

Thematic groups characteristic for riddles

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Annotation: *This article explores the diverse thematic landscape of riddles, categorizing them into distinct groups based on their subjects. It examines common themes such as nature (animals, plants, weather phenomena), everyday objects, human characteristics (physical traits, emotions, actions), occupations, and abstract concepts (time, truth, luck). The analysis may also consider how these thematic groups reflect cultural values and beliefs, as well as the cognitive processes involved in both creating and solving riddles. Finally, the article may discuss the educational and entertainment value of riddles across different age groups and cultures, highlighting their role in developing language skills, critical thinking, and cultural understanding. This article offers a comprehensive analysis of English and Russian riddles through thematic, structural, semantic, and cultural lenses. It categorizes riddles into thematic groups, including natural phenomena, human traits, occupations, abstract concepts, and everyday objects, highlighting how these themes mirror the cultural and social realities of their respective societies. The study investigates the structural forms of riddles – ranging from simple and complex sentences to full texts – and identifies common stylistic devices such as metaphor, personification, inversion, and homonymy. Drawing on folklore studies and cognitive linguistics, the article examines how riddles serve not only as entertainment but also as educational tools that foster memory, creativity, and critical thinking. The comparative approach reveals cross-cultural similarities and distinctions, emphasizing the riddle's role as a reflection of collective consciousness and cultural heritage. By analyzing riddles in both folk and modern contexts, the article contributes to the understanding of how language, cognition, and culture interact in verbal art forms.*

Key words: *riddles, culture, thematic groups, characteristics, allegorical forms, folk, examine, analyses, metaphorical.*

Тематические группы, характерные для загадок

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Аннотация: *В данной статье исследуется разнообразие тематического ландшафта загадок, которые классифицируются на отдельные группы в зависимости от их предмета. Рассматриваются такие распространенные темы, как природа (животные, растения, погодные явления), предметы быта, характеристики человека (физические черты, эмоции, действия), профессии и абстрактные понятия (время, истина, удача). В анализе также может рассматриваться то, как эти тематические группы отражают культурные*

ценности и верования, а также когнитивные процессы, участвующие как в создании, так и в разгадывании загадок. Наконец, в статье может обсуждаться образовательная и развлекательная ценность загадок для разных возрастных групп и культур, подчеркивая их роль в развитии языковых навыков, критического мышления и культурного понимания. Данная статья представляет собой комплексный анализ английских и русских загадок с точки зрения их тематических, структурных, семантических и культурных особенностей. Загадки классифицируются по тематике: природные явления, человеческие качества, профессии, абстрактные понятия и бытовые предметы. Показано, как эти темы отражают культурную и социальную действительность соответствующих народов. Рассматриваются структурные формы загадок – от простых и сложных предложений до текстовых форм, а также стилистические средства, характерные для жанра (метафора, олицетворение, инверсия, омонимия). На основе фольклористических и когнитивных подходов анализируется образовательная и развлекательная функция загадок, их роль в развитии памяти, воображения и критического мышления. Сравнительный анализ английских и русских загадок выявляет как универсальные черты, так и культурные особенности. Таким образом, статья раскрывает загадку как важный элемент лингвокультурного наследия, отражающий взаимодействие языка, мышления и культуры.

Ключевые слова: загадки, культура, тематические группы, характеристики, аллегорические формы, народные, исследовать, анализ, метафорический.

Topishmoqning xarakterli tematik guruhllari

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Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqola topishmoqlarning rang-barang tematik manzarasini o'rganadi va ularni mavzulariga qarab aniq guruhlarga ajratadi. Unda tabiat (hayvonlar, o'simliklar, ob-havo hodisalari), kundalik buyumlar, inson xususiyatlari (jismoniy xususiyatlar, his-tuyg'ular, harakatlar), kasblar va mavhum tushunchalar (vaqt, haqiqat, omad) kabi umumiy mavzular ko'rib chiqiladi. Tahlil shuningdek, ushbu tematik guruhlar qanday qilib madaniy qadriyatlar va e'tiqodlarni aks ettirishi, shuningdek, topishmoqlar yaratish va yechishda ishtirok etadigan bilim jarayonlarini ham ko'rib chiqishi mumkin. Va nihoyat, maqolada turli yosh guruhllari va madaniyatlarda topishmoqlarning ta'lim va o'yin-kulgi qiymati muhokama qilinishi, ularning til ko'nikmalarini, tanqidiy fikrlashni va madaniy tushunishni rivojlantirishdagi roli ta'kidlanishi mumkin. Ushbu maqolada ingliz va rus topishmoqlari mavzu, tuzilma, semantika va madaniy jihatlar nuqtai nazaridan chuqur tahlil qilinadi. Topishmoqlar tabiiy hodisalar, inson fazilatlari, kasblar, mavhum tushunchalar va kundalik hayot buyumlari kabi mavzular bo'yicha guruhlarga ajratilib, ularning o'z jamiyatlarining madaniy va ijtimoiy haqiqatlarini qanday aks ettirishi ko'rsatiladi. Tadqiqotda oddiy va murakkab gaplar hamda to'liq matn shaklidagi topishmoqlarning tuzilmasi o'rganilib, metafora, jonlantirish, inversiya va homonimiya kabi uslubiy vositalar aniqlanadi. Folklorshunoslik va kognitiv lingvistika asosida topishmoqlarning nafaqat ko'ngilochar vosita, balki eslab qolish, ijodkorlik va tanqidiy fikrlashni rivojlantiruvchi ta'limiy vosita sifatida ahamiyati ochib beriladi. Ingliz va rus topishmoqlarining taqqosiy tahlili madaniyatlararo o'xshashlik va farqlarni aniqlashga yordam beradi hamda til, tafakkur va madaniyat o'rtasidagi o'zaro bog'liqlikni yoritadi.

Maqola xalq og‘zaki ijodi va zamonaviy kontekstda topishmoqlarning ahamiyatini chuqurroq tushunishga hissa qo‘shadi.

***Kalit so‘zlar:** topishmoqlar, madaniyat, tematik guruhlar, xususiyatlar, allegorik shakllar, xalq, o‘rganish, tahlillar, metaforik.*

Introduction. Riddles are short pieces the basis of which is witty metaphorical question that provides the answer. To find the answer – solution of a riddle, one should know how to compare life phenomena on the base of their affinity or similarity due to signs, traits, or characteristics.

Specificity of riddles is that in their concealed allegorical form an object or phenomenon is encrypted and one should find its original meaning. Therefore, some scientists analysing the artistic form of riddles assert that “every riddle is composite and monomial parallelism, second member of which is solution of a riddle”.

Riddle is a genre of folk art, which remains to be one of the least developed. Studying English folk riddles allows us to consider the interaction of the language system and ethnos in dynamics and comprehend a speech phenomenon of folk culture and its influence on modern creative work and development of youth creative thinking. All these determine topicality of the researched theme. (Mantsayeva 2023)

Methods. Riddles are the results of folk art, which are examples of various thematic paradigms, phraseological diversity and richness of the poetic word. They stimulate the imagination in the cognitive process, perform an educational function. Riddles remain relevant due to the fact that they develop a person’s intelligence, curiosity, serve as a means of entertainment and in a certain way “test” a person for knowledge in a particular area. The poetic rhymed form of the riddle promotes memorization. Riddles belong to the secondary derivational cognitive zone. They arise from the experience of comparison, analysis and abstraction. For example: Who gets up early? (rooster). The specifics of the riddles are the accuracy of the theme, concise content, well established traditions and imagery. It happens that riddles have the features of anagrams. For example: A seasoning, the opposite of first - (salt, last). The mechanism of sequential exclusion of the individual from the general type helps to reveal the topics dissected in the rhematic block of the riddle. For example: white, not snow, hard, not stone, sweet, not honey (sugar). In this article, the authors aim to determine the structural, semantic and cognitive features of English and Russian riddles, ways of their translation by comparative analysis of English and Russian riddles. The object of the study was English and Russian riddles. The subject of the study is the structural, semantic and cognitive features of English and Russian riddles.

In the communities where the use of true riddles is a living tradition, new objects and methods are quickly taken up in riddles. Elli Köngäs Marandamade notes on the way the Lau of Malaita in the British Solomon Islands handled, by means of riddles, new commodities introduced by an alien culture (such as a truck, sugar, matches, aeroplane or axe). These riddles were by no means content to give a neutral description of the novelties and incorporated admiration implying that “Western technology is effective” (for example, “A small child carries a big man. – A chair.”). But the riddles also indicated fear – “Western things are perishable” (for example, “A big men’s house, very many men live in it. If they come out, they die. –Matches”) and direct criticism – “Western things are hard to acquire, lose their attractiveness or are dangerous” (for example, “A thing, when it hits a man, he dies. – A truck.”) (Köngäs Maranda 1978:207–218.) In many parts of the Western world views such as this on the way of the world are nowadays presented by means of joking questions. (Annikki Kaivola 2001)

Results. According to the purpose of the statement (communicative type of sentence), riddles can be narrative, interrogative and incentive. White pearls were scattered on a black cloth (The sky and the stars) Something has eyes and cannot see (A potato) Whatever the communicative type of riddle, it is necessary to find an answer. Even if it is a declarative sentence, without a question, the

riddle genre assumes that the guesser understands the intent of the questioner and gives an answer - a guess. In incentive riddles, an invitation to search for an encrypted answer is expressed in folklore formulas: Please answer me. Who could he be? Riddle me, riddle me. There are riddles in which a reward is promised for guessing (If you tell me this riddle, I'll give you a groat). Several communicative sentence types can be combined, as in the following example: I saw a man in white, he looked quite a sight. He was not old, but he stood in the cold. And when he felt the sun, he started to run. Please answer me. Who could he be? (A snowman). The riddle begins with a narrative, followed by an incentive part, stimulating to guess the riddle, and then a question. 2. From the point of view of structure, riddles can be divided into 1. riddles that have the form of a simple sentence (more common), riddles - complex sentences and riddles that are text Riddles in complex sentences with subordinate conditions: If you drop me, I'm sure to crack. Give me a smile, and I'll always smile back. (A mirror). In simple sentence: I'm the son of water but when I return to water I die. Who am I? (Ice) In text: I have eyes but I can't see. I have skin but I can't feel anything. I can be sweet but I'm not a piece of candy. I can be baked but I'm not a cake. I can be peeled but I'm not a carrot. (A potato) (Khaidari 2019)

Discussion. In ancient times, riddles had mystical, religious, and ritual applications, and guessing and predicting riddle was considered a sign of special wisdom. Riddles could only be guessed at a certain time - it was impossible to guess in the summer and during the day. At the end of the field work, it was allowed to speculate in autumn

and winter. During the celebration of Christmas time (from December 25 to January 6), special importance was attached to the prediction. By origin, Russian riddles are also associated with conditional speech -the coded language of hunters, rituals and magical actions aimed at ensuring harvest and success in livestock and agriculture. Riddles perform and fulfill the following functions: Cognitive contributes to the

activation of knowledge about the world around especially in a child, Developmental

Riddles, as compact verbal puzzles, often feature characters grouped thematically, reflecting the world around us and our ways of understanding it. Natural elements are frequently personified: the cunning fox, the wise owl, or the whispering wind. Domestic and everyday objects also come alive: the chattering teeth of a saw, the one-eyed needle, or the tirelessly ticking clock. Human characteristics, both physical and abstract, provide another rich vein, with riddles embodying emotions like joy or anger, or actions like running or sleeping. Occupational roles, from the farmer to the blacksmith, are also common, reflecting the social structures of different cultures. Beyond the concrete, abstract concepts such as time, truth, or luck become characters in riddles, challenging solvers to think metaphorically. (Choriyeva 2023).

These thematic groupings are not rigid, with considerable overlap and interplay, as riddles often blend the natural with the human, or the concrete with the Abstract. Studying these thematic groups offers insights into how riddles reflect and transmit cultural knowledge, beliefs, and values.

Riddles, being concise verbal puzzles, lend themselves to thematic classifications based on their subject matter. These classifications provide a framework for understanding the diverse world of riddles and their cultural significance. Common thematic groups include riddles about nature (animals, plants, celestial bodies, weather phenomena), everyday objects and tools, human beings (physical attributes, actions, emotions), occupations and social roles, and abstract concepts (time, truth, luck, fate). Some classifications also include meta-riddles, which focus on the riddle form itself. These categories are not mutually exclusive; a riddle about a blacksmith, for instance, could fall under both "occupations" and "tools." Studying these thematic groupings provides insights into the cultural values, beliefs, and everyday experiences that riddles reflect, as well as the cognitive processes involved in their creation and solution. Thematic classification also facilitates cross-cultural comparisons, highlighting universal themes and culturally specific elements in riddle traditions. (Georges 1963)

From the point of view of stylistic means, English riddles most often consist of lexical, syntactic and phonetic means (metaphor, personification, comparison, inversion, antithesis, alliteration /assonance, rhyme) A long snake that smokes. What am I? (Train) Seven brothers: Five work all day The other two just play and pray. (Days of the week) Murmurs, but never talks. Has a bed, but never sleeps. And has a mouth, but never eats? (A river) 5. Riddles based on morphological homonymy (What is black and white and read all over? (A newspaper)). The adjective red has the same sound as participle II of the verb to read, both words are pronounced like [red]. In this riddle, ambiguity is deliberately created: the homophone [red - read] is used together with adjectives denoting color. 6. From the point of view of authorship, riddles are divided into the following groups: (folk, borrowed from other languages and copyright). Conclusion Undoubtedly, there are prospects for further study of the semantics of English riddles as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon of language and culture. In particular, it would be interesting to consider the cognitive mechanisms for solving riddles based on metaphor and homonymy: how different are these mechanisms and whether they have similarities. The modern scientific paradigm no longer considers metaphor as a stylistic device or an exclusively semantic phenomenon. Metaphor is now the key to unraveling the cognitive nature of riddles. From the point of view of the culture of the people in which the riddle is born and exists riddles are a rich linguocultural material that reflects the most important features of the formation of culture, history and worldview of the people, their values and customs. The themes and functions of riddles change as society develops, so a riddle can provide rich historical and cultural material.

The Mahabharata(300BC–300AD)inturnposesquestionsoftheneck riddle type (cf. page 68), which often require answers of a moral or religious kind. The riddles are part of the narrative entity, as in the story of Yudhishthira and his four royal brothers who were dying of thirst in the forest. Spotting a pond, they began to drink from it, but the spirit of the pond, Yaksha, gave them permission to quench their thirst only if they could answer its questions correctly. They failed, and because they had nevertheless drunk the forbidden water, were punished with death. Yaksha's questions took the form of prasna or verbal puzzles, of which the epic is fond, and they fall into nine categories, one of which goes as follows:

Still, tell me what foeman is worst to subdue?
And what is the sickness lasts lifetime all through?
Of men that are upright, say which is the best?
And of those that are wicked, who passeth the rest?

By giving the right answers to all the questions put to him Yudhishthira was granted permission to drink the water and was finally able to bring his dead brothers back to life:

Anger is man's unconquered foe;
The ache of greed doth never go;
Who loveth most of saints is first. (Bragwatt 1943)

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