

Comparative Analysis of Terms of Address in English and Uzbek Languages

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ANNOTATION: We aimed to study comparatively linguistic features of terms of address in English and Uzbek language. This article analyzes different approaches to this issues by several linguistic scholars. This article can be a manual for English learners in order to get social, cultural and semantic features of using address terms or titles in English and Uzbek languages appropriately.

KEYWORD: terms of address, title, linguistic features, T/V forms of addressing words.

Introduction

Address “denotes a speaker’s linguistic reference to his/her collocutor(s)” (Braun, 1988: 7). Address terms may be used to start a conversation (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989) but also occur in other places and for other functions in the interaction. The way we use address, and how we speak with other people, is an incredibly important factor in defining, “establishing and maintaining social relationships” (Norrby & Wide, 2015: 2). Choice of address is strongly influenced by one’s own social and linguistic background and includes an assessment of the relationship with the interaction partner, making it a particularly suitable topic for sociolinguistic studies (Formentelli, 2009: 179).

Most commonly, for English, two types of address terms are distinguished: pronouns and nouns, i.e. names, titles, etc. (Clyne et al., 2009: 37). While in present-day English, the address pronoun is invariably *you*, when we compare to Uzbek language we find a T/V distinction, such as *siz* and *sen* (e.g. Brown & Gilman, 1960; Simon, 2003), i.e. *Siz* vs *Sen*, with *Siz* being the more formal form (“*sizlar*” in the plural). Nominal address terms in English usually consist of a combination of title and last name (TT¹ + LN, e.g. *Mr. Shakespeare*) or usage of the first name (FN, e.g. *William*); but one also finds endearment terms (e.g. *dear*), or other relational terms, such as kinship terms (e.g. *Dad*). Kinship terms can also be used as a form of relationship signaler between people who are not actually related, e.g. *Bro*.

In one of the first systematic studies on salutation, Brown and Gilman (1960) identified power and solidarity as the main factors in the choice of a form of address. However, older influential studies such as Brown and Gilman (1960), Brown and Ford (1961), and Braun (1988) have been criticized for making too bold claims on the basis of a slim database (e.g. Clyne et al., 2009: 15), and neglecting further potentially significant factors, e.g., situational variables (formal/informal), differences in power structures, speaker characteristics such as age and gender, the medium, social networks, perceptions of common ground, style, and even individual preference (cf. Norrby & Wide, 2015: 2–5, Clyne et al., 2009: 18; even the price range of the restaurant in which server-customer interactions take place has been shown to have an effect, cf. Staley 2018).

Brown and Ford (1961: 375) state that, in AmE, “English forms of address are reasonably well described by a single binary contrast: FN or [TT + LN]”. The TT + LN forms used, as well as the use of titles as honorifics (e.g. Sir) typically “express formality and distance towards addressees of high social status” (Formentelli, 2009: 182). However, they might also function as solidarity terms when used within friendships, where they may be used to “express camaraderie” (2009: 182). The use of honorific titles (e.g. sir, madam) is described as “uncommon strategy”, as “respect towards an addressee is rarely marked [...] in present-day English”. Exceptions may be service encounters where “an older customer may well be addressed” with an honorific (Leech, 1999: 112). Using the first name is described as not only normal for personal relationships (e.g. friends) but also for colleagues, while an important social contrastive function is attested to the choice of FN vs TT + LN (Leech, 1999: 112). In languages where the pronominal T/V (sen/siz in Uzbek) distinction is present, the T forms are typically combined with first names, while the V-pronouns are used with titles and last names.

Concerning recent change, Leech (1999: 114) speaks of “a progressive familiarization of addressing and naming habits in the English-speaking world” based on a corpus of speech that mostly includes “domestic use of language”. While British English exhibited a greater number of kin terms, AmE was in the lead concerning “a more extreme trend toward familiarization in American usage” (Leech, 1999: 114), with a high number of familiarizers as well as a higher number of familiarized first names. One might expect this trend to potentially find reflection in more recent British usage, as “recent developments in British English address practices [are] possibly influenced by patterns in American English” (Clyne et al., 2009: 4). Other studies on address in AmE have also shown this trend towards familiarization, i.e. increasing use of first names, also for example in business contexts (e.g. Brown & Ford, 1961; Ervin-Tripp, 1972; Murray, 2002).

Fewer studies exist on address in British English. Exceptions are Formentelli (2009) and Baker (2010). Formentelli (2009) investigated salutation in a conservative academic environment, based on a relatively small sample (23 participants). Interestingly, especially younger British students exhibited uncertainties regarding the salutation of lecturers (e.g. TT + LN vs FN), reflected in avoidance strategies, which can be seen as evidence of changing conventions. Baker’s (2010) corpus-based study focuses on choice of titles regarding gender. Comparing four corpora containing data from 1931 to 2006, his most important finding is that the use of titles is decreasing (2010: 143), which he links to the fact that first name address becomes more prevalent (2010: 143–144). Linking his findings to Mair’s (2006) idea of democratization and colloquialisation, Baker interprets this as “a move towards non-sexist language, a move towards more informal, equal and colloquial ways of addressing people and a (slight) reflection of the decrease of marriage in society” (Baker, 2010: 144).

Contrastive pragmatic research on English in the last decades has all in all confirmed the robustness of the five dimensions of pragmatic contrasts proposed by House (e.g. 1996, for a recent research overview of this field, see Kranich, 2016). For our present purpose, the dimensions of content-orientation vs addressee-orientation is the most relevant one. Greater attention to the addressee may make English speakers more likely to use terms of address that belong to the spectrum of solidarity markers / positive politeness markers (e.g. *darling*, *love*, *mate*), in order to create a positive relationship with the interlocutor.

In Uzbek language also, it is noticeable that people tend to use terms of address that belong to the spectrum of solidarity markers / positive politeness markers, for instance, *azizim*, *qadrdonim*, *do`stim*, *jonim* etc.

It is clear that when it comes to Alerters across situations, Attention Getters (AtG) are used relatively frequently. This is especially true for younger AmE speakers, but also in general, younger speakers use them more often than older speakers of the same variety. Another interesting observation is that the second person singular pronoun (Pr_D) seems to serve as Alerter only in Uzbek (and only the T-variant *Sen*). This means that the use of *Siz* in Uzbek seems to be accepted as strategy to gather the addressee’s attention, while

something like you, or even a combination of hey you, cannot be found in the data, even though the usage of it seems possible (though it might be perceived as somewhat rude, which is probably why our informants refrained from its use). English does make use of pronouns as Alerters, but these are indefinite pronouns (Pr_I) or indefinite combinations (Pr_IC) such as everyone and you all.

In the English varieties, the younger speakers show a somewhat higher use of Alerters, which to a large extent reflects their more frequent use of *Hey* and *Hi*. These two items represent the most frequently used AtG in the data. The fact that English, on the other hand, represents the variety with the highest Alerter use overall also has to do with the fact that the use of *Sir* to introduce a request in a formal situation (e.g. talking to one's boss) is especially common in this variety, particularly with regard to the older group of English speakers, who do not make frequent use of *Hey* or *Hi*.

The Greeting strategy (AtG_G) *Hey* or *Bro, dude*, and its frequent occurrence in the data of younger speakers relates to our hypothesis concerning colloquialisation and supports this hypothesis in two ways: it is younger speakers who prefer this informal strategy, and it is in particular US-American speakers i.e. the variety that has generally been assumed to be in the lead when it comes to colloquialisation (cf. e.g. Collins, 2012). Young Americans are followed, in contrast to our predictions, who do not behave conservatively at all in this respect.

In business situations, use formal titles unless the people you meet tell you otherwise. To get someone's attention you can say: "*Excuse me, Sir*" or "*Pardon me, Madam/Ma'am*." To greet someone, you can say: "*Hello Sir*" or "*Good morning, Madam/Ma'am*."

Here is the list of addressing words in English:

1. **Sir** (adult male of any age)
2. **Ma'am** (adult female - North American)
3. **Madam** (adult female)
4. **Mr** + last name (any man)
5. **Mrs** + last name (married woman who uses her husband's last name)
6. **Ms** + last name (married or unmarried woman; common in business)
7. **Miss** + last name (unmarried woman)
8. **Dr** + last name (some doctors go by Dr + first name)
9. **Professor** + last name (in a university setting)

Titles of Affection

When addressing a child, a romantic partner, or a close friend or family member (usually younger) people often use these terms of endearment, also known as "pet names":

- **Honey** (child, romantic partner, or younger person)
- **Dear**
- **Sweetie**
- **Love**
- **Darling**
- **Babe or Baby** (romantic partner)

- **Pal** (father or grandfather calls male child)
- **Buddy or Bud** (very informal between friends or adult-to-child; can be seen as negative)

Contrastingly, in Uzbek language lexemes indicating relative relationships can be used as terms of address. Such as, *tog'a*, *amma*, *xola*, *opoqi*, and etc.

Conclusion

To conclude, we can use several lexicons as terms of address, such as titles: *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Ms.*, professions such as, *professor*, *doctor* and etc. Solidarity words also can be used *e.g. darling*, *baby*, *sweetie*. Above mentioned lexical resources can be found in both languages: English and Uzbek languages. Contrastingly, words refer to relatives can be used as terms of address in Uzbek language. For instance, *xola*, *amma*, *tog'a*, *amaki*, *opoqi*, *kelinoyi* and etc.

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