



Linguocultural Analysis Of Riddles With The Concept Pilot In English

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Abstract. This study examines the representation of the profession concept in English folk riddles from semantic and linguocultural perspectives. Riddles are analyzed as cognitively complex paremiological units that encode meaning through indirect nomination, metaphorical description, and functional semantics. The research demonstrates that profession-related riddles do not explicitly name occupations; instead, they construct professional identity through characteristic actions, tools, clothing, responsibilities, and social roles.

Keywords: Riddle, Profession, English folk riddles, Linguoculturology; Paremiology.

The term “folklore” was first used in 1864 by the nineteenth-century researcher William Thomas. It consists of two words: “folk” – people, and “lore” – knowledge, wisdom, or learning. Thus, “folklore” literally means “the knowledge of the people” or “the wisdom of the people¹.” “Folklore” is an international term that is used differently in various countries. For example, in England and the United States, it refers to all forms of folk artistic activity, including poetic творчество, music, dance, games, theatre, visual arts, and applied arts, as well as superstitions, beliefs, and customs. In the Uzbek language, however, the term “folklore” mainly refers to folk poetic creativity. Other forms of folk art, such as music, are specified more precisely, for instance, by using the term “music folklore².”

A **riddle** is a statement, question, or phrase having a double or veiled meaning, put forth as a puzzle to be solved. Riddles are of two types: *enigmas*, which are problems generally expressed in metaphorical or allegorical language that require ingenuity and careful thinking for their solution, and *conundra*, which are questions relying for their effects on punning in either the question or the answer.

Archer Taylor says that “we can probably say that riddling is a universal art” and cites riddles from hundreds of different cultures including Finnish, Hungarian, American Indian, Chinese, Russian, Dutch, and Filipino sources amongst many others³. Many riddles and riddle-themes are internationally widespread.

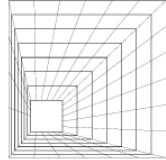
Riddles, as compact and metaphorically rich units of folklore discourse, function as cognitive instruments that encode cultural knowledge through indirect nomination and figurative representation. While traditional riddles often reflect agrarian life, domestic objects, and natural phenomena, modern English riddles increasingly incorporate contemporary professions shaped by technological development. Among such professions, the concept of the “pilot” occupies a significant position as a symbol of mobility, responsibility, and mastery of space.

From a linguocultural perspective, the concept of “pilot” extends beyond its literal occupational meaning. It represents leadership, control, precision, courage, and trust. In English cultural consciousness, the pilot is associated with advanced technology, global connectivity, and the ability to navigate complex environments. Therefore, riddles containing this concept serve not only as verbal puzzles but also as reflections of modern societal values and technological worldview. Semantically, riddles about pilots are typically constructed through indirect

¹ Abduraximov I. M. O‘zbek topishmoqlari. – Toshkent: 1991. – B. 34.

² Razzoqov Z., Mirzayev T., Sobirov O., Imomov K. O‘zbek xalq poetik ijodi. – Toshkent: 1980. – B. 67.

³ Taylor, Archer, English Riddles from Oral Tradition (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951)



descriptive strategies. The profession is not named directly; instead, it is encoded through characteristic actions (flying, guiding, steering), environmental elements (sky, clouds, storms), and symbolic markers (wings of steel, cockpit, radar). This semantic concealment creates cognitive tension between description and referent, encouraging analytical reasoning and associative thinking.

The linguocultural analysis of riddles with the concept “pilot” allows for the examination of how contemporary professional identities are integrated into folkloric structures. It reveals the interaction between traditional metaphorical thinking and modern technological imagery, demonstrating how language adapts to evolving social realities while preserving fundamental cognitive mechanisms such as metaphorization and semantic compression.

*I sit in front of wings of steel,
Through clouds and wind I guide the wheel.
Above the earth, below the sky —
Who am I? — Pilot*

*I command a bird that's made of metal,
Through storms that try to make it settle.
With steady hands I lead the way —
Name my job today. — Pilot*

*No feathers have I, yet I fly,
Across the oceans, through the sky.
Passengers trust me as I steer —
What profession is here? — Pilot*

*High above the towns and seas,
I travel paths no one else sees.
With maps and lights I find my way —
Who works like this each day? — Pilot*

*I speak with towers from afar,
Guiding my ship by radar and star.
Through night and cloud I safely glide —
Who sits at the cockpit side? — Pilot*

The linguocultural analysis of riddles containing the concept “pilot” in English demonstrates that modern professional identities are effectively integrated into folkloric discourse through traditional semantic mechanisms. Although the pilot is a product of technological and industrial development, the profession is represented in riddles through universal cognitive strategies such as metaphor, functional description, and indirect nomination. The semantic structure of pilot-related riddles is primarily based on action (flying, guiding, steering), spatial imagery (sky, clouds, height), and technological attributes (wings of steel, cockpit, radar). These elements form the conceptual nucleus of the profession, highlighting control, responsibility, precision, and leadership. The frequent metaphorical mapping of the airplane as a “bird” illustrates how modern technology is cognitively interpreted through natural imagery, preserving continuity with traditional metaphorical thinking. From a linguocultural perspective, the concept of “pilot” reflects values central to contemporary English-speaking societies, including trust, competence, discipline, and global mobility. The pilot is portrayed not merely as a technical operator but as a responsible leader ensuring safety and direction. This representation reveals the pragmatic and function-oriented cultural worldview embedded in English folklore discourse.



Thus, riddles with the concept “pilot” serve as linguistic models that encode modern social roles within traditional figurative structures. Their analysis contributes to a deeper understanding of how language adapts to technological progress while maintaining core cognitive and cultural patterns of meaning construction.

The List Of Used Literature

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