

**INCOMPLETE SENTENCES IN CONVERSATION: HOW REAL SPEECH USES
FRAGMENTS FOR POLITENESS, EFFICIENCY, AND RAPPORT**

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Abstract: This article offers a comparative pragmatic analysis of incomplete sentences in conversational discourse in Uzbek and English. The study examines how speakers deliberately employ fragments to achieve politeness, conversational efficiency, and interpersonal rapport. It explores the mechanisms through which fragments reduce redundancy, soften statements, signal shared understanding, and create emotional closeness in natural spoken interaction. Similarities and differences in the use of fragments for these pragmatic purposes are illustrated with examples from everyday conversations, dialogues in literature, and media in both languages. The findings contribute to pragmalinguistics, discourse analysis, comparative linguistics, and intercultural communication studies.

Keywords: incomplete sentences, sentence fragments, conversation analysis, pragmatics, politeness, linguistic economy, rapport, implicature, comparative linguistics.

**SUHBATDA TO‘LIQSIZ GAPLAR: HAQIQIY NUTQ QANDAY QILIB
FRAGMENTLARDAN MULOYIMLIK, SAMARADORLIK VA O‘ZARO MUNOSABAT
UCHUN FOYDALANADI**

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada o‘zbek va ingliz tillaridagi suhbat diskursida to‘liqsiz gaplarning pragmatik tahlili taqdim etiladi. Tadqiqot so‘zlashuvchilarning fragmentlardan muloyimlik, suhbat samaradorligi va shaxslararo munosabatni ta‘minlash uchun qasddan foydalanishini ko‘rib chiqadi. Fragmentlarning takrorlanishni qisqartirish, bayonotlarni yumshatish, umumiy tushunishni bildirish va emotsional yaqinlikni yaratish mexanizmlari o‘rganiladi. Ikki tilda bu pragmatik maqsadlar uchun fragmentlardan foydalanishdagi o‘xshashlik va farqlar kundalik suhbatlar, adabiyotdagi dialoglar va ommaviy axborot vositalaridan olingan misollar asosida yoritiladi. Natijalar pragmatik tahlil, diskurs tahlili, qiyosiy tilshunoslik va madaniyatlararo muloqot tadqiqotlariga hissa qo‘shadi.

Kalit so‘zlar: to‘liqsiz gaplar, sentence fragments, pragmatika, implikatura, ellips, emotsional ifodalilik, stilistik vazifalar, qiyosiy tilshunoslik.

**НЕПОЛНЫЕ ПРЕДЛОЖЕНИЯ В РАЗГОВОРЕ: КАК РЕАЛЬНАЯ РЕЧЬ ИСПОЛЬЗУЕТ
ФРАГМЕНТЫ ДЛЯ ВЕЖЛИВОСТИ, ЭФФЕКТИВНОСТИ И ВЗАИМОПОНИМАНИЯ**

Аннотация: В данной статье представлен сопоставительный прагматический анализ неполных предложений в разговорном дискурсе узбекского и английского языков. Исследование рассматривает, как говорящие намеренно используют фрагменты для достижения вежливости, разговорной эффективности и межличностного rapport. Анализируются механизмы, через которые фрагменты сокращают избыточность, смягчают высказывания, сигнализируют общее понимание и создают эмоциональную близость в естественном устном взаимодействии. Сходства и различия в использовании фрагментов для этих прагматических целей иллюстрируются примерами из повседневных разговоров, диалогов в литературе и СМИ на

обоих языках. Результаты вносят вклад в прагмалингвистику, анализ дискурса, сравнительное языкознание и исследования межкультурной коммуникации.

Ключевые слова: неполные предложения, sentence fragments, анализ разговора, прагматика, вежливость, языковая экономия, rapport, имплицатура, сравнительное языкознание. In everyday conversation, people rarely speak in perfectly formed, grammatically complete sentences. Instead, real speech is full of incomplete sentences — or sentence fragments — that nevertheless successfully transmit meaning. These fragments are not mistakes but strategic pragmatic devices that help speakers achieve politeness, conversational efficiency, and interpersonal rapport. By omitting recoverable information and relying on context, shared knowledge, and intonation, fragments allow communication to flow more naturally and economically.

Both in Uzbek and English, speakers use fragments to soften requests, avoid repetition, signal agreement or understanding, and build emotional closeness with interlocutors. However, the frequency, forms, and pragmatic effects of these fragments can vary depending on cultural norms of directness, politeness strategies, and conversational conventions. This article aims to analyze how incomplete sentences function in conversation in Uzbek and English from a comparative pragmatic perspective. It identifies their roles in politeness, efficiency, and rapport-building and highlights both universal patterns and language-specific features. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of natural spoken discourse and offers insights for pragmalinguistics, conversation analysis, and intercultural communication.

Literature Review. Conversation analysis and pragmatics have increasingly recognized the importance of sentence fragments in natural spoken interaction. Traditional grammar textbooks often label fragments as errors, yet empirical studies show that they are systematic and purposeful. Researchers drawing on Grice's Cooperative Principle and Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory argue that fragments serve as positive and negative politeness strategies by reducing imposition and creating solidarity.

Introduction. In English, studies of spoken corpora reveal that fragments are extremely common in casual talk for reasons of economy and rapport. Works on discourse markers and ellipsis highlight how fragments help speakers manage turn-taking and convey stance indirectly. In Uzbek linguistics, research on suhbat nutqi va to'liqsiz gaplar examines their role in maintaining harmony, expressing deference, and achieving brevity in daily interactions. Comparative observations suggest that while both languages exploit fragments for politeness and efficiency, English speakers may use more standalone elliptical responses, whereas Uzbek conversation often integrates fragments with particles (e.g., -mi, -da, -chi) and relies more heavily on contextual and prosodic cues to achieve similar pragmatic effects.

Research Methodology. This study adopts a comparative qualitative approach to investigate the pragmatic functions of incomplete sentences in conversational Uzbek and English. Data were gathered from recorded natural conversations, excerpts from films and television series, literary dialogues, and informal spoken interactions in both languages.

The research combines descriptive, analytical, and comparative methods. The descriptive method classifies types of conversational fragments elliptical questions, responses, verbless utterances, trailing

phrases. The analytical method examines their pragmatic functions — politeness, efficiency, and rapport — within specific contexts, focusing on speaker intention, listener inference, and interactional outcomes. The comparative method identifies similarities and culture-specific differences. Special attention is given to contextual factors, including social distance, power relations, and cultural expectations of politeness. This methodology allows for a nuanced understanding of how fragments operate as pragmatic resources in real speech.

Analysis and Results. The analysis reveals that incomplete sentences play three major pragmatic roles in conversation in both Uzbek and English.

First, they promote conversational efficiency by eliminating redundant elements that context already supplies:

English: “Going out?” “In a minute.” (instead of repeating full subject and verb)

Uzbek: “Chiqasizmi?” “Hozir.”

Such fragments save time and keep the conversation flowing smoothly.

Second, fragments serve politeness strategies. They often soften directives, requests, or potential face-threatening acts:

English: “A little help?” (instead of the more direct “Can you help me?”)

Uzbek: “Yordam bersangiz?” yoki “Bir oz yordam?” (talabni yumshatish)

By using shorter, less imposing forms, speakers reduce the threat to the listener’s negative face.

Third, and perhaps most importantly, fragments build rapport and interpersonal closeness. They signal shared knowledge and mutual understanding:

English: “Hot today.” “Boiling.” (creating solidarity through elliptical agreement)

Uzbek: “Bugun issiq.” “Juda issiq-da.” (o‘zaro hamjihatlikni bildirish)

Fragments like “You too?”, “Same here.”, or Uzbek “Siz ham?”, “Men ham.” quickly establish common ground and emotional connection without unnecessary elaboration.

Similarities: In both languages, fragments are fundamental to natural, cooperative conversation. They rely on context and implicature to convey meaning and serve the universal goals of politeness, efficiency, and rapport.

Differences: English conversation tends to feature more frequent standalone fragments and verbless responses, especially in informal settings and among equals. In Uzbek, fragments are often accompanied by pragmatic particles and may appear more embedded within larger turns, reflecting

cultural preferences for indirectness and collective harmony. Prosody and non-verbal cues also play a stronger supporting role in Uzbek conversational fragments.

Overall, the study shows that incomplete sentences are highly functional pragmatic tools that make real speech more natural, polite, and relationally effective.

Conclusions and Recommendations. In conclusion, incomplete sentences in conversation are powerful pragmatic resources that speakers in both Uzbek and English use strategically for politeness, efficiency, and rapport. Far from being deficient, fragments enable smoother interaction, reduce face threats, and strengthen interpersonal bonds through context-dependent implicature.

The comparative analysis underscores both universal pragmatic principles and culture-specific realizations shaped by linguistic structures and social norms. It is recommended that future research examine larger spoken corpora and include variables such as age, gender, and social context. Language teachers and learners should be trained to recognize and appropriately use conversational fragments to develop authentic pragmatic competence. Translators and interpreters would also benefit from heightened awareness of how fragments function differently across languages to avoid miscommunication in cross-cultural settings.

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