

PRAGMATIC FUNCTIONS OF PROVERBS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

Nuriddinova Khuriyat

Teacher of Termez state pedagogical institute

Phone: 978070771.

nuriddinova93@inbox.ru

Abstract:

This article examines the pragmatic functions of proverbs in English and Uzbek languages through a comparative analysis. Proverbs are studied not only as stylistic devices but also as communicative tools that serve specific pragmatic purposes. The research identifies the main functions of proverbs, including didactic, persuasive, warning, evaluative, and aesthetic roles. The findings reveal that while English and Uzbek proverbs share similar pragmatic functions, their symbolic imagery reflects distinct cultural backgrounds. For instance, Uzbek proverbs often draw on agricultural life, family values, and collectivist traditions, whereas English proverbs tend to emphasize individualism, maritime experience, and pragmatic reasoning. The study concludes that analyzing the pragmatic functions of proverbs provides deeper insight into national worldviews and cultural values, as well as offering theoretical support for more accurate translation and intercultural communication.

Keywords: proverb, pragmatics, English, Uzbek, communicative function, culture, comparative analysis.

Introduction:

Proverbs are one of the oldest and most expressive forms of folklore that reflect the worldview, mentality, and cultural heritage of nations. They are short, memorable statements that provide moral lessons, advice, or observations on life. In linguistics, proverbs are often studied not only from a semantic and structural perspective but also from a pragmatic one. Pragmatics examines how proverbs function in communication, what intentions they express, and how they influence the listener. This paper analyzes the pragmatic functions of proverbs in English and Uzbek languages, comparing their similarities and differences in cultural and communicative contexts.

The study applies a **comparative-pragmatic analysis** of proverbs collected from English and Uzbek sources. The selected proverbs were classified into pragmatic functions such as didactic, persuasive, warning, evaluative, and aesthetic. Examples were taken from everyday speech, literature, and dictionaries of proverbs.

The analysis of English and Uzbek proverbs demonstrates that in both languages they serve as multifunctional pragmatic tools, primarily used for teaching, persuading, warning, evaluating, and beautifying speech. In terms of the didactic function, proverbs often provide moral guidance and practical advice. For instance, the Uzbek proverb “*Mehnat qilgan to‘yadi*” and the English “*No pain, no gain*” both stress the significance of hard work, showing that diligence is a shared cultural value.

The persuasive function of proverbs is also evident in both languages, where they are used to influence attitudes or motivate individuals. For example, the Uzbek “*Yaxshi bilan yursang, yaxshilik topasan*” and the English “*Birds of a feather flock together*” encourage people to surround themselves with good company, highlighting the role of social environment in shaping human behavior.

Proverbs also function as warnings, cautioning individuals against reckless actions. In Uzbek, the saying “*O‘ylab gapir — boshing omon*” parallels the English “*Look before you leap*”, both advising careful consideration before taking action. This shows that caution is a universally valued human quality.

Another important pragmatic function is evaluation, through which proverbs express judgments or attitudes toward social relations and behavior. Both the Uzbek “*Do‘st kulfatda bilinadi*” and the English “*A friend in need is a friend indeed*” evaluate true friendship by testing loyalty in times of hardship.

Finally, proverbs also fulfill an aesthetic function, enriching speech and adding figurative depth. The Uzbek proverb “*Ko‘p gapdan ko‘ngil soviydi*” and the English “*Brevity is the soul of wit*” both illustrate the beauty of concise expression, emphasizing stylistic elegance.

Overall, the results indicate that although English and Uzbek proverbs differ in imagery and cultural associations, their pragmatic functions remain strikingly similar. They reveal common human concerns such as the value of hard work, the importance of good companionship, the need for caution, the criteria for true friendship, and the appreciation of eloquence.

The comparative analysis shows that English and Uzbek proverbs perform similar pragmatic functions despite cultural differences. Both languages use proverbs as tools of instruction, persuasion, and warning, reflecting universal human values. However, the cultural background shapes the imagery: Uzbek proverbs are strongly connected with agriculture, family, and collectivism, while English proverbs reflect individualism, pragmatism, and maritime or industrial culture.

Proverbs in both English and Uzbek languages are not merely linguistic units but powerful pragmatic tools that guide behavior, express cultural values, and structure communication. Their didactic, persuasive, warning, evaluative, and aesthetic functions reveal that while human values are universal, their expression depends on cultural experience. Studying the

pragmatic functions of proverbs provides insights into intercultural communication and helps in accurate translation and interpretation.

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