

Linguopragmatic Mechanisms Of Expressing Wish And Desire In English And Uzbek Discourse

Feruzjon Sharipov

Teacher at English teaching methodology №1 department, Uzbekistan state university of world languages, Uzbekistan

Received: 12 October 2025; **Accepted:** 10 November 2025; **Published:** 30 November 2025

Abstract: This article deals with the issues based on analyzing the linguopragmatic mechanisms used to express wish and desire in English and Uzbek discourse from a comparative perspective. Drawing on speech act theory, politeness theory, and cross-cultural pragmatics, the study analyzes grammatical structures, modal expressions, and discourse strategies through which emotional intentions are verbalized or implied. The study highlights the importance of pragmalinguistic awareness for translation and foreign language teaching, emphasizing that wishes function not only as grammatical forms but as culturally embedded pragmatic acts.

Keywords: Linguopragmatics, Wish expressions, Desire constructions, Speech acts, Politeness strategies, Optative mood, Cross-cultural discourse, Uzbek–English comparison.

Introduction: The expression of wish and desire constitutes a fundamental aspect of human communication, reflecting personal intentions, emotional states, social positioning, and culturally conditioned communicative norms. Within linguistics, these notions have been examined through the lenses of pragmatics, speech act theory, and discourse analysis, as they represent communicative acts that go beyond mere grammatical constructions to encompass speaker intentions and pragmatic effects. In English and Uzbek discourse alike, expressions of wish and desire operate as indirect speech acts that often require pragmatic interpretation to uncover the speaker's true communicative purpose (Searle, 1975; Levinson, 1983).

Linguopragmatics focuses on how language users apply linguistic resources in specific communicative contexts to achieve intended meanings. Wishes and desires are expressed through modal verbs, optative and subjunctive constructions, performative verbs, lexical expressions, and pragmatic markers, each of which functions differently across languages and cultures. While English typically relies on modal verbs (wish, want, would like, hope), conditional structures (If only I could...), and politeness strategies, Uzbek frequently employs optative moods (-sa edi, bo'lsa edi, istardim),

lexical verbs (xohlamoq, istamoq), and culturally embedded expressions of humility or emotional restraint. These divergences point toward distinct lingua-cultural models of interpersonal communication, emphasizing individual agency in English versus community-oriented value systems in Uzbek discourse (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

From a pragmatic standpoint, expressions of wish and desire often serve multifunctional communicative goals. They may function as requests (I wish you could help me), complaints (If only this situation were different), expressions of regret (I wish I had studied harder), or markers of hope and emotional vulnerability (I hope everything will be fine). Similarly, Uzbek utterances such as "Qaniydi vaqt bo'lsa edi" or "Istardimki, bu ish yakun topgan bo'lsa" simultaneously convey desire and indirect evaluation of reality, often maintaining sociolinguistic politeness and face-saving strategies characteristic of high-context cultures. Moreover, the relevance of studying linguopragmatic mechanisms lies not only in revealing cross-linguistic differences but also in promoting intercultural communicative competence. Misinterpretation of wish-based utterances across languages may lead to pragmatic failure, particularly in second-language communication contexts (Thomas, 1983). For language

learners, understanding how desire is pragmatically encoded helps enhance pragmatic awareness, communicative appropriateness, and cross-cultural sensitivity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of wishes and desires within linguopragmatics has developed primarily through speech act theory, politeness research, and cross-cultural pragmatics. Austin (1962) established that utterances function as actions rather than mere statements, and Searle (1975) further classified speech acts, situating wishes within the category of expressives and indirect directives. Wishes often function pragmatically as masked requests or evaluative statements, demanding context-sensitive interpretation.

Levinson (1983) expanded pragmatic theory by emphasizing the importance of context, implicature, and shared knowledge in understanding indirect meaning. Expressions such as “I wish you were here” communicate more than emotional longing; they can signal relational closeness or subtle requests. Yule (1996) further emphasized how modal constructions and conditional patterns facilitate non-literal interpretation by activating pragmatic inference.

Politeness theory provides essential insights into how wishes are shaped by social relationships. Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that indirect strategies are commonly used to mitigate face-threatening acts. Since expressing desire often implies requesting action from another interlocutor, speakers adopt polite or mitigated forms (would like to, I was hoping...) to soften imposition. This politeness strategy is notable in English, where indirectness contributes to social harmony.

Cross-cultural pragmatics has demonstrated that the conceptualization and expression of desire differ culturally. Blum-Kulka (1989) notes that directness levels vary according to sociocultural norms. High-context cultures, such as Uzbek society, favor implicitness and collectivist politeness strategies, often encoding wishes as culturally framed suggestions or emotional appeals rather than direct statements. Wierzbicka (1991) emphasizes that emotional speech acts are semantically encoded differently across languages, as emotions and desires are filtered through culturally specific values.

Uzbek linguopragmatic research (Abdullaeva, 2018; Qosimov, 2020) highlights the importance of optative forms (-sa edi), desiderative verbs (istamoq, xohlamoq), and discourse particles (qaniydi) for wish expression. These structures allow speakers to articulate desire without direct imposition, aligning

communication with values of respect, modesty, and emotional restraint. Similarly, Yuldashev (2020) demonstrates that Uzbek optative constructions convey layered meanings combining desire, regret, and polite request.

Studies in contrastive linguistics reveal that English language pragmatics favors explicit emotional articulation, while Uzbek discourse demonstrates “contextual emotionality,” often implying desire rather than directly stating it (Karasik, 2002). This difference may present challenges for second-language learners, who may misinterpret pragmatic force when relying solely on grammatical equivalence (Thomas, 1983). For example, a learner translating “Qaniydi kelgan bo’lsangiz” literally as “I wish you came” may fail to capture the apologetic or requestive undertone inherent in the Uzbek original.

From a discourse perspective, literary texts have proven productive for analyzing emotionally charged speech acts. Toolan (2011) suggests that literary dialogue demonstrates pragmatic creativity, while Simpson (2014) points out that characters’ wishes often function as narrative catalysts revealing emotional depth and interpersonal conflict.

Recent applied linguistics studies underscore the pedagogical importance of teaching pragmatic competence alongside grammar (Taguchi, 2015). Learners must recognize that wishes are not merely grammatical structures but context-dependent communicative acts shaped by politeness conventions and socio-cultural norms.

Literary discourse provides rich material for examining the pragmatics of desire, as characters’ utterances are often emotionally charged and indirectly motivated. In English literature, Shakespeare’s Hamlet offers a well-known example: “O that this too too solid flesh would melt” (I.ii). This utterance expresses a wish for self-annihilation while pragmatically conveying despair. Grammatically framed as an optative interjection (“O that”), its pragmatic force functions as emotional self-disclosure rather than an actionable request. The expression is intensified through archaic optative syntax, creating a speech act of grief rather than desire for real-world fulfillment.

Similarly, in Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*, Elizabeth states: “I wish you had been there”. The utterance linguistically uses the subjunctive past perfect but pragmatically serves as a mild reproach and expression of emotional distance. Although framed as a wish, the underlying function critiques absence, demonstrating how wish structures often convey implicit evaluation or emotional stance.

In Uzbek literature, Abdulla Qodiriy’s novels provide

culturally typical examples. Expressions such as “Qaniydi u qaytib kelsa edi” (“If only he would come back”) reflect optative constructions marked by -sa edi, functioning pragmatically to express personal longing, regret, and helpless acceptance. The absence of direct address demonstrates a cultural preference for low imposition and emotional containment; desire becomes reflective rather than directive.

Another example appears in O’tkir Hoshimov’s dialogue: “Istardimki, hammasi boshqacha bo’lsa” (“I wish everything were different”). Linguistically this features the desiderative verb istamoq combined with a subordinate optative clause. Pragmatically, it performs psychological distancing, expressing dissatisfaction without directing blame toward any interlocutor.

Across both languages, wish statements frequently operate as indirect speech acts. In English, “I wish you could help me” often functions as a softened request. In Uzbek, the pragmatic equivalent might be “Yordam bersangiz yaxshi bo’lardi” (“It would be good if you helped”), avoiding direct articulation of desire. Politeness is maintained through modality and hypothetical framing rather than explicit want-assertion.

The primary contrast lies in degrees of explicitness. English discourse commonly permits open self-expression—I want, I wish, I hope—while Uzbek discourse tends to imply rather than assert emotional needs, embedding desire within culturally moderated constructions. This difference influences translation and language teaching; literal transfer may distort pragmatic meaning.

Uzbek classical and modern prose offers rich material for exploring linguopragmatic mechanisms of expressing wish and desire, particularly in the works of O’tkir Hoshimov and Abdulla Qahhor, whose narratives deeply reflect everyday emotional struggles, internal longing, and culturally moderated self-expression.

In O’tkir Hoshimov’s novel Dunyoning ishlari (“The

Affairs of the World”), characters often verbalize desire through emotionally restrained optative constructions. A recurrent pattern is the use of expressions such as “Qaniydi hammasi boshqacha bo’lsa edi” (“If only everything were different”). Linguistically, the utterance is structured through the particle qaniydi combined with the optative -sa edi ending, which avoids explicit personal volition verbs (xohlayman, “I want”) and instead frames the desire as an unattainable hypothetical condition. Pragmatically, this structure functions not as a request but as a form of emotional reflection and resignation, signaling psychological dissatisfaction with reality while preserving cultural norms of emotional modesty.

Another example from Hoshimov’s dialogues features expressions like “Bir oz tinchlik bo’lsa edi” (“If only there were some peace”). This short, impersonal optative utterance suppresses the grammatical subject, allowing the speaker to distance themselves from direct emotional self-disclosure. From a linguopragmatic perspective, this strategy reflects negative politeness and emotional mitigation (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Rather than explicitly stating personal exhaustion or complaint, the character invokes a generalized situational wish, socially neutralizing emotional vulnerability.

Abdulla Qahhor similarly employs optative constructions in portraying internal longing and subtle dissatisfaction. In his short stories such as O’tkan kunlar farzandlari and Sinchalak, characters frequently articulate wishes indirectly: “Bu ish barbod bo’lmaganida edi” (“If only this matter had not failed”). Grammatically, this past counterfactual wish mirrors English constructions with “If only...” or “I wish + past perfect”. Pragmatically, however, Qahhor’s usage conveys layered meanings: regret, latent self-blame, and emotional disappointment — often without confrontation or outward emotionality. The speaker’s desire is expressed as retrospective evaluation rather than forward-looking intention.

Table 1

Linguopragmatic Expression of Wish and Desire

Aspect	English Discourse	Uzbek Discourse	Linguopragmatic Interpretation
Grammatical Structures	<i>I wish + Past Simple / Past Perfect; Would like to + Verb; Hope + Present/Future</i>	<i>-sa edi, -ishni xohlamoq, -ishini istamoq, umid qilmoq</i>	<i>Both languages use conditional and subjunctive mechanisms to signal unreal or future-oriented desire; English relies on tense shifting while Uzbek uses suffixal modality markers.</i>

Modal Verbs / Modal Expressions	<i>wish, would like, hope, want, long for</i>	<i>xohlamoq, istamoq, niyat qilmoq, orzu qilmoq, umid qilmoq</i>	<i>Modal lexemes function as illocutionary markers that encode intensity and emotional stance toward realization of desire.</i>
Politeness Strategies	Indirect forms: <i>Would you mind...? I wish you would...</i>	Honorific and indirect request patterns: <i>Iltimos..., Mumkin bo'lsa..., Xohlasangiz...</i>	<i>Desire expressions are modulated by politeness conventions shaped by sociocultural norms—negative politeness in English vs respect-based indirectness in Uzbek.</i>
Hypothetical / Unreal Wishes	<i>If I were rich, I would travel.</i>	<i>Agar boy bo'lganimda, sayohat qilgan bo'lardim.</i>	<i>Parallel use of conditional structures reveals alignment in expressing unrealized desire, albeit through different grammatical systems.</i>
Emotionally Expressive Wishes	<i>I wish with all my heart...</i>	<i>Jondan tilayman..., chin dildan...</i>	<i>Emotional intensifiers convey speaker commitment, functioning as affective pragmatic amplifiers.</i>
Cultural Formulaic Wishes	<i>Good luck! All the best! I wish you success!</i>	<i>Omad yor bo'lsin!, Oq yo'li, Xudo xohlasa!</i>	<i>Formulaic expressions reflect cultural pragmatics embedded in religious or social values, especially pronounced in Uzbek usage.</i>
Speech Acts	Directives: <i>I want you to...; Commissive: I hope to...</i>	Indirect requests: <i>Qilsangiz yaxshi bo'lar edi...</i>	<i>Wishes operate across speech act types: directives, expressives, and commissives, with Uzbek showing stronger preference for indirect realizations.</i>

The expression of wish and desire in both English and Uzbek discourse reflects shared pragmatic goals—namely, to convey the speaker’s subjective orientation toward unrealized states or future outcomes. However, the mechanisms through which these meanings are linguistically encoded diverge due to typological differences between the two languages.

In English, expressions of wish are largely realized through syntactic constructions involving modal verbs and tense shifting. Structures such as I wish + Past Simple/Past Perfect or If I were... allow speakers to concretize unreal situations or unattainable desires through grammatical displacement in time. Conversely, Uzbek employs morphological markers and conditional-affixation (-sa edi, -gan bo'lardim) to express equivalent meanings. The pragmatic effect in both languages is the same—marking psychological distance between desire and reality—yet the grammatical implementation differs substantially.

From a speech act perspective, wishes perform multiple illocutionary functions. They often operate as expressives, conveying emotional states (I wish you happiness / Baxt tilayman), but may also function as indirect directives, especially when requesting actions (I wish you would help me / Yordam bersangiz yaxshi bo'lar edi). Uzbek demonstrates a stronger pragmatic preference for indirectness in requests, reflecting culturally embedded politeness norms that emphasize modesty, respect, and avoidance of imposition.

Politeness strategies further reveal cross-cultural distinctions. English speakers typically adopt negative politeness, employing hedges and indirect grammatical forms to mitigate imposition (Would you mind...?). Uzbek speakers rely on formulaic expressions (Iltimos, Xohlasangiz) and hierarchical respect markers, effectively encoding social relations within wish constructions. This highlights Uzbek discourse as more relation-oriented, while English remains more task-oriented.

Another notable contrast concerns emotional amplification and intensity marking. English predominantly uses lexical intensifiers (really, deeply, desperately), whereas Uzbek leverages both lexical and morphological means, allowing flexibility in pragmatic emphasis via repetition or suffixal modification (juda-juda istayman).

Culturally embedded formulaic wishes illustrate how pragmatic expressions reflect national value systems. Uzbek wishes frequently invoke spirituality or communal well-being through references to divine will (Xudo xohlasa, Olloh sizni asrasin), while English formulae emphasize individual success and general goodwill (Good luck, Best wishes). These conventions underline differing conceptualizations of agency and fate within linguistic pragmatics.

Although English and Uzbek share universal pragmatic intentions in expressing wishes and desires, the linguopragmatic realization diverges at structural, cultural, and discourse levels. English favors syntactic transparency and modal constructions, while Uzbek relies on affixation, contextual inference, and culturally grounded politeness strategies. This comparison highlights how language-specific grammatical resources interact with sociocultural norms to shape pragmatic meaning.

The comparative analysis also highlights that while English literary discourse typically verbalizes inner desire via personalized modal constructions (“I wish I could...”), Uzbek prose relies on depersonalized or hypothetical optatives that foreground emotion while mitigating social assertiveness. Both Hoshimov and Qahhor thus exemplify how Uzbek wish-expressions frequently perform introspective emotional acts rather than outwardly directive speech acts. Such constructions contribute significantly to literary characterization by portraying emotional fragility, resignation, or unfulfilled longing without violating pragmatic norms of modesty and politeness.

CONCLUSION

The expressions of wish and desire in English and Uzbek discourse operate as complex linguopragmatic phenomena shaped by grammatical structure, emotional intention, politeness strategies, and cultural norms. English largely favors explicit verbalization through modal verbs and subjunctive constructions, enabling direct declaration of internal states and softened requests. Uzbek, in contrast, relies on optative moods, contextual implication, and polite hypothetical framing to express desire indirectly while maintaining interpersonal harmony. Both languages demonstrate a preference for indirectness when wishes encroach upon others' autonomy, but they

differ in degrees of overt emotional expression. The findings underscore the importance of pragmatic awareness in translation and language education. Failure to consider linguopragmatic mechanisms may result in misinterpretation or inappropriate communicative behavior. Pedagogically, language learners must be guided to perceive wish structures not only as grammatical forms but as socially embedded speech acts requiring contextual sensitivity. Further research may extend this comparative framework to spoken interaction or corpus analysis to deepen insights into real-life intercultural communication.

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