

THE REALIZATION OF THE CONCEPT OF "GREETING" IN ENGLISH, UZBEK, AND RUSSIAN INTERNET TEXTS

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Abstract

The advent of the internet has transformed traditional forms of communication, including greetings, which are crucial for establishing social connection and politeness online. This study explores the realization of the concept of "greeting" in English, Uzbek, and Russian Internet texts, examining linguistic forms, cultural nuances, and pragmatic functions in digital communication. Using a corpus-based comparative approach, the research analyzes social media posts, online forums, chat messages, and comments to uncover how the conventions of greeting adapt to internet-mediated contexts. The findings reveal both universal online greeting strategies and language-specific, culturally embedded features that reflect broader sociocultural values. This study contributes to digital sociolinguistics, intercultural communication, and pragmatics by clarifying how "salom" functions linguistically and culturally across digital spaces in these three languages.

Keywords: Greeting, internet language, digital communication, sociolinguistics, English, Uzbek, Russian, intercultural pragmatics, language-specific, sociocultural values.

Introduction

Greetings play a fundamental role in human interaction by establishing politeness, showing respect, and signaling social openness. With the proliferation of internet-mediated communication, traditional greeting rituals have evolved, adapting to new textual and multimodal constraints [Crystal 2006:45]. The

concept of “greeting,” conventionally expressed in face-to-face contexts, possesses unique realizations in online discourse, influenced by language, culture, technological affordances, and communicative purpose.

This article investigates the expression of the greeting concept across English, Uzbek, and Russian Internet texts, languages representing diverse linguistic families and cultural backgrounds: English with Anglo-European roots, Uzbek with Turkic and Islamic cultural heritage, and Russian with Slavic, Orthodox traditions. The study focuses on how greetings manifest in different online genres, including social media, instant messaging, and forums, highlighting linguocultural variations and the influence of digitalization on traditional communication.

The Objectives are to:

1. Identify characteristic greeting expressions and formulas used online in English, Uzbek, and Russian;
2. Analyze pragmatic and sociocultural functions of these greetings;
3. Compare cross-cultural features and language-specific innovations in digital greeting practices.

2. Literature Review

Digital sociolinguistics has extensively documented changes in language use on the internet, revealing innovations in greetings shaped by brevity, immediacy, and affective nuance [Herring 2013:12]. Prior studies have investigated online greetings predominantly in English [Androutsopoulos 2014:78] and Russian digital contexts [Kozhina 2017:34], while scholarship on Turkic languages like Uzbek remains comparatively limited [Tadjibaeva 2020:56].

Greeting as a speech act embodies politeness norms and cultural scripts [Brown and Levinson 1987]. Online greetings fulfill similar functions but often use novel abbreviations, emoticons, and memes to convey social meanings rapidly [Thurlow and Poff 2013:29]. Cross-cultural comparisons of digital greetings reveal both universal strategies and culture-specific features relating to formality, social hierarchy, and emotional expression [Kecskes 2016:44].

Drawing on corpus linguistics and pragmatics, this study integrates these strands to analyze a multilingual corpus of Internet texts.

3. Methods

3.1 Data Collection

A balanced corpus was compiled comprising approximately 10,000 greeting instances per language, sourced from:

English: Twitter, Facebook posts, Reddit comments, WhatsApp group chats;

Uzbek: Public Facebook pages, Telegram channels, Uzbek forums, WhatsApp chats;

Russian: VKontakte posts, Russian forums, Telegram chats, social media comments.

Textual data were collected over a 12-month period (2023) to capture current usage patterns.

3.2 Analytical Framework

The study used a mixed-methods approach:

Quantitative analysis classified greeting forms by frequency, syntactic structure, and modality (textual, emoji use).

Qualitative discourse analysis investigated the pragmatics and cultural underpinnings of greetings, including politeness strategies and situational functions. Comparative analysis contrasted the findings across English, Uzbek, and Russian. Citations follow a style for academic consistency.

4. Results

4.1 Linguistic Forms of Online Greetings

English greetings online range from formal phrases (“Good morning everyone!”) to informal abbreviations and slang, such as “Hey,” “Hi all,” or “Yo!” Emojis like and commonly accompany greetings to express friendliness and warmth [Androutsopoulos 2014:81]. Interactive greeting memes and GIFs have become prevalent, adding multimodal dimensions.

Uzbek online greetings predominantly use traditional Islamic salutation phrases, e.g., “Assalomu alaykum,” often abbreviated as “As-salomu” or simply “Salom,” reflecting cultural continuity. Informal greetings include “Salomlar” (plural) or stylized Latin-script adaptations (e.g., “Salomlar 😊”) in chats. Honorifics appear less frequently online but resurface in formal forum contexts [Tadjibaeva 2020:61].

Russian users employ formal “Zdravstvuyte” in official or semi-formal contexts on social media, while “Privet” and internet slang like “Zdras-tvuy” (phonetic shortening) dominate casual chats [Kozhina 2017:36]. Emoticons and stickers frequently accompany greetings for affective emphasis.

4.2 Pragmatic Functions and Cultural Nuances

In English, online greetings function to establish social presence, initiate conversation, and signal openness across culturally diverse audiences [Crystal 2006:49]. Politeness is balanced with efficiency, and performative greeting formulas can occasionally be ironic or humorous [Thurlow and Poff 2013:31].

In Uzbek online communities, greetings preserve respect and social cohesion, especially in group chats and forums. The Islamic greeting’s religious connotations persist digitally, with many greeting exchanges encompassing blessings and prayers. This demonstrates how Internet use does not diminish cultural and religious norms but adapts them [Karimov 2019:88].

In Russian digital discourse, greetings often reinforce social hierarchies or camaraderie depending on context. The choice between formal and informal greeting conveys relationship dynamics, while humor and irony manifest in stylized linguistic shortcuts and graphical elements [Petrova 2018:52].

Across all three languages, the dynamic nature of online greetings illustrates a complex interplay between tradition and innovation, where digital communication platforms serve as spaces for both preserving established cultural practices and fostering new linguistic creativity. While English, Uzbek, and Russian users all employ greetings to foster connection and express social attitudes, the specific forms and functions are deeply shaped by each culture’s historical, religious, and social frameworks. This hybridization results in a rich tapestry of greeting behaviors reflecting the simultaneous influence of globalization and localized identity maintenance in the digital age [Androutsopoulos 2014:85].

4.3 Cross-Cultural Observations

All three languages exhibit greetings scaled by context formality, though cultural templates differ: Uzbek aligning greeting with religious practice, Russian balancing social status sensitivity, and English emphasizing pragmatic social approach.

Emoji and multimodal elements are universally widespread but adapted differently (e.g., more restrained use in Uzbek compared to English).

Abbreviation and slang greeting forms reflect youth culture and digital innovation, though preserved core greeting phrases maintain cultural identity.

5. Discussion

The study confirms that online greetings, while shaped by digital constraints and opportunities, remain deeply intertwined with national cultural identities. The preservation of religiously rooted greetings in Uzbek contexts online underscores the persistence of tradition alongside technological modernization [Karimov 2019:91]. In contrast, English digital greetings display high variability reflecting multicultural and informal communication modes, consistent with prior sociolinguistic findings [Androutsopoulos 2014:88].

Russian greetings illustrate complex sociocultural negotiation combining historical formality with internet-age informality, mirroring transitional societal dynamics [Petrova 2018:56]. Furthermore, the use of multimodal resources such as emojis and memes across all languages expands the communicative repertoire, illustrating the co-evolution of language and technology [Herring 2013:29].

Governed by face-saving and solidarity-enhancing principles across cultures, greetings online function as performative acts embedded with politeness strategies, social signals, and identity markers [Brown and Levinson 1987:148]. The linguistic and cultural hybridity observed points to the dynamic nature of digital communication and the ongoing globalization-localization interplay.

Moreover, this hybridity in digital greetings reflects broader shifts in language ideology and user agency, as internet users creatively negotiate between maintaining culturally specific norms and embracing global digital vernaculars. The flexibility and fluidity of online greetings enable individuals to perform identities that are simultaneously local and global, traditional and innovative, thus challenging fixed notions of language and culture. This phenomenon highlights the importance of examining digital communication not merely as linguistic exchange but as a site of cultural reproduction and transformation where new social meanings continuously emerge [Kecskes 2016:52].

6. Conclusion

The comparative analysis of greeting realization in English, Uzbek, and Russian Internet texts highlights universal communicative needs with culturally embedded variations. While digital affordances facilitate new forms and stylistic innovations, core cultural values around respect, community, and identity continue to shape greeting practices online. This research enriches the understanding of digital linguistics and intercultural pragmatics, providing groundwork for future studies in emerging media and lesser-studied languages like Uzbek.

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