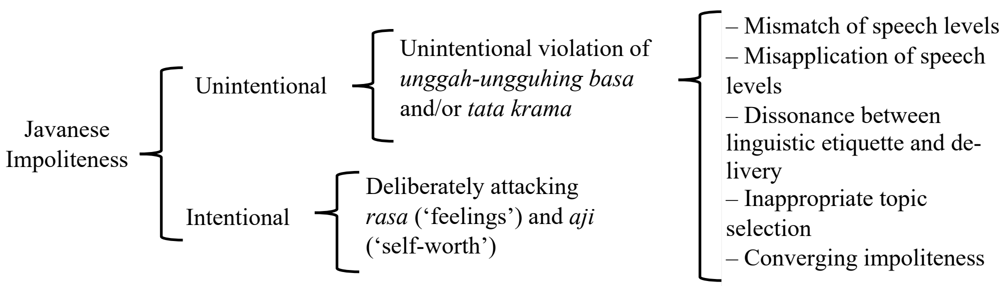

Diagram 2. Javanese impoliteness framework

3. Data and methods

3.1. Research participants

The study was conducted in Surakarta, Indonesia. This city was chosen as the setting of the study as, in addition to Yogyakarta, it is the hub of Javanese culture and traditions (Magnis-Suseno 1997: 23). The residents of the city mostly speak Javanese and they still maintain Javanese social structures and norms that can influence social interactions and perceptions of Javanese im/politeness. Purposive sampling was employed to select research participants for the study. Specifically, 158 Javanese residents who had lived in Surakarta for more than 15 years were chosen as respondents. They represented a diverse range of professions and social backgrounds.

3.2. Data compilation and analysis

The study collected data through semi-structured interviews with 158 native Javanese participants. In their responses, they were free to use either Javanese or Bahasa Indonesia to recount the impoliteness incidents they had experienced. Each interview session lasted between 20 to 25 minutes. The dataset comprised 42,532 words, focusing primarily on the main question: "Did you experience incidents of impoliteness?" and a follow-up question: "If so, could you describe them?" Additional probing questions were used to explore reported incidents in more depth, such as: "What did the other participant(s) say and do?" and "Why did you perceive it as impolite?" "How did you feel about it?". Among the respondents, one person reported experiencing a heated quarrel or *padu*, while three others reported witnessing *padu* among their neighbours.

The collected data was analysed using thematic analysis adopted from Braun and Clarke (2006). This method involved identifying recurring patterns, themes, and commonalities across the data. In phase 1, the data obtained from the interview was transcribed. Based on these transcripts, each piece of data was carefully considered. Only cases where co-participants' behaviours and language use were evaluated as impolite were included in the corpus. In phase 2, descriptive codes were created for each data segment to facilitate systematic analysis. Codes such as "using profanity" and "incorrect language level" were used. Additionally, the respondents' perceptions about co-participants' behaviour in communication, such as "arrogantly speaking" and "inconsiderate", were coded. In phase 3, similar coded segments were grouped into themes, resulting in 28 themes. For example, segments coded as *lancang* ('acting carelessly') and *sembrana* ('to act recklessly') were grouped under the theme "lacking self-control". In phase 4, the themes were regrouped, and some themes with similar contents were merged, resulting in 15 themes out of the initial 28. In phase 5, the 15 themes were classified into 7 overarching themes, which served as the materials on which the research was reported.

Table 1. **Themes of impoliteness**

Theme	Frequency	Description
Breaching honorifics	142	Violating linguistic etiquette encompasses breaching the complexities of speech levels relative to social standing, the use of proper social conduct alongside inappropriate speech levels, contradictions between courteous speech and nonverbal cues, discussions of sensitive topics in inappropriate contexts, and instances combining inappropriate speech levels with improper conduct.

Theme	Frequency	Description
Conducts against *andhap asor* ('self-deprecation')	21	Behaviours marked by an exaggerated sense of one's importance, abilities, or value, lacking humility and empathy towards others' perspectives. These also involve emphasising personal achievements, qualities, or status in ways perceived as excessive, self-centred, or arrogant, often seeking superiority or validation from others.
Conducts against *lembah manah* ('emotional restraint'):	31	Behaviours are characterised by difficulties in regulating impulses, emotions, or actions, impacting interpersonal relationships, decision-making, and overall well-being. Individuals may find it challenging to control impulses, manage emotional volatility, and maintain emotional equilibrium in different situations.
Conducts of *ora ngerti empan papan* ('not showing decorum')	42	The communication and behavioural tendencies are characterised by a disregard for social norms, expectations, and the comfort of others in various settings. These individuals overlook the impact of their actions on others' comfort or expectations, potentially causing disruption, discomfort, or offence in interpersonal interactions and social settings. Such behaviours extend beyond communication to include actions that do not adhere to accepted social norms, or expectations in various contexts, resulting in social discomfort, offence, or disruption of harmony in social interactions and public settings.
Conducts of *ora grapyak* ('unfriendliness')	18	Behaviours are characterised by exclusionary actions, abrasive communication styles, indirect expressions of hostility or resentment, and overt or covert displays of hostility or competition in social interactions.
Conducts attacking self-worth	17	Conducts attacking self-worth involve behaviours that directly target and undermine a person's self-image, self-worth, or dignity, causing lasting emotional and psychological effects. These behaviours include actions or speech that diminish the perceived competence, autonomy, or authority of others, leading to self-doubt and disempowerment. Additionally, they diminish individuals' value by undermining their efforts, abilities, opinions, or contributions, fostering feelings of inadequacy and reduced confidence. Such behaviours also aim to exert control or dominance over others by attacking their sense of self, creating an environment of fear, insecurity, and vulnerability that significantly impacts their well-being.
Conducts attacking feelings	23	The behaviours can hurt others' feelings as they target vulnerabilities, instil fear, undermine self-esteem, provoke defensiveness, escalate conflicts, and damage relationships. They can lead to lasting psychological harm like depression and trauma, creating a hurtful environment and diminishing individuals' dignity within social dynamics.

4. Results

4.1. Breaking unggah-ungguhing basa ('linguistic etiquette')

The following excerpt highlights impolite communication marked by a mismatch between the speaker's chosen *Ngoko* ('low level') and the addressee's relative social standing. The interviewee, a senior citizen, recounted an experience where a stranger approached him while he was gardening, using solely *Ngoko* to ask for directions. This, he explained, caused irritation as he felt it disrespectful, especially considering he was not a labourer as the stranger's language implied.

(1) *Pernah ada orang mendekati saya, dia tanya alamat, benar-benar nggak sopan, dia langsung tanya nggak, nggak pakai nuwun sewu, apalagi dia Ngoko ke saya. Saya mbatin, apa dia nggak tahu kalo saya ini udah tua atau mungkin pakaian saya yang kotor, kan waktu itu lagi berkebun, nganggep saya kayak buruh gitu mungkin mas, ya..paling tidak kan permisi dulu atau menggunakan bahasa yang baik, lha mosok sama orang tua kok Ngoko. Kalo saya lihat dia ya orang Jawa, karena dia dengan temannya juga ngomong pakai bahasa Jawa lancar. Tapi ya anehnya ya itu tadi, nggak ngerti unggah-ungguh. Ya gitulah mas orang sekarang, bertingkah aneh-aneh.* ('Once a person approached me and asked for directions. He was really impolite. He didn't say *nuwun sewu* ('a polite Javanese phrase for "excuse me") and even he used *Ngoko* (low level Javanese) to me. I thought to myself, 'Doesn't he know I'm old? Or maybe it is because my clothes were dirty. I was gardening at the time, so maybe he thought I was a labourer. At least he could have asked for permission or used polite language. How can he use *Ngoko* to an old person? From what I saw, he was Javanese because he spoke Javanese fluently with his friend. But the strange thing was, as I said before, he did not have any polite manners. That's how people are these days, behaving strangely').

The following excerpt highlights the misapplication of speech level, where the speaker adhered to proper social conduct during a conversation, but simultaneously employed an inappropriate speech level relative to the addressee's social status. The respondent explained that a fruit seller's attempt to be humble by rejecting her compliment, which is polite in Javanese, clashed with the informal *Ngoko* he used. This inconsistency has caused the buyer (the respondent) to feel uncomfortable.

(2) Interviewee: *Saya pernah membeli buah di dekat rumah, karena saya lihat toko buah itu ramai pengunjung, maka untuk basa-basi, saya puji "wah lumayan rame sanget nggih mas", kira-kira begitu. Penjualnya tersenyum dan menjawab pujian saya, sayangnya kok Ngoko, masak dengan pembeli kok sok akrab, rasanya bagaimana gitu. Lalu saya berubah pikiran, karena agak anyel, saya pergi dan tidak jadi beli.* ('Once I went to a fruit shop near my house. I saw the fruit shop was crowded with buyers, so I made small talk and praised the seller, "Wow, it is quite busy, isn't it, brother? The seller smiled and replied to my compliment. Unfortunately, he used *Ngoko* to me. I felt uncomfortable

because it seemed like he was trying to be too familiar with me. Feeling irritated, I changed my mind and left without buying anything').
Interviewer: *Memangnya apa yang dikatan bu, yang katanya Ngoko tadi?* ('what did the fruit seller say to you? you mentioned the fruit seller addressed you using *Ngoko*')
Interviewee: *Kurang lebih begini 'ora kok, biasa ae'* ('It is something like, 'no it is not, just as usual')

The excerpt below underscores that impoliteness extends beyond the use of inappropriate words. The respondent shared an experience in which she asked a student to help clean up scattered plastic bottles. Although the student used *Krama* language, the high tone of the student's response contradicted the intended politeness. The discord between words and delivery highlights how nonverbal cues can undermine polite speech.

(3) *Saya mengajar di kelas 8. Pernah saya minta tolong siswa membuang sampah botol plastik ke tempat sampah, dia cuma menjawab tapi tidak melakukannya. Ada juga yang mengiyakan tapi dengan nada tinggi. Meskipun menjawab 'nggih', tapi kalo suaranya tinggi kan seperti setengah hati. Saya kira seperti itu juga kurang santun karena berbicara dengan gurunya.* ('I teach 8th grade. Once, I asked a student to throw a plastic bottle into the trash can, but he only responded without taking action. Another student said 'yes' but in a high tone of voice. Although he said *nggih* (*Krama*: 'yes'), the high voice made it sound insincere. I think this was also impolite because he was speaking to his teacher').

The following excerpt demonstrates that impoliteness can arise from a synergistic combination of inappropriate speech level and non-linguistic transgressions, such as tone of delivery. Such transgression can create an unfavourable communication environment for the respondent.

(4) *Saya waktu itu di stasiun, ada orang yang tidak saya kenal dan dia Ngoko seperti.., apa ya istilahnya? Sulit mengatakannya. Begini, dia itu Ngoko dan sikapnya tidak seperti orang Jawa. Kan bisa kelihatan ya kalo orang Jawa dari cara membawakan diri, cara berbicaranya, cara menghormati lawan bicaranya. Pokoknya tidak ada hal-hal yang seperti itu. Dia seperti mengucapkan apa yang ia dengar sebelumnya, sehingga terasa tidak sopan sama sekali. Ora njawani, mungkin dia itu bukan orang Jawa, dan saya maklumi saja*. ('I was in a railway station. A stranger approached me, and he used *Ngoko*, and it was like..., what is the right term? It is hard to explain. It is like this, he used *Ngoko* and his demeanour was not like that of a Javanese. You can tell if someone is Javanese from the way they carry themselves, the way they speak, and the respect they show in conversations. But none of that was present. It felt like he was just mimicking what he had heard, and it did not sound polite at all. Maybe he was not Javanese, so I just let it go').

4.2. Transgressions of tata kram ('proper social conducts')

Violation of *tata krama*, known as *ora ngerti tata krama*, refers to a negative evaluation of a co-participant's behaviour that disregards the principles of *andhap asor* ('humility'), *lembah manah* ('emotional restraint'), *empan papan* ('decorum'), and *grapyak* ('friendliness').

The concept of Javanese *andhap asor* emphasizes humility and self-deprecation. However, some behaviours, as reported by respondents in this study (see Table 2), deviate from this principle. These behaviours, marked by arrogance, boastfulness, and lack of humility, contrast sharply with the essence of *andhap asor*. The following excerpt illustrates impoliteness arising from arrogance, where a senior lecturer criticized a junior colleague for displaying *sombong* ('arrogance') and *kemaki* ('overbearing confidence').

(5) Interviewee: *Contone ya kuwi pak, ana dosen peh okeh publikasiné lagake sombong. Sithik-sithik takon sudah berapa publikasinya? Yang terindek Scopus berapa?* ('For example, there is this lecturer who behaves arrogantly towards me because he has many publications. He boasts and repeatedly asks me questions, such as, 'how many publications do you have?' 'how many of your articles are indexed in Scopus?')
Interviewer: *Kok sombong?* ('Why do you think he is arrogant?')
Interviewee: *Dia bilang 'punya saya lolos terus. Kalo yang itu-itu saja yang dibahas ya mana ada yang mau, jan kemaki tenan koyo yok yo'o aé. Tiap ketemu sing diomongké kuwi-kuwi waé. Aku yo kadang jengkel. Tak pikir ngono kuwi suwé-suwé yo ora sopan.* ('He said 'my papers always get published. If you only discuss such common topics, they will never publish your work'. He acts so arrogantly as if he knows everything and is more superior than anyone else in publishing articles. Every time we meet, he brings up the same things. I often feel annoyed. To me, that behaviour is just impolite').

Table 2. **Conducts against *andhap asor* ('humility')**

Inflated Self-worth traits	1. *Angkuh,* ('Snobbishness, conceit, haughty') 2. *Sombong* ('Excessively proud displaying an attitude of superiority') 3. *Keminter* ('Assuming that one's knowledge and skills are superior') 4. *Beneré dhéwé* **('**Being narrow-minded and unwilling to consider other viewpoints') 5. *Menangé dhéwé* ('Lack of willingness to accept constructive feedback and acting as though s/he is always right')
Boasting and arrogant displays	1. *Nggleleng, kumenthus* or *kemethak* ('To show off haughtily') 2. *Gumedhé* ('Boastful') 3. *Nggolek wah* ('Engaging in actions solely to attract attention and compliments') 4. *Kemlinthi, kemaki* ('Swagger, or showing overbearing confidence') 5. *Seneng pamer* ('Constantly showing off personal details, emotions, and activities')

Javanese speakers commonly emphasize *lembah manah* ('emotional restraint'). Table 3 presents data showing behaviours that deviate from this ideal. These actions, characterized by a lack of self-control and inappropriate emotional expression, can lead to impolite communication.

The following excerpt illustrates that quick anger, known as *gampil duka* or *muntap*, is perceived as impolite. As the respondent noted, such behaviour can make others feel uncomfortable.

(6) *Wonten rencang kulo ingkang mboten sabaran. Piyambakipun gampil duka. Pun pokoke klentu ngendikan sekedhik kewawon langsung muntap, langsung ngegas. Nuwun sewu, tumindak kados menika, miturut kulo lo mas, nggih mboten saé, amargi saged ndamel tiyang sanes mboten sekeca*. ('I know a friend of mine who is always impatient. He often gets angry easily. If someone speaks to him in the wrong language, he quickly becomes very angry. In my opinion, such behaviour is inappropriate as it can make others uncomfortable').

Table 3. **Conducts against *lembah manah* ('emotional restraint')**

Lacking behavioural control	1. *Ora sabaran* ('Impatient') 2. *Grusa-grusu* ('Easily rushing into decisions or actions') 3. *Sembrana* ('To act recklessly or carelessly') 4. *Karepé dhéwé* ('Acting without considering consequences') 5. *Seneng nyalahaké* ('Constant complaining on the negative aspects of a situation') 6. *Meksa* ('Pushy and demanding') 7. *Lancang* ('Acting carelessly without consent') 8. *Nyusu-nyusu* ('Rushing other people without considering their needs or abilities') 9. *Seneng ngeyel* ('Stubborn and uncompromising')
Inability to manage emotions appropriately	1. *Crewet* ('Fussy or pernickety') 2. *Ngomel* ('Nagging') 3. *Nggrundel* ('Grumbling') 4. *Nesunan/gampang nesu* ('Temperamental, short-tempered') 5. *Ngamukan* ('Difficult to control anger') 6. *Cugetan* ('Easily getting angry and frustrated') 7. *Gampang muntap* ('Responding quickly and emotionally to situations')

The Javanese concept of *empan papan*, which refers to decorum, is essential for fostering respectful interactions. In communication, *empan papan* means adjusting one's behaviour according to the setting and situation (Poedjosoedarmo 2017: 4). Conversely, *ora ngerti empan papan* describes individuals who fail to consider their actions or social cues and behave inappropriately without contextual awareness. Table 4 outlines the behaviours of individuals lacking *empan papan*, as identified by the respondents in this study.

The following excerpt shows perceptions of impoliteness linked to disruptive behaviour during a community meeting, where a participant made a phone call. This act was perceived as inconsiderate and described as *kirang mangertos empan papan,* meaning behaving without an understanding of the appropriate setting and situation.

(7) *Rumiyin nalika rapat RW wonten piyantun ingkang nampi telpon, ngendikan kaliyan swanten ingkang radi sero. Tumindak mengaten menika nggih mboten sopan saestu mas. Wonten panggenan rapat malah nelpon meniko kados pundi, nggih kirang prayogi, piyambakipun kirang mangertos empan papan. Nggih to mas? Mewani nelpon prayoginipun nggih kedah medal rumiyin supados mboten nggangu.* ('I remember an incident that happened a long time ago. During a neighbourhood association (*Rukun Warga* or *RW*) meeting, someone made a loud phone call. Such behaviour is very impolite, brother. How could someone make a call during a meeting like that? In my opinion, it was quite inappropriate; the person did not seem to consider the surroundings. Don't you agree, brother? If someone needs to make a call, they should step outside first so as not to disturb others who are in the meeting').

Table 4. **Conducts of *ora ngerti empan papan ('failing to show decorum')***

Inappropriate communication based on settings or situations.	1. *Bengak-bengok* ('Speaking loudly in places where people typically expect quietness') 2. *Ramé dhéwé* ('Having loud conversations during performances, presentations, or lectures, etc.') 3. *Ngomong sero ing papan panggonan umum* ('Speaking loudly in public places') 4. *Misuh sembarangan* ('Swearing indiscriminately') 5. *Waton ngomong* ('Speaking carelessly') 6. *Ngomong saru ing papan panggonan umum* ('Talking about obscenity or taboo, talking with vulgar language in public places') 7. *Nyeneni ing ngarepé wong liya* ('Scolding someone in front of others') 8. *Ngritik ing ngarepé wong liya* ('Criticising someone in front of others') 9. *Ngganggu wong liya nalika dheweké lagi ngomong* ('Interrupting others while they are talking') 10. *Nelpon ora ngerti wayah* ('Making calls at inappropriate times/situation')
Inappropriate behaviours based on settings and situations.	1. *Nagih utang ing ngarepé wong liya* ('Collecting debts in front of others') 2. *Gojegan ing papan sripahan* ('Joking at a funeral ceremony') 3. *Ngguyu sero ing papan sripahan* ('Laughing loudly at funeral ceremony') 4. *Ngonekké musik sero tengah wengi* ('Playing loud music at night') 5. *Ngguyu sero ing papan panggonan umum* ('Laughing loudly in public places') 6. *Mertamu ora ngeri wayah* ('Paying a visit at an inconvenient time') 7. *Motong antrian* ('Cutting the line') 8. *Nganggo klambi sing ora pantes* ('Wearing inappropriate clothes') 9. *Ndusal-ndusel nggawé wong liya ora kepénak* ('Invading someone's personal space without regard for their comfort')

The concept of Javanese *grapyak*, commonly referring to friendliness, embodies openness of hearts, welcoming smiles, and a genuine desire to connect with others. This inherent friendliness manifests in various ways, including offering warm greetings, acknowledging others' successes or prosperity, and engaging in friendly conversations (Widiana et al. 2020: 42–52). However, this valued trait can be unintentionally breached due to various factors. Intentional displays of unfriendliness can result in impolite communication. Drawing on the respondents' insights (as presented in Table 5), various acts that can breach *grapyak* are identified. The following interview data shows a perception of impoliteness, particularly regarding the act of disregarding others. One participant explained that failing to greet others is perceived as a sign of disrespect toward interlocutors.

(8) *Wong sing ora sopan sak iki ya akeh mas, aku ngalami dhewé, contoné wong sing ora gelem aruh-aruh, biasané wong kaya ngono iki ora duwé kanca. Conto liyané, wong sing ora ngajeni wong liya, lagi dijak ngomong malah ndelok HP, jan nganyelké.* ('Bro, rude folks are everywhere these days. I have experienced it myself, like, some folks just won't say hi, you know? And usually, those types don't have many buddies. And then there are the ones who won't put down their mobile phones when they are talking to you. So annoying, right?).

Table 5. **Conducts of *ora grapyak ('Unfriendly')***

Exclusionary behaviours	1. *Ora gelem srawung* ('Unwilling to socialise with others') 2. *Nyinkiraké* ('Actively excluding someone from social activities or conversations') 3. *Ora gelem cedhak* ('Aloof')
Verbal aggression	1. *Cekak lan ketus* ('Curt') 2. *Nylekit* ('A tendency towards harshness and severity in speech') 3. *Kasar* ('Gruff')
Passively aggressive behaviours	1. *Ngenengké* ('Giving the silent treatment') 2. *Ora nyapa* ('Walking past someone without acknowledging their presence'). 3. *Ora njawab salam* ('Failing to respond to greetings') 4. *Ora ngreken* ('Disregarding someone's presence, opinions, or feelings'). 5. *Ora nganggep* ('Ignoring someone or treating someone as invisible') 6. *Mbesengut, mrengut* ('Using a frown to show dislike')
Competitiveness	1. *Musuhi* ('Showing hostility') 2. *Satru, nyatru* ('Silent rivalry')

Ngajeni, meaning to respect others' self-worth, is a central value in Javanese culture. Its opposite, *ora ngajeni*, refers to behaviours that undermine this principle. This includes inappropriate speech levels (e.g., omitting *Krama*), neglecting honorifics, disregarding respectful gestures, and attacking another's *aji* ('self-worth'), targeting the core of their identity. Table 6 outlines such behaviours identified by the respondents. The following excerpt exemplifies this, as a respondent recounted feeling disrespected by a new colleague's *mentang-mentang* ('patronizing') and *ngécé* ('scornful behaviour').

(9) Interviewee: *Bukuku dipindah ora taren, paling ora kan diomogké dhisik, lah iki ora. Ora bener ngéné iki. Tur omongané yo kasar karo bocah-bocah iki, peh njabat ora ngajeni wong liya. Wong iki mentang-mentang, omongané kadang-kadang kaya ngécé, ora sopan blas.* ('My books were removed from my office without any prior notification. What he did is not right. Moreover, he spoke rudely to the staff members. Just because he holds a position, he does not respect others. This person also speaks patronisingly and often scornfully, not polite at all').
Interviewer: *Kok ngécé, memang apa yang dia katakan pak?* ('Why do you think he is scornful? What did he say?')
Interviewee: *Sekarang jaman digital, paling tidak ya ebooks lah.* ('He said, 'Nowadays it is the digital era, at least you have to use e-books'').

Table 6. **Conducts attacking *aji* ('self-worth')**

Attack the core of one's self-image	1. *Ngenyek* ('Humiliate, express contempt, or disdain towards someone'). 2. *Ngécé* ('Scorn') 3. *Ngina* ('Insult') 4. *Mledhingi* ('Moon or exhibit one's buttocks') 5. *Ngiwi-iwi* ('Mock playfully') 6. *Ngisin-isin* ('Shaming')
Undermine confidence and agency	1. *Nantang* ('Challenge') 2. *Mentang-mentang* ('Speak condescendingly or patronisingly')
Diminish the individual's value	1. *Ngasoraké* ('Put others down, make disparaging comments, or intentionally undermine the efforts and abilities of others') 2. *Nyepelekaké, ngemingké* ('Belittle, denigrate, overlook'). 3. *Nggeguyu* ('Belittle playfully and dismiss the opinions and contributions of others') 4. *Misuhi* ('Swearing at others') 5. *Nyentak* ('Yelling at others')
Dismantle the individual's sense of self	1. *Maneni* ('Taunt') 2. *Ngancam* ('Threat')

Javanese culture emphasizes maintaining *rasa* ('emotional well-being') and avoiding actions that could hurt someone's feelings (*nglarani ati*) in daily interactions (Geertz 1976: 242). However, open conflicts are an exception where norms shift, and intentionally upsetting feelings becomes a strategy. This often targets the emotional core, directly inflicting pain and disrupting the opponent's emotional equilibrium. Behaviours such as *nyinggung* ('offend'), *misuhi* ('swear at others'), and *nyentak* ('yell') can target the emotional core, causing pain and destabilizing the opponent. Other acts, such as *maneni* ('taunt'), *ngancam* ('threaten'), *nantang* ('challenge'), *ngécé* ('mock'), and *ngenyek* ('humiliate'), further inflict emotional harm (see Table 6).

In a heated quarrel or *padu*, people often use derogatory language and gestures, and they use informal *Ngoko* to attack each other irrespective of their status. The use of *Ngoko* can place both parties on an equal footing, enabling them to engage in rough (*kasar*) communication. Pejorative words and animalistic insults such as *asu* or *kirik* ('dog'), *babi* ('pig'), *kethek* or *munyuk* ('monkey') and many others become commonplace, directly attacking the recipient's self-worth and emotional state. In the following excerpt, a respondent narrated that his neighbour had a heated quarrel.

(10) Interviewee: *Kalo sekarang udah jarang, mungkin orang sekarang pada sibuk jadi tak punya waktu untuk ngrasani ataupun bentrok dengan orang lain. Dulu pernah ada tetangga yang bertengkar ramai sekali, tapi sudah lama.* ('It is rare these days, maybe because people are too busy, and they do not have time to gossip or quarrel with others. There used to be neighbours who quarrelled very loudly, but that was a long time ago').
Interviewer: *Kalo padu begitu, apa yang mereka dikatakan?* ('What did they say to each other?').
Interviewee: *Ya kalo orang sini biasanya saling membentak, misuhi dengan kata-kata kotor, bawa-bawa nama hewan, seperti, asu.* ('Well, people here usually yell and curse at each other, and call each other using animal names like dog').

5. Discussion

The study investigated communication strategies that violate *unggah-ungguhing basa* ('linguistic etiquette') and examined specific behaviours that breach *tata krama* ('proper social conduct'), potentially harming *rasa* and *aji*, the core emotional and self-respectful elements of Javanese social interaction.

The present study indicates that impoliteness arises not only from breaching linguistic etiquette but also from violating Javanese proper social conduct. Five specific strategies encompass these transgressions: (1) Speech level mismatch: Communication characterized by a discrepancy between the speaker's chosen speech level (e.g., *Ngoko, Madya, Krama*) and the addressee's social status. This dissonance is reflected in verbal communication (word choice, grammar) and nonverbal cues. (2) Misapplication of speech levels: Using proper linguistic etiquette in a conversation, but employing an inappropriate speech level relative to the addressee's social status. (3) Dissonance between linguistic etiquette and delivery: Speakers use appropriate speech levels, but their tone of voice, body language, or other nonverbal cues contradict the intended courteousness. (4) Inappropriate topics: Discussing sensitive, offensive, or taboo topics in contexts that violate social norms or situational expectations. In such cases, the inappropriate topic choice can supersede even the most refined speech or linguistic etiquette, making communication ineffective or harmful. (5) Combined transgressions: The most severe form of disrespectful communication occurs when both inappropriate speech levels and improper social conduct are present. This convergence of linguistic and non-linguistic violations can damage interpersonal relationships and create a hostile communication environment.

The present study affirms that *tata krama* and *unggah-ungguhing basa* are norms of appropriateness that serve as benchmarks for polite communication in Javanese. Violating *tata krama* and *unggah-ungguhing basa* leads to judgements of impoliteness. This finding aligns with previous studies (e.g., Locher & Watts 2008, Watts 2003), indicating that judgements of politeness or impoliteness are not solely determined by the words used, but are also influenced by adherence to social norms and expectations. Culpeper (2008: 29–30) contends that the evaluation of impoliteness considers not only individual experiential norms but also broader social norms that dictate accepted behaviours or conduct within a community. However, according to Locher and Watts (2008: 81), the norms governing interpersonal interaction are flexible and subject to change across diverse social contexts and practices. Meanwhile, in Javanese, at least according to the emerging data of this study, the evaluation of im/politeness is predominantly guided by *tata krama* and *unggah-ungguhing basa*.

Excerpt (6) provides evidence for the concept of self-emotion mismanagement (Işık-Güler & Ruhi 2010) and emotional insensitivity (emotive impoliteness) as outlined by Larina and Ponton (2022), showing how an inability to control emotions can lead to the perception of impoliteness in the speaker. The excerpt demonstrates how impoliteness is assessed based on individuals' difficulty in managing emotions appropriately, with additional behaviours summarised in Table 3, under the category of 'Inability to manage emotions appropriately'. These behaviours are deemed impolite due to their tendency to disregard the feelings of others. This finding also aligns with Wijayanto, Hikmat, and Prasetyarini's (2018) study, which reported that impoliteness can arise from negative emotions such as anger and annoyance.

Several behavioural patterns observed among the Javanese closely resemble Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness strategies, suggesting that certain aspects of Javanese impoliteness align with his framework. For instance, several behaviours summarised in Table 6 essentially correspond to Culpeper's (1996) concept of negative impoliteness. However, the Javanese demonstrate variability in expressing Culpeper's *condescension, scorn*, or *ridicule.* Additionally, Culpeper's (1996) positive impoliteness strategies, such as being *disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic* and *ignoring* are largely reflected in Javanese passively aggressive behaviours, as summarised in Table 5. These behaviours include *ngenengké* ('giving the silent treatment'), *ora nyapa* ('walking past someone without acknowledging their presence'), *ora njawab salam* ('ignoring greetings'), *ora ngreken* ('displaying a lack of interest in someone's presence or opinions'), and *ora nganggep* ('ignoring someone or making them feel invisible'). Culpeper's (1996) strategy of *snubbing the other*, which implies deliberate rejection, is reflected in behaviours such as *ora gelem srawung* ('unwillingness to socialise with others'), *nyinkiraké* ('actively excluding someone from social activities or conversations'), *ora gelem cedhak* ('deliberately showing aloofness') and *satru* ('silent rivalry'). The practice of *satru* or silent rivalry in Javanese can endure for extended periods, varying from a few days among children to many years among adults. While this conduct is evaluated as impolite by the research participants, this practice serves as a valuable mechanism for discouraging hostility. By maintaining a silent rivalry, individuals can indirectly address their feelings while avoiding direct and potentially harmful confrontations (Geertz 1961: 117–118).

Another finding, as shown in excerpt (3), shows that prosodic features, such as high intonation can contribute to the perception of impoliteness, as reported by previous research (e.g., Culpeper et al. 2003). The respondent stated that the student's use of high-pitched intonation while addressing a teacher was perceived as impolite. A similar finding was reported by several previous studies reporting impoliteness among young Javanese (e.g., Atmawati 2021, Setyawan 2018, Sujono et al. 2019). Although this might indicate shifts in communication standards among the younger Javanese, it is important to interpret the findings with caution. Understanding the Javanese language etiquette takes effort, and young Javanese individuals who conduct unintentional impoliteness are often forgiven, as they are considered *durung (n)jawa*, meaning they have not yet fully embraced the Javanese way of life (Magnis-Suseno 1997).

The perception of unintentional impoliteness differs for *dudu jawa* ('non-Javanese individuals'). Their transgressions are often met with more understanding, as seen in excerpt (4) where the respondent reacted with leniency towards the impolite behaviour. Even native Javanese speakers can be forgiven, as shown in excerpt (1). This reflects the Javanese value of maintaining harmony and avoiding conflict, which contributes to the cultural goal of social tranquillity. While such impoliteness can cause *anyel* ('irritation'), those who behave impolitely are more likely to be considered *aneh-aneh* ('strange') (see excerpt 1) or *ora njawani* ('not acting like a Javanese') (see excerpt 4).

Javanese intentional impoliteness commonly emerges in heated quarrels in which people attack each other by using bad language or pejoratives. However, unlike other cultures where *face* is the primary target (e.g., Bousfield 2007, Culpeper 1996, Dynel 2012), Javanese attacks focus on deeper aspects: *aji*, the individual's sense of self-worth, and *rasa*, their emotional well-being. These vulnerabilities are particularly susceptible to the sting of verbal aggression, making Javanese conflict resolution a unique and impactful experience. Unlike Brown and Levinson's (1987: 2) concept of self-esteem, which is more about how a person feels about themselves in relation to others or the social world that is constructed through interpersonal interaction, the Javanese *aji* ('self-worth') refers to an inherent sense of dignity and value as a human being, independent of external validation or societal standards.

While behaviours listed in the tables above may exhibit cultural specificity in the Javanese context, many align with universal understandings of rudeness or impoliteness. For instance, speaking loudly in places where people typically expect quietness is generally considered rude in most cultures, as it disrupts the peace expected in such settings. Having loud conversations during meetings, presentations, or lectures, where others are trying to listen or focus, is generally considered impolite. Additionally, making phone calls at inappropriate times (as seen in excerpt 7) is widely regarded as rude or disrespectful across many cultures. Therefore, the behaviours listed in the tables above may reflect tendencies to breach social norms or linguistic etiquette, which can vary across cultures. However, they generally align in terms of what is considered rude behaviour.

It is important to note that this research was conducted with a limited number of Javanese participants, potentially affecting the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, this paper is not an analysis of real-time data but rather a result of interviews focusing on the perception and construction of impoliteness within the Javanese context, as reported by the respondents of this research. Despite these constraints, the insights gained from the research participants offer valuable perspectives on the dynamics of impoliteness within the Javanese context. Moving forward, future studies could explore alternative methodologies or broader sampling strategies to further investigate impoliteness in Javanese contexts, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of impoliteness phenomena beyond the specific limitations encountered in this study. Additionally, the perception of impoliteness among different genders and age groups was not thoroughly examined in this study. Therefore, exploring and comparing perceptions of impoliteness based on gender and age would be essential for future research.

6. Conclusion

The present study examines impoliteness in Javanese through the interpretations or perceptions of laypeople and reveals a complex interplay between language, societal norms, and individual perspectives. The narratives provided by the Javanese respondents reveal the multifaceted nature of impoliteness, encompassing not only linguistic etiquette violations but also breaches of social conduct, all of which contribute to impolite communication experiences.

Impoliteness in Javanese can be either unintentional or intentional. Unintentional impoliteness, often referred to as rudeness in literature, occurs when linguistic etiquette is violated. This study identifies various manifestations of this phenomenon, including speech level mismatch, misapplication of speech levels, dissonance between linguistic etiquette and delivery, the discussion of inappropriate topics, and combined transgressions of *tata krama* and *unggah-ungguhing basa*. By contrast, intentional impoliteness occurs when speakers intentionally attack others' self-worth and feelings or emotional well-being through derogatory language and insults. However, due to the limited availability of data on intentional impoliteness in heated quarrels or *padu*, further research is needed to explore behaviours that specifically target self-worth and emotional states. Overall, this study provides valuable insights into the complex factors shaping laypersons' judgments of impolite communication in Javanese.

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Article history:
Received: 18 February 2024
Accepted: 25 January 2025

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Russian Journal of Linguistics
ISSN 2687-0088 (Print), ISSN 2686-8024 (Online)

2025 Vol. 29 No. 2 409–431
http://journals.rudn.ru/linguistics

https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-39624
EDN: KXAJEY

Research article / Научная статья

Linguistic (in)visibility in Islamabad's landscape: A nexus analysis of policies, practices and perceptions

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Abstract
The linguistic landscape (LL) in multilingual communities often reflects the complex relationship of language policies, practices, and people's perceptions of these policies and practices. This complex policy-practice-perception nexus leads to questions of linguistic inclusivity in contexts such as Pakistan. This study, therefore, attempted to find the nexus of spatial practices, language policies, and residents' perceptions of language use in the LL of Islamabad. To improve the structure of the highlighted sentence, it may be rewritten as: Data included a sample of 1213 pictures collected from Islamabad; text from the Pakistani constitution, parliamentary debates, and political talk shows; and three focus group discussions with the local residents. A nexus analysis of the data (Hult 2018) was carried out to see the extent of correspondence among the three data sets. The findings revealed that English, Urdu, and Arabic remain the most visible languages (respectively) in the LL of Islamabad, and the indigenous languages lack visibility. The macro-level language policies were also found to promote the three languages, deeming them necessary for the constitutional and ideological makeup of Pakistan. The residents, too, tended to favour the use of these languages in the LL of Islamabad, despite their demonstration of affection for their native languages. The findings of the study have serious implications for the Pakistani indigenous languages, and indicate a need for inclusive language policies and awareness initiatives to protect linguistic diversity in Pakistan.

Key words: *linguistic landscape, language policy, nexus analysis, multilingual communities, indigenous languages, Pakistan*

For citation:
Hussain, Turab, Muhammad Haseeb Nasir & Aziz Khan. 2025. Linguistic (in)visibility in Islamabad's landscape: A nexus analysis of policies, practices and perceptions. *Russian Journal of Linguistics* 29 (2). 409–431. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-39624

Языковой ландшафт Исламабада: анализ взаимосвязи политики, практики и восприятия

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Аннотация
Языковой ландшафт (ЯЛ) в многоязычных сообществах часто отражает сложную взаимосвязь между языковой политикой, языковыми практиками и их восприятием населением, что ставит вопрос о языковой инклюзивности. В данной работе предпринята попытка выявить связь между представленностью языка в городском пространстве Исламабада, проводимой языковой политикой и восприятием жителями использования языка в ЯЛ. Материалом для исследования послужили: выборка из 1213 фотографий, сделанных в Исламабаде; тексты из конституции Пакистана, парламентских дебатов, политических ток-шоу и дискуссии, проведенные с тремя фокус-группами местных жителей. Полученные данные были проанализированы с помощью триадной модели ЯЛ Трампера-Хехта (Trumper-Hecht 2010). С целью определить степень их соответствия был проведен нексус-анализ (Hult 2018). Результаты показали, что наиболее заметными языками в ЯЛ Исламабада остаются английский, урду и арабский, в то время как коренные языки находятся на заднем плане. Языковая политика на макроуровне также содействует распространению этих трех языков, считая их необходимыми для конституционного и идеологического устройства Пакистана. Было выявлено, что местные жители, несмотря на их привязанность к своим родным языкам, также приветствуют использование этих трех языков в ЯЛ Исламабада. Результаты исследования имеют важное значение для коренных языков Пакистана и указывают на необходимость проведения инклюзивной языковой политики и просветительских мероприятий по защите языкового разнообразия.
Ключевые слова: *языковой ландшафт, языковая политика, нексус-анализ, многоязычные сообщества, коренные языки, Пакистан*

Для цитирования:
Hussain T., Nasir M.H., Khan A. Linguistic (in)visibility in Islamabad's landscape: A nexus analysis of policies, practices and perceptions. *Russian Journal of Linguistics.* 2025. Vol. 29. № 2. P. 409–431. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-39624

1. Introduction

The current study explores the linguistic landscape (LL) of Islamabad from the perspectives of language policies and residents' perceptions of language use in public spaces. Islamabad is the federal capital of Pakistan. In terms of population composition, it is the most diverse metropolitan and multinational city in Pakistan, which shapes its linguistic landscape.

In a rich societal multilingual context like Pakistan, studying the linguistic landscape is important to understand concerns about language policies, spatial practices, and the community's attitude towards language use in public spaces. Previous LL researchers (e.g. Hovens 2021, Motschanbacher 2024, Negro 2008, Yavari 2012) focused on the relationship between language policies and spatial practices. The interplay of policies, spatial practices, and residents' perceptions of spatial practices shaping the LL of a region, on the other hand, has received little scholarly attention. The current study addresses this gap by exploring the nexus of spatial practice, language policies, and residents' perceptions of language use in public spaces in Islamabad.

"Linguistic landscape" refers to the presence of instances of written language on billboards, signboards, shop signs, safety signs, road and street signs, and all other sorts of signs in public spaces. LL, a growing field of sociolinguistics and language policy and planning (e.g., Blommaert 2013, Landry & Bourhis 1997, Yelenevskaya & Fialkova 2017, among others), helps us to understand the social, cultural, and political structure of a society (Blommaert 2013). Thus, space becomes a primary concern in LL studies, and is considered a sociopolitical rather than a physical phenomenon. Importantly, LL is indexical as well as informational. It is indexical in the sense that it alludes to the presence (or absence) of a linguistic community in a particular space (Alomoush 2015, Landry & Bourhis 1997). LL is symbolic in the sense that it is a marker of sociolinguistic dynamism, marginalization, and the relative status and power of languages and their varieties (Ben-Rafael, Shohamy & Barni 2010).

Additionally, linguistic landscape is indexically and symbolically linked to language policies on the one side, and language perceptions on the other. LL reflects explicit and implicit language policies as well the language use within a given community (Hueber 2006, Negro 2008). LL studies (see, e.g., Backhaus 2007, Gorter 2006, Jaworski & Thurlow 2010, Shohamy & Gorter 2009) consider the visibility and invisibility of languages as an outcome of socio-historical and sociopolitical processes—policies and practices. Research studies in LL have explored various domains like language policy (e.g., Cenoz & Gorter 2006, Coluzzi 2009), language ideologies (e.g., Shohamy & Gorter 2009, Shohamy, Ben-Rafael & Barni 2010), globalization and linguistic dominance of English (e.g., Tan & Tan 2015), visibility and invisibility of indigenous languages (e.g., Amos 2017, Marten, Mensel & Gorter 2012), and the role of the visual environment in the discursive construction of multilingual settings.

The relative symbolic values of languages are obvious from the absence or presence of some languages in LL (Shohamy 2006) and contribute to shaping the sense of place in a city (Jaworski & Yeung 2010). Much of the LL research is conducted on the visual environment as a manifestation of historical impacts and contemporary language policies and practices (Pietikainen et al. 2010). Trumper-Hecht (2010), however, points to the lack of the local community voice as the missing link in the existing LL research, whereas Hult (2018) identifies the need for an analysis of the nexus of policies, processes, and practices for a true understanding of the language situation in a polity. This becomes more important in metropolitan cities where the linguistic landscape is increasingly becoming multilingual, with minority languages vying for spaces, especially on private signage.

Introducing a triad theoretical model for LL studies, Trumper-Hecht (2010) argues that *spatial practice* (distribution of languages in linguistic landscape), *conceived space* (ideologies and beliefs contained in the views of policies and policymakers) and *lived space* (ordinary people's perceptions about language use in public spaces), are of equal importance when exploring linguistic landscapes. Adding to this, and drawing from Scollon and Scollon (2004), Hult (2018) proposes an analysis of the nexus between *discourses in place* (relationship among languages in the policy documents), *historical body* (people's beliefs and experiences of language use and *interactional order* (the use of language in linguistic landscape). The current study, therefore, taking Trumper-Hecht's (2010) theoretical stance and Hult's (2018) analytical stance on linguistic landscapes, aims to investigate the nexus between spatial practice (linguistic landscapes), language policy, and people's perceptions of language use in public spaces with a particular focus on the linguistic dominance of English and newly emerging languages (or their varieties) in the rich multicultural and multilingual context of Islamabad.

In the context of Pakistan, although LL research is not scarce, many studies overlook the crucial connection between LL practices and language policies. There is a scarcity of studies that examine the nexus among the three interconnected domains of LLs: policies, practices and perceptions. Furthermore, there is need for studies that provide a richer account of the dynamics of LLs in urban metropolitan cities, such as Islamabad. While English and Urdu are undoubtedly the dominant languages in the LL, it is important to explore the degree to which this dominance aligns with broader language policies and local perceptions. Additionally, it is worth investigating whether there are any emerging linguistic varieties or indigenous languages visible in the LL, and how such visibility connects (or disconnects) with policymaking and public perceptions.

The current study aims to explore spatial practice, language policy and residents' perception of language use in public spaces in Islamabad. To analyze the relationship among the three interconnected dimensions of the linguistic landscape, i.e. spatial practice, residents' perceptions, and language policy, we designed a qualitative exploratory research study, underpinned by an interpretivist epistemological paradigm (Lincoln & Guba 2003).

The research questions of the study are:

1. In what ways do language policies shape language use in the public spaces of Islamabad?
2. What are the perceptions of the local populace towards the choice of languages in spatial practices?
3. What are the (dis)connects across the practices-perceptions-policy nexus?

2. Theoretical and analytical frameworks

The theoretical framework for this study comes from Trumper-Hecht (2010), who identified the need to add a third dimension to the existing research on the linguistic landscape. Drawing from Lefebvre (1991), Trumper-Hecht (2010) presents three interrelated dimensions of space i.e., 'spatial practice,' 'conceived space,' and 'lived space.' According to Trumper-Hecht, spatial practice is the human action that takes place in physical space. Conceived space is the space conceptualized by powerful social groups including politicians, technocrats, policymakers, and planners. The third dimension, lived space, is the experiential dimension of space. Space is conceptualized and experienced by its inhabitants in the form of symbols displayed in the landscape. Following Lefebvre, LL as a 'sociolinguistic-spatial phenomenon' can be studied by observing these dimensions and the way they are connected. Spatial practice, i.e. physical dimension of space, is the presence or absence of languages on public signs and can be documented through a camera. Conceived space, i.e. political dimension, can be analyzed through the conceptualization and ideologies held by powerful social groups whose policies and planning shape the LL of a region. The third dimension, 'lived space' is experiential and can be examined through the experience with and perception of language use in linguistic landscape. In order to get a more comprehensive understanding of LL, exploration of all these dimensions and the way they are interconnected is required.

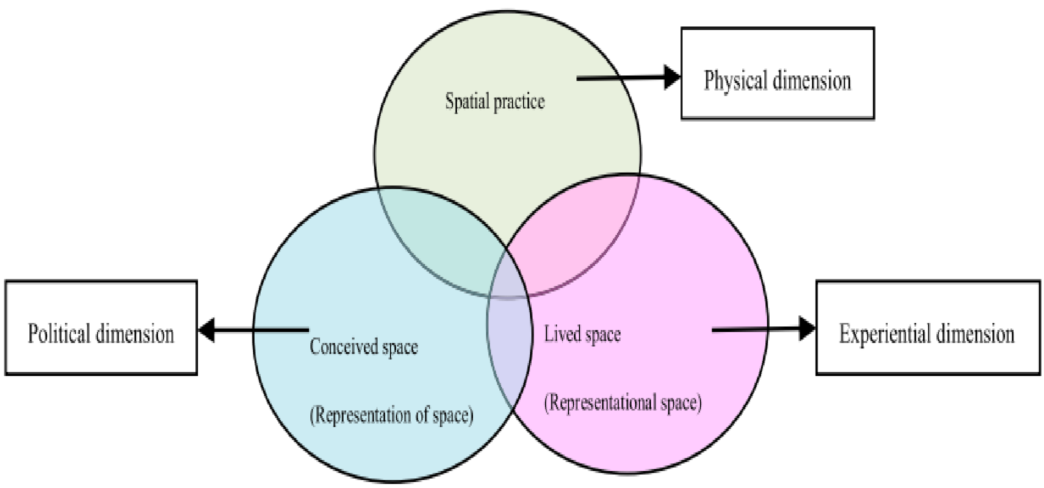

Figure 1. A triad model adapted from Lefebvre (1991) and Trumper-Hecht (2010)

The analytical framework used for this study is borrowed from Scollon and Scollon (2004) and Hult (2018). Drawing on Scollon and Scollon (2004), Hult (2018) recommends a nexus analysis of 'discourses in place,' 'interaction order,' and 'historical body' to be able to get a true account of the language dynamics of a state. The first aspect, 'discourses in place,' is related to a relationship among languages in the policy documents, ideologies of language in *de jure* policies, shared knowledge in *de facto* policies, the layout of physical space, and artifacts shaping policy making and interpretation. 'Historical body' refers to the lived experiences of actors. It is related to people's beliefs about languages, experiences with language policies, and norms of making and implementing policies. The third discourse, i.e. discourse of 'interactional order', is related to a relationship among actors at an interpersonal and an institutional level. Interactional order is relevant to patterns of interaction in a setting or context and modalities (writing, speaking, signage, and visuals).

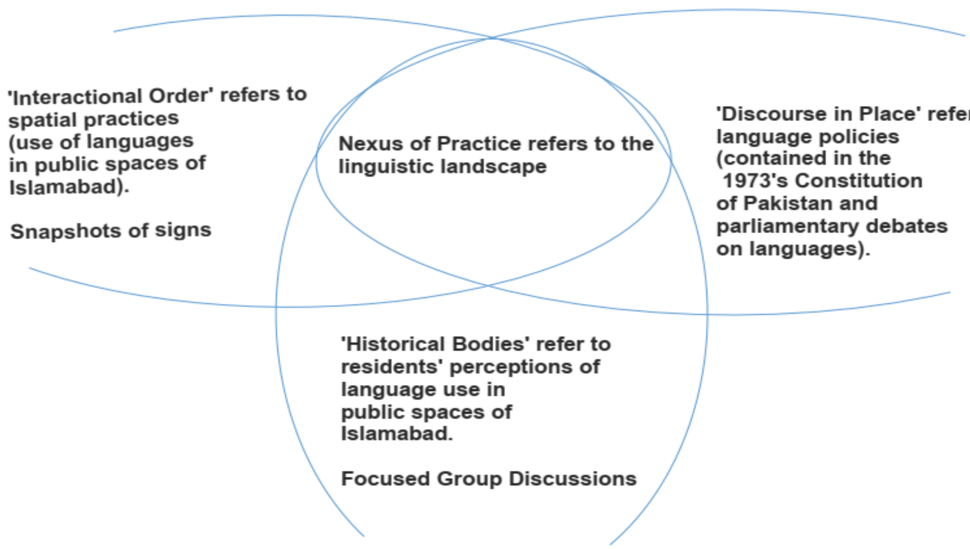

Figure 2. Nexus Analysis adapted from Hult (2018)

3. Data and methods

The current study aims to analyze three related dimensions—spatial practice, conceived space, and the lived space—of the LL. For the exploration of these dimensions, data were collected in the form of language policy documents, LL images, and focused group discussions with the local populace. Further, Hult (2018) and Scollon and Scollon (2004) discuss three types of discourses in nexus analysis, i.e. 'discourse in place', 'interactional order' and 'historical body'. To observe discourses in place, language policy documents (Constitution of Pakistan (1973)) were analyzed; for interactional order, snapshots taken with a digital camera were analysed; and for historical body, focused group discussions were analysed. Data collection

3.1. Context and snapshots

The selection of the context is the initial stage in LL research (Scollon & Scollon 2004). Our study was delimited to Islamabad. To get an idea of the spatial practice in the city, we targeted sectors such as I-8, G-9, G-10, F-7, F-8, F-10, Blue

Area, Melody Market, and Abpara Market of the city (See Figure 3). These sectors were selected as they have densely populated markets. We marked survey areas in these markets. For marking the geographical boundaries of the survey area, we relied on Tufi and Blackwood (2010) and Blackwood (2011), who proposed a stretch of 50 continuous meters as a survey area. A sample of 1213 pictures was collected from all sectors.

For the unit of analysis, the current study uses the definition of LL by Landry and Bourhis (1997) and includes fixed signs only. Additionally, the study was limited to private signs including commercial signs, political signs, religious signs, and graffiti. Government signs (top-down signs) directly reflect language policies, and our aim was to examine the influence of state language policies on private linguistic practices – spatial practices. Therefore, we limited our study to private signs. Moreover, private signs represent a bottom-up linguistic landscape, reflecting the language preferences of business owners, advertisers, and the general public. Unlike government signage, which follows official language policies, private signage is shaped by socioeconomic, cultural, and consumer-driven factors. By studying private signs, we could assess whether language policy is aligned with actual linguistic preferences in public spaces or whether there is a disconnect.

Figure 3. Survey Areas on the map of Islamabad

The red arrows on the map of Islamabad show the survey areas and data collection sites.

3.2. Focused group discussions

In order to elicit responses from the respondents about language use in public spaces, three focused group discussions were recorded. Through a careful sampling technique, seven participants for Group 1 were recruited, eight for Group 2, and seven for Group 3 to ensure representation from different social, linguistic, and professional backgrounds. The focused group discussions were formed in different survey areas, including I-8 Markaz, G-9 Markaz and Abpara Market of Islamabad. The age of the participants varies from 25 to 45 years. The participants were speakers of different languages including Punjabi, Sindhi, Saraiki, Pashto, Potohari, and Balti. The participants were from different professional backgrounds, such as business owners, shopkeepers, students, nurses, daily wagers, and teachers. Due to cultural sensitivity, we were unable to recruit female participants in the focused groups of the study. It was challenging to make a group of participants for discussion. However, we found it convenient to form a group of people at tea bars, juice corners, and cafes. The researchers invited participants for discussion by offering small gifts and tea, juice, or fast food. The discussions were recorded in Urdu as it serves as a lingua franca in Islamabad. The discussions with each group took 40 to 55 minutes. We played the role of facilitators during the discussion. Arguments among the participants were helpful in carrying on discussions. We did not have any specific set of questions except three to four questions related to participants' perceptions of language use in public spaces and language policies of Pakistan. While conducting focused group discussions, the researcher would suspend photographic data collection ensuring that the participants and researchers had a dedicated space for discussion.

3.3. Language policy documents and parliamentarians' interviews

Linguistic landscape displays the traces of historical and contemporary language policies, including those that are explicit as well as those that are implicitly implemented (Backhaus 2007, Shohamy 2010). We downloaded the Constitution of Pakistan (1973) from the government of Pakistan's website (www.gov.pk) and searched parliamentarians' debates and interviews on language-related matters to understand the language policies of Pakistan. The YouTube channel of Parliament TV was searched for speeches. The news channels, such asGeo News, ARY News and Dawn News, were searched for parliamentarians' interviews on the matters of languages.

3.4. Data analysis

According to Hult (2018), there are three types of discourses in nexus analysis: 'discourses in place', 'interactional order' and 'historical body'. To observe discourses in place, we analyzed language policy documents and parliamentarians' debates and interviews on the matters of languages; for interactional order, we analyzed snapshots taken with a digital camera; and for historical body, focused group discussions with participants were analyzed. The results are given below.

3.5. Snapshots

The unit of analysis, i.e. snapshots of signs, included signs of street names, business names, posters displayed on shop gates and walls, billboards and noticeboards, signs displayed on private institution buildings, and announcements captured with a digital camera. They were classified into three groups: monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual. For this study, monolingual signs use one language, bilingual signs use two, and multilingual signs use more than two. Our interpretation of a multilingual sign is different from the the existing understanding as reflected in Backhaus (2006) and Lia (2013). The categorization of the unit of analysis allowed us to analyze the visibility and invisibility of language use in public places.

The figures below display examples of monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual signs.

Figure 4. An examples of a Monolingual sign

Figure 4 displays an examples of a monolingual sign. The sign contains only English and is treated as monolingual.

Figure 5. An example of a bilingual sign

The sign in Figure 5 is an example of a bilingual sign. The sign contains English and Arabic and is treated as bilingual.

Figure 6. An example of a trilingual sign

The sign in Figure 6 is an example of a multilingual sign as it displays 3 languages: Arabic, Chinese, and English.

Along with visibility, salience is also an important aspect of language display in public spaces, as pointed out by Scollon and Scollon (2004). Salience refers to the top/down, left-right, central and corner position of a language with other languages and font size of languages on multilingual signs. The languages displayed on top, center, and written in a bigger size are regarded as a dominant language (Han 2019, Scollon & Scollon 2004).

3.6. Focused group discussions and document analysis

The discussions of the respondents were transcribed, translated, and analyzed through thematic analysis. The policy-related document i.e., the 1973's Constitution of Pakistan, was analysed for interconnections between policy, spatial practice, and perceptions of language use. In thematic analysis, coding was conducted by defining, naming, and reviewing the themes. Different strategies, like back-and-forth movement in the study between literature and unstructured data, was used to ensure clarity, authenticity, and relevance of the coding/thematic scheme. After the analysis of all three dimensions, we used the nexus analysis presented by Scollon and Scollon (2004) and refined by Hult (2018) for identifying connections between language policies, spatial practice, and residents' perceptions of language use in public spaces of Islamabad.

4. Findings of the study

4.1. Spatial practice (physical dimension)

Spatial practice refers to the use of language in public spaces. This section deals with the visibility or invisibility of languages in the linguistic landscape of Islamabad and salience of the languages on signs in the linguistic landscape of Islamabad.

4.1.1. (in)Visibility of languages

The first phase included classifying signs into monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual. The data analysis identified that out of 1213 signs, 783 signs were monolingual, 376 signs were bilingual and 54 signs were multilingual.

Table 1. **(In)Visibility of languages on monolingual, bilingual and multilingual signs**

Languages	English		Urdu		Arabic		Chinese		Others		Total signs (1213)	%
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
Monolingual	775	98.97	05	0.6	00	00	03	0.38	00	00	783	64.55
Bilingual	321	85.37	346	92	23	6.11	07	1.86	00	00	376	30.99
Trilingual	54	100	46	85	41	75.9	07	13	00	00	54	4.45

Table 1 demonstrates the visibility of languages and the percentage of monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual signs. The total number of monolingual signs is 783, which constitutes 64.55% of the whole number (1213). The total number of bilingual signs is 376 out of 1213, therefore about 31% of the signs are bilingual. The total number of multilingual signs is 54 (4.45 %).

As for language presence, English is the most visible language in the linguistic landscape of Islamabad. English is displayed on 775 monolingual signs out of 783; the visibility percentage for English on monolingual signs is 98.97. It is visible on 321 bilingual signs (85.37%) and on 54 trilingual or multilingual signs (100%). During data analysis, we noticed that monolingual signs were in abundance in elite business areas, such as Sector I-8, Sector F-8, F-10 and Blue Area of Islamabad. These areas feature a strong presence of international brands, making them hubs of global business and commerce. In the context of Pakistan, English is preferred over Urdu and other languages for branding (Manan et al. 2017). The extensive use of English on monolingual signs can therefore be linked to the presence of international branding. Moreover, the wide use of English can be linked to its prestige and international appeal. One of the study's participants acknowledged the use of English and stated that 'English serves as a means of attracting customers in larger cities, particularly in Islamabad. Therefore, the use of English for signage is preferred over other languages.' During focused group discussion, a participant asserted that the use of English on signage is a market trend: 'A larger segment of private signage displays English in Islamabad. Therefore, everyone tries to write their shop name in English rather than Urdu'. Additionally, the use of English on signage is preferred in Islamabad as it serves the purposes of foreign visitors. One of the study participants mentioned that 'foreigners mostly visit F Sectors and Blue Area of Islamabad. To assist foreign tourists, it is important to display English on signage. Furthermore, English serves the purposes of the local community as well. Since the Blue Area, F-10, and F-8 sectors have a strong presence of brands, most literate people visit these areas for shopping and other purposes'.

Urdu holds the second position in terms of visibility on signs in the LL of Islamabad. However, Urdu remains almost invisible on monolingual signs, as it is written only on 5 signs and the visibility percentage is 0.6. Urdu remains the most dominant language on bilingual signs. It is used on 346 out of 376 bilingual signs. The visibility percentage for Urdu on bilingual signs is 92%. Urdu is also visible on 46 multilingual signs out of 54. It is the second most visible language on multilingual signs. A larger portion of bilingual signs was collected from more mixed socio-economic areas, such as Abpara Market, Sector G-9, and Sector I-10 of Islamabad. Compared to the sectors and areas mentioned above, these survey areas do not boast a stronger presence of international brands. As pointed out by one of the study's participants, 'Urdu serves as a lingua franca in larger metropolitan cities of Pakistan.' The wider use of Urdu on bilingual signs can be linked to its role as a bridge language for wider communication. Furthermore, the use of Urdu on signs was preferred as it is associated with identity. A participant stated: 'it is our national language and a marker of our identity. Its presence on signs in the capital is mandatory.' Since Urdu is visible on most of the bilingual signs, it is used as a means of making signs multilingual, which serves the purpose of the local community. It appears on bilingual signs mostly in combination with English where it is used for translation and transliteration.

Arabic is not visible on any monolingual sign in our study. However, it is visible on 23 bilingual signs (6.11%) and 41 multilingual signs (75.9%). Arabic is used on bilingual and multilingual signs. Arabic is associated with Islam, and in most cases, Arabic appears in the form of Quranic verses. It is also used for writing the names of Allah. However, it is not used for conveying specific information. The use of Arabic is linked to its association with religious identity.

Among other anguages, Chinese demonstrates visibility in the LL of Islamabad. It is visible on 3 monolingual signs (0.38%), 7 bilingual signs (1.86%) and 7 trilingual or multilingual signs (13%). The visibility of Chinese in the capital of Pakistan is linked to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project. A study participant who preferred the use of local languages for signage asserted that 'the signs displaying Chinese were recently designed. The number of Chinese tourists and workers increases day by day since major projects are operated by China across Pakistan. Chinese will dominate the landscape of Pakistan in near future. Unfortunately, our local languages are not valued'.

Local languages do not appear on signs in the linguistic landscape of Islamabad. The absence of local language can be explained by the lack of linguistic proficiency in the local languages. During the discussion, a participant stated: 'Local languages are not taught at school or college. Therefore, it becomes difficult for local community to write and read in the local languages, and they are not written on signboards in the linguistic landscape of Islamabad.' Another participant stated that Pakistan is a linguistically rich country with more than 60 languages. Islamabad is home to people from all provinces and people from different linguistic backgrounds. It becomes impossible to put so many languages on signs in Islamabad; additionally, the use of local languages may not serve the purposes of the Pakistani community and foreigners. For instance, a Punjabi speaker may not be able to read Pashto or other languages. However, Urdu and English are taught at school and serve both the Pakistani community and foreigners. The absence of local languages from the LL of Islamabad indicates the lower and inferior status of indigenous languages, associated with lower socio-economic status. The extensive use of English on brands coupled with the absence of local languages manifests the perception that local languages are impractical for business and economic affairs. Moreover, Pakistan's language policies have granted official recognition to English and Urdu, while local languages have remained neglected. Therefore, local languages remain absent from education, media (Rahman 2007), and other spheres including the linguistic landscape.

Our findings identified English's dominant presence in the LL of Islamabad. Following English, Urdu is the second widely visible language in the LL of Islamabad, while Arabic is the third most visible language in the linguistic landscape of Islamabad. Chinese is observed as an emerging language, written mostly on new signboards. Except English, Urdu, Arabic, and Chinese, no other languages feature in the linguistic landscape of Islamabad. The reasons for this hierarchical construction of the LL of Islamabad are international branding, international appeal, community needs, business and commerce, and the state language policies.

4.1.2. Linguistic salience of languages: Dominant vs marginalized code

Salience refers to the top/down, left-right, central and corner position of a language with other languages and font size of languages on multilingual signs. Linguistic salience of languages makes languages dominant compared to other languages on bilingual and multilingual signs (Carr 2021, Han 2019, Scollon & Scollon 2004). Our study included signs that are written in Urdu and Arabic. Both Arabic and Urdu are written from right to left. In such cases, a language that is written towards the right was treated as a dominant code, and a language that is written towards the left is treated as a marginalized code. Moreover, the study included signs that display languages written from opposite directions—for example, English and Urdu: English is written from left to right and Urdu is written from right to left. In this case, both languages are treated as equal in terms of placement on signboards, and font size was used to identify the dominance and marginalization of codes.

Figure 7. An example of dominant code on bilingual and trilingual signs

In Figure 7, Arabic is treated as a dominant code as it is written towards the right and also in bigger and bold font. Urdu, on the other hand, is considered a marginalized code; it is situated towards the left in less prominent font. While analyzing the salience of languages in the LL, it is worth noticing that such analysis includes comparison between/among languages written on a single sign. Thus, monolingual signs were excluded from the analysis and only bilingual and trilingual signs were analyzed. After the analysis of 430 signs (bilingual and multilingual), it was noted that English was the most dominant language that was written on the top and in the center (103 signs). Urdu was the second dominant language that was written on the top, and in the center and towards the right side on 43 signs. Arabic was written on the top and in the center of only 17 signs. Chinese was written on the top of only one sign. In terms of bold font and bigger font, English dominated the LL of Islamabad. It was written in bold and bigger font on 96 signs out of 430 bilingual and multilingual signs. Urdu was the second most common language written in bold and bigger font on 26 signs. Arabic was written in bigger and bold font on 19 signs. Chinese was written in bigger and bold font on only one sign.

It can be concluded that English is the most dominant language followed by Urdu, Arabic, and Chinese both in terms of visibility and salience. The dominance of English and marginalization of other languages are linked to language policy and residents' perceptions in the study. The next section provides an overview of state language policies.

4.2. Language policies (political dimension)

4.2.1. The constitution of Pakistan (de jure language policy)

Pakistan has no detailed language policy. The Constitution of Pakistan contains limited information related to language. Article 28 of the Constitution states, "subject to Article 251, any section of citizens having a distinct language, script or culture shall have the rights to preserve and promote the same and subject to law, establish institutions for that purpose".

Article 28 in conjunction with Article 251 of the Constitution acknowledges linguistic diversity in Pakistan. Such constitutional recognition is crucial in rich multilingual Pakistan where more than 70 languages are spoken. The Article also guarantees the preservation of linguistic heritage within the nation. The emphasis on institutions established by law shows the intentions of safeguarding linguistic heritage via organized means. However, the effectiveness of this provision is dependent on the practical implementation of policies to ensure linguistic preservation within the country.

Article 31 of the Constitution of Pakistan encourages the teaching of Arabic. In the multilingual context of Pakistan where more than 60 languages are spoken, the Article highlights the attempts to promote the teaching of Islam and the Arabic language. The language is associated with Islamic education, thus its learning and teaching in the context of Pakistan are justified. The preservation of local languages is emphasized on one hand, but on the other hand, the teaching of Arabic is accentuated. Balancing the teaching of Arabic and the preservation of local languages is important; the teaching of Arabic aligns with the religious aspects of the major population and the preservation of local languages aligns with the cultural identity of various ethnic groups.

Article 251 of the constitution states that:

"1. The National language of Pakistan is Urdu, and arrangements shall be made for its being used for official and other purposes within fifteen years from the commencing day.

2. Subject to clause (1), the English language may be used for official purposes until arrangements are made for its replacement by Urdu.

3. Without prejudice to the status of the National language, a Provincial Assembly may by law prescribe measures for the teaching, promotion and use of a Provincial language in addition to the National language".

The 1973 Constitution of Pakistan declares English as the official language and Urdu as the national language of the state. The Constitution states that English may be used for official purposes until arrangements for its replacement with Urdu are made. The arrangements for replacement of English with Urdu for official purposes have not been made yet. Both English and Urdu take precedence in all language policies of Pakistan. Urdu remains preferred language at the state level and may be declared an official language. Moreover, it is stated that 'without prejudice to the status of Urdu, the provincial assembly may by law promote the teaching of local languages'. At the same time, local languages may be promoted in addition to Urdu. However, local languages receive no attention at state level. Only three languages, Arabic, English and Urdu, and this order reflects their state value. Except for rhetoric, the norms and patterns inherited from British colonialism have remained unchanged. Urdu has been associated with national integrity while English has been regarded as the language of elites. Arabic has been associated with religion and remains a marker of religious identity. Local languages, however, are ignored. More importantly, the Constitution itself is written in English which reflects the central and key role of English as a dominant language in Pakistan.

4.2.2. Parliamentarians' debates and interviews on the matters of languages (de facto language policies)

The study focused on Geo News, ARY News and Dawn News YouTube channels for parliamentarians' interviews on languages as well as Parliament TV for their parliamentary speeches on languages. No single interview or parliamentary speech on languages was identified. The lack of discussion on languages at higher levels by stakeholders reflects the neglect of matters related to languages at macro levels.

4.3. Residents' perceptions (experiential dimension)

Residents' perceptions of their languages is one of the three interconnected domains of LL research. Focused group discussions were recorded to identify the community's perceptions of spatial practices in Islamabad. Most of the respondents favoured English by providing the reasons specified in the following subsections. The participants of the study were given pseudonyms.

4.3.1. Brands (A class indicator):

Ahmar: "Majority of the shopping malls are the international brands. English is the most suitable language for international brands".

Salman: "Only the elite class buys things in big stores and brand shops. Writing English on brands attracts the elite. English is the language of elites. They like English; it should be written on shops to attract customers".

During the focused group discussions, it was noted that the participants prefer using English for signboards, particularly brand names. As shown by the data above, the participants are of the opinion that English is the only language used for international brands, and it attracts the elite if it is displayed on shop signs.

4.3.2. Globalization/Internationalization:

Kashif: **"**Islamabad is an international city. English is an international language; it should be written on signboards to help people visiting Islamabad from all over the world".

The federal capital is thought to be an international city. The use of English in the LL of Islamabad may attract foreigners.

4.3.3. Colonial mindset

Rehman: "English is favoured and will be favoured in future because of our history, i.e., our colonial past; it is the language of linguistic landscape, curriculum, language of research, language of media, language of court and all other domains in Pakistan. It will not be replaced by any other languages in near future. Its dominance in Pakistan is due to the colonial past."

The above quote from a focused group discussion highlights the dominance of English in Pakistan in relation to our colonial past. Before Partition, English was institutionalized as the language of education, administration, and legal affairs by the British Empire in colonial India. After the independence of Pakistan up to the present day, English remains the dominant language in all spheres. The dominance of English and its unlikely replacement reflects the enduring colonial legacy. English is part of the curriculum, used in educational settings, widely visible in the linguistic landscape of the country, used in research, media, and the judiciary. It is predicted that no language will replace English in the near future. In addition to

English, Urdu was prioritized by a majority of the participants. The reason for preferring Urdu is discussed below.

4.3.4. Urdu: The national language and lingua franca

Rehan: "Urdu is our national language. It is spoken everywhere in Pakistan. It is easy to understand. It should be used in public spaces".

Hussain: "The local population in Pakistan is far greater than that of foreign population; everyone can read it. How can a labourer understand English? Urdu must be written on shop signs".

The Constitution of Pakistan (1973) has declared Urdu as the national language of Pakistan. The macro-level policies shape micro-level practices and the community's attitude about language(s). A majority of the study's participants preferred Urdu to be written on signboards in public spaces as it is the national language of Pakistan. According to Rahman (2006), Urdu is the native tongue of less than 8% of the population of Pakistan. The language serves as a lingua franca in Pakistan. Being the national language of Pakistan, Urdu is associated with national integrity and thus desired by the local populace.

4.3.5. Indigenous languages: Languages desired but detested

"I love my mother tongue; you know it's my MOTHER TONGUE, my MOTHER TONGUE. My language is my identity. I am unable to read and write in my language. I can only speak my language. However, writing Pashto on signboards will not serve the purpose for many people in multilingual city like Islamabad."

Indigenous languages are desired because they are associated with ethnic identity. On the other hand, local/Indigenous languages are detested in practice. Indigenous languages are not part of the curriculum. The majority of the local populace is unable to write or read in local languages. Indigenous languages are not used in domains like education, media, legal affairs, official affairs, and so on. Indigenous languages are not integral to macro-level policies. Thus, the indigenous languages are invisible in the LL of Islamabad. Moreover, local/indigenous languages are associated with rural identity and lower socio-economic status. Therefore, they are seen as impractical for business and commercial purposes.

4.4. The (dis)connects across the practices – perceptions - policy nexus

The macro-level policies shape actual language practices and community attitude of spatial practice. English, Urdu and Arabic are recognized by the state language policies. Thus, English is visible on most of the monolingual, bilingual, and trilingual signs. Almost all brand names are written in English. The participants of the study also emphasized its use in the linguistic landscape of Pakistan. Urdu holds second position in terms of visibility on signs in the linguistic landscape of Islamabad. Urdu is associated with national unity and integrity. It serves the purpose of a lingua franca in Pakistan. The language is desired by the local populace to be used in the linguistic landscape of Islamabad. The teaching of Arabic has been emphasized in the language policy of Pakistan and itis visible in the linguistic landscape of Islamabad. Local languages are not recognized by the state language policies and are invisible in the linguistic landscape of Islamabad. Local languages are desired by the local populace but detested in various domains, including public spaces. It is thus clear that a strong nexus exists among language policies, spatial practice, and residents' perceptions in the context of Islamabad.

5. Discussion

This study explores the linguistic landscape of Islamabad. We attempted to find a nexus among the three interrelated domains of the LL: spatial practice, policy, and community perceptions of language use in public spaces. Drawing on the data, we identified the dominance of various languages across all three domains of the study. The data explicitly confirmed the dominance of English in terms of visibility and linguistic salience in the linguistic landscape of Islamabad. The extensive use of English in the linguistic landscape of Islamabad is due to globalization, its international appeal, its utility for international branding, marketability, and its stylistic and artistic synchronization.

The linguistic landscape of a region serves a symbolic function. It is a marker of sociolinguistic dynamism, marginalization, and the relative status and power of languages and their varieties (Blommaert 2013). Moreover, the LL of polity is linked to language policies (de jure and de facto) and language perceptions. Symbolically, the extensive use of English in the LL can be linked to various sociopolitical, socio-psychological and cultural factors. In the context of Pakistan, English is the symbol of elitism, modernization, and sophistication. Additionally, the state language policy recognized English as the official language of Pakistan which shapes language practices and community perceptions of English. Thus, the selection of English for signage in the LL of Islamabad can be linked to language policies at the state level. From political perspectives, the dominance of English in various spheres can be associated with the country's colonial history. The situation in Pakistan can be related to the situation in Afria as described by Putz (2020). According to Putz (2020), the local/African languages in the context of Africa suffer due the colonial past. Similarly in Pakistan, before the independence, English was institutionalized as the language of education, administration, and legal affairs by the British. After the independence of Pakistan and to the present date, English remains the dominant language in all spheres including media, education, and the LL. The dominance of English and its unlikely replacement reflects its enduring colonial legacy.

Urdu is the second most dominant language in the LL of Islamabad, as it appears mostly on bilingual and multilingual signs with English and Arabic. The use of Urdu with English on bilingual and multilingual signs is due to its role as a local lingua franca. The state language policies have recognized Urdu as the sole national language of Pakistan. The data of the study reflects that the use of Urdu in the LL of Islamabad is linked to its status as the national language of Pakistan. Moreover, the use of Urdu is linked to identity, national integrity, and unity. Due to its symbolic value and political association, Urdu becomes a dominant language in various spheres in the context of Pakistan where it is the native tongue of less than 8% of people.

Following Urdu, Arabic appears as the third most dominant language in the LL of Islamabad. The language is associated with the teaching of Islam and the Quran. Arabic is considered a sacred language and a marker of religious identity. Although Arabic does not serve the purposes of the local community in the LL of Pakistan, its religious association makes it a dominant language in the LL of Islamabad. Moreover, it is recognized by the state language policies and its teaching at the school level is emphasized. Therefore, the language appears in the LL of Islamabad and its use is desired by passersby, business owners, and creators of the LL in Islamabad. Drawing on the data, it is concluded that Chinese is gaining ground in the LL of Islamabad. The appearance of Chinese in the LL of Islamabad can be linked to commerce and industrialization and, more importantly, to the CPEC project. The teaching of Chinese in the context of Pakistan is rapidly increasing as various Chinese teaching centers are established in the private sectors and universities across Pakistan. The teaching of Chinese equally contributes to its appearance in the LL of various cities, particularly Islamabad.

Our data revealed that none of the local languages except Urdu appears in the LL of Islamabad. The use of local languages is desired because they are associated with ethnic identity. On the other hand, local languages are not preferred in practice as they are associated with rural identity and lower socioeconomic status. Local languages are not recognized by the state language policies. The macro-level policy discourses shape language practices and shape community attitudes of their languages (Rahman 2007). Local languages are absent from education and mainstream media in Pakistan. Due to the exclusion of local languages from curriculum, a larger portion of the local community lacks linguistic proficiency, particularly in writing and reading, in their native languages. Additionally, local languages are seen as impractical for business and commercial purposes. Thus, local languages are not given space in public spaces of Islamabad. Politically, the promotion of local languages is narrowly monitored as the promotion of local languages is seen as a threat and prejudice towards the status of the national language, Urdu.

The data confirmed that there is a strong nexus between language policies, spatial practices, and residents' perceptions of language use. The LL of a region is the manifestation of linguistic hierarchies, ideologies shaped by various factors and also as an act of resistance in a multiethnic community (Putz 2020). The state language policies are deeply influenced by various political and ideological factors. The state language policies shape people's perceptions of actual language practices. Only the state-recognized languages remain dominant in the LL of Islamabad and are preferred by residents for signage. However, very few creators and readers of the LL of Islamabad advocate for the use of local languages in signage. Keeping in view the importance of linguistic diversity, we urge more inclusive language policies and linguistic landscape that promote linguistic diversity in the context of Pakistan.

6. Conclusion

The current study explored the linguistic landscape of Islamabad. The study was informed by Trumper-Hecht's (2010) Triad Model for Linguistic Landscape as it studied the use of language on private signs in the city, residents' perceptions of language use in the public spaces of Islamabad, and language policies of Pakistan. A Nexus Analysis of Hult (2018) was employed to understand how the nexus of spatial practices, residents' perceptions, and language policies shape the LL of the city. Findings reveal that English, Urdu, and Arabic dominate the LL of Islamabad, whereas Chinese is an emerging language. English, Urdu, and Arabic are integral to language policies and are preferred by residents for public signage. Despite the residents' affection for their use in public spaces of Islamabad, local languages remained absent in the LL of Islamabad. The data indicated that globalization, international appeal, utility for international branding, marketability, and stylistic and artistic synchronization were the factors motivating the extensive use of English in the linguistic landscape of Islamabad. Importantly, the designation of English as the official language of Pakistan through state language policies has contributed to its dominance in the LL along with various domains, including media, education, and legal affairs. Following English, Urdu is the second dominant language in the linguistic landscape. The dominance of Urdu is linked to its designation as the sole national language of Pakistan through level macro-level policies and its role as a lingua franca in the context of Pakistan. Arabic is the third language dominating the LL of Islamabad. The teaching of Arabic is emphasized in the state language policy, and the language is associated with the teaching of Islam and the Quran. Therefore, it is considered a sacred language in the context of Pakistan. The dominance of Arabic in the LL of Islamabad was linked to its association with the teaching of Islam and its status as a religious and sacred language. Chinese is an emerging language, and its emergence in the LL of the city is due to various developmental projects, particularly CPEC, operated by China in Pakistan. Moreover, the data reflected that the absence of local languages in the LL of Islamabad was due to the community's lack of linguistic proficiency in their native tongues. Additionally, local and indigenous languages are not prioritized in state language policies and, as a result, remain absent from various domains, including the linguistic landscape. Overall, the findings of the study reveal that there is a strong connection between language policies, residents' perceptions, and spatial practices in the context of Islamabad. The findings of the study have serious implications for the Pakistani indigenous languages and indicate a need for inclusive language policies and awareness initiatives to protect linguistic diversity in Pakistan.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Turab Hussain: Conceptualization, Data collection, Data analysis, Writing – original draft; **Muhammad Haseeb Nasir:** Conceptualization, Visualisation, Supervision; **Aziz Khan:** Conceptualisation, Study design, Critical revision of the manuscript, Proofreading.

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Article history:
Received: 20 June 2024
Accepted: 25 January 2025

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Russian Journal of Linguistics
ISSN 2687-0088 (Print), ISSN 2686-8024 (Online)

2025 Vol. 29 No. 2 432–456
http://journals.rudn.ru/linguistics

https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-40338
EDN: LIJRWS

Research article / Научная статья

Derivative terms with the meaning of new social strata in English and Russian sociological discourse

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Abstract
In periods of social transformation, the analysis of neologisms introduced into academic discourse to denote societal strata possesses a particular linguistic and interdisciplinary significance. The article's objective is twofold: firstly, to describe the cognitive-derivational models underlying the formation of the most recent sociological terms (*cognitariat*, *salariat*, *precariat*); and, secondly, to identify their functional idiosyncrasies within English and Russian sociological discourse. The data set, comprising 1950 microtexts of usage examples, was derived from sociological works by British, American, and Russian scholars, as well as frompublicly accessible internet sources. A comprehensive analysis was conducted, encompassing definitional, etymological, cognitive-derivational, contextual and functional-semantic methodologies. The study revealed that two primary models underpinning these naming processes: affixation, inherent in the formation of *salariat* and *precariat*, and blending, characteristic of *cognitariat*. The choice of relevant onomasiological features plays a decisive role in successful term formation. Denotative features that indicate the type of activity or the source of income (*cognitive → cognitariat*; *salary → salariat*) ensure terminological unambiguity and transparency of internal form. Conversely, incorporating the subjective characteristic of instability (*precarious → precariat*) introduces ambiguity in semantic volume and referential boundaries, justifying its interpretation as an artificial analytical construct. A close examination of the terms' functioning in English and Russian discourse highlights distinct correlations with social groups and ethno-cultural perceptions. Western sociologists frame the *precariat* as a potential trigger for social conflict, whereas Russian scholars perceive this stratum as analogous to the middle class and a guarantor of socio-economic stability. The study contributes to the theory of terminology within the framework of cognitive-derivational modelling of sociological terms.

Keywords: *social stratification, socionyms, term derivatives, suffixal derivation, blending*

For citation:
Shkapenko, Tatiana M. & Elena N. Strelchuk. 2025. Derivative terms with the meaning of new social strata in English and Russian sociological discourse. *Russian Journal of Linguistics* 29 (2). 432–456. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-40338

Терминодериваты со значением новых социальных страт в англоязычном и русскоязычном социологическом дискурсе

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Аннотация
В периоды социальных трансформаций анализ неологизмов, вводимых в научный оборот для обозначения социальных страт общества, имеет особую лингвистическую и междисциплинарную значимость. Цель статьи – описать когнитивно-деривационные модели, лежащие в основе образования новейших соционимов *cognitariat*, *salariat*, *precariat, когнитариат, салариат, прекариат,* и выявить особенности их функционирования в англоязычном и русскоязычном социологическом дискурсе. Материалом для анализа послужили 1950 микроконтекстов употребления рассматриваемых лексических единиц, извлеченных из научных трудов по социологии британских, американских и российских социологов, а также из открытых интернет-источников. Для их исследования использовались методы дефиниционного, ономасиологического, когнитивно-деривационного, контекстуального и сравнительно-сопоставительного анализа. Выявлено, что в основе актов номинации лежат две базовые модели: аффиксальная, присущая акту словообразования терминов *salariat, precariat,* и блендинговая, характерная для образования термина *cognitariat*. Обоснована определяющая роль выбора релевантных ономасиологических признаков для успешного акта терминопроизводства. Использование денотативных признаков со значением рода деятельности или вида заработков (*cognitive → cognitariat; salary → salariat*) обеспечивает необходимую для терминов однозначность и прозрачность внутренней формы. Включение в состав деривационной модели субъективной характеристики нестабильности (*precarious → precariat)* вызывает разночтения в процессе осмысления объема понятия и области референции, что дает основания для интерпретации термина как искусственного аналитического конструкта. В результате анализа особенностей функционирования новых терминов в англоязычном и русскоязычном дискурсе выявлена специфика коррелирующих с ними социальных групп и особенности этнокультурного восприятия. *Прекариат* рассматривается западными социологами как потенциальный триггер социальных конфликтов, российские ученые видят в этой социальной страте аналог среднего класса и гаранта социально-экономической стабильности. Полученные результаты дополняют теорию терминоведения в области когнитивно-деривационного моделирования терминов социологических наук.
Ключевые слова: *социальная стратификация, соционимы, терминодериваты, суффиксальная деривация, блендинг*

Для цитирования:
Шкапенко Т.М., Стрельчук Е.Н. Терминодериваты со значением новых социальных страт в англоязычном и русскоязычном социологическом дискурсе. Russian Journal of Linguistics. 2025. Т. 29. № 2. С. 432–456. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-40338

1. Введение

Социальные преобразования, связанные со стремительным распространением рыночной экономики, с одной стороны, а с другой, с формированием постиндустриального, информационного ицифрового общества, привели к радикальным преобразованиям его социальной структуры. Большинство современных ученых-социологов говорят о неактуальности разделения общества на классы и о формировании новых социальных групп. Как указывает Е.В. Хлыщева, «классы в их классическом понимании исчезли, но возникли новые социально-экономически обусловленные группы (страты)» (Хлыщева 2022: 40). Их идентификация вызвала необходимость появления новых лексических единиц с семантикой коллективных имен, так называемых *nomina collectiva*, служащих для обозначения социальных объединений людей.

Несмотря на активное внедрение лексических единиц данной группы в современные дискурсивные практики, устойчивый научный интерес к ним можно наблюдать только в области общественно-экономических и политических наук, изучающих особенности социальной трансформации российского общества. С лингвистической точки зрения номинативные единицы, вербализующие новые формы социальных объединений людей, крайне редко становятся предметом научного интереса. В то же время анализ механизмов их возникновения и функционирования в языке имеет особую важность, поскольку соционимы[1] «представляют интерес не только с точки зрения семантики и словообразования, но и с позиций социо- и прагмалингвистики, так как имеют непосредственную связь с именуемыми объектами, задавая тип их организации и изменяясь вместе с ними» (Откидычева 2012: 169). Большинство единиц данной группы «импортируется» из английского языка как транслятора эффективных образцов социального устройства вместе со средствами их языкового обозначения. Такие соционимы, как «общество потребления», «цифровое общество», «средний» или «креативный класс», прочно вошли не только в российский научный дискурс, но и в повседневный речевой обиход россиян. Другие соционимы знакомы лишь узкому кругу специалистов,

[1] Термин *соционим* в российской ономастике впервые был использован в начале XXI века в переводе книги *Homo academicus* французского социолога П. Бурдье (2018): «Пришедшее из английского языка сочетание «креативный класс» – это типичное коллективное имя, или этикетка, или, как я предлагаю говорить, «соционим», что удобно и понятно рядом с хорошо известным понятием «этноним» (Бурдье 2018: 55). В настоящее время термин *соционим* используется в значении названия социальных групп для групповой идентификации наряду с такими квазисинонимами, как *социальные номинаторы, имена социальные*, *имена коллективные* или *nomina collectiva.*

изучающих труды зарубежных ученых и внедряющих предложенные ими терминологические единицы в практику собственного научного анализа.

К числу самых значимых с точки зрения масштабности описываемых социальных страт относятся терминодериваты *cognitariat*, *salariat*, *precariat*, функционирующие в форме прямых заимствований в российском научном дискурсе с начала 2000-х годов. В англоязычных материалах, посвященных различным аспектам изучения новых терминов, высказываются неоднозначные мнения как о словообразовательных механизмах, лежащих в основе номинативных актов, так и о степени обоснованности введения данных неологизмов в социологический тезаурус. В русскоязычном дискурсе, связанном с обсуждением новых соционимов и их соответствием текущим принципам стратификации российского общества, также по многим вопросам возникает полемика. Многочисленные дискуссионные моменты обусловили постановку следующей цели данного исследования: описать когнитивно-деривационный механизм, использованный в процессе образования новейших соционимов *cognitariat*, *salariat*, *precariat,* и охарактеризовать особенности осмысления и интерпретации новейших терминов в англоязычном и русскоязычном социологическом дискурсе. Поставленная цель предполагает решение следующих исследовательских задач – выявить когнитивно-деривационные модели, лежащие в основе образования новейших социологических терминов; определить семантический объем данных понятий в их соотнесении с составом референтных групп; обнаружить особенности интерпретации предложенных терминов зарубежными и российскими учеными; установить причины неоднозначного отношения к степени обоснованности введения различных неодериватов для идентификации социальных страт.

2. Теоретические основы исследования

2.1. Основные аспекты изучения термина в лингвистике

Будучи важнейшей составной частью тезауруса различных научных дисциплин, термины неоднократно подвергались многоаспектному лингвистическому анализу. В фокусе внимания исследователей находились два основных вопроса: определение природы термина и его конститутивных признаков, а также классификация основных механизмов терминообразования. Классическое определение термина восходит к трудам А.А. Реформатского, предлагающего рассматривать термин как особую функцию простого языкового знака, позволяющую соотнести любое слово с профессиональной сферой его употребления (Реформатский 1986: 69). В хронологически более поздних дефинициях на первое место выдвигаются структурно-функциональные характеристики и непосредственная связь термина с обозначаемым понятием. На основе анализа различных определений термина А.В. Суперанская приходит к выводу, что «для термина именуемое понятие одновременно и есть именуемый объект, т. е. доминирует связь «имя–понятие». За термином всегда стоит предмет мысли, но не мысли вообще, а специальной мысли, ограниченной определенным полем» (Суперанская 2012: 34). В рамках когнитивного подхода термин рассматривается как «ментальная категория, фиксирующая результат научного познания. Соответственно, с позиций когнитивно-дискурсивной парадигмы можно рассматривать термин как языковой знак, в значении которого сконцентрировано знание о предмете» (Финикова 2012: 180).

К проблемным вопросам в рамках анализа конститутивных признаков термина относится их необязательное соответствие тем эталонным требованиям, которые были сформулированы учеными. Такие отличительные черты, как однозначность, точность, информационная емкость, краткость, внеположенность экспрессии, мотивированность, системность и другие, выделяются практически всеми учеными. В то же время нельзя не согласиться с не менее распространенным утверждением, что «указанные условия представляют собой требования к термину в идеале, однако на практике обнаруживаются термины, которые им не соответствуют, однако успешно обслуживают понятийные цели» (Лантюхова и др. 2013: 43).

Большее единогласие среди ученых наблюдается в вопросах классификации способов терминотворчества, к которым относят: семантический, заключающийся в употреблении в качестве термина слов или словосочетаний из общеупотребительного языка; морфологический, т.е. создание термина с помощью аффиксов или сложения основ слов; синтаксический, т.е. создание сочетаний различного структурного типа, а также аббревиатурный (см. подробнее: Саламатина 2020). Выбор конкретного способа создания термина определяется структурными особенностями языка, в котором он возникает, принадлежностью обозначаемого понятия к конкретной области научного знания и в определенной степени субъективным решением авторов изобретаемого термина. В.П. Даниленко подчеркивал, что терминотворчество – всегда процесс сознательный (не стихийный), контролируемый и регулируемый. Для терминологических номинаций особенно важной является прозрачность их внутренней формы, достигаемая за счет целенаправленного сложения стандартных морфологических средств, выбор которых «находится в теснейшей зависимости от классификации понятий. В ряду этих понятий будет находиться вновь образуемый термин (как наименование понятия этого ряда), поскольку термины одного классификационного ряда по возможности должны быть образованы по одной словообразовательной модели» (Даниленко 1997: 95).

2.2. Аффиксальная модель с формантом -АТ в функции терминологических обозначений

Одним из стандартных способов морфологического терминотворчества является использование регулярных аффиксальных моделей, в которых к выбранной номинатором основе слова присоединяется соответствующий для целей номинаций префикс или суффикс. Особую роль в процессе создания научных терминов играют суффиксы, поскольку «при суффиксальном терминообразовании термин образуется в итоге определенной формальной операции, результатом которой выступает не только новая форма, но и новое знание (когнитивный аспект суффиксации)» (Борисова 2016: 6).

Значительная часть формантов, используемых в целях терминообразования, ведет свое происхождение из латинского или греческого языков и выступает в роли «классификаторов», позволяющих осуществлять систематизацию ряда (множества) понятий одного порядка, одного уровня гносеологического членения» (Буянова 1996: 183). Так, суффикс *-ит* (*-ite*) является экспликатором понятийной категории «вещество», например, *александрит*, *кварцит*, *барит* (*alexandrite*, *quartzite*, *barite*) или группы химических веществ: *бромиты*, *сульфиты*, *хлориты* (*bromites*, *sulphites*, *chlorites*); суффикс *-атор* (*-ator*) эксплицирует понятийную категорию человека или предмета, выполняющего определенное действие: *агитатор*, *эскалатор*, *радиатор* (*agitator*, *escalator*, *radiator*) и т.д.

Несложно заметить, что терминодериваты с суффиксами латинского происхождения представляют собой интернациональные лексемы, различающиеся лишь морфонологически в зависимости от строя языка, в котором они функционируют. Как правило, изучение суффиксальной терминодеривации осуществляется на базе естественнонаучной терминологии, что вполне объяснимо в связи с фактами постоянного пополнения состава референтных единиц, требующих своего названия. В последнее время, однако, наблюдается активизация моделей суффиксальной терминодеривации в социологических науках, что является следствием кардинальных изменений, происходящих в социальной стратификации современного общества. В качестве основного аффикса, имеющего категориальное значение совокупности людей, объединенных принадлежностью к одной социальной группе, используется интернациональный суффикс латинского происхождения *-ат*.

Согласно Оксфордскому словарю в английском языке *-at* частично заимствуется из латинского, частично из французского языка: «*-at*, *-ate* is of multiple origins. Partly a borrowing from French. Partly a borrowing from Latin. Etymons: French *at*; Latin *-at*» (Oxford Learners Dictionary). По данным этого же словаря, в производных существительных суффикс *-ate* обозначает: статус или функцию; группу с определенным статусом или функцией, а также группу химических веществ, образуемых с помощью кислот. Чаще всего этот суффикс оформляется в английских существительных так называемой немой *-e* (silent-e syllable) в соответствии с особенностями фономорфологического строя языка. Лишь одно существительное *proletariat* (фр. *prolétariat*) заимствуется из французского языка в неизменной форме, что, как можно предположить, связано с особой значимостью референта данного понятия, рабочего класса, взявшего на рубеже XIX–XX столетий на себя функции социального гегемона.

Детальное описание значения интернациональной морфемы *-ат* в русском языке представлено в трех основных источниках: в «Русской грамматике» (РГ-80), в «Словаре словообразовательных аффиксов современного русского языка» (Лопатин, Улуханов 2016) и «Толково-словообразовательном словаре» Т.Ф. Ефремовой (Ефремова 2000). Их детальный анализ представляется необходимым с точки зрения того когнитивно-деривационного потенциала, который заложен в функциональной семантике данного терминоформанта.

В РГ-80 выделяются три основных типа существительных с суффиксом *-ат* (морф *-иат*). Первый тип характеризуется как продуктивный в сфере интересующей нас общественно-политической терминологии и включает в себя следующие словообразовательные значения:

1) Слова, мотивированные существительными со значением лица и называющие общественную систему, должность, учреждение, связанные с лицом. Семантические подтипы: а) «общественная или политическая система, определяемая властью лица (лиц)»: *султанат*, *калифат*, *эмират* и др.; б) «общественная система, связанная с существованием данной социальной прослойки»: *колонат*, *патрициат*; <…> г) «учреждение, состоящее из лиц, названных мотивирующим словом»: *редакторат*, *директорат*, *епископат*; д) «учреждение, возглавляемое лицом»: *комиссариат*, *ректорат*, *деканат*» (РГ-80: 192).

В сущности, связь мотивированного и мотивирующего существительных в данном типе может быть охарактеризована как метонимическая, поскольку имя единичного лица при присоединении аффикса становится ономасиологическим признаком для обозначения целостной системы или организации. По способу словообразования вся вышеуказанная группа представляет собой реализацию модели: «мотивирующее существительное со значением лица + суффикс *-ат* → мотивированное существительное со значением совокупности людей, входящих в состав политической системы, сословия или учреждения». Категориальное значение суффикса как экспонента ономасиологического базиса в данной деривационной модели состоит в репрезентации понятийной категории собирательной множественности.

Небезынтересным с точки зрения когнитивно-деривационной модели представляется выделение РГ-80 в составе второго словообразовательного типа терминов, близких общественно-политической тематике:

2) Слова, называющие лицо по отношению к предмету, стране, политической группировке, биологическому явлению: *стипендия – стипендиат*, *Азия – азиат*, *уния – униат*, *акселерация – акселерат* (РГ-80: 192).

Если в первом типе мотивирующее существительное со значением лица выступало в качестве ономасиологического признака и в результате присоединения аффикса образовывало производное со значением совокупности, то во втором типе суффикс *-ат*, напротив, имеет категоризирующее значение единичности. Мотивирующим словом в данном случае становится собирательное понятие, а деривационная модель строится противоположным образом: «мотивирующее существительное со значением организации, страны, ментального или физиологического процесса + суффикс *-ат* → мотивированное существительное со значением одного индивидуума, являющегося носителем мотивирующего признака». Таким образом, в первой группе формант *-ат* выполняет функцию генерализации, во второй – функцию индивидуализации, что можно интерпретировать как факт энантиосемии анализируемой морфемы, или разновидность векторной метонимии.

3. Материал и методология исследования

Материалом исследования послужили оригинальные англоязычные и переводные книги и статьи (Berardi 2005, Neilson & Rossiter 2008, Byung-Chul 2015, Standing & Guy 2014, 2015, Jorgensen 2016, Wright 2016, Тоффлер 1997). Общая картотека исследования составила 1200 примеров контекстов употребления рассматриваемых лексических единиц. В качестве материала для изучения особенностей функционирования заимствованных терминов в русскоязычном социологическом дискурсе привлекались статьи российских социологов (Воронин, Крамер 2021, Слатов 2017, Терновая, Шастина 2022, Тощенко 2020, Фишман 2022, Хлыщева 2022). Общее количество извлеченных микроконтекстов составило 750 единиц. С целью выявления способов репрезентации терминов в неографических источниках были использованы данные электронных словарей (Collins Dictionary, Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Oxford Learners Dictionary, The Free Dictionary, Word Sense Dictionary). Наблюдения за функционированием анализируемых соционимов за пределами научного дискурса осуществлялись с привлечением открытых англоязычных и русскоязычных интернет-ресурсов.

Методологической основой выполненного исследования явились основные положения, сформулированные в трудах российских ученых в области терминоведения (Реформатский 1986, Даниленко 1997, Суперанская 2012, Финикова 2012); ономасиологический подход к изучению языка при опоре на дефиниционный анализ (Богданова 2015, Al-Salman & Haider 2021, Шкапенко, Милявская 2022), а также когнитивно-деривационный подход к анализу морфологического способа терминопроизводства (Fodor 1983, Кубрякова 2006, Буянова 2016, Григорьева 2019).

Процедура исследования заключалась в следующем.

1. Сбор и каталогизация языкового материала. Было решено подразделять анализируемые материалы на макро- и микроконтексты. Под макроконтекстами понимались книги и статьи, к микроконтекстам были отнесены синтаксически целостные высказывания, актуализирующие данные термины.

2. Дефиниционный анализ. На данном этапе осуществлялся поиск, фиксация и анализ словарных и авторских дефиниций новых терминов и моделей их словообразования. В случае необходимости данные дефиниционного анализа дополнялись сведениями, почерпнутыми из этимологических словарей.

3. Ономасиологический и когнитивно-деривационный анализ. Обнаруженная неоднозначность интерпретации новых терминов и моделей их образования потребовала обращения к анализу основных ономасиологических признаков, использованных в акте терминологической номинации, с одной стороны, и к анализу когнитивно-деривационных основ аффиксальных и блендинговых моделей, с другой.

4. Сравнительно-сопоставительный анализ. Данный этап базировался на сопоставлении способов функционирования и интерпретации новейших соционимов в работах российских и англо-американских ученых и в соответствующих интернет-ресурсах.

В результате выполнения данных взаимосвязанных этапов работы мы пытались решить следующие исследовательские задачи:

1) Уточнить и аргументировать тип словообразования, использованный в новейших социологических терминах.

2) Обнаружить степень влияния избранного ономасиологического признака и когнитивно-деривационной модели на восприятие неологизма учеными как терминологической единицы или как искусственного аналитического конструкта.

3) Выявить этнокультурную специфику восприятия новых соционимов в англоязычном и русскоязычном социологическом дискурсе.

4. Результаты

4.1. Особенности деривационных моделей новейших соционимов

Конец XX столетия ознаменовался введением в англоязычный социологический дискурс трех новых терминов, претендующих на роль обозначений основных социальных страт современного общества: *salariat*, *precariat, cognitariat*. Только два из вышеуказанных неологизмов включены в он-лайн словари английского языка: *salariat* «the salary-earning class» (‘класс, имеющий гарантированные доходы’), от *salary* – зарплата, *precariat* «the class of people in society who lack a reliable long-tern source of income (‘класс людей, у которых нет надежного долгосрочного источника дохода’), от *precarious*: «liable to failure or catastrophe; insecure» (‘подверженный неудачам или катастрофам; ненадежный’) (Collins Dictionary). Терминолексема *cognitariat,* несмотря на ее значительную распространенность в англоязычном социологическом дискурсе, в словарях не фиксируется, а ее значение в наиболее общем виде описывается как «the social corporeality of cognitive labour» (‘социальная группа представителей интеллектуального труда’) (Berardi 2005).

Обращает на себя внимание, что англоязычные лексикографические источники квалифицируют все данные термины как результат словообразовательной операции блендинга:

cognitariat: origin and history: вlend of *cognitive* and *proletariat* (WordSense Dictionary);

precariat: blend of *precarious* + *proletariat*, popularized by economist Guy Standing in his book The Precariat (Collins Dictionary);

salariat: Fr. *salaire*, *salary* + *prolétariat*, *proletariat* (Collins Dictionary).

Первая часть блендов в вышеприведенных структурах представлена лексемами со значением характеристик новых социальных страт, в качестве второй части неизменно указывается существительное *proletariat.* Комбинация данных слов интерпретируется как результат блендингового словообразования.

Признавая всю сложность и неоднозначность классификации блендинговых, или телескопических образований, следует заметить, что свойственная им модель описывается дериватологами как наложение различных, семантически значимых частей двух или более лексем, например: «pullitician = pull + politician – влиятельный политический деятель, socialion = social + lion – крупный общественный деятель, warphan = war + orphan – ребенок, родители которого умерли на войне, paytriot(ism) = pay + patriot(ism) – оплаченный патриотизм и др.» (Стрельцов 2022: 137). Как следует из примеров, обе части гибридных слов сохраняют следы не только морфологического, но и семантического присутствия соединяемых лексем или их частей. В то же время в анализируемых терминодериватах *salariat*, *precariat* следы существительного *proletariat* обнаруживаются только в виде аффикса -*at*, несущего на себе деривационную нагрузку собирательного значения. Никакого контаминационного смысла, присущего блендинговым образованиям, в данных терминодериватах не возникает.

Несколько сложнее обстоит дело с существительным *cognitariat*, в состав которого входит бóльшая часть прецедентной единицы *prole-tariat*. С одной стороны, ее более полное включение может быть связано с морфонологическими особенностями прилагательного *cognitive,* не содержащего в своей финали столь удобной для образования имени новых классов фонемы -*r*, как это имело место в мотивирующих лексемах *precarious, salary.* В этом случае модель образования неологизма основывается на усечении суффикса прилагательного -*ive* и присоединении к основе терминоформанта -*at.* С другой стороны, для более точной идентификации когнитивно-деривационной модели, лежащей в основе индивидуального акта номинации, необходимо обратиться к трудам самого автора нового соционима.

Американский философ и социолог Э. Тоффлер впервые использует термин *cognitariat* в книге «Метаморфозы власти» (Тоффлер 1997), посвященной радикальным изменениям, произошедшим в экономике, которую он называет «суперсимволической». Привычное разделение экономики на «сельское хозяйство», «промышленность» и «услуги», по мнению ученого, скорее затуманивает смысл, чем его проясняет. Вместо того чтобы «придерживаться старой классификации, необходимо проанализировать, что в действительности делают люди во всех отраслях. Как только мы поставим этот вопрос, то обнаружим все больше и больше производства символов или умственного труда во всех трех секторах экономики» (Там же: 85).

Автор работы аргументирует, что практически все люди, независимо от сферы их деятельности, сегодня используют в своей работе компьютеры – от фермеров до кладовщиков. Названия профессий уже ничего не обозначают: «сегодня гораздо полезнее объединять рабочих по количеству производимых ими символов или доли умственного труда в их работе, чем по названиям профессий или по месту работы» (там же). «Наверху того, что может быть названо «спектр умственного труда», находятся ученый, финансовый аналитик, программист или, например, простой клерк-делопроизводитель. Возникает вопрос, почему клерк-делопроизводитель и ученый оказались в одной группе? Ответ таков: хотя их функции различны, <…> все они не делают ничего, кроме перемещения информации или создания новой информации. <…> Чисто физический труд находится в нижней части спектра и постепенно исчезает. С малым количеством занятых физическим трудом в экономике «пролетариат» сейчас находится в меньшинстве и заменяется «когнитариатом». По мере становления суперсимволической экономики пролетарий становится когнитарием» (там же: 87–88).

Из этой обширной цитаты вполне очевидной становится апелляция номинатора к соционимy *пролетариат* как к социоисторическому и словообразовательному прецеденту. Основой смысловой связи между ними является характерный для политэкономической стратификации классов критерий орудия производства – от доминирующего физического труда к труду интеллектуальному, основанному на массовом использовании интернет-технологий. Согласно Э. Тоффлеру «когнитариат – основное действующее лицо процесса информатизации, интеллектуальный работник, умеющий квалифицированно и эффективно работать со все более сложной и разнообразной информацией» (Тоффлер 1997: 85).

Примечательно, что несколько иные ассоциации вызывает включение морфемного образования *-tariat* в обыденном языковом сознании носителей английского языка. Согласно Википедии: «*Cognitariat* (sociology). A social group formed by people with high academic training, who receive a low salary not in accordance with their educational level» (‘*Когнитариат* (социология). Социальная группа, состоящая из людей с высокой академической подготовкой, которые получают низкую зарплату, не соответствующую их уровню образования’) (Wiktionary). Как видим, пролетариат, в первую очередь, ассоциируется с классом неимущих, что приводит к незапланированному автором термина результату контаминированного осмысления неологического образования.

Термины *salariat*, *precariat* не вызывают никаких дополнительных ассоциаций с пролетариатом как потенциальным историческим прецедентом. Причины их ошибочной интерпретации как блендов могут, на наш взгляд, крыться в механической экстраполяции модного лингвистического определения на зону действия традиционного аффиксального терминоообразования. Как подчеркивала Е.С. Кубрякова, производное слово создается как в результате мыслительных операций, представленных в производных словах в виде онтологической по отношению к объективному миру форме, так и в виде мыслительных конструктов, созданных путем оперирования языковыми знаками. В результате производное слово «может отсылать как к знаниям о мире, так и к знаниям о языке и другим словам этого языка» (Кубрякова 2006: 79). Представляется вполне очевидным, что в процессе создания терминов *salariat*, *precariat,* их номинаторы базировались не на игровых процессах контаминации, а на знании «архитектуры когниции» (Fodor 1983), в которой ономасиологический базис *-at* выполняет роль типологического маркера крупного социального объединения людей.

Аналоговая модель лежит также в основе образования производных со значением единичного лица, представителя социальной группы когнитариата, салариата или прекариата. При этом имеет место обратная модель деривации: если в словообразовательной паре *proletarius – proletariat* (*пролетарий – пролетариат*) направление деривации идет от существительного со значением индивидуального лица к существительному со значением собирательной множественности, то в парах *cognitariat – cognitarie* (*когнитариат – когнитарий*), *precariat – precarie* (*прекариат – прекарий*) действует обратный когнитивно-деривационный вектор.

В целом, в современной англо-американской социологии сложился устойчивый ряд новейших соционимов, активизирующих модель образования термина: «основа + суффикс *-at*» с результирующим значением совокупности людей, принадлежащих к определенной социальной страте». В процессе их функционирования в научном дискурсе обнаруживают себя семантический объем новых понятий, соответствующий им референтный состав, а также степень релевантности ономасиологических признаков, избранных номинаторами, реальным условиям стратификации современного общества.

4.2. Функционирование неологических терминодериватов в англоязычном дискурсе

В понятийном смысле термину *когнитариат* предшествовало в английском социологическом дискурсе словосочетание *knowledge worker* (букв.: *интеллектуальный работник*), употребляемое Д. Беллом (Bell 1973) наряду с метонимическим обозначением *белые воротнички* (*white collars*). Осмысление американским социологом новых страт происходит в традиционных терминах классовой структуры, в рамках которой выделяется научная элита, средний класс профессоров и пролетариат, состоящий из преподавателей-ассистентов.

Несмотря на декларацию социологов об исчезновении классов, данный соционим в силу дискурсивной инерции постоянно присутствует в работах западных ученых, определяющих когнитариат как «класс когнитивных работников», специфика труда которых формирует отличное от пролетариата отношение к собственной работе и к ее результатам. Креативный характер труда, возможность его осуществления вне отчуждаемого от личностного пространства рабочем месте, достойный в большинстве случае размер оплаты, – все это создает принципиально новые условия для отношения к труду, стремление вкладывать собственный творческий потенциал в процесс производства интеллектуального продукта (Berardi 2005). Этот же автор отмечает, однако, издержки физического и психологического плана, которые характерны для когнитариев. По его справедливому утверждению, «социальное существование когнитивных работников не может быть сведено к интеллекту: в своей экзистенциальной конкретности когнитарии – это еще и тело, то есть нервы, которые находятся в постоянном напряжении, глаза, которые устают, глядя на экран и т.п.» (Berardi 2005: 57). Если по отношению к социуму и экономике плоды «коллективного разума» имеют прогрессивный характер, то в отношении к самому себе они сродни самоистязанию и часто приводят к ущербу здоровью (Byung-Chul 2015). Таким образом, исключительно положительное осмысление новой социальной страты как креативного класса, присущее первоначальному периоду функционирования термина «когнитариат», постепенно сменяется индивидуальным психофизиологическим подходом с преобладанием негативных оценок и неблагоприятных прогнозов.

Авторство термина *salariat* принадлежит английскому социологу Г. Стендингу (Standing 2014), характеризующему данный класс как людей, которые имеют постоянное место работы, пенсию, отпуск, субсидии от государства. В основном они работают в крупных корпорациях, правительственных учреждениях и государственных органах (Standing 2014). В различных дефинициях практически все словари подчеркивают противопоставленность значения существительных *salary/wage*. Например, «the meaning of *salariat* is the class or body of salaried persons usually as distinguished from wage earners» (‘Значение слова *салариат* – класс или группа лиц, получающих ежемесячную зарплату, в отличие от лиц, получающих почасовую, сдельную и т.п. оплату’) (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). В финансовом англоязычном словаре предлагается схожее определение: «Persons who earn salaries (or set amounts of money each month or year) as a class. The *salariat* contrasts with wage earners, who are paid by the hour and are not paid for hours not worked. See also: *proletariat*» (‘Лица, которые получают зарплату (или определенные суммы денег каждый месяц или год), в значении класса. *Салариат* противостоит наемным работникам, которым платят только за отработанные часы. См. также: *пролетариат*’) (The Free Dictionary). Выбор в качестве ономасиологического признака существительного *salary* как обозначения устойчивых заработков и социальных гарантий обусловливает исключительно позитивную интерпретацию данного соционима – как в отнесении к целостной страте, так и к каждому ее отдельному представителю.

Особый интерес с точки зрения функционирования предложенной авторской модели номинации новой страты представляет собой термин *precariat.*

С одной стороны, этот класс противостоит салариату как имеющему гарантированный доход, с другой стороны, в качестве ономасиологического признака Г. Стендинг (Standing 2014) избирает асимметричный критерий «ненадежности, опасности и риска», закодированный в семантике прилагательного *precarious*.

Отношение к данной страте как к потенциальному источнику социальных потрясений следует не только из внутренней формы слова, но и из названий трудов Г. Стендинга «Прекариат. Новый опасный класс» (Standing 2014), «Прекариат и классовая борьба» (Standing 2015). По утверждению ученого, мировая экономика в процессе глобальной трансформации порождает новую глобальную классовую структуру. «Новый класс – прекариат – характеризующийся хронической неопределенностью и незащищенностью, еще разделен внутри себя. Чтобы стать преобразующим классом, прекариату необходимо выйти за пределы стадии примитивного бунта, что будет включать борьбу за перераспределение ключевых активов, необходимых для хорошей жизни в обществе XXI века – не «средств производства», а социально-экономической безопасности, контроля времени, качества пространства, знаний или образования, финансовых знаний и финансового капитала» (Там же: 25).

Обоснованность выделения Г. Стендингом (Standing 2014) признака финансовой нестабильности как конституирующего социальное объединение людей подвергается сомнению в ряде работ зарубежных ученых. Критике подвергается сам концепт прекарности, его чисто умозрительный характер, не находящий реального подтверждения в социальной структуре общества (Wright 2016), искусственность «аналитического конструкта» (Jorgensen 2016). Б. Нейлсон и Н. Росситер (Neilson & Rossiter 2008) высказывают небезосновательное мнение о том, что скорее «стабильная трудовая занятость» является исключением из хода мировой истории, в то время как нестабильность представляет собой «нормальное положение дел» (Neilson & Rossiter 2008) и, следовательно, не может служить основополагающим критерием для наименования нового социального объединения людей.

Если *прекариат* как концепт, обозначающий социальную страту, признается далеко не всеми учеными, то взятый за основу его наименования признак «прекарности» в значении ненадежности, неустойчивости, шаткости и угрозы коллапса активизируется в виде двух существительных: *precariousness/precarity*. На их востребованность в социологическом и философском дискурсе влияет нестабильная геополитическая ситуация, рост террористических и военных угроз в мире. Так, после терактов в Нью-Йорке в 2001 г. в 2004 г. американский философ Джуддит Баттлер издала книгу под названием «Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence» («Прекарная жизнь: силы скорби и насилия») (Buttler 2004), в которой описывает онтологический смысл прекарности как бытования человека в состоянии постоянных экзистенциальных рисков и угроз. Автор получившей широкую известность книги, с одной стороны, связывает социальную нестабильность с психологическим состоянием угнетенности и скорби (grievability), с другой стороны, усматривает в состоянии прекарности слияние смыслов ненадежности и опасности, способных приводить к социальным взрывам, протестам и войнам.

4.3. Функционирование неологических терминодериватов в русскоязычном дискурсе

С середины 2000-х годов дискуссия о новых способах стратификации постиндустриального общества проникает в российский социологический дискурс. Как отмечает А.В. Юревич, «отечественная социогуманитарная наука постепенно превращается в механизм трансляции знания (а также гипотез, интерпретаций, заблуждений и т. д.), созданного зарубежной наукой» (Юревич 2006: 72). Заимствование западных стратификационных паттернов сопровождается уточнением их семантического объема, определением степени их релевантности для российского социума, а в отдельных случаях острой критикой критериев, выбранных для объединения разрозненных индивидов под крышей единого термина.

Наиболее общая дефиниция термина *когнитариат* в российской социологии принадлежит М.Г. Бреслеру (2023), характеризующего его как «новую социальную группу/класс создателей информационного продукта» (Бреслер 2023: 143). В зависимости от отношения к информационному/цифровому продукту ученый предлагает выделять три новые социальные группы: в высших слоях общества – владельцы информационного продукта и информационно-коммуникационных сетей (нетократия, или «сетевые аристократы» – термин, предложенный А. Бардом, Я. Зодерквистом (2004), в средних слоях социального пространства – производящая социальная группа/класс – когнитариат, в низших слоях – потребителей информационного продукта – консьюмериат» (Бреслер 2023: 149). Как видим, российский социолог также использует аффиксальную модель (консьюм – от англ. consume «потреблять» + *-ат*) и вводит отсутствующий в трудах западных социологов термин, обозначающий самую массовую социальную страту в рамках общества потребления, ограничивая его референцию, однако, исключительно отношением к интернет-технологиям.

Класс когнитариата находится в России в стадии формирования, на что косвенным образом указывает тот факт, что многие ученые приравнивают к когнитариям представителей молодого поколения, так называемого поколения Z, именуемого также с помощью заимствований «центиниалы, зумеры, хоумлендеры» и т.п. Именно для представителей данной возрастной группы естественным форматом жизнедеятельности является цифровая среда, которая одновременно становится источником их финансовых доходов.

Наименьшую распространенность в работах современных российских социологов получил термин *салариат*. С диахронической точки зрения слово можно интерпретировать как вторичное заимствование, поскольку в начале

XX века оно уже функционировало в русском языке в значении «системы заработной платы», пришедшем из французского языка (Епишкин 2010). Дефиниции термина в российских социологических трудах совпадают с формулировками, предложенными Г. Стендингом (Standing 2014), однако в определении состава референтных групп и в описании социального контекста наблюдаются ощутимые различия. Согласно исследованию Д.Г. Слатова (2017), в России *салариат* включает в себя лиц, имеющих стабильное место работы с более-менее фиксированной, предсказуемой и легальной («белой») заработной платой. Для салариата характерно наличие выраженной профессиональной траектории, полная занятость, включенность в системы социального и пенсионного обеспечения. В данную категорию попадают, например, врачи, преподаватели, государственные и муниципальные служащие, «силовики», штатные сотрудники крупных корпораций, особенно с государственным участием (Слатов 2017: 19). В работах российских ученых термин «салариат» регулярно соседствует с транслируемым из американского варианта английского языка понятием социальной мобильности или социального лифта. Именно вертикальная модель стратификации общества представляет основу управления переходами молодого поколения в ряды когнитариата или салариата, способствует «переформатированию расположения и наполненности социальных страт, отвечая не только социально-политическому запросу, но и духу технического прогресса» (Терновая, Шастина 2022: 68).

Если вхождение индивидов в состав салариата характеризуется как движение вверх по иерархической общественной лестнице, то попадание в слои прекариата представляет собой свидетельство социального регресса и, как следствие, источник множественных рисков. В условиях российской действительности *прекариат* представляет собой «формирующийся класс, который, с одной стороны, олицетворяет социальные слои, обладающие профессиональными знаниями, квалификацией, опытом и стремящиеся построить рациональные взаимосвязи с обществом и государством, с другой стороны, это быстро растущий слой работников нестабильного социального положения с неопределенной, флексибильной (гибкой) степенью занятости» (Тощенко 2020: 60).

Новый термин выходит за пределы собственно научного дискурса, внедряется в смежные дискурсивные практики и получает различные характеристики в масс-медиа: «прекариат – новый социальный класс, расположившийся между традиционным пролетариатом и беднотой»; «прекариат – это социально неустроенные, не имеющие полной гарантированной занятости люди», «прекариат – это люди, которые работают, но не имеют постоянного полноценного трудового контракта» и т.п. К прекариату причисляют представителей различных групп: «рабочие – мигранты на стройках, домашний персонал (повара, уборщицы, няни, водители, садовники) в домах богачей (элиты и салариата) и фрилансеры (от английских слов free lancer – «свободный копейщик», то есть средневековый солдат-наёмник), которые заняты отдельными проектами и «кочуют» от заказчика к заказчику» (Velobiker 2022). В других источниках подчеркивается, что «прекариат — это вовсе не маргиналы. Это люди, которые работают, но не имеют постоянного полноценного трудового контракта» (Banki.ru 2020).

Разночтения в определении прекариата, а также сомнения в существовании обозначаемой с помощью данного термина социальной страты высказываются и отдельными российскими учеными. В дискуссии, организованной на базе Казанского федерального университета, поднимались вопросы о том, является ли «прекариат модным термином или реально нарождающимся классом», обращалось внимание на умозрительный характер построений Г. Стендинга, а также на особую природу нового соционима, «вполне применимого для того, чтобы манипулировать определенными социальными силами» (Хасанова 2014). По утверждению Л.Г. Фишмана (2022), «противоречивость существующих взглядов на прекариат во многом обусловлена изначальной интенцией включать в новый класс (или в число кандидатов в его члены) всех, кто, независимо от размера... дохода, образования, самоидентификации и других характеристик, не имеет формальной занятости <…>. Неудивительно, что нарисованный столь широкими мазками портрет «нового опасного класса» с самого начала вызывал сомнения» (Фишман 2022: 104).

Неудачный характер терминотворчества Г. Стендинга (Standing 2014) может быть объяснен и с лингвистической точки зрения: выбор в качестве ономасиологического признака качества «нестабильности, шаткости финансового положения, сопряженной с опасностью коллапса», закодированного в семантике прилагательного *прекарный*, не может представлять собой объективного критерия, объединяющего людей в одну социальную страту. Потенциальный риск утраты социальных или финансовых гарантий касается каждого и является естественным фактором в условиях рыночной экономики. Существующий лишь в потенции социопсихологический фактор не может быть использован в качестве параметра, объединяющего людей в реально существующие социальные объединения.

В то же время характерная для современной цивилизации тенденция нестабильности находит свое выражение в производном существительном *прекаризация*, которое проходит быстрый путь от употребления в узкоспециализированных сочетаниях «прекаризация труда, занятости, молодежи» до общей характеристики прекаризации жизни. Описывая положение формирующегося класса как неустойчивое, связанное с риском утраты трудовых прав и социальных гарантий, Г.Л. Воронин указывает, что такие работники сталкиваются не только с «прекаризацией труда, но и прекаризацией жизни в целом» (Воронин, Крамер 2021: 112).

Ономасиологический признак неустойчивости, не «сработавший» в терминодеривате, призванном обозначать социальную страту, становится востребованным в характеристике процессуального состояния современной цивилизации. Е.А. Земская указывала, что до 70-х годов XX в. количество существительных на -*изация* было незначительным, но уже к началу XXI столетия их число резко возросло при отсутствии соотносительных глаголов, от которых они могли быть образованы (Земская 1996: 109).

Данный неологизм все чаще соседствует с существительным *прекарность* со значением отвлеченного признака. *Прекаризация* и *прекарность* начинают активным образом использоваться в заголовках различных интернет-статей; свежесть и новизна лексических единиц способствует их употреблению в качестве прагматических аттракторов, способных привлечь внимание целевой аудитории. Например: «Фриланс как тюрьма. Что такое прекарность и почему нам стоит ее избегать» (Бармина 2018), «Осторожно! Прекаризация труда» (Кореневский 2022), «Прекарность искусства: новое будущее институций?» (Писарев 2021) или «От прекарной занятости до прекаризации жизни» (Шевченко 2022). Во многих материалах отмечается, что прекаризация проникла во все области экономической и трудовой деятельности россиян: в здравоохранение, культуру, образование, политику и экономику, пронизывает публичную и приватную жизнь россиян, негативным образом отражаясь на их психологическом состоянии.

В вышеуказанных контекстах изначально присущая прилагательному *прекарный* сема социальной нестабильности деактуализируется, на первый план выходит психологический и экзистенциальный ракурс именуемого феномена. На прошедшем в 2023 году XVII Санкт-Петербургском саммите психологов *прекарность* становится основной темой дискуссии, в рамках которой озвучиваются идеи о том, что «прекарность может быть понята как состояние психологической уязвимости человека, как специфичная для текущего времени метапатология – массовое нарушение личностного развития», как «тип жизненной стратегии» или даже как «новая экзистенциальная перспектива развития человека» (Психологическая газета 2023). Обращает на себя внимание этноспецифичный характер осмысления феномена прекарности в России как депрессивного психологического состояния, имеющего демотивационный характер, что вступает в противоречие с убежденностью западных ученых в наличии в прекариате пока еще дремлющего революционного потенциала. Л.Г Фишман усматривает причины такого подхода к новому социальному феномену в том, что «российский прекариат практически полностью совпадает с российским же средним классом <…> И поскольку с такого рода прекариатом как пассивно страдающим и совсем уже не опасным классом государство может вести не подрывающий основ системы диалог, дискурс о прекариате и прекаризации становится такой же потенциально легитимной разновидностью нормализующего дискурса, как и дискурс о среднем классе» (Фишман 2022: 104).

5. Обсуждение результатов

Анализ когнитивно-деривационных моделей, лежащих в основе новейших терминодериватов с суффиксом -*ат*, дополненный изучением смыслов, которые вкладываются в них англо-американскими номинаторами и российскими учеными-социологами, выявил, что изобретенные термины носят в значительной мере характер искусственных социоконструктов, отражающих не только объективную потребность в их разработке и соответствие реальной стратификации общества, но и субъективные особенности мировоззрения ученых. Существенную роль в поддержании научной жизнеспособности новых терминолексем и их притязаний на роль ведущих социологических терминов играет взятая за основу суффиксальная модель, в рамках которой латинский формант *-ат* выступает в качестве экспонента собирательной множественности разряда существительных nomina collectiva. В то же время непосредственная связь термина *когнитариат* с наименованием конкретного исторического прецедента – класса пролетариата – вызывает неоднозначные интерпретации словообразовательной модели и вероятных ассоциативных связей. Если для самого номинатора смена пролетариев когнитариями связывается с изменениями основного орудия труда, то в обыденном сознании носителей языка происходит актуализация семы финансового состояния, квалифицирующая когнитивную социальную прослойку как новый аналог класса малоимущих.

Анализ функционирования термина *precariat*/*прекариат* выявил недостатки субъективного выбора номинатором ономасиологического признака прекарности как критерия, конституирующего новую социальную страту. Закодированное в семантике прилагательного *precarious* значение неустойчивости, потенциальных опасностей и рисков вызвало сомнения многих ученых в наличии референтных групп, соответствующих столь широкому умозрительному социоконструкту. В то же время актуализация семы психологического состояния, изначально присутствующей в мотивирующем прилагательном, обусловила возникновение и дискурсивную активизацию производных существительных, описывающих прекаризацию и прекарность как общую тенденцию развития цивилизации и как экзистенциальный феномен. В осмыслении данных концептов зарубежными и отечественными социологами обнаруживается этнокультурная специфика: на западе нестабильность экзистенции интерпретируется как источник социальной конфликтогенности, в российской социологической науке прекариат приравнивается к среднему классу, в существовании которого усматривается залог социально-экономической стабильности общества.

6. Заключение

Осуществленный нами анализ новейших социологических терминов показывает, что аффиксальная модель с формантом *-ат*, традиционно используемая для образования nomina collectiva, пересекается с блендинговой моделью. Выявленная неоднозначность восприятия академическим сообществом предложенных терминообразований свидетельствует о важной роли человеческого фактора в конструировании термина. Особое значение для успешного функционирования соционимов имеет выбор ономасиологического признака, коррелирующего с объективными характеристиками, присущими целой социальной страте. Преобладание в акте номинации субъективного авторского взгляда обусловливает множественные интерпретации внутренней формы неодеривата и вызывает сомнения в его способности обозначать конкретную социальную группу. Блендинговые структуры, порождающие прямые ассоциации с предыдущим соционимом, способствуют проецированию ложных представлений на новую референтную группу и, следовательно, не соответствуют требованиям его однозначного, унифицированного понимания. Выявленные особенности интерпретации заимствованных терминов в русскоязычном дискурсе определяются спецификой актуальной стратификации российского общества и тенденций его развития. Сделанные в результате осуществленного анализа выводы вносят вклад в теорию современного терминоведения и могут учитываться в практике терминотворчества.

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Article history:
Received: 09 August 2024
Accepted: 25 January 2025

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Russian Journal of Linguistics
ISSN 2687-0088 (Print), ISSN 2686-8024 (Online)

2025 Vol. 29 No. 2 457–461
http://journals.rudn.ru/linguistics

https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-40603
EDN: LKIUEW

Review of Carsten Levisen. 2024. *Postcolonial Semantics: Meaning and Metalanguage in a Multipolar World.* Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter

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Postcolonial semantics is a relatively new branch of linguistics that studies meaning in places that were formerly colonized. It explores the meanings of concepts, inter alia, that were introduced through Euro-colonialism and those that emerged because of it. Levisen's book *Postcolonial Semantics* is the first book to offer a meaning-centered and cultural-insider approach to postcolonial linguistics. Using this approach, Levisen explores Bislama, a Pacific language. While previous studies have investigated different aspects of this language (e.g., Crowley 2004a, 2004b), Levisen's is the first book to investigate part of the Bislama universe of meaning and present findings that can easily be verified by the average native Bislama speaker.

Chapter 1 is an introduction. It starts by defining the term 'postcolonial semantics' and moves on to introduce the research setting. Levisen investigates Bislama, the national language of Vanuatu, an archipelagic country in the Pacific Ocean that was colonized by Britain and France and gained independence in 1980. Bislama is a creole whose words are predominantly of English origin. Levisen also introduces his empirical framework through which he approaches meaning in Bislama. This framework rests on semantic socialization, consultation, and observation.

Chapter 2 sheds light on the centrality of meanings and that of metalanguage. For Levisen, semantics is all about studying meanings, which he regards as conceptual constructs that are based on prototypical scenarios. To study these meanings, especially across linguacultures (ways of speaking and ways of living), semanticists need a metalanguage that unpacks these meanings while avoiding Anglo- and Eurocentrism. The metalanguage that Levisen proposes and uses throughout his book is the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM). This metalanguage uses, inter alia, 65 concepts that are simple (cannot be defined using simpler terms) and universal (have exact equivalents in all languages). As the book investigates meanings in Bislama, Levisen presents a list of the exact equivalents of these 65 concepts in this language.

Chapter 3 studies the popular representation of 'places' and 'people in places' in the Bislama discourse. More specifically, it investigates the meanings of *graon* 'land/home,' *aelan* '(home) island,' *kantri* 'country,' and *paradaes* 'Paradise.' For each concept, Levisen presents an explication (a definition using simple, universal concepts). In addition, he compares them to their English counterparts and also presents an explication of English *country* and *Paradise*.

Chapter 4 starts by discussing Anglo metalinguistics, and it particularly looks into and explicates the meanings of the English words and phrases *English*, *dialect of English*, and *variety of English*. It then moves on to discuss Ni-Vanuatu metalinguistics, and it analyzes and explicates the following terms: *lanwis* 'island vernacular,' two meanings of the word *Bislama*, *inglis* 'English,' *franis* 'French,' and *ekspensif inglis* 'lit. expensive English.'

In Chapter 5, Levisen investigates the semantics of social categories in Vanuatu. By 'social categories' is meant how different groups of people are referred to in a certain place, whether these groups live or are related to that place or not. Levisen analyzes and explicates 23 such categories. It is no wonder then that this chapter is the longest (49 pages) and has the word *dictionary* in its title: "Postcolonial lexicography: A dictionary of social words and worlds." Among the categories investigated are *ol bubu* 'ancestors,' *ol brata mo ol sista* 'lit. brothers and sisters' (which are used as kinship and friendship terms), and *ol blakman mo ol waetman* 'lit. black and white people.'

Chapter 6 advocates the importance of using cross-translatable concepts when describing how people in different cultures talk about how they feel. Using simple, universal concepts, Levisen discusses the pragmatics of *sakem swea* 'lit. throwing insults' in Bislama and provides four cultural scripts (short texts describing cultural norms and practices) for *sakem swea*. He also investigates the meanings of some words from this category and explicates one of them, namely *dipskin* 'lit. thick skin.' Furthermore, he explores the semantics of *faea i ded* 'lit. dead fire' and the two anger-like feelings *kros* (etymon: cross) and *les* (etymon: lazy), and the word *sore* (etymon: sorry), and ends the chapter by explicating the music-driven category *aire* (etymon: Jamaican *irie*). Compared to English, Bislama gives more prominence to expressive conceptualizations of feelings than to descriptive ones.

In Chapter 7, Levisen presents his cultural and critical theory of ortholexy. By the word *ortholexy* he means the study of good and bad words; this study is conducted from the lens of native speakers of the target linguaculture. He analyzes and explicates the English word *taboo*, as well as the Bislama words *rabis* (etymon:

rubbish) and *stret* (etymon: straight), which refer to doing bad and good things, respectively. He also discusses and provides a cultural script for the Bislama concept of *sakem toktok* 'throwing words' and that of *nakaema*. Regarding *nakaema*, Levisen demonstrates how rendering it as 'black magic' does not reflect its true meaning. He ends this chapter by throwing light on the semantics of the Bislama value of *rispek hemi honorabel* 'respect is honorable.'

Chapter 8 is the conclusion. Here, the author lists and discusses the different contributions of his findings to different fields. His book contributes to postcolonial linguistics, cognitive and cultural semantics, creole studies and world Englishes, Bislama and urban Pacific studies, and linguistic worldview studies.

The originality of this book lies in its providing a new framework. This framework paves the road for studying cognitive semantics and postcolonial linguistics, and it demonstrates how this road can be taken. Levisen takes his readers on a journey into the Bislama linguaculture and helps them see and experience the ways of speaking and living in the capital of Vanuatu as locals there see them and experience them. I hypothesize that most readers might know very little (if any) about Vanuatu and Bislama. For them, as it was for the present reviewer, Levisen's book will be an eye-opener in two respects. First, it will introduce them to a new place, language, and culture. Second, it will do so through the lens of Bislama speakers. Almost any book about a certain linguaculture will do the first task, but rarely can one find such a book that also does the second task.

Levisen succeeds in his endeavor because his research and analysis are grounded in an approach that employs simple, universal concepts (Goddard 2021, Goddard & Wierzbicka 1994, 2002, 2014, Peeters 2006, Wierzbicka 2021). When he describes a certain aspect of the Bislama linguaculture using these concepts, his description can be read to/by native Bislama speakers, and the claims he makes about their linguaculture can be verified by them. A description that uses concepts that do not have exact equivalents in Bislama will be very difficult or impossible to verify.

Levisen's book is enriching in yet another respect. It gives its readers the opportunity to question their own ways of viewing and understanding the world around them, especially other languages and cultures. Without proper education, most people would tend to judge other languages and cultures from the prism of their own language and culture. This ethnocentrism prevents these people from seeing reality as it is. With a world that has turned into a global village, people need to read books like Levisen's.

This book is also enriching in terms of language acquisition and/or learning. To many people, learning or acquiring a new language is highly desirable. Readers of Levisen's book can find themselves acquiring/learning some of the basics of the vocabulary and grammar of Bislama, although the book's aim is not to teach this language. This is because Levisen provides the explications of the target Bislama concepts and the cultural scripts in both English and Bislama. The ability to read and relatively understand the texts in Bislama stems from two factors. The first is because most words in Bislama are originally from English. The second is because all the explications use the Bislama exponents of the 65 simple, universal terms mentioned above. By coming across these simple words repeatedly, readers find themselves committing them to memory almost effortlessly.

If the publisher, de Gruyter, were to consider a second edition of this book, a possible change could be simplifying the academic language of the book to make it more accessible to a general audience. For example, Levisen uses technical words that are highly academic, such as *etic*, *emic*, and *cryptodiversity*. Although he explains their meanings clearly, readers can stumble over them. He uses the word *etic*, for instance, 62 times in the body of the book (excluding the Table of Contents and references). Since this word is not commonly used even in academic discourse, readers (including experts in the field) may find themselves needing to mentally translate it into simpler terms, and this can be distracting.

In addition, it would be insightful to add to the appendix the origin of some of the Bislama exponents (exact equivalents) of the 65 semantic primes. The origin of some of the exponents is straightforward, like *mi* ‘I’ and *yu* ‘you.’ The origin of others, like *hemia* ‘there is,’ is not. Having said that, it is worth noting that Levisen provides information about the etymology of almost all the complex Bislama terms he analyzes and explicates.

Postcolonial Semantics is a book worth reading and learning from. It broadens the horizons of its readers and helps them grow more aware of cross-linguistic and cross-cultural differences. This, in turn, helps in diminishing ethnocentrism.

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Review history:
Received: 02 September 2024
Accepted: 20 December 2023

Bionote:

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Russian Journal of Linguistics
ISSN 2687-0088 (Print), ISSN 2686-8024 (Online)

2025 Vol. 29 No. 2 462–467
http://journals.rudn.ru/linguistics

https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-42131
EDN: LLIWMU

Review of Lily Lim and Defeng Li (eds.). 2020. *Key Issues in Translation Studies in China: Reflections and New Insights*. Springer: Singapore. 203 pp. eBook ISBN: 978-981-15-5865-8

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Over the past four decades, Translation Studies has experienced rapid expansion, with China becoming a notable contributor to this field. *Key Issues in Translation Studies in China: Reflections and New Insights* (2020), co-edited by Lily Lim and Defeng Li, offers a comprehensive analysis of the evolution of translation studies in China, highlighting its distinctive historical context and modernization trajectory. Against the backdrop of globalization and rapid technological advancement, China's translation discipline has experienced profound transformation: transitioning from traditional paradigms to modern frameworks, synthesizing both Eastern and Western theoretical perspectives, while continuously innovating in educational practices, technological applications, and industry standards. The book presents a collection of eight chapters that encompass pivotal themes including translating and interpreting training, cultural dimensions of CTS, cognitive processes routes of translation and interpretation, as well as curriculum design and assessment. Collectively presenting a unique lens to explore Chinese translation as a distinct academic discipline, the book highlights China's evolving role in the global translation community.

Chapter 1, "Chinese Translation Discourse—Traditional and Contemporary Features of Development," discusses the development of Chinese translation discourse, its most important features and major stages, both traditional and contemporary, and how it has evolved from the past to the present. Zaixi Tan believes that, ‘as a system of its own’, Chinese translation discourse (as well as translation theory in general) has its own unique ‘Chineseness’, and should encompass both its historical roots and modern developments. Tan’s chapter effectively bridges the gap between traditional Chinese translation theory and its modern counterparts, providing a nuanced understanding of how past practices inform present-day translation studies. His argument for a holistic view of Chinese translation discourse is compelling and sets the stage for the rest of the book.

In Chapter 2 “Teaching Translation and Culture”, Yifeng Sun re-evaluates the role of culture in translation education, emphasizing its historical context, key issues, and contributions. Sun advocates for incorporating cultural knowledge and cross-cultural awareness into translation training and suggests that translation should not be reduced to vocational training but a balanced curriculum that equips students with heightened cultural sensitivity and insight into the intricate and dialogical nature of cultural disparities inherent in both source and target languages. Sun’s approach is particularly relevant in light of AI’s impact on the field, offering practical and forward-looking recommendations for enhancing cultural competence in translation education, making this chapter a valuable resource for educators.

Chapter 3 “Translation Teaching Research in the Chinese Mainland (1978–2018): Theory, Method and Development”, systematically reviews the development of translation training in China from 1978 to 2018, highlighting key theoretical frameworks and publication trends. Youlan Tao, Hui Wen, and Shuhuai Wang underscore the critical role of translation teaching within applied translation studies, aligning it with the growing demands of the language service industry. Through a thorough quantitative analysis, the chapter offers valuable reflections on past developments and provides insights for future advancements, establishing it as a significant contribution to translation pedagogy.

Chapter 4 “Pragmatics and Chinese Translation” explores the pragmatics of translation. Vincent Wang critically examines the research on that topic carried out by Chinese scholars, categorizing the studies into two primary groups — pragmatics as perspective and pragmatics as behaviour. Using a case study from *Pygmalion*, Wang demonstrates the application of speech act analysis in translation, underscoring how pragmatic analysis can enhance both understanding of translation processes and quality evaluation. This chapter fills a gap in translation studies by illustrating the practical relevance of pragmatics, offering valuable insights for researchers and practitioners alike.

Chapter 5 “Cognitive Processing Routes of Culture-Specific Linguistic Metaphors in Simultaneous Interpreting”, examines how professional interpreters process culture-specific linguistic metaphors (CSMs) during simultaneous interpreting by analyzing their cognitive strategies through a corpus-assisted empirical study. Yue Lang and Defeng Li’s findings indicate that interpreters predominantly utilize a vertical route to interpret both literal expressions and CSMs, with a greater reliance on this approach for cultural nuances. Nevertheless, the grammatical unit of the source language exert minimal influence on the cognitive process of interpreting CSMs. Furthermore, it specifically contrasts metaphoric expressions with literal ones, addressing a gap in this field. Also, it suggests that future research on the cognitive mechanisms of simultaneous interpretation could benefit from utilizing larger corpus and online methods, particularly in elucidating linguistic metaphors. This chapter is methodologically robust, offering a clear example of how empirical research can advance our understanding of cognitive processes in interpreting. The authors' findings are significant for interpreter training programs, as they highlight the importance of cognitive strategies in handling culturally unique expressions.

Chapter 6 "From Faithfulness to Information Quality: On 信 in Translation Studies", discusses the role of Xin 信 in enhancing information quality in translation. Chu-Ren Huang and Xiaowen Wang offer a comprehensive analysis of the practical application of Xin 信 in translation, underscore the significance of information quality by asserting that Xin 信 should be evaluated through meticulous consideration of contextual meaning rather than a simplistic word-for-word translation. Through comparative analyses of two pairs of near synonyms in Chinese and English based on comparable corpora, the authors further expound that prioritizing information quality is essential for comprehending the significance of translation in today's interconnected information economy. In this chapter, by examining synaesthetic and conceptual metaphors, the authors contribute to the discussion on faithfulness in translation, reflecting a shift toward functional and communicative approaches.

Chapter 7, "Interpreting Training in China: Past, Present, and Future," reviews the development, current state, and future directions of interpreter training in China, emphasizing the integration of theory with practice. Lily Lim, in this chapter, reviews key milestones, explores training models through three curriculum paradigms, and advocates a blended approach that incorporates information technology and corpus-based practice. The chapter also discusses the relevance of community interpreting training, the impact of artificial intelligence, and the need to align training with global trends, aiming to cultivate interpreters with essential IT skills. The professionalization of community interpreting in China is still at an early stage of development. The field of domestic community interpreting research is relatively limited in scope and has not received adequate scholarly attention (Hu 2018). Lim's insights provide a comprehensive and relevant perspective on advancing interpreter training in China, especially community interpreting.

Chapter 8 "Translation and Interpreting Assessment Schemes: NAATI Versus CATTI" by Leong Ko, provides a thorough analysis of the translation and interpreting markets in Australia and China, along with an examination of the development of the NAATI and CATTI tests. It compares their structures, standards, components, and qualification pathways and examines the implications of these frameworks for the translation and interpreting markets, including ethical, social, and cultural dimensions. The author's comparative study offers valuable insights and recommendations for enhancing assessment schemes, making it a significant resource for policymakers and educators involved in translator and interpreter certification.

The book is a significant contribution to the field of translation studies. It offers a well-rounded exploration of both theoretical and practical issues in TS: translation and interpretation teaching and assessment (Chapters 2, 3, 7, 8), translation culture and the Chinese characteristics (Chapters 1, 2, 6) and linguistics (Chapters 4 and 5), with a particular focus on the Chinese context. However, the relevance of the topics discussed extends far beyond China, making the book an important resource for the international TS community. The editors and contributors have succeeded in addressing critical issues while also providing innovative solutions to some of the most pressing challenges in the field. The book's empirical focus, particularly in chapters dealing with cognitive processes and pragmatics, adds a scientific dimension to the discussion that is often lacking in more theoretical works.

While the book is extensive, there are areas where it could be further strengthened. As with any collective work, there is a lack of internal connections between topics across chapters, which may affect the continuity of reading. Integrating discussions of related topics into cohesive sections may enhance overall coherence. A limited portion of the information presented in the book could benefit from closer attention to detail, such as a misspelling of the author's name (p. 65 Li should be Lv) and a minor Chinese transliteration error (p. 127 *neng4* should be *neng2*). If future editions are planned, a thorough review of such details would further enhance the book's overall professionalism and accuracy.

Nevertheless, this book is an invaluable resource for translation researchers, scholars, and educators in tertiary-level translation and interpretation programs, providing comprehensive insights on the latest advancements in translation studies in China. Through comparative analyses, such as between NAATI and CATTI, the book addresses the pragmatic and ethical aspects of translation and interpreting practices in China. This approach, combined with insights on translator training and assessment, makes the book a valuable resource for educators, policymakers, and practitioners aiming to align translation standards with the growing demands of international communication. Scholars may discover a wealth of current research trends and prospective directions in the field of translation. This not only facilitates knowledge exchange and growth within the academic community but also lays a robust foundation for future research initiatives.

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Review history:
Received: 2 December 2024
Accepted: 20 March 2025

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