SPEECH ACTS AND PRAGMATIC STRATEGIES IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH EPICS: A COGNITIVE-PRAGMATIC INQUIRY

Durdona Rustamova

durdonarustamova0728@gmail.com

Abstract. *A literary and cultural artefact, epic poetry reflects the social and cognitive worldviews of the communities that create it. The speech actions and pragmatic techniques found in Uzbek and English epics are examined in this essay, emphasising their function in establishing cultural identity and passing along morals. Epics like Alpomish and Goʻroʻgʻli in the Uzbek tradition and Beowulf and The Faerie Queene in the English tradition have long been recognised for their aesthetic and folkloric value, but less focus has been placed on how their lyrical discourse serves as a practical communication tool and a cognitive model of thought.This study examines how blessings, curses, oaths, declarations, and divine appeals function within these epics using cognitive frameworks from Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conceptual metaphor theory, Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1979) speech act theory, and Fauconnier and Turner's (2002) blending theory. The results show that while English epics place more emphasis on individual bravery, personal honour, and appeals to heavenly power, Uzbek epics emphasise collective values through blessings and moral exhortations. Cognitively, English oaths are based on metaphors of bound and battle, but Uzbek blessings are constructed through metaphors of growth, continuity, and kinship. These findings imply that epic speech should be seen as a dynamic cultural discourse that conveys moral frameworks, encodes identity, and preserves collective memory rather than only as a poetry genre.*

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As archives of collective memory and national identity, epics hold a prominent position in national cultural imaginations. They are linguistic and cultural structures that encode values, philosophies, and worldviews in addition to being stories of valiant actions. Because poetry frequently expresses the inner voice of people, their feelings, and their link to larger cultural frameworks, the lyrical discourse that is woven throughout epics is very important. Lyrical sections are ripe for pragmatic and cognitive examination because, in contrast to descriptive narrative passages, they use heightened language and performative utterances.

The worldview reflected in Uzbek epics like Alpomish and Goʻroʻgʻli is firmly anchored in collectivism, familial bonds, and moral obligation to the community. These works use blessings, curses, and exhortations as performative gestures that help to define collective identity in addition to serving as literary embellishments. English epics, on the other hand, like Beowulf and Spenser's The Faerie Queene, place more emphasis on moral testing, individual bravery, and the conflict between one's own fate and that of God. Since individuality and divine judgement are so important in English culture, oaths, heroic statements, and pleas to God predominate in the pragmatic repertory.

Scholars have mainly seen epics as literary or folklore phenomena, despite the significance of these practical tactics (Karomatov, 1981; Frye, 1967). The pragmatic roles of speech actions in forming cultural cognition are still poorly understood, despite research on metaphor and symbolism in epics. In order to close that gap, this study compares the cognitive-pragmatic analysis of speech acts in English and Uzbek epics.

The following are the main research questions:

Which speech act kinds are most common in English and Uzbek epics?

In what practical ways do these speech acts uphold cultural values?

How do these speech acts reflect different worldviews, and what cognitive models underpin them?

Methods.This research uses a qualitative comparative methodology that combines cognitive linguistics, speech act theory, and discourse analysis.

Selection of Corpora. Four canonical epics are the subject of the analysis: Beowulf and The Faerie Queene from the English tradition, and Alpomish and Go'ro'g'li from the Uzbek tradition. The performative aspect of a few chosen lyrical passages—blessings, curses, oaths, petitions, and exhortations—was taken into consideration. framework for analysis.

Analysis of the Speech Act. The classification of utterances was driven by Searle's (1979) taxonomy of speech acts (assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives) and Austin's (1962) differentiation between locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. functions that are pragmatic. To ascertain if utterances were meant to warn, unite, instruct, or convince, their context was examined.

Interpretation of cognition. The metaphorical structures that underlie speech acts were identified using the conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The blending theory (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002) and mental spaces proposed by Fauconnier (1994) offered instruments for elucidating the construction and fusion of cultural meanings in epic discourse. analysis of data. A comparative method connected language methods to cultural concepts of individuality vs collectivism, highlighting both similarities and differences between the two traditions.

Findings and Interpretation

The speech acts of Uzbek and English epics showed clear patterns that reflected cultural attitudes towards individualism and collectivism, according to the investigation.

Uzbek epics.

Blessings and Curses: "May your land bloom like spring, may your children be as strong as mountains" are two examples of Alpomish blessings for wealth that frequently conjure images of nature. These statements serve the perlo

Epics in English.

Beowulf's pre-battle oaths and declarations emphasise individual accountability: "I shall face the monster alone, and fate will decide." By presenting the concept of life as battle, these commissives tie the hero's identity to his actions.

Appeals to Divine Authority: The hero's battle in The Faerie Queene is placed within a cosmic moral order through the use of prayers and invocations. Here, legitimation serves a pragmatic purpose by establishing the divine will as the foundation for human behaviour.

Individual Deixis: To emphasise personal identification and accountability, the pronouns I, my fate, and my honour are prevalent.

dimensions of cognition. Uzbek blessings are organised using themes of continuity and fertility, with destiny viewed as a shared journey and life as a thriving garden.

cutionary purpose of fostering a sense of community. On the other hand, curses target treason and warn that disloyalty will lead to the destruction of society.

Proclamations: Elders and heroes frequently urge loyalty, patience, and unity in Goʻroʻgʻli. These instructions are linked to cultural metaphors of stability and growth and serve as practical moral instruction.

Communal Deixis: By emphasising collective identification, the frequent usage of biz ("we"), el ("people"), and xalq ("nation") lessens the importance of individual pronouns.

Discussion.The results demonstrate how speech acts in epics serve as cognitive-pragmatic tools that are intricately woven into cultural structures.

The prevalence of blessings, curses, and exhortations in Uzbek culture reflects a collectivist mindset that holds that a person cannot exist apart of their community. Speech acts are used to teach moral norms, strengthen unity, and shape collective values in addition to expressing emotions. The idea of dependency and continuity is encoded by the metaphorical identification of the people with a mountain or the nation with a mother.

The English tradition, on the other hand, values individualism. While appeals to God situate personal difficulties within a divine order, oaths and declarations centre the hero's identity and destiny. A worldview that places a high value on moral autonomy and personal honour is reflected in the metaphorical link of life with conflict and destiny with a legally binding agreement.

An additional dimension worth noting is the performative power of these speech acts within oral tradition. Unlike modern literary texts consumed primarily by individual readers, epics were historically recited in communal settings. In this context, blessings and curses in Uzbek epics, or oaths and appeals in English ones, would not merely represent fictional utterances but functioned as socially binding acts when performed aloud. The audience, whether villagers listening to Alpomish or courtly listeners of The Faerie Queene, participated in these acts as witnesses, reinforcing their illocutionary force. This performative aspect underscores the pragmatic reality that speech acts in epics did not just describe values but actively shaped and reproduced them in cultural practice.

Furthermore, a comparative perspective highlights how epic speech acts contribute to cultural resilience. In the Uzbek context, blessings and exhortations safeguarded communal values during periods of foreign domination by reinforcing shared identity through performance. In the English context, oaths and divine appeals reflected the shaping of a Christian moral framework that would influence the political and ethical ideologies of

medieval and Renaissance society. Thus, the pragmatic strategies observed are not static literary devices but dynamic cultural tools that both reflected and sustained the historical realities of their respective communities. Conclusion. The significance of epic discourse as a cultural performance is shown by these distinctions. While speech acts in English epics have a heroic purpose by dramatising the individual's struggle with fate and divine judgement, those in Uzbek epics serve an educational purpose by teaching audiences about loyalty and collective duty. These techniques show how metaphors influence language and cultural cognition from a cognitive standpoint.

This study has shown that a useful framework for comprehending epic discourse as a cultural phenomenon is provided by the cognitive-pragmatic analysis of speech acts. The pragmatic tactics used in Uzbek and English epics are different and reflect their various worldviews: individualism vs collectivism, and honour versus community. Metaphors of nature and kinship in the Uzbek tradition and of conflict and bond in the English tradition serve as the cognitive foundation for these tactics.

As a result, epic discourse becomes more than just a literary form; it is a cultural mechanism that conveys moral frameworks, encodes identity, and moulds communal memory. By providing a deeper understanding of how language works in epic traditions to retain and project cultural values, the comparative findings of this study advance the fields of comparative literary studies, cognitive linguistics, and cross-cultural pragmatics.

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