



THE LINGUISTIC STUDY OF “WISDOM/FOOLISHNESS” OPPOSITIONS IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH FOLKLORE

Yusupova Omina Mukhammadzoiir kizi

Doctor of Philosophy in Philological Sciences (PhD)

Annotation. *This article presents a comparative linguistic analysis of the “wisdom-foolishness” oppositions as they are manifested in Uzbek and English folklore. The primary objective of this research is to identify and comparatively analyze the linguistic means used to verbalize the concepts of “wisdom” and “foolishness” across various genres of Uzbek and English folklore. Furthermore, the study investigates how these fundamental moral and social antitheses are linguistically encoded across various folkloric genres, including proverbs and tales.*

Key words: *Uzbek folklore, English folklore, oppositions, proverbs, tales, wisdom, foolishness, lexical and stylistic means.*

Introduction

The concepts of wisdom and foolishness are foundational universal binaries that underpin the moral and social value systems of any human culture. These concepts are frequently made concrete and passed down through a nation’s rich folklore, which functions as a lasting archive of its shared experiences and philosophical perspective. This research involves a comparative linguistic analysis focused on how these two opposing ideas are represented and expressed within the folklore of Uzbek and English people.

In cognitive linguistics, concepts like wisdom and foolishness are not simply dictionary definitions but complex cognitive structures organized around core semantic features. The analysis is centered on the premise that the way a culture talks about wisdom and foolishness reveals what it values. Wisdom is frequently defined by its connection to knowledge, experience, self-control, and the commitment to maintaining social harmony. Conversely, foolishness is often associated with ignorance, a lack of experience, impulsiveness, and causing social disharmony.

In Uzbek folklore, terms for wisdom often carry a strong connotation of moral prudence and life experience. Words like *donishmand*, *oqil*, *dono* and *farosatli* highlight not only intellectual capacity but also social awareness.

“Shu bilan Ayozi podsho bo‘lib, o‘zining donoligidan xalqni odillik bilan so‘rab, mamlakatda adolat o‘rnatgan ekan” (from the tale “Ayozi”).

“Dononing gapi – tegadi nafi” (an Uzbek proverb).

In contrast, foolishness is represented by Uzbek words like *ahmoq*, *tentak laqma* and *g‘o‘r* often signaling a clear lack of both real-world experience as well as appropriate social conduct.





“Qushlarning ichida kalxat yomon, hayvonlarning ichida xachir yomon, to‘qayda to‘ng‘iz yomon, odamlar orasida laqmasi yomon” (from the tale “Ayozi”).

“Ahmoq boshdan aql chiqmas,

Aql chiqsa ham, ma‘qul chiqmas” (an Uzbek proverb).

In English folklore, the field of wisdom is covered by terms like wise, judicious, sensible, and prudent. The term wisdom itself, rooted in Old English, speaks to a state of being knowledgeable.

“The wise men returned immediately to the king. Robert, they said, would be bold and valiant, and would gain renown and honour, but he would finally be overcome by violence, and die in prison” (from the tale “The Sons of the Conqueror”).

“A drop of wisdom is better than a sea of gold” (an English proverb).

Foolishness encompasses foolish, silly, daft, or dim-witted. The semantic range often includes a higher degree of focus on individual intellect and common sense.

“The farmer was very angry, and he swore that he had never met with such a fool as his wife” (from the tale “Jack Hannaford”).

“A fool and his money are soon parted” (an English proverb).

In Uzbek folklore the concept of wisdom is more closely linked to socio-ethical values such as life experience, respect, and hospitality. Foolishness is often expressed through traits like laziness, greed, and disrespect towards elders. In English folklore wisdom is more associated with individual intellect, pragmatism, and self-control. Foolishness, on the other hand, may be characterized by simple silliness or not fitting formal norms.

Conclusion

The linguistic analysis of the contrasting concepts of “wisdom”/“foolishness” within Uzbek and English folklore unequivocally confirms their central role in shaping national ethical identity. Both binary concepts function as cultural compasses, guiding societal norms and reflecting deeply ingrained philosophical values in each nation’s collective memory. Uzbek folklore highlights wisdom not just as a mental attribute, but as a holistic achievement – a synthesis of intellect, morality and deep social respect. In contrast, English folklore emphasizes wisdom as a pragmatic, individualistic application of good sense. This view aligns with the historical Western focus on individualism and self-reliance. Wisdom, in the English context, is often less about social deference, effective decision-making and personal success.

References

1. Afzalov M., Rasulov X., Husainova Z. O‘zbek xalq ertaklari III jild. – Toshkent: O‘qituvchi nashriyot-matbaa ijodiy uyi, 2014.
2. Joseph J. English fairy tales. – Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University, 2005.





3. Joseph J. More English Fairy Tales. Illustrated by John D.Batten.
– London: David Nutt, 1894.
4. Joseph J. More Celtic Fairy Tales. Illustrated by John D.Batten:
– London: David Nutt, 1894.
5. Мамонова Ю.В. Когнитивно-дискурсивные особенности лексики английской бытовой сказки: Дисс. ... канд. филол. наук. – М., 2004.
6. Пропп В.Я. Морфология сказки. – М.: Главная редакция восточной литературы издательства Наука, 1969.

