

Gender Asymmetries in The Conceptualization of Hospitality: A Contrastive Study of English And Uzbek Cultural Models

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Abstract: This paper investigates gender asymmetries in the linguistic and cultural conceptualization of hospitality within English and Uzbek societies. Utilizing a contrastive cognitive-discursive and linguocultural methodology, the study examines how gender roles (host/hostess, *mezbon*) are linguistically encoded and culturally performed during hospitality rituals. The findings reveal that while English cultural models reflect a modern tendency toward shared domestic responsibilities and symmetrical host roles, Uzbek cultural models retain distinct traditional gender demarcations, where female agency is heavily centered on domestic hospitality management, culinary labor, and ritual obligations, whereas male agency represents outer social representation and protection.

Keywords: Gender asymmetry, hospitality concept, linguoculturology, conceptual model, English, Uzbek.

Introduction: The conceptualization of hospitality is deeply intertwined with cultural norms, social structures, and gender expectations (Onyx & Benton, 2014). In modern linguistics, examining how concepts are shaped by gender highlights the ways societies distribute domestic and public labor (Karasik, 2019). Although hospitality is generally framed as a universal human virtue, its practical execution and linguistic representation often reveal explicit gender asymmetries.

The relevance of this study stems from the necessity to explore how typologically different languages such as analytic/inflectional English and agglutinative Uzbek verbalize gender roles within the ritualized framework of guest-hosting practices. The object of this study is the linguistic units, phraseological items, and discursive practices reflecting hospitality, while the subject comprises the gender-based asymmetries embedded within these cognitive models in English and Uzbek cultures. The objective is to contrast how English and Uzbek languages structure gender roles in host-guest

interactions through lexical units, idioms, proverbs, and discourse formulas.

METHODOLOGY

To uncover gender-based cognitive structures and their linguistic manifestations, a complex methodological framework was applied:

- **Contrastive-Comparative Analysis:** Used to juxtapose lexical, phraseological, and paremiological units denoting male and female roles in hosting across both languages (Yartseva, 2006).
- **Cognitive Metaphor Mapping:** Employed to analyze metaphorical models associated with male and female hosts, examining how conceptual domains such as "home," "hearth," and "protection" map onto gender categories (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).
- **Linguocultural and Discourse Analysis:** Applied to interpret cultural texts, conversational scripts, and behavioral norms to identify underlying values regarding the gender division of labor (Maslova,

2018; Fairclough, 2013).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The comparative evaluation of English and Uzbek linguistic material indicates significant divergences in how gender structures the hospitality framework across both cultures.

Linguistic Representation of Female Agency in Hospitality

In Uzbek linguoculture, hospitality tasks demonstrate pronounced traditional gender demarcation. The linguistic representation of the female host (*beka*, *uy bekasi*, *kelin*) heavily emphasizes her role as the primary operational agent of the household. She is linguistically and culturally responsible for the preparation of the ritual table (*dasturxon*), continuous serving, and maintaining emotional warmth. Proverbs and socio-cultural idioms strongly anchor this role; for instance, expressions highlighting the industriousness of the female host ("Mehmon kelishidan ma'lum, uyi bekasi holatidan" or references to the immaculate arrangement of the home) underline the woman's central labor in maintaining family honor through hospitality.

Conversely, in the English linguistic and cultural model, terms such as *hostess* historically denoted a female entertainer or manager of guests, but contemporary English discourse increasingly favors gender-neutral formulations (e.g., *the hosts*, *co-hosting*) or shows that hosting duties are shared equally regardless of gender (Agha, 2007). English idioms related to entertaining guests (e.g., "to play the host", "making guests feel at home") lack the rigid hierarchical and ritualized domestic obligations found in traditional Uzbek models, reflecting a more egalitarian approach to domestic labor division.

Linguistic Representation of Male Agency and Public Space

In terms of male participation, Uzbek culture assigns the male host (*uy egasi*, *mezbon*, *oqsoqol*) the role of external social representation. The man greets esteemed guests at the outer gate (*darvoza*), leads them to the honored place (*to'ra*), and engages in formal philosophical or status-driven discourse. Male agency in Uzbek hospitality is metaphorically linked to protection, provision, and territorial honor.

In English culture, male participation in hosting (such as barbecuing, serving drinks, or greeting at the door) is characterized by shared domestic cooperation rather than strict hierarchical division. Studies in Western pragmatics indicate that domestic hospitality is increasingly viewed as a joint household project rather than a gender-segregated duty (Tannen, 1994).

Universal vs. Culturally Specific Features

- **Universal Features:** In both cultures, successful hosting enhances social capital, reflects individual politeness, and serves as an indicator of moral upbringing and family reputation (Wierzbicka, 1996).
- **Cultural Specificities:** Uzbek hospitality models retain strong collectivist and ritualized gender roles where the domestic sphere is closely tied to female labor, honor, and ritual execution, whereas the English model leans toward individualistic, shared, and pragmatic domestic distribution with flexible role-swapping.

CONCLUSION

The contrastive analysis of gender asymmetries in English and Uzbek hospitality concepts demonstrates that language serves as a precise mirror of societal expectations regarding gender roles. While English culture moves toward a symmetrical and egalitarian distribution of hosting responsibilities, Uzbek culture preserves culturally specific archetypes where gender functions as a structural pillar of traditional etiquette and ritualized obligations. These findings expand the scope of cross-cultural pragmatics, gender linguistics, and comparative cultural studies.

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