



## THE SPEECH-DISCURSIVE USE OF KINSHIP TERMS

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**Annotation:** The article analyzes the speech-discursive use of kinship terms in the Uzbek language. It is shown that, beyond their genealogical meaning, kinship lexicon functions as a pragmatic tool that regulates the communication process. Based on 320 examples drawn from everyday speech, media texts, and literary works, the study highlights the active functions of these terms, such as expressing respect, softening speech, marking social distance, conveying irony, and creating metaphorical meanings. The results of the research reveal the linguistic and cultural significance of kinship terms in Uzbek speech culture.

**Keywords:** kinship terms, discourse, pragmatics, discourse strategy, metaphor, category of respect.

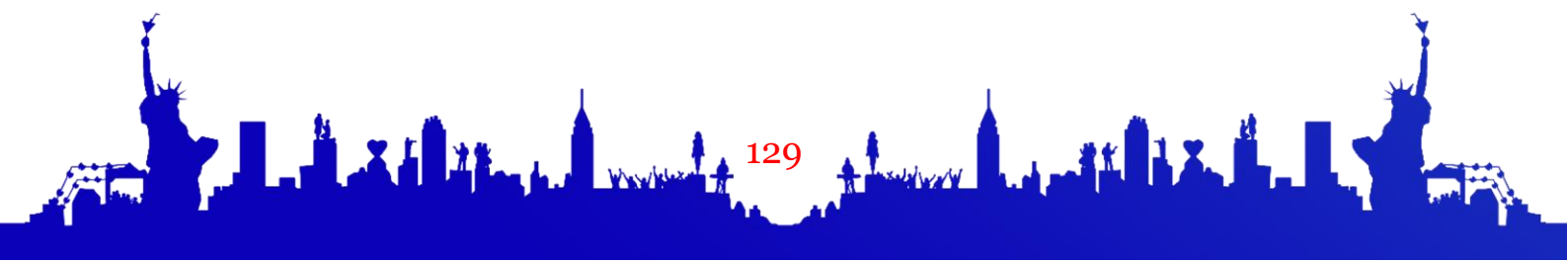
Kinship terms represent one of the oldest layers of the Uzbek language, reflecting national worldview, social structure, and cultural experience. In the communication process, these terms not only indicate genealogical relationships but also define the pragmatic aspects of interaction. In particular, they perform discursive functions such as expressing respect toward the interlocutor, reducing speech distance, and softening or intensifying communication [1].

Although the semantic structure of kinship terms has been well studied in Uzbek linguistics, their discursive functions in actual speech have not been sufficiently explored. Therefore, this article analyzes the speech-discursive use of kinship terms, their pragmatic significance, and the processes of meaning expansion.

The study employs discourse analysis, pragmatic analysis, corpus linguistics, and observation methods. As materials, 320 units of conversation were selected from dialogues in literary works, texts from mass media, observations of everyday speech, and social network interactions.

In each communicative situation, the following aspects were identified:

- the lexical meaning of the kinship term;
- its discursive role in the speech context;
- its pragmatic load;
- the social distance between the participants in communication.





The results were summarized based on qualitative and quantitative analysis methods. As a result of the analysis, the following main functions of kinship terms in speech-discursive use were identified:

### **1.Means of expressing respect and closeness**

Terms such as “aka”, “opa”, “uka”, and “jiyan” often go beyond their biological meanings and are used to show respect to the interlocutor or to soften communication. For example: “Aka, yordam bera olasizmi?” — here, “aka” does not refer to a relative but conveys a friendly and respectful address in the conversation [2].

### **2.Expressing social superiority or seniority**

In speech, terms like “aka” and “opa” indicate age or social status:

“Opa aytganlari uchun shunday qildik.”

### **3.Ironic pragmatics in conflict situations**

Sometimes these terms are used ironically to intensify conflict:

“Voy aka, sizdan bunaqa gap kutmagandim!”

### **4.Metaphorical extension**

Terms such as “kelin”, “kuyov”, and “buva” can acquire new figurative meanings beyond actual kinship. For example:

“Bu qiz kelin bo‘lib qolibdi, hamma ishni qilib qo‘yibdi.” — here, “kelin” is used metaphorically to convey the meaning of being neat and orderly [3].

### **5.Softening formal interactions**

In service settings, forms of address such as “opa” and “aka” help warm the interaction between client and employee and reduce the level of formality.

In Uzbek speech culture, kinship terms function actively as indicators of social roles, markers of respect, and regulators of communicative distance. They determine not only the content but also the tone, strategy, and dynamics of communication. This phenomenon is also observed in other Turkic languages; however, in Uzbek speech, metaphorical extension and mitigating pragmatics are particularly prominent [4].

Additionally, kinship terms reflect both vertical (respect for elders) and horizontal (closeness, collectivity) social relations in society. In discourse, these terms serve as pragmatic markers that shape the mood of the conversation. The limitation of the study lies in its primary reliance on everyday speech materials. In the future, political speech, media discourse, and official texts should also be included.

In conclusion, kinship terms play an important role in the pragmatic and discursive system of the Uzbek language. They regulate social distance between





interlocutors, shape the tone of respect, express social roles, and sometimes convey metaphorical meanings. The results help to gain a deeper understanding of the linguistic and cultural significance of these terms in speech culture.

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