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DISCOURSE-PRAGMATIC FEATURES OF COSMETIC PRODUCT INSTRUCTIONS IN ENGLISH

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Ingliz tilidagi kosmetik mahsulot yo‘riqnomalarining diskursiv-pragmatik xususiyatlari

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Abstract. Cosmetic product instructions in English do more than communicate safe and correct use: they function as genre texts that guide consumers toward particular actions. Practical sequencing, forms of address, degrees of obligation, and cautionary meaning are closely interwoven in these texts, yet their interpretation as one discourse-pragmatic system remains insufficiently defined. The study aims to describe how procedural organization interacts with pragmatic force in English cosmetic product instructions. The analysis combines historical-comparative analysis, hermeneutic interpretation, source-oriented examination, and thematic coding of genre texts through discourse-pragmatic categories. The results disclose two interlaced planes: procedural sequencing, which arranges stages of use, and pragmatic positioning, which directs readers toward direct or indirect action. Imperatives, modal units, conditional constructions, repeated reader address, and safety warnings emerge as the principal devices connecting these planes. These findings support an understanding of instructions not as plain technical descriptions but as a hybrid genre that joins procedural and persuasive functions. The study’s scholarly contribution lies in linking procedural organization with directive pragmatic force within a unified genre model. This model provides a basis for identifying translational shifts in command intensity, modal meaning, and reader address. It also clarifies why apparently minor lexical or syntactic choices can alter the practical interpretation of an instruction. The proposed account offers a discourse-sensitive foundation for comparing English instructions with translated versions and for developing genre-aware strategies in specialized translation and instruction writing.

Keywords: directive devices, discourse-pragmatic analysis, English-language instructions, hybrid genre, modal units, procedural sequencing, safety warnings

Annotatsiya. Ingliz tilidagi kosmetik mahsulot yo‘riqnomalari iste’molchiga xavfsiz va to‘g‘ri foydalanish tartibini yetkazish bilan birga, uni muayyan harakatlarga undaydigan janriy matn sifatida namoyon bo‘ladi. Bunday matnlarda amaliy ketma-ketlik, murojaat shakli, majburiylik darajasi va ehtiyotkorlik ma’nosi bir-biri bilan uzviy bog‘langan bo‘lsa-da, ularning yagona diskursiv-pragmatik tizim sifatidagi talqini yetarli darajada aniqlashtirilmagan. Tadqiqotning maqsadi ingliz tilidagi kosmetik mahsulot yo‘riqnomalarida protseduraviy tashkil etilish va pragmatik ta’sirning o‘zaro munosabatini tavsiflashdan iborat. Ishda tarixiy-qiyosiy tahlil, hermenevtik talqin, manbashunoslik va janriy matnlarni diskursiv-pragmatik kategoriyalar bo‘yicha tematik kodlash usullari qo‘llandi. Tahlil natijasida ikki o‘zaro bog‘langan yo‘nalish aniqlandi: foydalanish bosqichlarini tartibga soluvchi protseduraviy ketma-ketlik hamda o‘quvchini bevosita yoki bilvosita harakatga yo‘naltiruvchi pragmatik pozitsiyalash. Buyruq mayli, modal birliklar, shartli konstruksiyalar, takroriy murojaat va xavfsizlikka oid ogohlantirishlar ushbu yo‘nalishlarni birlashtiruvchi asosiy vositalar sifatida talqin qilindi. Natijalar yo‘riqnomalarni oddiy texnik bayon emas, balki protseduraviy va ishontiruvchi vazifalarni birlashtirgan gibrid janr sifatida belgilash imkonini beradi. Tadqiqotning ilmiy hissasi protseduraviy tashkilot bilan direktiv pragmatik kuchni yagona janriy modelda bog‘lashidadir;

model tarjima jarayonida buyruq ohangi, modal ma’no va o‘quvchiga murojaatdagi siljishlarni aniqlash uchun asos yaratadi.

Kalit so‘zlar: buyruq vositalari, diskursiv-pragmatik tahlil, gibrid janr, inglizcha yo‘riqnomalar, modal birliklar, protseduraviy ketma-ketlik, xavfsizlik ogohlantirishlari

Аннотация. Инструкции к косметической продукции на английском языке не только передают порядок безопасного и правильного применения средства, но и образуют сложный коммуникативный жанр, направляющий пользователя к определённым действиям. Способы сочетания приказа, совета, предупреждения и ограничения, а также формы обращения к читателю в таких текстах ещё недостаточно систематизированы в дискурсивно-прагматическом отношении. Цель исследования состоит в выявлении взаимосвязи содержательной последовательности и прагматического воздействия в англоязычных инструкциях. В анализе применялись качественное тематическое кодирование, жанровый анализ, прагматическая интерпретация и сопоставительный текстовый анализ. Текстовые единицы были распределены по двум взаимосвязанным планам: процедурной последовательности и прагматическому позиционированию, регулирующему поведение читателя. Первый план объединяет этапы применения, временные показатели и условный порядок действий; второй охватывает директивную силу, модальное значение, стратегии смягчения и формы адресации. Результаты показали, что инструкция не является исключительно императивным текстом: она представляет собой гибридную структуру, соединяющую указания, рекомендации и предупреждения, обеспечивающие безопасность. Научный вклад заключается в объединении процедурной организации и прагматической силы в единой жанровой модели. Эта модель создаёт теоретическую основу для объяснения потерь, усилений и смягчений директивного значения при переводе, а также для разработки инструкций, соответствующих требованиям конкретного жанра. Перспективное направление связано с сопоставлением английских инструкций и их переводных версий в разных языках.

Ключевые слова: англоязычные инструкции, гибридный жанр, директивные средства, дискурсивно-прагматический анализ, модальные единицы, предупреждения о безопасности, процедурная последовательность

INTRODUCTION

Cosmetic product instructions in English require scrutiny because procedural sequencing and consumer-oriented wording jointly regulate product use, safety, and interpretation [1]. Existing scholarship addresses specialized discourse, advertising, or isolated pragmatic devices, yet their interaction within this hybrid genre remains insufficiently explained [2]. This study examines cosmetic product instructions in English, focusing on discourse features and pragmatic features that organize information and guide consumer action; its aim was to identify their interaction through qualitative textual analysis, hermeneutic interpretation, source criticism, and comparative linguistic analysis [3]. Five tasks were pursued: classify textual sequencing; interpret directives; examine modality and politeness; trace presupposition and reader address; compare translation-relevant meanings [4]. The novelty consists in a genre-focused account linking procedural organization with pragmatic force, while the findings support discourse-pragmatic translation strategies and genre-sensitive instruction writing [5].

METHODOLOGY

The preceding distinction between procedural sequencing and consumer-oriented wording required a design capable of separating textual organization from communicative force. The study therefore employed Content Analysis, specifically Mayring's Qualitative Content Analysis, for a purposively selected corpus of contemporary English cosmetic product instructions, with publication dates recorded for source criticism [3]. Primary sources comprised package inserts, container instructions, and manufacturer-issued usage texts; secondary sources supplied genre, discourse-pragmatic, and translation-theoretical criteria [6]. Selection privileged genre relevance, textual completeness, and explicit directions concerning application, warnings, storage, and expected benefits.

Discourse features were coded as information sequencing, syntactic patterning, genre moves, reader address, and cohesion, whereas pragmatic features covered speech acts, modality, deixis, presupposition, politeness, and implied meaning. This separation followed the distinction between textual arrangement and communicative force, while retaining their interaction in reader-oriented interpretation [7]. Speech-act categories identified directive force; modality and politeness clarified obligation, mitigation, and consumer positioning [8]. Comparative and contrastive linguistics framed English-specific choices against transferable instruction patterns, supporting later translation analysis [9].

The coding scheme combined deductive categories from discourse analysis and genre theory with inductive categories emerging during close reading [10]. Manifest content recorded overt imperatives, warnings, and sequence markers; latent content interpreted presupposed knowledge and persuasive orientation [11]. Textual criticism compared variant formulations across editions and attributed wording to manufacturer discourse, while hermeneutic reading connected linguistic form with intended consumer action [12]. The analytical instruments are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 *— Analytical categories for English cosmetic product instructions*

Dimension	Coding categories	Interpretive purpose
Discourse features	sequencing, syntax, cohesion, genre moves	organization of procedural information
Pragmatic features	speech acts, modality, deixis, politeness	regulation of consumer action
Latent meaning	presupposition, benefit claims, implied meaning	reader-oriented interpretation

Source: author's analytical framework

These procedures enabled the subsequent analysis to trace how textual sequencing and pragmatic positioning jointly construct usable, persuasive instructions.

RESULTS

The category matrix identified two interlaced planes in English cosmetic product instructions: procedural sequencing and pragmatic positioning. The first plane commonly opens with product identification, proceeds through application steps, and closes with storage or cautionary

information, thereby converting dispersed product knowledge into an executable sequence [3]. Imperative constructions such as "Apply evenly to clean, dry skin" foreground the consumer's next action, whereas declaratives such as "The cream absorbs quickly" supply an evaluative premise that legitimizes compliance. This alternation confirms that discourse features do not merely arrange information; they prepare the reader to interpret benefit claims as reasons for following instructions.

Table 2 — *Discourse-pragmatic realizations in English cosmetic product instructions*

Analytical realization	**Primary textual function**	**Pragmatic orientation**
Imperative sequence	Directing application	Immediate consumer action
Declarative benefit claim	Framing expected effect	Product evaluation
Modal warning	Restricting use	Risk avoidance
Second-person address	Personalizing instruction	Reader involvement

Source: compiled by the author

As shown in Table 2, pragmatic features become most visible where directive force is moderated by modality and politeness. "Avoid contact with eyes" imposes a prohibition without naming an institutional authority, while "For external use only" presupposes that the reader recognizes conventional safety language and understands its regulatory implication. Such formulations correspond to speech acts whose illocutionary force is action-guiding rather than purely descriptive [8]. The English pronoun "you," when explicitly used, narrows the communicative distance between producer and consumer; its omission in imperatives instead produces concise, label-like authority.

Benefit claims intensify this orientation through presupposition. Expressions including "helps restore moisture" presuppose a consumer concern with dryness, while "for sensitive skin" constructs a target user before any individual reader confirms that identity. Kochetova associates cosmetic discourse with persuasive evaluation, yet the instructional texts examined here embed persuasion within procedural adjacency rather than separating advertising from use guidance [2]. This structural interdependence supports the hypothesis that the genre is hybrid: textual sequencing grants operational access, whereas pragmatic features attach anticipated benefits and risks to the required action.

The category matrix also revealed translation-sensitive points: imperative force, warning intensity, and implied consumer knowledge cannot be transferred through lexical substitution alone. Their equivalence depends on preserving the relation between explicit instruction and inferred purpose, a problem central to pragmatic translation [5]. These findings establish the textual basis for comparing English instructions with their translated counterparts through losses, additions, and shifts in directive force.

DISCUSSION

The results presented above indicate that sequencing and pragmatic positioning jointly make English cosmetic product instructions actionable yet persuasive. Historically, this hybridity reflects

specialized discourse conventions in which procedural moves coexist with promotional evaluation, supporting Aitchison's genre account [1]. Bhatia's genre theory likewise explains the movement from product identification to use, caution, and benefit as a communicative strategy rather than accidental ordering [6]. Kochetova's analysis of cosmetic advertising aligns with the persuasive force identified here, although the present material gives greater weight to operational directives [2].

The category matrix also clarifies a taxonomic distinction between direct imperatives, mitigated directives, declarative warnings, and presupposed benefit claims. Searle's speech-act model supports treating these forms as differentiated directive realizations [8], while Leech's pragmatic framework explains politeness as regulation of imposition rather than mere stylistic softness [7]. The contrastive consequence concerns translation: literal transfer may preserve syntax but weaken implied consumer orientation, whereas genre-sensitive strategies can retain directive force and persuasive implicature, as Dolimov argues for pragmatic equivalence [5].

Table 3 *— Interpretive comparison of directive realizations*

Category	**Primary discourse function**	**Pragmatic orientation**
Direct imperative	procedural access	immediate compliance
Mitigated directive	sequence management	reduced imposition
Declarative warning	risk foregrounding	protective persuasion

Source: compiled by the author

Limitations arise from purposive qualitative selection, contemporary English focus, and interpretation-dependent coding. Future research should compare translated instructions across languages, examining lexical additions, omissions, and politeness shifts within equivalent genre contexts.

CONCLUSION

The qualitative analysis establishes that English cosmetic product instructions operate as a hybrid instructional-promotional genre: discourse features arrange procedural access, whereas pragmatic features orient interpretation and consumer action. Their interaction constitutes the article's genre-focused account of how textual organization and communicative force function together in English instructions. Translation practice should therefore preserve explicit procedural content separately from implied benefits, presupposed knowledge, politeness, and directive force. Translators should apply discourse-pragmatic analysis before selecting translation strategies, while editors should use genre-sensitive guidelines to prevent pragmatic loss or unwarranted addition. The next research stage should compare English instructions with translated versions, identifying how modality and reader address shift across languages.

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