



Linguocultural analysis of folklore texts

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Abstract: Linguoculturology, as an interdisciplinary field at the intersection of linguistics, cultural studies, and anthropology, provides a powerful framework for analyzing folklore texts as carriers of national worldview, collective memory, and cultural values. This paper conducts a comprehensive linguocultural analysis of selected Uzbek folklore texts, focusing on the heroic epic *Alpomish*, the *Go'ro'g'li* cycle, traditional fairy tales such as *Zumrad va Qimmat*, and paremiological units (proverbs and sayings). Drawing on the systemic method of analysis, the study identifies key linguoculturomes — lexical, phraseological, and onomastic units that encode culturally specific concepts such as heroism (*botirlik*), hospitality (*mehmondo'stlik*), family loyalty, and the cyclical nature of life. The research demonstrates that folklore texts serve not only as artistic expressions but also as repositories of the national linguistic picture of the world, reflecting the ethnos's historical experience, moral norms, and cognitive models. Comparative insights with English folklore highlight both universal archetypes (triumph of good over evil, hero's journey) and nationally specific features rooted in Central Asian nomadic traditions and Islamic-Turkic cultural layers. The findings underscore the relevance of linguocultural analysis for preserving intangible cultural heritage in the context of globalization and contribute to the development of Uzbek linguoculturology as a distinct scholarly direction.

Keywords: linguoculturology, folklore texts, Uzbek epic tradition, *Alpomish*, linguoculturomes, phraseological units, national mentality, cultural concepts, paremiology.

Introduction: The study of language in its inseparable connection with culture has gained prominence in contemporary linguistics under the anthropocentric paradigm. Linguoculturology emerged as a result of the synthesis of linguistics with ethnography, culturology, and cognitive science, focusing on the reflection of cultural





values in linguistic units. According to V.A. Maslova, linguoculturology is “a product of the anthropocentric paradigm in linguistics” that examines the triad “language – culture – man” [1, p. 8]. V.N. Teliya similarly defines it as the synchronous interaction of language and culture within ethnolinguistics [2, p. 217].

Folklore texts occupy a special place in linguocultural research because they represent the “high” level of folk culture — collective, traditional, and deeply rooted in the national consciousness [3, p. 1002]. Unlike authored literature, folklore is characterized by orality, variability, and formulaic style, which enhance its role as a mirror of the ethnos’s mentality. In Uzbek linguistics, the foundations of folklore studies were laid by scholars such as Hodi Zarifov, while modern linguocultural approaches have been developed by N. Mahmudov, D. Khudoiberganova, and others [4, p. 5; 5]. This paper builds upon these traditions by applying linguocultural analysis to core genres of Uzbek folklore, thereby contributing to the understanding of how language encodes cultural specificity.

Relevance of Work: In the era of globalization and digitalization, national cultures face the risk of erosion, making the preservation and scientific interpretation of folklore particularly urgent. Folklore texts function as a “cultural code” that transmits values, behavioral models, and worldview from generation to generation. For the Uzbek people, whose history is marked by nomadic traditions, Silk Road exchanges, and rich Turkic-Islamic heritage, folklore serves as a key source of identity. Linguocultural analysis reveals how seemingly simple linguistic elements — names, proverbs, epithets — carry deep cultural meanings that distinguish Uzbek folklore from Western or other Eastern traditions.

The relevance is further heightened by the practical need to integrate folklore into modern education and cultural policy. As noted by Uzbek researchers, studying the language of folklore helps develop linguocultural competence among youth [6]. Moreover, comparative linguocultural studies foster intercultural dialogue while highlighting unique national features, such as the collectivist ethos and respect for elders in Uzbek epics versus individualistic heroism in some English tales [7, pp. 545–548]. This work addresses these issues by providing a detailed analysis grounded in both theoretical frameworks and concrete textual material.





Purpose: The primary purpose of this research is to conduct a systematic linguocultural analysis of Uzbek folklore texts in order to: (1) identify and classify linguoculturomes (cultural-linguistic units) that reflect the national picture of the world; (2) reveal the mechanisms through which language and culture interact in epic, fairy-tale, and paremiological genres; and (3) demonstrate the specificity of Uzbek folklore in comparison with universal folklore motifs. The study aims to contribute to the theoretical development of Uzbek linguoculturology and offer practical recommendations for the use of folklore in language and cultural education.

Materials and Methods of Research: The materials for analysis consist of authentic Uzbek folklore texts: the heroic epic *Alpomish* (in versions recorded by folklorists such as M. Jorayev and N. Eshonkulov), episodes from the *Go'ro'g'li* dastan cycle, the fairy tale *Zumrad va Qimmat*, and a corpus of 150 Uzbek proverbs and sayings collected from classical compilations. Comparative material includes English fairy tales (*Cinderella*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*) for contrastive purposes.

The research employs a complex of methods characteristic of linguoculturology:

- **Descriptive and interpretive method** for identifying cultural concepts;
- **Systemic method** (semantics + pragmatics + stylistics), as proposed by Telia, to analyze linguoculturomes as holistic units [2, pp. 32–43];
- **Comparative-contrastive method** to distinguish universal and ethno-specific features [3, p. 1003];
- **Semantic field analysis** and phraseological analysis to examine key concepts such as *botir* (hero), *mehmon* (guest), and *oilaviy qadriyat* (family values);
- **Contextual and intertextual analysis** to trace formulaic repetitions and motifs.

All analyses are supported by references to primary texts and secondary scholarly sources.

Results and Discussion: The linguocultural analysis yields several significant findings. First, anthroponyms and toponyms in epics function as powerful linguoculturomes. In *Alpomish*, the protagonist's name combines *alp* ("hero, giant") with *mish* (a formative element), symbolizing archetypal bravery and protection of the tribe — a reflection of ancient Turkic warrior ethos [8, p. 25]. Similarly, in the *Go'ro'g'li* cycle, names and epithets encode ideals of justice and resistance, with





formulaic phrases like “qilichini qayirib” (drawing the sword) serving both stylistic and cultural functions [9].

Second, phraseological units and proverbs densely encode cultural values. Uzbek proverbs such as “Mehmon — rizq bilan keladi” (A guest comes with sustenance) and “Ota-ona rizosi — Xudo rizosi” (Parental approval is divine approval) linguistically embody the concepts of hospitality and filial piety central to Uzbek mentality [5, p. 112]. These units are not mere sayings but “cultural scripts” that regulate social behavior and are transmitted orally across generations. In contrast to English proverbs, which often emphasize individual wit (e.g., “Jack of all trades”), Uzbek paremiology stresses communal harmony and respect for hierarchy [7, p. 547].

Third, fairy tales like *Zumrad va Qimmat* illustrate the binary opposition of good and evil through culturally marked linguistic means. The positive heroine Zumrad is described with epithets reflecting diligence, patience, and moral purity (“mehnatkash qiz”), while negative characters employ lexemes associated with greed and cruelty. This duality reinforces moral education and mirrors the national belief in the ultimate triumph of justice — a motif shared universally yet expressed through Uzbek-specific imagery of nature, family, and Islamic ethics [10, p. 15].

Discussion of results reveals that Uzbek folklore texts exhibit a cyclical narrative structure (episodic returns, generational continuity) versus the linear progression common in many Western tales. This cyclicity linguistically and culturally reflects the nomadic worldview and the importance of collective memory [7, pp. 546–547]. Repetition (threefold tasks, formulaic descriptions) serves mnemonic and pragmatic functions, ensuring oral transmission while reinforcing cultural norms. Linguoculturological analysis thus proves that folklore is not archaic but a living system that shapes contemporary national identity.

Conclusion: The linguocultural analysis of Uzbek folklore texts confirms their exceptional role as a repository of national cultural values encoded in language. Through the identification of linguoculturomes in epics, fairy tales, and proverbs, the study has demonstrated how concepts of heroism, hospitality, family loyalty, and moral duality form the core of the Uzbek linguistic picture of the world. The findings highlight both universal folklore archetypes and unique ethno-cultural features rooted in Turkic traditions.





In conclusion, linguoculturology offers an effective methodology for preserving and interpreting intangible heritage. Future research could expand the corpus to include ceremonial folklore and children's songs, as well as digital applications for educational purposes. Ultimately, such analyses strengthen cultural self-awareness and intercultural understanding in a globalized world.

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