

LINGUISTIC VERBALIZATION OF THE CONCEPT OF “HAPPINESS” IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK FOLK TALES

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Abstract

This article examines how the concept of “happiness” is expressed in English and Uzbek folk tales, that is, through what linguistic means it is brought into verbal form. Within the framework of folk oral creativity, the concept of “happiness” is analyzed in cultural, mental and linguistic contexts. The ways in which the heroes of English and Uzbek folk tales achieve happiness, the semantic field of this concept and its expression through lexical and semantic means are analyzed comparatively.

Keywords: concept of happiness, folk tales, English folklore, Uzbek folklore, verbalization, linguoculturology, semantic analysis.

Annotatsiya

Ushbu maqolada ingliz va o‘zbek xalq ertaklarida “baxt” konsepti qanday ifodalanishi, ya’ni u qanday til vositalari orqali verbal shaklga keltirilishi o‘rganiladi. Xalq og‘zaki ijodi doirasida “baxt” tushunchasi madaniy, mental va lingvistik kontekstlarda qanday talqin qilinishi tahlil qilinadi. Ingliz va o‘zbek xalq ertaklaridagi qahramonlarning baxtga erishish yo‘llari, ushbu tushunchaning semantik maydoni hamda leksik-semantik vositalar orqali ifodalanishi qiyosiy tahlil qilinadi.

Kalit so‘zlar: baxt konsepti, xalq ertaklari, ingliz folklori, o‘zbek folklori, verballashtirish, lingvokulturologiya, semantik tahlil.

Аннотация

В данной статье рассматривается, как концепт «счастье» выражается в английских и узбекских народных сказках, то есть с помощью каких языковых средств он облекается в словесную форму. В рамках народного устного творчества концепт «счастье» анализируется в культурном, ментальном и языковом контекстах. Сравнительно анализируются способы, с помощью которых герои английских и узбекских народных сказок достигают счастья, семантическое поле этого концепта и его выражение с помощью лексических и семантических средств.

Ключевые слова: концепт счастья, народные сказки, английский фольклор, узбекский фольклор, вербализация, лингвокультурология, семантический анализ.

Introduction

The language and oral literature of every nation represent a priceless treasure that embodies its historical memory, value system, and worldview. In particular, folk tales are vivid reflections of a people’s spirituality and cultural thinking, portraying human aspirations, moral standards, and perceptions of happiness and prosperity through artistic imagery. From this

perspective, studying how the concept of “happiness” is manifested and what linguistic means are used to express it in folk tales is a significant task in linguoculturological research.

The notion of “happiness” is interpreted differently in the worldview of each culture. For instance, in Uzbek folk tales, happiness is often depicted as a high blessing attained through hard work, patience, honesty, and virtue. In English folk tales, on the other hand, happiness is more often associated with luck, courage, magical aid, or unexpected events. This difference reflects variations in cultural values, mental orientation, and aesthetic sensibilities between the two nations.

This research presents a comparative linguistic analysis of how the concept of “happiness” is verbalized in English and Uzbek folk tales. It examines the semantic field of the concept, lexical-semantic means, metaphorical expressions, idioms, and plot structures used to express it. The study analyzes prominent examples of folk tales such as *Jack and the Beanstalk*, *The Princess Who Never Smiled*, *Zumrad and Qimmat*, and *A Poor Man Became Rich*.

The relevance of this topic lies in the fact that studying the linguistic means in folk tales allows researchers to uncover the linguistic expressions of ancient cultural concepts and cultural codes.¹ Additionally, such comparative analyses serve as valuable tools for intercultural communication and enrich the methodological base of linguocultural research.²

Theoretical Foundations

In the field of cognitive linguistics—one of the most important areas in contemporary linguistics—the concept is considered a central scientific category. It helps reveal the intrinsic connection between language, thought, and culture. A concept is a generalized unit of knowledge, understanding, or imagery that forms in the human mind and is expressed through language. Scholars like A. Vejbitskaya, Y. Apresyan, G. Lakoff, and N. Boldirev define concepts as multi-layered structures of meaning shaped by cultural and mental experience.³

Although concepts may be universal, their forms of expression vary significantly across languages and cultures. For example, the concept of “happiness” is expressed in English using words such as *happiness*, *luck*, and *fortune*, while in Uzbek, it is verbalized through terms like *baxt*, *omad*, *taqdir*, and *shodlik*. This variation is directly related to the process of **verbalization**, i.e., expressing concepts through linguistic units.⁴

Verbalization refers to the process of making a concept manifest in language, using lexical items, idioms, metaphors, syntactic structures, and cultural connotations. Oral folk literature—particularly fairy tales—serves as an important source in this process, as key cultural concepts are embedded in symbolic and figurative forms.

For instance, in English folk tales, happiness is often expressed through phrases like *happy ending* and *luck smiled upon him*, whereas in Uzbek tales, it appears through metaphorical expressions like *the bird of happiness landed* or *his star shone*. This highlights the strong influence of cultural factors on verbalization.

As A. Vejbitskaya emphasizes, every language conceptualizes the world in its unique way, and verbalization plays a key role in shaping national ways of thinking. Therefore, analyzing concepts like “happiness” requires deep linguistic, cultural, psychological, and semantic exploration.

¹ Boltayeva, O. S. (2024). The Concept of “Happiness/Baxt” in English and Uzbek Languages

² Rustamov, I. & Rustamova, S. (2024). Genre Characteristics of Fairy Tales (Uzbek–English).

³ Vezhbtskaya, A. (1996). Language, Culture and Cognition. — Konseptni madaniy bilimlar bilan bog'laydi.

⁴ Apresyan, Y. D. (1995). *Leksicheskaya Semantika: Sinonimicheskie Sredstva Yazı

Verbalization of the Concept of “Happiness” in Uzbek Folk Tales

In Uzbek folk tales, the concept of “happiness” carries rich meanings. It is often portrayed as the realization of human dreams, spiritual and material success attained through goodness, love, loyalty, and hard work. Happiness is depicted not only as an emotional state but also as a personified image.

For example, in the tale *The Boy Who Sought Happiness*, the main character embarks on a long journey in search of happiness. Here, happiness is verbalized as an achievable goal through action and effort. Expressions like “If you set out to seek happiness, every step will be a test” and “Those who work hard find happiness” associate happiness with perseverance and personal initiative.

In *Zumrad and Qimmat*, happiness is on the side of the honest and hardworking girl Zumrad. Here, happiness is expressed through values: “Those who labor honestly will find happiness among the people”, “One who does good shall find happiness.”

In *The Golden Fish*, happiness appears as an opportunity, yet greed and impatience lead to its loss. Happiness is associated with patience and gratitude: “Happiness comes with patience; those who rush lose it.”

Linguistic forms used to verbalize happiness in Uzbek tales include:

- **Lexical level:** *baxt*, *baxtli bo‘lish* (to be happy), *omad* (luck), *shodlik* (joy), *xazina* (treasure)⁵
- **Metaphors:** *baxt qushi konishi* (bird of happiness lands), *yulduzi porladi* (his star shone), *taqdir yo‘li* (path of destiny)⁶
- **Plot structure:** The protagonist attains happiness through trials, labor, or marriage—often with magical or moral components.⁷

Verbalization of the Concept of “Happiness” in English Folk Tales

In English folk tales, the concept of “happiness” (*happiness*, *good fortune*, *luck*) is typically linked to luck, magical help, or unexpected success. Happiness is often portrayed in symbolic language and metaphors.

In *Jack and the Beanstalk*, Jack seeks happiness through an uncertain and risky adventure. Happiness symbolizes social ascent—from poverty to prosperity—and is verbalized through action verbs like *climb*, *find*, *win*, *escape*: “Jack climbed the beanstalk to seek his fortune.”

In *Cinderella*, happiness arrives as a reward for kindness and patience. The phrase “they lived happily ever after” encapsulates the ideal of lasting happiness.

In *The Three Little Pigs*, happiness results from responsibility and intelligence. The third pig’s diligence and planning bring him security: “He outsmarted the wolf”, “He built wisely.”

In English folk tales, happiness is often pure luck: “He stumbled upon great luck”, “Fortune favored him.”

Common linguistic expressions:

- **Lexical tools:** *happiness*, *luck*, *fortune*, *joy*, *happy ending*, *dreams come true*⁸
- **Idioms:** *live happily ever after*, *luck smiled on him*, *fate was kind*⁹

⁵ G‘ulomov, N. (1980). O‘zbek xalq ertaklari.

⁶ Xudoyberdiyeva, S. (2022). O‘zbek metaforik frazeologizmlari.

⁷ Propp, V. (1969). Morphology of the Folktale.

⁸ Bettelheim, B. (1976). The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales.

⁹ Von Franz, M.-L. (1951). The Interpretation of Fairy Tales.

- **Plot structure:** Happiness is attained through courage, magic, or moral virtue¹⁰

Comparative Analysis: “Happiness” in English vs Uzbek Folk Tales

Criteria	Uzbek Folk Tales	English Folk Tales
Source of Happiness	Hard work, honesty, patience, goodness	Luck, chance, magical help
Common Expressions	"He searched", "He found", "He worked", "He was patient"	"Climbed", "Found luck", "Lived happily", "Was lucky"
Characters	Honest farmer, humble boy/girl, patient hero	Brave boy, lucky child, magically aided hero
Symbol of Happiness	Love, family prosperity, victory of good	Wealth, royalty, magic
Moral Message	“Happiness comes to the honest”, “Do good, find happiness”	“Luck smiled upon him”, “Magic led to happiness”
Character Activity	Active: hero works for happiness	Mixed: some act, others are helped
Underlying Values	Labor, patience, devotion, humanity	Courage, luck, simplicity, belief in magic
Means of Achieving Happiness	Trials, self-proving	Magic, chance, fate

Conclusion

To conclude, in English folk tales, the concept of “happiness” is represented in diverse forms such as *luck*, *happy ending*, and *prosperity*. It is verbalized through action verbs like *seek*, *find*, *win*, *live happily*, or *be lucky*, indicating its connection to human will or fate. In Uzbek folk tales, happiness is depicted as a value achieved through effort, honesty, patience, love, and justice

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¹⁰ Lüthi, M. (1984). *The European Folktale: Form and Nature*.



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