

LINGUACULTURAL AND COGNITIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF ANTHROPOMORPHISM IN UZBEK FOLK RIDDLES RELATED TO LABOR TOOLS

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Annotatsiya: Ushbu ilmiy maqolada oʻzbek xalq topishmoqlarida anʼanaviy mehnat va dehqonchilik qurollarining antropomorfizm (shaxslantirish) prinsiplari asosida lisoniy shakllanishi tadqiq etiladi. Maqolada jun tarogʻi, ketmon, omoch, urchuq kabi milliy maishiy asboblarning insonga xos sifatlar (yigit, qiz, kampir, polvon) orqali kognitiv va lingvomadaniy jihatdan modellastirilishi tahlil qilingan. Tadqiqot xalq ogʻzaki ijodida antropomorfik metaforalarning lisoniy tizimda tutgan oʻrnini ochib beradi.

Kalit soʻzlar: antropomorfizm, topishmoq, mehnat qurollari, lingvomadaniyat, milliy mentalitet, kognitiv metafora.

Аннотация: В данной научной статье исследуется языковое формирование традиционных орудий труда и сельскохозяйственного инвентаря в узбекских народных загадках на основе принципов антропоморфизма (олицетворения). Анализируется когнитивное и лингвокультурное моделирование таких национальных бытовых инструментов, как гребень для шерсти, кетмень, омач (плуг) и веретено, через человеческие качества (юноша, девушка, старуха, богатырь). Исследование раскрывает роль антропоморфных метафор в языковой системе устного народного творчества.

Ключевые слова: антропоморфизм, загадка, орудия труда, лингвокультурология, национальный менталитет, когнитивная метафора.

Abstract: This scientific paper explores the linguistic formation of traditional labor and agricultural tools in Uzbek folk riddles based on the principles of anthropomorphism (personification). The cognitive and linguacultural modeling of national household tools—such as wool combs, hoes, plows, and spindles—is analyzed through human attributes (young man, girl, old woman, wrestler). The study reveals the role of anthropomorphic metaphors within the linguistic framework of oral folklore.

Keywords: anthropomorphism, riddle, labor tools, linguacultural analysis, national mentality, cognitive metaphor.

INTRODUCTION. Language operates not merely as a tool for communication, but as the cultural repository of a nation, capturing the distinct ways in which a community perceives and structures reality. Within the realm of folklore, riddles serve as a profound reflection of a nation's cognitive capacity, revealing hidden metaphorical connections between distinct elements of the environment. In Uzbek paremiology, riddles focusing on traditional labor, agriculture, and craftsmanship tools occupy a prominent position. When examining the semantic structure of these texts, a dominant conceptual mechanism emerges: anthropomorphism—the practice of endowing inanimate objects with human shapes, age, gender, and character traits. In modern cognitive linguistics, anthropomorphism is no longer viewed as a simplistic stylistic device or mere personification. Instead, it is recognized as a fundamental element of the anthropocentric worldview, where human beings decode the external universe using their own biological and

social frameworks. For centuries, Uzbek ancestors lived in close symbiosis with their agricultural and domestic tools, gradually conceptualizing these implements as living companions, family members, or distinct social personas. While previous linguistic scholarship in Uzbekistan has thoroughly investigated anthropomorphism within proverbs, its unique manifestation within archaic labor riddles remains a critical gap. Therefore, this study aims to provide a comprehensive linguacultural and cognitive analysis of anthropomorphic models in Uzbek labor riddles, uncovering the socio-ethnic codes hidden within these authentic text samples.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of anthropomorphism within folklore requires a cross-disciplinary approach that bridges cognitive metaphor theory with cultural anthropology. From a global theoretical perspective, the cognitive framework of anthropomorphism is heavily anchored in the conceptual metaphor theory developed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, who argue that human thought processes are inherently metaphorical, allowing humans to rationalize physical objects based on personal experiences (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 35). In their view, personification is an essential cognitive tool that allows humans to understand the physical world through human motivations and biological characteristics. Within Turkic scholarship, the national and cultural dimensions of this phenomenon are deeply explored by national linguists. Professor H. Dadaboyev emphasizes that language acts as a mirror of national mentality, stating that the way a nation humanizes its surrounding environment directly reflects its historic values, lifestyle, and unique worldview (Dadaboyev, 2019, p. 72). Dadaboyev's insights imply that when Uzbek folk oral traditions humanize household items, they encode specific cultural values—such as a deep respect for manual labor—into the linguistic fabric of the community. Furthermore, the structural and semantic evolution of metaphors within Uzbek oral traditions was investigated by academician Sh. Rahmatullayev, who notes that terms of kinship and social hierarchy used metaphorically in folk texts carry latent cultural codes that define community relations (Rahmatullayev, 1995, p. 48). As folklore research establishes, while Western traditions often utilize personification to emphasize human dominance over a passive environment, Uzbek labor riddles use anthropomorphism to establish a harmonious dialogue and partnership between the worker and their tools (Uzbek Folk Oral Creativity, 1981, p. 14).

Analysis and results. The linguistic analysis of the gathered data reveals that the anthropomorphic modeling of labor tools in Uzbek riddles forms a highly systematic cognitive structure. This system operates primarily by transferring human gender roles, social hierarchies, and biological systems onto inanimate instruments, transforming mechanical tasks into vivid human narratives. A prominent finding is the strict mapping of tools based on the traditional social division of labor, where heavy, loud, or group-oriented machinery is conceptualized through masculine identities such as a wrestler (*polvon*) or a brave young man (*mard yigit*). For instance, the synchronized and forceful motion of wool-beating sticks is described through a brotherhood of brave men in the text: “To‘rda turgan to‘rt yigit, To‘rtovi ham mard yigit” (Four brave young men standing in the seat of honor). The intense, rhythmic struggle of this labor process is further personified as a wrestling match inside a room: “Qorong‘i uyda ko‘p polvon olishadi” (Many wrestlers fighting in a dark room). Similarly, the heavy, ground-shaking mechanism of an oil-mill is elevated to an influential male figure: “Qorong‘i tomning ichida Polvon akam ikki oyoq bilan tepadi” (Inside the dark roof, Brother Wrestler kicks with two feet). Through these masculine metaphors, the physical strength and weight of the instruments are made tangible to the listener's cognitive framework. Conversely, domestic tools associated with spinning, weaving, and clothing production – tasks historically performed by women – are systematically personified with feminine identities such as an old woman (*kampir*), a young girl (*qizgina*), or an aunt (*xola*). The domestic utility of the wool stick is mirrored in a feminine parallel: “Bizning uyda to‘rt kampir, To‘rtovi ham mard kampir” (Four brave old women in our house). The continuous, spinning rotation of a spindle is beautifully captured as an elder woman who never tires and continuously wraps her belt: “Charchamas kampir ko‘rdim, yolg‘iz oyoq...

Yurgan sari belbog‘ini qavatlaydi” (I saw a tireless old woman with a single leg, folding her belt as she moves). Furthermore, the swift, light, and rhythmic gliding of a weaving shuttle across the loom is depicted as a gracefully adorned young girl moving back and forth: “U yoqqa o‘tadi qizgina, Bu yoqqa o‘tadi qizgina, Qulog‘iga halqa taqib, Shildirab o‘tadi qizgina” (The young girl passes this way and that, wearing an earring, rustling as she goes).

Beyond gender categorization, the results show that these tools enter complex social and kinship relationships within the riddle’s narrative. In the Uzbek linguistic consciousness, instruments are given proper names, titles of respect, or high social statuses to establish an intimate connection between the worker and the tool. This is evident in the naming of a spinning wheel as an respected elder brother: “Sariboy akam saqtali, Ikki oti no‘xtali” (My Brother Sariboy is well-equipped, with two haltered horses). The traditional wooden plow working underground is granted the status of wealth: “Yer ostida boy boradi, Qulog‘ida loy boradi” (A rich man goes underground, with mud on his ear). Even the grinding process of a watermill is structured as a living social dialogue between neighboring personas: “Bir jumbog‘im bor boshdan, Joni temir, toshdan. Zuhra xola, yuguraver, Usta tosh o‘ldi ochdan” (My riddle from the start, its soul is iron and stone. Aunt Zuhra, keep running, Master Stone is dying of hunger). Here, the millstone possesses a "soul," and the chore becomes a cooperative social interaction between "Aunt Zuhra" and "Master Stone."

Finally, the most archaic layer of anthropomorphism identified in the texts is the anatomical mapping, where the structural components of mechanical tools are directly equated with the biological organs of the human body, such as teeth, legs, and ears. The construction of a wool comb is condensed into a singular personified entity characterized by its dental structure: “Biznikida bitta kishi, Og‘zida qirqta tishi” (One person in our house, with forty teeth in his mouth). The handles of a stretcher (zambil) are conceptualized as resting limbs: “Boradir, boradir, Oyog‘ini ko‘tarib yotadir” (It goes and goes, then lies down lifting its legs). Vital agricultural movements are likewise expressed through human physiological actions; a hoe cutting weeds is a swift runner committing a constructive act of elimination (“Yugurib, chaqqon o‘tadi, Tagidagin o‘ldirib ketadi”), while a water wheel’s seasonal utility is modeled as human sleep and waking cycles: “Yozda yurar, Qishda yotar” (Walks in the summer, lies down in the winter).

CONCLUSION. In conclusion, the manifestation of anthropomorphism within Uzbek folk riddles regarding labor tools highlights the rich cognitive complexity and philosophical depth of the national language. This essay illustrates that personification is the primary mechanism through which historical Uzbek speakers maintained a linguistic dialogue with their working environment. By transforming cold iron and wood into vivid characters like wrestlers, girls, and aunts, oral folklore successfully preserved the community’s historical ethnography and moral values across generations. Conducting further research on these anthropomorphic structures is highly valuable for expanding the paremiological databases of the Uzbek national corpus and presenting the authentic linguistic landscape of the Uzbek worldview on an international academic stage.

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