



LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IN THE FORMATION OF GAME NAMES

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the names of children's games as an important part of national and spiritual values. It highlights the significance of children's game names from linguistic and linguocultural perspectives, their analysis as linguoculturemes, and their role in preserving cultural heritage. The article emphasizes that game names not only express the content of the game but also reflect the people's way of life, traditions, and historical experiences. Using examples of games like "Double Dutch" and "Arg'amchi" the influence of sociolinguistic and linguocultural factors on the formation of names is demonstrated..

The names of children's games are considered an integral and traditional part of safeguarding national and spiritual values, representing intangible cultural heritage. Games played by children of various nations reflect aspects unique to their spiritual and national identity, embodying the spirit of the people and its historical genetic foundations. The names of traditional children's games, in both English and Uzbek, possess distinct linguistic features, making their study crucial from the perspectives of linguistics and linguocultural studies. Game names form part of children's speech, through which not only the game content but also cultural values and concepts are expressed [2, 94-98 p]. Language is not merely a means of communication; it is a unique key to understanding human nature and a tool for preserving a nation's values. The life experiences, historical events, lessons learned, and knowledge acquired over a nation's long historical development are passed down to future generations through language.

Language serves as a vehicle for transmitting cultural and historical experience. This process is further manifested in ethno-cultural units (phrases, proverbs and words, folk songs, games, symbols, comparisons, and others) that reveal the nation's historical and cultural characteristics. In this context, the term "linguocultureme" is a linguistic phenomenon that showcases a people's distinct culture through its linguistic units. They are a means of expressing national values in language, reflecting both linguistic and cultural markers. Linguoculturology is the specialized field of study within linguistics dedicated to linguoculturemes. The term "linguocultureme," a cross-disciplinary, complex unit, was first used in linguistics by V.Vorobyev, who interpreted it as: "A linguocultureme is a complex unit that forms a dialectical unity of linguistic and extralinguistic content. This unit carries a 'deeper' meaning compared to a word. It adds the extralinguistic content of the cultureme, i.e., the cultural concept component, to the ordinary sign or meaning" [6, 47-48 p]. They are noteworthy as a medium that conveys national, ancient, invaluable, and unique culture from

generation to generation. O.Fayzullayev emphasizes that children's game folklore is also a valuable source rich in important national and cultural values: "The culture, unique values of a particular nation are primarily reflected in its artistic creations, especially in samples of folklore" [1, 24 p]. From this viewpoint, children's game names are considered an inseparable part of folk culture and a spiritual heritage that reflects the people's spirituality and national values.

Culture and customs are units that express the unique characteristics of every nation. During the Tsarist Russian conquest, Mikhail Skobelev, the Governor-General of Fergana, reportedly said: "To destroy a nation, you don't have to butcher it; just destroy its culture, art, and language, and soon it will perish on its own..." Language, culture, ethos are closely interconnected concepts, and today, research based on the anthropocentric paradigm is leading in contemporary linguistics. Consequently, at the modern stage of linguistic research, it is appropriate to study language not merely as a means of communication, but as an inseparable component of the people's culture. Therefore, analyzing the interplay of language and culture in the formation of children's game names contributes significantly to the field of game onomastics.

Uzbek children's game folklore is diverse, but only a few samples, such as "Kurash" (wrestling), "Uloq" (goat-pulling), "Oq terakmi, ko'k terak" (White Poplar or Green Poplar), and "Kim oladi-yo, shuginani-yo" (Who Will Take It), are still played by children today. Profoundly studying, reviving, and promoting traditional folk games which are a part of our cultural heritage and have granted health and vigor to our ancestors for centuries means preserving our national identity. "We must not forget that folk games are a vast historical and cultural treasure accumulated by our ancestors over many years. We must not forget that it is a sacred duty to cherish, honor, and wisely utilize them. If we can do so, as the people say, the soul and body of both ourselves and our future generations "will be safe" [3, 206-207 p].

The names of children's games are shaped by sociolinguistic and linguocultural factors. For instance, the game name "Double Dutch" reflects the historical and social relations between the English and the Dutch. In the 17th-18th centuries, strong commercial competition existed between England and the Netherlands. This rivalry also influenced language, with the English often using the term "Dutch" derisively to mean "strange" or "confused." From this perspective, the phrase "Double Dutch" expresses not only the form of the game but also social stereotypes and cultural perceptions. Furthermore, the name features elements of melodiousness, namely alliteration (d) and assonance (u), ensuring its memorability for children.

On the other hand, the name of the game "Arg'amchi" (skipping rope), found in Uzbek folk oral tradition, is formed on a linguocultural basis. Linguistically, the name originated from the primary tool of the game the rope or cord (arqon or ip) which occurred through the phenomenon of metonymy (tool = game name). Concurrently, the game name is closely linked to the cultural heritage of the Uzbek people, particularly to the tools used in animal husbandry and daily life. This demonstrates that the lifestyle, labor activities, and cultural values of the people are reflected in the names of children's games.

The cultural and linguistic analysis of children's game names helps us deeply understand how broader societal processes are reflected through the game. This analysis

reveals the interconnectedness of culture, socialization, and development, and shows the importance of play in children's understanding of their world. Such analysis serves a deeper understanding of childhood experiences and contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage by documenting traditional games.

In conclusion, the linguocultural analysis of children's game names not only aids in understanding the interconnectedness between language and culture but also plays a vital role in transmitting this invaluable heritage to future generations. Through children's games, including their names, cultural values, the spirit of the people, and unique identities are passed down across generations. Therefore, their profound study, preservation, and promotion are an essential prerequisite for safeguarding national identity. Folk games simultaneously serve the physical and spiritual development of the child and lay the groundwork for them to view their own culture with respect.

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