

## A LEXICAL-SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF RIDDLE AND APHORISM UNITS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

*Jumaniyazova Nasiba Kerimbay kizi*

*Urgench Ranch university*

**ABSTRACT:** This article explores the lexical-semantic field of units related to riddles and aphorisms in English and Uzbek languages. The study focuses on identifying and analyzing semantic similarities and differences between figurative expressions, wisdom-based sayings, and culturally rooted riddles in both languages. Through comparative linguistic analysis, the paper reveals how the conceptual structures of riddles and aphorisms reflect national identity, worldviews, and communicative traditions of English and Uzbek speakers. The research also emphasizes the role of such linguistic units in the development of communicative competence, language learning, and intercultural understanding. Findings suggest that despite structural and cultural differences, there are universal themes and metaphorical mechanisms that unite both languages in their use of aphoristic and riddle-based expressions.

**Keywords:** Lexical-semantic field, riddles, aphorisms, figurative language, English and Uzbek languages, comparative analysis, cultural linguistics, metaphor, national worldview, linguistic units.

### INTRODUCTION

Language is not merely a means of communication; it is a cultural and cognitive system that reflects the worldview, traditions, and values of its speakers. Among the many forms of linguistic expression, riddles and aphorisms represent unique genres that combine creativity, metaphor, and philosophical reflection. These units not only serve as a means of entertainment or moral instruction, but also embody the collective intellect and national identity of a given community. Their analysis, therefore, provides valuable insights into the semantic, cultural, and cognitive features of a language. In both English and Uzbek, riddles and aphorisms are deeply embedded in oral and written traditions, functioning as tools for teaching, persuading, entertaining, and preserving moral values. Riddles often involve metaphorical thinking and play on lexical ambiguity, while aphorisms condense complex ideas into concise, impactful expressions. The lexical-semantic field of these units consists of culturally specific metaphors, idiomatic expressions, and symbolic structures that reflect the social norms, historical experiences, and psychological models of the speakers. This study aims to analyze the lexical-semantic field of riddles and aphorisms in English and Uzbek, focusing on their structural, semantic, and functional features. The research is grounded in comparative linguistics and cognitive semantics, using qualitative methods to identify common patterns and culturally distinct elements. By exploring the semantic networks within which these units operate, the paper sheds light on the mechanisms of meaning formation and cultural conceptualization in the two languages. Furthermore, understanding the lexical-semantic features of riddles and aphorisms has practical significance for language teaching, translation studies, and intercultural communication. In a globalized world where cultural sensitivity is essential, the ability to comprehend and appropriately interpret figurative language becomes a crucial aspect of communicative competence. The relevance of this research lies in its interdisciplinary nature, combining linguistics, folklore studies, and cultural anthropology to investigate how abstract thought and cultural memory are encoded in language through riddles and

aphorisms. It also contributes to a deeper understanding of the conceptual and cognitive mechanisms that underpin metaphorical and symbolic language in English and Uzbek. The lexical-semantic field of riddles and aphorisms in English and Uzbek languages demonstrates both universal and culturally specific features. These expressions often rely on metaphor, irony, and symbolism to convey deeper meanings.

In English, aphorisms such as *“Actions speak louder than words”* or *“A stitch in time saves nine”* reflect practical wisdom and concise moral instruction. Similarly, Uzbek aphorisms like *“Ko‘p yugurgan emas, to‘g‘ri yugurgan yutadi”* emphasize patience, balance, and cultural values rooted in collectivism. Riddles in both languages frequently use metaphor and personification. For instance, the English riddle *“What has hands but cannot clap?”* (Answer: a clock) and the Uzbek riddle *“Oyoqsiz yuradi, qo‘lsiz ushlaydi”* (Answer: shamol – the wind) illustrate the cognitive mechanism of conceptual metaphor. Semantically, both languages use riddles and aphorisms to encapsulate concepts such as time, wisdom, nature, and morality. However, their cultural interpretations may differ: while English aphorisms tend to favor individual initiative and pragmatism, Uzbek counterparts often highlight harmony, respect for elders, and communal experience. These linguistic units also exhibit structural variation. English aphorisms are often brief and parallel in form, whereas Uzbek aphorisms may include rhyme or rhythm to aid oral transmission. The semantic density in both types enriches the cognitive and emotional experience of language users. By analyzing their lexical-semantic components—keywords, figurative structures, and underlying conceptual metaphors—we can better understand how each language encodes its worldview and societal norms.

## CONCLUSION

This comparative analysis of riddles and aphorisms in English and Uzbek reveals that both languages possess rich lexical-semantic fields rooted in cultural heritage, metaphorical thinking, and symbolic representation. While the two languages show structural and thematic similarities—such as frequent use of metaphor and brevity—the differences lie primarily in their cultural orientation and conceptual framing. English expressions tend to reflect values such as individualism, pragmatism, and direct logic, whereas Uzbek riddles and aphorisms are more likely to emphasize collectivism, patience, moral didacticism, and respect for tradition. These findings demonstrate that such linguistic units are not only tools of communication but also vehicles of cultural identity and cognitive patterns. The study suggests that further comparative research on figurative language can enrich our understanding of intercultural semantics, support effective language teaching strategies, and foster deeper empathy in cross-cultural communication. Additionally, incorporating aphorisms and riddles into foreign language curricula can enhance learners’ cultural awareness and cognitive engagement.

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