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THE USE OF ANIMAL AND PLANT NAMES IN FRENCH AND UZBEK FAIRY TALES: A LINGUOCULTURAL ANALYSIS

Majidova Laziza Bakhtiyorovna
Lecturer, Department of German and French Philology, Bukhara State University, Uzbekistan
E-mail: lazizamajidova@gmail.com

Abstract

This article presents a comparative linguocultural analysis of animal and plant names found in French and Uzbek folk tales. The study examines the semantic, symbolic, and cultural functions of zoonyms and phytonyms used in fairy-tale discourse. The findings demonstrate that animal and plant names serve as significant representations of national worldviews, moral values, and folklore traditions in both cultures. While Uzbek fairy tales predominantly reflect images associated with pastoral and agricultural life, French fairy tales tend to emphasize forests and elements characteristic of European nature.

Keywords: fairy tale, folklore, linguocultural analysis, zoonym, phytonym, French fairy tales, Uzbek fairy tales, comparative analysis, symbolism.

Introduction

Folklore is one of the most important manifestations of a nation's historical memory, spiritual heritage, and cultural values. Folk tales, as one of the oldest and most popular genres of folklore, reflect people's perceptions of nature, moral principles, and social ideals.

Animal and plant names occupy a special place in fairy tales. They function not merely as nominative lexical units but also as artistic devices expressing symbolic meanings. Therefore, zoonyms (animal names) and phytonyms (plant names) constitute an important source for studying the semantic structure of fairy tales.

Although the French and Uzbek peoples have developed in different geographical and cultural environments, natural images play a significant role in the fairy tales of both nations. This article provides a comparative analysis of these images.

Research Aim and Objectives

The main objective of this study is to identify the linguocultural characteristics of animal and plant names used in French and Uzbek fairy tales.

To achieve this objective, the following tasks were set:

to identify the main zoonyms used in fairy tales;

to examine the semantic and cultural functions of phytonyms;

to determine similarities and differences between French and Uzbek fairy tales;

to describe the symbolic meanings of animal and plant names.

Methodology

The study employs comparative-typological, descriptive, semantic, and linguocultural methods of analysis. The research materials include collections of Uzbek folk tales as well as fairy tales by Charles Perrault and fables by Jean de La Fontaine.

Literature Review

Significant contributions to the study of folklore and fairy-tale poetics have been made by Vladimir Propp, Alexander Veselovsky, Mamatqul Jo‘rayev, To‘ra Mirzayev, and Omon Safarov. In the field of linguocultural studies, the works of V. Vorobyov, V. Maslova, and N. Alefirenko provide an important theoretical foundation.

Although these studies have explored the structure and cultural content of fairy tales, comparative research focusing specifically on zoonyms and phytonyms in French and Uzbek fairy tales remains limited.

Results and Discussion

Linguocultural Characteristics of Zoonyms in Uzbek Fairy Tales

Among the most frequently used animal names in Uzbek fairy tales are the fox, wolf, lion, rabbit, donkey, horse, and camel.

The fox traditionally symbolizes cunning and intelligence. In many tales, it defeats stronger opponents through cleverness rather than physical power.

The wolf is commonly portrayed as a negative character, representing greed, aggression, and evil.

The horse occupies a special place in Uzbek folklore. In numerous fairy tales, it serves as the loyal companion and helper of the protagonist. This reflects the historical importance of horses in the life of Turkic peoples.

Linguocultural Characteristics of Zoonyms in French Fairy Tales

Animal images are also central to French fairy tales.

In Charles Perrault's Little Red Riding Hood (Le Petit Chaperon Rouge), the wolf represents danger, deception, and evil. Through this character, children are taught the importance of caution and distrust of strangers.

In Jean de La Fontaine's fables, the fox symbolizes intelligence, wit, and cunning. Similarly, the lion often represents power, authority, and social superiority, reflecting aspects of medieval European society.

The Use of Phytonyms in Uzbek Fairy Tales

The most common plant names found in Uzbek fairy tales include:

pomegranate;
apple;
mulberry;
plane tree;
flowers;
grapes.

The pomegranate symbolizes fertility, abundance, and prosperity, while the plane tree represents longevity, strength, and wisdom.

Magical trees frequently appear in Uzbek fairy tales. Such trees often test the protagonist or provide assistance during difficult situations.

The Use of Phytonyms in French Fairy Tales

Forest and tree imagery occupies a central position in French fairy tales.

The most common phytonyms include:

rose;
oak;
apple tree;
forest.

The rose symbolizes beauty and love, while the oak represents strength, endurance, and determination.

In European fairy tales, forests often function as spaces of mystery, adventure, and personal transformation.

Examples from Fairy Tales

In the Uzbek folk tale The Fox and the Wolf, the fox deceives the wolf by persuading him to catch

fish through a hole in the ice. As a result, the wolf's tail freezes in the ice. Here, the fox symbolizes intelligence and cunning, whereas the wolf represents foolishness and greed.

In the Uzbek tale Susambil, domestic animals such as the horse, donkey, and ox are anthropomorphized and endowed with human characteristics. The horse, in particular, symbolizes loyalty and patience.

In Charles Perrault's Little Red Riding Hood, the wolf serves as the principal antagonist and embodies danger and deception.

In Puss in Boots (Le Chat Botté), the cat is portrayed as intelligent and resourceful, helping his master achieve wealth and social status. The cat's role resembles that of the clever fox in many Uzbek fairy tales.

In the Uzbek tale Golden Watermelon, the watermelon symbolizes abundance and prosperity, reflecting the agricultural traditions of the Uzbek people.

In Sleeping Beauty (La Belle au bois dormant), dense thorny vegetation surrounding the castle symbolizes time, mystery, and the trials that must be overcome before happiness can be achieved.

Comparative Analysis

The comparative analysis reveals that animal images in both traditions primarily function as representations of human character traits. The fox symbolizes cunning, while the wolf represents danger and evil in both cultures.

However, significant differences can be observed in the use of plant imagery. Uzbek fairy tales frequently employ agricultural symbols such as pomegranates, watermelons, mulberries, and apple trees, whereas French fairy tales emphasize forests, roses, and oak trees, reflecting the natural and cultural environment of Europe.

These differences demonstrate the close relationship between folklore and the geographical, historical, and cultural conditions in which it develops.

Conclusion

Animal and plant names constitute important linguocultural units in both French and Uzbek fairy tales. They reflect national worldviews, moral values, and cultural traditions.

The study leads to the following conclusions:

In both traditions, animal images function as symbolic representations of human character traits.

The fox and the wolf possess largely universal symbolic meanings.

Plant names reveal the distinctive cultural characteristics of each nation.

Uzbek fairy tales reflect pastoral and agricultural traditions, while French fairy tales emphasize forest culture.

Zoonyms and phytonyms significantly enhance the artistic and aesthetic value of fairy tales.

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