



Comparative Study of Riddles with The Concept Profession in Uzbek and English Languages

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Abstract. This study presents a comparative analysis of riddles formed on the basis of the concept of profession in Uzbek and English folklore traditions. Riddles are examined as paremiological units that encode occupational identity through indirect nomination, functional semantics, and metaphorical representation. The research aims to identify universal cognitive mechanisms and culture-specific features in the linguistic modeling of professions.

Keywords: Riddle; Comparative analysis, Uzbek folklore; English folklore, Cross-cultural studies.

Riddles, as one of the most intellectually engaging genres of oral folklore, reflect not only objects and natural phenomena but also social structures and professional identities. Among the various thematic domains present in folklore traditions, profession-based riddles occupy a distinctive position, as they encode social roles, labor values, and community responsibilities through indirect nomination and figurative language.

In both Uzbek and English folklore, professions are rarely named directly in riddles. Instead, occupational identity is constructed through functional description, characteristic tools, symbolic clothing, or socially significant actions. This indirect representation creates semantic tension between the descriptive clues and the hidden referent, encouraging analytical thinking and cognitive engagement. Thus, profession-based riddles function not merely as entertainment but as cultural texts that preserve collective perceptions of labor and social hierarchy.

A comparative study of profession-based riddles in Uzbek and English provides valuable insight into both universal and culture-specific patterns of conceptualization. While both traditions rely on functional semantics and attributive markers, differences emerge in metaphorical richness, structural organization, and the degree of logical paradox. Uzbek riddles often emphasize social respect and moral value associated with professions, whereas English riddles frequently highlight pragmatic function, role clarity, and metaphorical creativity.

From a linguocultural perspective, profession-based riddles reveal how societies interpret and evaluate occupational roles. They demonstrate the interaction between language, cultural worldview, and social development. Therefore, the comparative analysis of such riddles contributes to a deeper understanding of semantic modeling, cognitive mechanisms of indirect reference, and the reflection of national mentality in folklore discourse.

*I build your house both strong and tall,
But I don't live inside at all. **Builder***
*G'isht terar, uy qurar,
Boshqa joyda o'zi turar. **Quruvchi***
*I plant the seeds and watch them grow,
Through sun and rain and winter snow. **Farmer***
*Yer haydar, urug' sochar,
Hosil olib elni boqar. **Dehqon***
*I wear a badge and keep the peace,
From crime and danger bring release. **Police Officer***



*Qonunni qo'riqlar tunu kun,
El tinchligi uning uchun. **Politsiyachi**
When flames rise high into the sky,
I run toward them, not away. **Firefighter**
Olov ichra qo'rqmay kirar,
Suv bilan alangani yengar. **O't o'chiruvchi**
With pots and pans I work all day,
Turning hunger far away. **Chef**
With hammer and nail I shape the wood. **Carpenter**
Bemor boshida tunar,
Mehr bilan dardni yengar. **Hamshira***

The comparative study of riddles with the concept of profession in Uzbek and English demonstrates that occupational identity is predominantly constructed through functional semantics and indirect nomination in both linguistic traditions. Rather than explicitly naming a profession, riddles encode its identity through characteristic actions, tools, responsibilities, and socially significant roles. This shared structural feature confirms the universality of cognitive mechanisms such as metaphorization, semantic compression, and associative reasoning in folklore discourse.

However, notable linguocultural differences emerge in the stylistic and conceptual representation of professions. Uzbek riddles tend to emphasize social respect, moral value, and community-oriented functions of professions. Occupational roles are often presented with emotional coloring and ethical evaluation, reflecting the collectivist and value-centered orientation of Uzbek cultural consciousness. In contrast, English riddles frequently highlight pragmatic function, logical contrast, and metaphorical creativity. The focus is placed on productivity, role clarity, and practical contribution to society, illustrating a more function-oriented cultural model.

Furthermore, English profession-based riddles show a greater tendency toward metaphorical expansion and logical paradox, while Uzbek riddles more commonly employ direct functional description combined with cultural symbolism. Despite these differences, both traditions reveal a strong emphasis on socially significant professions such as teacher, doctor, builder, farmer, police officer, and pilot, underscoring the universal importance of labor and professional responsibility in human societies.

Thus, profession-based riddles function as linguocultural models that encode collective attitudes toward work, social hierarchy, responsibility, and competence. Their comparative analysis contributes to a deeper understanding of semantic modeling, cross-cultural conceptualization, and the interaction between language, culture, and social structure within the framework of folklore studies.

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