



## THE PRAGMATIC ROLE OF PAREMIAS IN EXPRESSING SOCIAL NORMS IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH DISCOURSES

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### ANNOTATION

Paremiyas, as culturally embedded linguistic units, play a significant pragmatic role in expressing and regulating social norms within discourse. This study investigates how paremiyas function as pragmatic tools for articulating socially accepted values and behavioral expectations in Uzbek and English discourses. Adopting a discourse-pragmatic and contrastive approach, the research examines the illocutionary force, evaluative orientation, and contextual dependency of paremiyas as they are employed to convey normative meanings. The analysis reveals that in both Uzbek and English discourses, paremiyas are frequently used as indirect speech acts to legitimize social norms, mitigate face-threatening acts, and guide interpersonal behavior. However, notable cross-cultural differences emerge in the pragmatic realization of these functions. Uzbek paremiyas predominantly emphasize collectivist values, respect for social hierarchy, and moral responsibility, while English paremiyas tend to foreground individual autonomy, practical wisdom, and self-regulation. The findings demonstrate that paremiyas serve not merely as rhetorical devices but as dynamic pragmatic mechanisms through which social norms are enacted, reinforced, and negotiated in discourse.

**Introduction.** Language serves not only as a means of communication but also as a powerful instrument for transmitting social values and regulating collective behavior. Among the linguistic units that encode culturally shared knowledge, *paremiyas*—including proverbs and proverbial expressions—occupy a distinctive position due to their normative, evaluative, and didactic functions. As condensed forms of folk wisdom, paremiyas reflect socially sanctioned beliefs and function as pragmatic tools through which speakers reinforce, negotiate, and legitimize social norms within discourse. At first we should clarify the meaning and the units of paremiyas. Proverbs, as concise and memorable expressions of traditional wisdom, serve as a mirror to the soul of a culture. They encapsulate the accumulated experiences, values, and beliefs of a people, passed down through generations<sup>1</sup>.

From a pragmatic perspective, the use of paremiyas extends beyond their literal meanings and is deeply embedded in context-dependent interpretation. Speakers employ paremiyas to perform various communicative acts such as advising, warning, criticizing, or justifying behavior while often avoiding direct imposition. In this sense, paremiyas operate as indirect speech acts that allow speakers to express judgments and expectations in a socially acceptable and culturally resonant manner. Their pragmatic force is particularly salient in situations involving moral evaluation, interpersonal regulation, and the transmission of behavioral standards. The expression of social norms through paremiyas is inherently culture-bound, as norms themselves are shaped by historical, social, and ideological factors. In Uzbek discourse, paremiyas frequently emphasize values such as respect for elders, collectivism, social harmony, and moral responsibility, whereas English paremiyas often foreground individual agency, self-reliance, and pragmatic rationality. Despite these differences, both linguistic traditions utilize paremiyas as authoritative discourse strategies that draw on shared cultural knowledge to legitimize normative claims and influence interlocutors' behavior. Although paremiyas have been widely studied from folkloristic, semantic, and cultural perspectives, their pragmatic role in expressing social norms within discourse—particularly in a contrastive Uzbek–English framework—remains underexplored. Existing studies often focus on meaning equivalence or cultural symbolism, overlooking how paremiyas function dynamically in interaction to encode norms and regulate social conduct. Addressing this gap, the present study adopts a discourse-pragmatic approach to examine how paremiyas are employed in Uzbek and English to articulate, reinforce, and

negotiate social norms across communicative contexts. As we use the term "discourse", we should identify when this term was firstly used. Even before the appearance of the modern theory of discourse, which began to develop into an independent field of science only in the mid-60s of the XX century, there were attempts to define this term. The word *discours* has the most "old" meaning in French and means dialogical speech. Already in the XIX century, this term was polysemic: in the Dictionary of the German language by Jacob Wilhelm Grim "Deutsches Woerterbuch" of 1860, the following semantic parameters of the term "discourse" are indicated: 1) dialogue, conversation; 2) speech, lecture<sup>2</sup>.

The aim of this article is to analyze the pragmatic mechanisms through which paremiyas convey social norms in Uzbek and English discourse, with particular attention to their illocutionary force, contextual dependency, and evaluative function. By conducting a comparative analysis, the study seeks to reveal both shared pragmatic patterns and culture-specific strategies in the normative use of paremiyas, thereby contributing to broader discussions in cross-cultural pragmatics, discourse analysis, and paremiology.

**Literature review.** The study of paremiyas has long occupied an important place in linguistic research due to their role as carriers of collective experience, cultural memory, and social values. Traditionally, paremiyas have been examined within the fields of folklore studies and paremiology, where scholars focused on their origins, structural patterns, semantic content, and thematic classifications. Early studies emphasized the didactic and moralizing nature of paremiyas, viewing them primarily as fixed expressions that transmit traditional wisdom across generations. Paremiology is the study and analysis of proverbs, idioms, and other types of sayings. When looking at paremiology in literary texts, there are several linguistic peculiarities that can be observed. These include: figurative language: Proverbs and sayings often contain figurative language, such as metaphors or similes. They can be used to convey complex ideas in a concise and memorable manner. For example, Shakespeare's famous proverb "All that glitters is not gold" uses metaphorical language to convey the idea that appearances can be deceiving. Cultural and historical references: Many proverbs and sayings have cultural and historical origins, reflecting the traditions, customs, and beliefs of a particular community or time period. Literary texts often use these sayings to evoke a specific cultural or historical context. For instance, the saying "When in Rome, do as the Romans do" is often used to refer to the importance of adapting to

<sup>1</sup> Qodirova, Z. (2025). Linguocultural Features of Proverbs in Abdulla Qahhor's and O. Henry's Works. *TLEP – International Journal of Multidiscipline*, 2(5), 10-17. <https://www.tlepub.org/index.php/1/article/view/296>

<sup>2</sup> Rashidova Manzura Baxtiyorovna. THE CONCEPT OF DISCOURSE IN MODERN LINGUISTICS // ResearchJet Journal of Analysis and Inventions // Volume 2, Issue 7 July, 2021.- p 7.

one's surroundings<sup>3</sup>. With the development of pragmatics and discourse analysis, scholarly attention gradually shifted toward the functional and context dependent aspects of paremias. From a pragmatic perspective, paremias are no longer viewed solely as repositories of meaning but as communicative tools that speakers strategically employ to achieve specific interactional goals. Researchers in pragmatics have demonstrated that paremias frequently function as indirect speech acts through which speakers express advice, warnings, evaluations, or social criticism in an implicit and socially acceptable manner. This indirectness allows speakers to convey normative judgments while minimizing potential face threatening effects, thereby enhancing the interpersonal effectiveness of communication. The relationship between language and social norms has been a central concern in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology. Social norms are understood as shared expectations that guide behavior within a community, and language plays a crucial role in articulating, maintaining, and reinforcing these norms. Within this framework, paremias are considered particularly powerful linguistic resources because they draw on collective authority and cultural legitimacy. Scholars have argued that when a speaker uses a paremia, the source of authority shifts from the individual speaker to the community at large, making the expressed norm appear natural, unquestionable, and socially sanctioned.

One cognitive feature of paremias is their use of metaphors to convey abstract concepts. Metaphorical expressions are pervasive in paremias, as they allow speakers to draw parallels between concrete experiences and abstract ideas. For example, the English proverb "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush" uses the metaphor of a bird to convey the idea that it is better to hold onto something certain than to risk losing it for something uncertain<sup>4</sup>.

V.V. Vinogradov, a pioneering Russian linguist, proposed that proverbs belong to the phraseological system of a language due to their fixed lexical composition and idiomatic nature. He emphasized the idea that proverbs, like idioms, are prefabricated speech units that serve expressive and communicative functions. N. N. Amosova, however, challenged this view by arguing that proverbs are not mere lexical units but syntactically independent constructions that often function as full sentences or even mini-discourses. According to Amosova, proverbs possess an autonomous communicative status, which sets them apart from typical phraseological expressions and idioms<sup>5</sup>. Comparative studies involving Uzbek and English paremias are especially scarce, and those that do exist frequently emphasize lexical equivalence or cultural differences at the level of meaning rather than pragmatic function. There is a noticeable gap in research that systematically examines how paremias in these two languages operate within discourse to construct and reinforce social norms. This gap is particularly significant given the contrasting cultural contexts of Uzbek and English speaking communities, which provide a rich ground for exploring both universal and culture specific pragmatic mechanisms.

**Methodology.** The present study employs a qualitative contrastive research design grounded in discourse pragmatics to examine the pragmatic role of paremias in expressing social norms in Uzbek and English discourses. This approach is particularly suitable for exploring how meaning is shaped through language use in context and how culturally shared expressions function as normative tools in communication. By combining pragmatic interpretation with discourse analysis, the study aims to reveal how paremias operate beyond their literal meanings to convey socially accepted values and behavioral expectations. The data for the analysis were drawn from a range of written and spoken sources in both languages. Uzbek paremias were collected from authoritative paremiological dictionaries, folklore collections, and examples of naturally occurring discourse, including everyday conversational exchanges, literary texts, and media discourse. English paremias were selected from well established proverb dictionaries, linguistic corpora, and contemporary spoken and written discourse. Only those paremias that demonstrate clear normative or evaluative

potential were included, ensuring that the data set reflects actual communicative practice rather than archaic or marginal usage. Efforts were made to maintain thematic balance between the two languages by selecting paremias related to comparable social domains such as family relations, moral behavior, social responsibility, and interpersonal interaction. The data consist of Uzbek and English paremias drawn from established proverb dictionaries, folklore collections, linguistic corpora, and naturally occurring spoken and written discourse. Only actively used paremias with clear normative or evaluative functions were selected. The data were thematically balanced across both languages, covering comparable domains such as family relations, moral conduct, social behavior, and interpersonal interaction. A contrastive functional analysis is employed to identify shared and culture specific pragmatic strategies in Uzbek and English discourse. Interpretations are based on multiple contextual occurrences to ensure analytical consistency and reliability. All data were obtained from publicly available or anonymized sources and analyzed in accordance with ethical research standards.

**Results.** The analysis of Uzbek and English discourses demonstrates that paremias function as pragmatically effective instruments for expressing and reinforcing social norms in both linguistic communities. In both languages, paremias are predominantly used as indirect means of evaluation and regulation, enabling speakers to convey normative judgments without overt instruction. However, the pragmatic realization of these functions reveals both shared communicative principles and culturally specific patterns.

A central finding of the study is that paremias in both Uzbek and English discourse operate as indirect speech acts. In Uzbek discourse, paremias frequently function as indirect directives and moral evaluations aimed at promoting collective responsibility and ethical behavior. For example, the Uzbek paremia "Yaxshilik qil, dengizga tashla, baliq bilmasa, Xudo bilar" is commonly used in contexts where speakers encourage altruistic action without expectation of personal reward. Pragmatically, this expression functions as a moral directive rather than a literal statement, reinforcing the social norm of selflessness. This finding is consistent with the notion of indirect speech acts as developed by J. L. Austin in *How to Do Things with Words* and further elaborated by John R. Searle in *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*, where meaning is shaped by conventionalized social use rather than explicit linguistic form<sup>6</sup>. In English discourse, paremias also function as indirect evaluative acts, though they often emphasize individual accountability and practical reasoning. The proverb "Actions speak louder than words" is frequently used to evaluate behavior in situations involving promises or intentions. Its pragmatic role lies in implicitly criticizing insincerity and reinforcing the norm that personal credibility is established through observable action. This type of indirect evaluation corresponds to George Yule's discussion of pragmatic inference in *Pragmatics*, where shared cultural knowledge allows speakers to communicate judgments efficiently and with minimal face threat<sup>7</sup>.

Another significant result concerns the evaluative orientation of paremias in relation to social hierarchy and interpersonal relations. Uzbek paremias frequently encode respect based on age and social position, as illustrated by the expression "Kattaga hurmat, kichikka izzat." In discourse, this paremia functions as a pragmatic reminder of hierarchical norms and appropriate social conduct. By invoking a culturally accepted principle, the speaker legitimizes expectations of respectful behavior without personal confrontation. This observation aligns with Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson's theory of politeness as presented in *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*, particularly their discussion of how culturally shared norms mitigate face threatening acts in hierarchical societies<sup>8</sup>. In contrast, English paremias often reflect norms related to personal boundaries and autonomy. The expression "Mind your own business" pragmatically enforces the social norm of non interference and individual privacy. Rather than appealing to collective authority, the paremia emphasizes self

<sup>3</sup> Qodirova, Z. H. (2024). THE LINGUISTIC PECULIARITIES OF PAREMIOLOGY IN LITERARY TEXTS. *Journal of Modern Educational Achievements*, 3(1), 6-9.

<sup>4</sup> Khayrulla Toshquvvatov, & Alisher Fayziyev. (2024). COGNITIVE AND PRAGMATIC FEATURES OF ENGLISH AND UZBEK PAREMIAS. *European International Journal of Philological Sciences*, 4(05), 31–35. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/eijps/article/view/34096>

<sup>5</sup> Djamila BEGJANOVA. (2025). STRUCTURAL AND SYNTACTIC ANALYSIS OF PAREMIOLOGICAL UNITS OF UZBEK, KARAKALPAK, AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES . «ACTA NUUz», 1(1.7), 216–218. <https://doi.org/10.69617/nuuz.v1i1.7.8458>

<sup>6</sup> Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words* (pp. 1–167). Oxford University Press.

<sup>7</sup> Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics* (pp. 1–138). Oxford University Press.

<sup>8</sup> Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage* (pp. 1–345). Cambridge University Press.

regulation and respect for personal space. The analysis further reveals that paremias in both languages function as discourse structuring devices, particularly in concluding or summarizing interactional sequences. In Uzbek discourse, paremias frequently appear at the end of advisory or moral discussions, framing the speaker's stance as culturally sanctioned wisdom. Similarly, in English discourse, paremias are often used to close arguments or reinforce conclusions by appealing to shared experience. This discourse positioning supports Wolfgang Mieder's observations in *Proverbs: A Handbook*, where paremias are described as authoritative expressions that condense social experience into easily recognizable forms<sup>9</sup>.

We can take one example from Uzbek short story, *Tilmoch tortiqni oldi va beto'xtov pristavga yaxshilab tushuntirishni va'da qildi. Cholning butun bo'g'lnlari bo'shashib ketdi, keyin tutoqishdi, ammo go'nda bir narsa deya oladimi!* "O'yashmagil arbob bilan - seni urar har bob bilan"<sup>10</sup>. In this part the proverb used as a tool for describing social status of the character of the story. In Uzbek language it means a person who works in high position of state, you can be disobedient to him. A notable difference between the two discourses lies in the perceived source of pragmatic authority. Uzbek paremias tend to derive their force from collective tradition, moral values, and communal experience, often reinforced by religious or ethical undertones. English paremias, by contrast, more frequently appeal to empirical observation and individual reasoning. Overall, the results indicate that while paremias in both Uzbek and English discourses serve a shared pragmatic function in expressing social norms, their specific communicative strategies differ in accordance with cultural values. Uzbek paremias predominantly reinforce social harmony, moral obligation, and respect for hierarchy, whereas English paremias emphasize personal responsibility, autonomy, and practical judgment. These findings confirm that paremias function as active pragmatic mechanisms through which social norms are constructed, maintained, and negotiated in discourse rather than as merely decorative linguistic elements.

**Discussions.** The findings of this study confirm that paremias function as powerful pragmatic resources for expressing and reinforcing social norms in both Uzbek and English discourses. The analysis demonstrates that paremias are not merely traditional or stylistic elements of language but dynamic communicative tools through which speakers negotiate values, regulate behavior, and legitimize normative expectations. These results support contemporary pragmatic and discourse-based views that meaning emerges from use, context, and shared cultural knowledge rather than from linguistic form alone. One of the most significant insights of the study is the role of paremias as indirect speech acts. In both languages, speakers rely on paremias to perform evaluative and directive functions without direct imposition. This confirms the relevance of speech act theory, particularly the ideas advanced by Austin, which emphasize that illocutionary force is often conveyed implicitly through conventionalized expressions. By using paremias, speakers shift responsibility for the message from the individual to collective wisdom, thereby increasing the authority and acceptability of the norm being expressed. This pragmatic strategy is especially effective in contexts involving advice, moral judgment, or social criticism, where direct commands could threaten interpersonal relations. The contrastive analysis reveals that

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2. Rashidova Manzura Baxtiyorovna. THE CONCEPT OF DISCOURSE IN MODERN LINGUISTICS // ResearchJet Journal of Analysis and Inventions // Volume 2, Issue 7 July, 2021.- p 7.
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although the pragmatic mechanisms underlying paremiological usage are similar in Uzbek and English, their cultural orientation differs considerably. Uzbek paremias predominantly reflect collectivist values, moral obligation, and respect for social hierarchy. The frequent emphasis on elders, authority figures, and communal harmony suggests that paremias in Uzbek discourse function as instruments of social cohesion and continuity. This observation aligns with sociocultural and pragmatic studies which argue that in collectivist societies, social norms are maintained through implicit moral regulation rather than explicit individual assertion.

In contrast, English paremias tend to foreground individual responsibility, autonomy, and pragmatic rationality. Rather than appealing to tradition or hierarchy, English paremias often derive their persuasive force from experiential logic and observable behavior. This reflects a discourse culture in which social norms are negotiated through personal accountability and self-regulation. Such findings are consistent with previous discourse studies that describe English-speaking communicative practices as valuing independence, personal boundaries, and indirect conflict management. Another important aspect highlighted in the analysis is the evaluative function of paremias. In both languages, paremias encode judgments about socially acceptable and unacceptable behavior, functioning as moral reference points within discourse. However, the nature of evaluation differs. Uzbek paremias often present norms as stable, inherited, and unquestionable, reinforcing traditional value systems. English paremias, by contrast, allow greater flexibility in interpretation, enabling speakers to adapt normative meanings to specific situations. This difference suggests that pragmatic normativity is shaped not only by linguistic convention but also by culturally specific attitudes toward authority and social order.

The literary example from Abdulla Qahhor's short story illustrates how paremias function not only in everyday communication but also in fictional discourse to construct social meaning. In this context, the paremia serves to signal power relations and social hierarchy, reinforcing the pragmatic role of paremias as markers of social status and behavioral constraint. This demonstrates that paremias operate across discourse types and retain their normative force in both spoken and written contexts.

**Conclusion.** This study has examined the pragmatic role of paremias in expressing social norms in Uzbek and English discourses from a discourse-pragmatic and contrastive perspective. The analysis demonstrates that paremias function as culturally embedded pragmatic mechanisms through which socially accepted values, moral judgments, and behavioral expectations are articulated and reinforced in communication. Far from being merely traditional or decorative expressions, paremias operate as active tools of normative regulation within discourse.

The findings show that in both Uzbek and English, paremias are frequently employed as indirect speech acts that allow speakers to convey evaluation, advice, and social criticism in an implicit and socially acceptable manner. This indirectness enhances their pragmatic effectiveness by mitigating face-threatening acts and increasing the authority of the expressed norms through appeal to shared cultural knowledge. The study confirms that the pragmatic force of paremias is shaped by contextual factors such as discourse setting, speaker intention, and interpersonal relations.

<sup>9</sup> Mieder, W. (2004). *Proverbs: A handbook* (pp. 1-305). Greenwood Press.

<sup>10</sup> Abdulla Qahhor. O'g'ri. – Toshkent, G'afur G'ulom nomidagi nashriyot. – 2019. B. 6, 7.