

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS ADVICE IN PARENT–ADOLESCENT COMMUNICATION: A PRAGMATIC COMPARISON BETWEEN CENTRAL ASIAN AND ENGLISH-SPEAKING FAMILIES

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Abstract: *This article explores moral and religious advice in parent–adolescent communication from a pragmatic and cross-cultural perspective, focusing on Central Asian and English-speaking families. Moral and religious discourse functions as a key mechanism for transmitting values, regulating behavior, and constructing parental authority. Drawing on speech act theory and politeness theory, the study analyzes how parents use advice-giving, moral exhortation, and religious references as pragmatic strategies. The findings show that Central Asian families rely more on directive and religion-based moral guidance, whereas English-speaking families prefer indirect, supportive, and autonomy-oriented strategies. These differences reflect broader cultural values and social norms.*

Keywords: *moral advice, religious discourse, parent–adolescent communication, pragmatics, Central Asian families, English-speaking families*

Introduction

Moral and Religious Advice as Pragmatic Action

From a pragmatic perspective, parental advice constitutes a speech act that performs social and moral regulation rather than merely conveying information (Austin, 1962)¹. In family discourse, moral and religious utterances function as tools for shaping adolescents' behavior and reinforcing parental authority.

Central Asian Families

Central Asian parents frequently use directive moral advice combined with religious references such as God's will, sin, and spiritual duty. These utterances legitimize parental authority and strengthen the normative force of advice. Moral guidance is often framed as obligation rather than personal choice, reflecting collectivist values and high power distance (Hofstede, 2001)².

English-Speaking Families

In English-speaking families, moral advice is commonly expressed through indirectness, emotional support, and reasoning. Parents tend to avoid explicit religious references and instead emphasize individual responsibility and personal choice. Advice is

framed as a suggestion rather than an order, which minimizes face threats and supports adolescents' autonomy (Brown & Levinson, 1987)³.

Cross-Cultural Comparison

The comparison reveals that Central Asian families prioritize moral authority and religious legitimation, while English-speaking families emphasize emotional validation and autonomy. Despite these differences, both cultures use advice-giving as a universal pragmatic strategy for moral socialization (Searle, 1976)⁴.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that moral and religious advice in parent–adolescent communication is a pragmatically structured process shaped by cultural values. Central Asian families rely more on directive and religion-based strategies, whereas English-speaking families favor indirect and supportive discourse. Understanding these differences is essential for intercultural communication research and family studies.

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