



Linguocultural Interpretation Of The Functions Of Proper Names

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ABSTRACT

Proper names play a key role in the linguistic and cultural system, acting as important elements of the cultural code that reflect the historical, ethnic, and social characteristics of a people. This article examines the functions of proper names from the perspective of linguoculturology based on material from Russian and Uzbek fairy tales. Such functions as nominative, symbolic, emotional-expressive, and identificational are considered. The study emphasizes the significance of proper names as a tool of intercultural communication, as well as their contribution to the development of onomastics and ethnolinguistics. The results of the study open up new perspectives for examining the national characteristics of language and culture in a global context.

KEYWORDS: Proper names, linguoculturology, Russian and Uzbek fairy tales, ethnocultural values, archetypes, national identity, symbolic function, onomastics, linguocultural heritage.

INTRODUCTION

Proper names occupy a special place in the system of language and culture, since they not only perform a nominative function but also serve as an important element of the cultural code. Every language reflects the unique worldview of a people, its historical, ethnic, and social characteristics. Proper names, being a significant component of the linguistic system, record the names of objects in the surrounding world, their cultural interpretation, and convey important information about the traditions, mentality, and symbolism of a particular community. In the modern world of globalization and intensive cultural exchange, the study of proper names is becoming particularly relevant. These linguistic units perform not only an identificational function but also a function of cultural representation, serving as a reflection of cultural and historical processes. For example, names in fairy tales traditionally function as carriers of symbolic and archetypal content, helping to convey the collective unconscious of a people. Studying their functions makes it possible to understand more deeply the national characteristics of worldview and reveal the cultural meanings embedded in names. Linguoculturology as a scientific discipline studies the interaction between language and culture, analysing how the cultural characteristics of a people are reflected in language. In the context of proper names, the linguoculturological approach makes it possible to examine their multidimensional meaning: from direct nomination to semiotic and cultural context. It is precisely through the prism of linguoculturology that it becomes possible to identify the functions of proper names in their cultural, symbolic, and social roles.

Proper names constitute a special lexical category whose main function is to designate a specific object. N. V. Podolskaya defines a proper name as a word or word combination intended to distinguish an individual object from others by identifying it. This definition includes:

- anthroponyms (names of people),
- toponyms (place names),
- zoonyms (names of animals), and many other categories [2, pp. 88–90].

A. Gardiner interprets a proper name as a lexical unit that indicates an object without reference to its internal meaning, relying exclusively on its sound form [6, pp. 52–56]. Proper names differ from common nouns in that their main purpose is not to describe an object but to distinguish it from a general class. For example, the word “river” is a common noun because it describes a category of objects, whereas the name “Amazon” specifies a single object. Proper names also possess unique cultural semantics, reflecting the history and mentality of a people, which is not characteristic of common nouns. Linguoculturology examines proper names through the prism of their role in language and culture. The main principles of analysis include the following approaches:

Semiotic approach: analysis of a name as a sign carrying cultural meaning.

Ethnocultural interpretation: study of the relationship between a name and national traditions, customs, and mentality.

Historical-dynamic approach: study of the transformation of the meanings of names across historical periods.

Language and culture are closely interconnected, and proper names play a key role in this interaction. They become a “calling card” of culture, conveying information about its most important values and traditions. For example, the names of historical figures or literary characters such as Gretchen or Don Quixote serve as symbols of an era and the national spirit. In Russian and Uzbek fairy tales, proper names play an important role, reflecting cultural characteristics and national colouring. Names in fairy tales reflect key aspects of culture. In Russian fairy tales, names are often associated with archetypes—noble young heroes, treacherous villains, and powerful tsars. They contain elements of the Christian tradition, for example, Ivan as a symbol of simplicity and hope for a miracle. Uzbek names, in turn, emphasize the importance of family and kinship ties, respect for elders, and national ideals of beauty and valour. For example, the name Alpamysh symbolizes strength and valour, embodying the ideal of courage and responsibility toward society.

In Uzbek fairy tales, names also carry profound symbolism. For example, Alpamysh embodies the archetype of the warrior and protector. The name Gulandam symbolizes beauty and tenderness, as well as a connection with nature, which is typical of Eastern culture. These names reflect the mentality of the Uzbek people, in which harmony, strength, and wisdom are valued above all.

Proper names in fairy tales often evoke strong emotional associations, helping to create vivid images of characters. For example, in Russian fairy tales, the name Koschei the Deathless evokes a sense of fear and mystery, while the name Elena the Beautiful is associated with the ideal of beauty and purity. These names intensify the dramatic nature of the narrative, making the characters memorable.

In Uzbek fairy tales, names such as Ergash or Shirin evoke an emotional response through associations with cultural values and aesthetics. Ergash symbolizes bravery, while Shirin

symbolizes sweetness and tenderness. These names not only enrich the fairy-tale atmosphere but also emphasize the emotional depth of the stories.

Results and Discussion

The conducted study confirmed that proper names are an integral element of the linguocultural system and perform numerous functions, ranging from nominative to emotional-expressive. In Russian and Uzbek fairy tales, proper names play a key role, reflecting the cultural values, archetypes, and mentality of the peoples. The analysis showed that proper names in fairy tales perform a symbolic function by linking characters with particular cultural archetypes and traditions; the emotional-expressive function of proper names helps create vivid images, intensify dramatic effect, and convey the emotional background of the narrative; the social-identificational function of proper names emphasizes their role in distinguishing characters and demonstrating their social or ethnic affiliation. Names from fairy tales, such as Alpamysh or Ivan Tsarevich, not only convey cultural values but also serve as an educational tool, helping new generations understand the language and culture of their ancestors.

The results of the study contribute to the development of new approaches to the study of onomastics and highlight the need for its integration into educational programmes and interdisciplinary research.

Conclusions

Proper names in fairy tales are not merely words, but cultural signs that preserve historical and cultural knowledge and transmit it from generation to generation. Proper names play a crucial role in preserving and transmitting linguocultural heritage. They embody key elements of the cultural code: historical memory, ethnic traditions, worldview, and the aesthetic ideals of a people. Thus, the study of proper names becomes an important step toward a deeper understanding of language as a reflection of culture and a means of intercultural interaction.

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