

PECULARITIES OF THE FORMAL SPEECH STYLE

Rakhimberdiyev Damirjon

Student at Samarkand Institute of Economics and Service

Dilnoza Yuldasheva

Senior teacher at Samarkand Institute of Economics and Service

Abstract. *The formal speech style plays a crucial role in professional, academic, and official communication, characterized by its adherence to established linguistic norms, clarity, and precision. This article explores the peculiarities of the formal speech style, highlighting its distinct features, including the use of sophisticated vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and impersonal tone. Formal speech is often employed in settings where professionalism, respect, and objectivity are prioritized, such as in business meetings, academic presentations, legal contexts, and government communication. The article examines how formal language differs from informal speech in terms of vocabulary choice, syntax, and register, emphasizing its role in ensuring clear and effective communication in high-stakes environments. Additionally, the study discusses the importance of cultural and contextual awareness when using formal speech, as it often reflects social hierarchies and expectations. By analyzing the key components of formal speech, the article provides insight into its significance in maintaining professionalism and ensuring mutual understanding in diverse communication settings.*

Key words: *Formal speech, language style, professional communication, academic language, vocabulary, sentence structure, impersonal tone, register, communication contexts*

Introduction. Formal speech style is a mode of communication characterized by its adherence to standardized language rules, precision, and objectivity. It is predominantly used in professional, academic, legal, and official contexts, where clarity, respect, and formality are essential for effective interaction. Unlike informal speech, which is more relaxed and conversational, formal speech tends to avoid colloquialisms, slang, and overly casual expressions. It favors complex sentence structures, a rich vocabulary, and impersonal constructions that promote professionalism and impartiality. The need for formal speech is especially evident in environments that require authority, professionalism, and clarity, such as business meetings, academic lectures, legal proceedings, and governmental communications. In these contexts, the use of formal language helps to convey respect for the audience, maintain objectivity, and avoid misunderstandings. As noted by Holmes (2013), formal speech is often linked with social power and status, serving as a marker of professionalism and credibility in hierarchical situations. Furthermore, according to Crystal (2008), the formal speech style plays a key role in institutional settings by ensuring that

communication is clear, precise, and devoid of ambiguity, which is crucial for decision-making processes and legal matters.

One key feature of formal speech is its structured nature. It often involves longer, more complex sentences, the use of passive voice, and a carefully selected vocabulary that reflects higher levels of education and sophistication. As studied by Swales (2015), formal language typically avoids contractions and prioritizes full forms of words, which enhances clarity and ensures that the speaker is perceived as knowledgeable and authoritative. Additionally, formal speech tends to be more impersonal, as it often focuses on facts, issues, or ideas rather than personal experiences or emotions. This impersonal tone helps to maintain objectivity and impartiality, essential qualities in professional and academic communication. The importance of understanding and mastering formal speech style is highlighted in a variety of academic and professional settings. In the business world, effective communication is a key factor in building trust and authority, as stated by Gumperz and Hymes (2016), who argue that the formal style of communication fosters respect and professionalism. Similarly, in academia, formal speech is used to present research, engage in scholarly debates, and publish findings, with scholars often relying on formal language to convey their ideas clearly and persuasively (Hyland, 2019).

Literature review. The formal speech style, characterized by its adherence to linguistic conventions, objectivity, and professionalism, has been a subject of extensive study across various fields, including linguistics, sociolinguistics, and communication studies. Researchers have explored the distinct features of formal speech, its role in maintaining clarity and authority, and its application in professional and academic contexts. This literature review provides an overview of key studies and perspectives on the peculiarities of formal speech style, shedding light on its defining characteristics, social functions, and impact on communication.

Linguistic Features of Formal Speech

Formal speech style is marked by specific linguistic features that differentiate it from informal speech. According to Holmes (2013), formal speech typically avoids colloquial expressions, contractions, and informal vocabulary. Instead, it employs a more sophisticated lexicon, complex sentence structures, and a formal tone. These linguistic elements are essential in ensuring clarity, precision, and the conveyance of authority. Crystal (2008) supports this view, noting that formal language often uses passive constructions and nominalizations to emphasize actions or concepts rather than individuals, contributing to a sense of objectivity and impartiality. Furthermore, Crystal suggests that the vocabulary used in formal speech is more likely to reflect higher levels of education, which serves to establish the speaker's credibility.

Swales (2015) also emphasizes the role of sentence structure in formal speech, highlighting the preference for longer, more complex sentences. These sentences typically include more subordinate clauses, which allow for the expression of nuanced ideas. Swales' work focuses on the academic context, where formal speech is integral to scholarly

communication. He argues that the complexity and precision of formal language are necessary for presenting research findings, engaging in debates, and contributing to academic discourse. Formal language is viewed as a tool for articulating complex ideas with clarity, which is especially important in academic writing and presentations.

The Social Functions of Formal Speech

Beyond its linguistic features, formal speech plays a significant role in social interactions, particularly in professional and academic settings. Gumperz and Hymes (2016) emphasize that formal speech is often associated with social power and authority. In professional contexts, the use of formal language is a way to signal respect for the audience, maintain professionalism, and convey expertise. It is also an important marker of status, as it often reflects the speaker's knowledge and role within a hierarchical structure. For example, in legal and governmental communication, formal speech is used to uphold the authority of institutions and ensure that decisions are communicated with clarity and precision. Gumperz and Hymes argue that these interactions rely heavily on formal speech to establish credibility and convey trustworthiness.

In addition to its function in professional settings, formal speech is also crucial in academic discourse. Hyland (2019) explores the role of formal language in academic writing, noting that it serves as a tool for presenting arguments, discussing research findings, and establishing scholarly credibility. The use of formal language in academia, according to Hyland, helps to maintain objectivity and depersonalize the content, allowing the focus to remain on ideas rather than personal opinions or experiences. This characteristic of formal speech is particularly important in academic contexts, where the communication of knowledge must be clear, precise, and free of ambiguity.

Cultural and Contextual Considerations

The use of formal speech is not uniform across all cultures and contexts. It is shaped by the cultural and social norms of the community in which it is used. As noted by Holmes (2013), the level of formality required in speech can vary depending on the context, the relationship between the speakers, and the expectations of the audience. In some cultures, formal speech is a marker of politeness and respect, while in others, it may be used to establish authority or distance between individuals. For instance, in many professional settings, such as business meetings or legal proceedings, the use of formal speech helps to create an environment of respect and professionalism.

Swales (2015) highlights that the expectations for formal speech in academia differ from those in business or legal contexts. In academic discourse, formality is expected in writing and presentations, but it is not necessarily linked to hierarchical power dynamics as it often is in business or legal contexts. In the business world, formal speech is often used to assert authority and build trust, particularly in high-stakes negotiations or presentations. Therefore, understanding the cultural and contextual factors that influence formal speech is crucial for effective communication.

Conclusion. the formal speech style serves as an essential tool for effective communication across various professional, academic, and institutional settings. Its distinct features, such as the use of sophisticated vocabulary, complex sentence structures, impersonal tone, and adherence to linguistic conventions, help ensure clarity, precision, and professionalism. As explored in the literature, formal speech not only facilitates clear communication of complex ideas but also establishes credibility, authority, and respect, which are crucial in high-stakes environments like business meetings, academic lectures, legal proceedings, and governmental communication.

The studies reviewed emphasize the role of formal speech in maintaining objectivity and professionalism, as well as in fostering trust and mutual understanding between individuals in hierarchical and institutional contexts. As Gumperz and Hymes (2016) point out, formal speech serves as a marker of social power and authority, while Hyland (2019) highlights its role in academic settings, where it ensures that research and academic discourse remain focused and clear.

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