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MAIN GENRES OF UZBEK CHILDREN'S FOLKLORE

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Annotation.
This article discusses the study and classification of Uzbek children's folklore genres. The views of folklorist O. Safarov on the classification of children's folklore are analyzed. The scholar's theoretical approaches are compared with classifications in global folklore studies.

Keywords: classification, children's folklore, lullabies, cradle songs, caressing songs, soothing rhymes.

Based on materials collected during folklore expeditions, prominent folklorist Oxunjon Safarov identified and analyzed several genres in Uzbek children's songs, such as **chorlama** (calling songs), **aytishuv** (verbal duels), and ethnographic poetic fragments like **aytim-olqish** (praise chants), **hayitlik** (festive songs), **tarqalmachoq** (farewell rhymes), **qofiyadosh laqab** (rhymed nicknames), **arazlama** (songs of offense), **yarashtirgich** (reconciliation songs), and **cheklashmachoq** (prohibitive rhymes). He explored the semantic and functional aspects of these genres, which enabled a more structured classification of Uzbek children's folklore.
Such classifications have also been developed in global folklore studies by scholars such as G. Vinogradov, O. Kapitsa, M. Melnikov, N. Isenbet, N. Beyeshu, R. N. Khashba, M. Ozhan, E. Tucker, and in Uzbek folklore studies by G'. Jahongirov [4, p. 102].

Oxunjon Safarov conducted an in-depth study of classification systems related to Russian, Tatar, Moldovan, Dagestani, Abkhazian, and Tajik children's folklore, analyzing their similarities and differences in comparison with Uzbek children's oral poetic creativity. He also offered critical insights into certain shortcomings in the classification approaches of other cultures. For example, regarding the Russian scholarly tradition, he notes: "Professor G. Vinogradov includes teasing rhymes (**'chandishlar'**) under examples of children's humor, whereas Associate Professor M. Melnikov interprets them as a genre of soothing folklore. Furthermore, Melnikov disagrees with Vinogradov's distinction between **'tegishmachoq'** (teasing songs) and **'masxaralama'** (mockery), preferring instead to view them as a single phenomenon. However, in his own classification, he leaves unclear which functional group such songs (which he refers to as draznilka) should belong to."
Safarov emphasizes that even with nearly two centuries of research experience, Russian folklore studies have yet to consistently categorize various humorous and satirical children's songs as a distinct group within their classifications.

Accordingly, the most comprehensive classification in Russian children's folklore studies is attributed to O. I. Kapitsa. She identifies the following main genres in children's folklore: **lullabies**, **caressing songs**, **soothing rhymes**, **comic songs**, **calendar-related songs**, **ritual songs**, **riddles**, **tongue twisters**, **fairy tales**, and **games**.

Oxunjon Safarov also shared his reflections on the research of Tajik folklorist B. Shermuhammadov, which is dedicated to the study of Tajik children's folklore. He notes that

Shermuhammadov's classification system remains within the scope of merely acknowledging certain phenomena specific to children's poetic folklore, without providing a well-founded basis for the genre-based differentiation of children's songs. Safarov points out that the classification lacks clear principles for differentiation and that certain ambiguities in terminology are evident [4, p. 154].

Additionally, Safarov comments on the classification proposed by F. Z. Abakarova, who studied children's folklore in Dagestan. He argues that Abakarova's classification is overly general and does not adequately reflect the genre diversity characteristic of children's poetic folklore. He further notes that elements specific to children's humor and satire are overlooked in her system.

Based on his reflections, O. Safarov, relying on the views and existing classifications that have emerged, and considering the nature of the materials on Uzbek children's folklore he has collected over nearly half a century, approved studying them divided into three major parts as follows:

1. **Lullabies and Soothing Songs:**

This includes alla, aytim-olqish, ovutmachoq, erkalama, and qiziqmachoq, emphasizing that the leitmotif throughout these genres is soothing or affectionate. The scholar divides examples of soothing poetry into two groups based on their purpose and the child's age:

- The first group consists of **lullabies**, which include allas and ethnographic aytim-olqish (sung until the child is about three years old) aimed at calming the child in the cradle.
- The second group is called **songs of affection**, which includes erkalama, ovutmachoq, qiziqmachoq, and qaytarmachoq (sung until about 6-7 years old).
- **Children's Calendar and the Ritual Songs Expressing It:**

In this category, adults actively participate in shaping children's relationship with nature. Some of these songs related to the seasons — spring, summer, autumn, and winter — have transitioned from the adult repertoire to the children's repertoire due to social and political development demands. Moreover, based on the animistic and totemistic beliefs of our primitive ancestors, ritual genres such as yalinchoq and hukmlagich, which have now lost their original meanings, have been preserved in the children's repertoire.

- **Songs and Games Resulting from Children's Own Creativity and Performance:**

This category forms the foundation of Uzbek children's folklore. These are divided into two major groups based on the participation of words and movements:

a) Children's everyday-life songs;

b) Children's game folklore.

This classification was presented by O. Safarov in a 2007 textbook published for higher education institutions. The scholar fully expressed his main scientific and theoretical views on children's folklore in his doctoral dissertation titled "The Genre Structure and Artistic Nature of Uzbek Children's Poetic Folklore" (1985). The content of this dissertation was later published as a monograph. In it, the scholar divides children's folklore into three major parts. The first and second classifications are very similar, but differences can be observed in the third classification. In this classification, children's performance is divided into four groups:

Classification of Children's Folklore: Analysis and Observations

1. **Songs with Play Elements** (including invitation songs, exclusion rhymes, "guldur-gup", counting-out rhymes, play songs, and dispersal songs).
2. **Word Games** (tongue twisters, riddles, verbal duels).
3. **Songs** (various songs in the form of duets, trios, quartets, and humorous chants).
4. **Children's Humorous and Satirical Songs** [4,203].

In this classification, the internal types of games and songs are numbered separately. However, the title of the third section, “Songs,” is overly general and could also encompass the humorous and satirical songs listed separately under number four. This indicates redundancy in categorization.

It would be more appropriate if children's folklore were first divided into two major groups — **games and songs** — and then the internal structure of each was detailed separately. Such a structure would ensure better clarity and consistency.

In our view, the relatively recent classification (2007) is more effective due to its principles of **conciseness and simplicity**, which make it easier to understand. Moreover, the replacement of the term “dispersal songs” with the more specific “**tarqalmachoq**” and the introduction of a new genre called **qaytarmachoq** under love songs are also noteworthy.

This clearly shows that **O. Safarov** was constantly exploring new dimensions of children’s folklore, aiming to further develop and enrich the field. His efforts contributed significantly to the discovery and classification of new genres and terminology within children's folklore studies.

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