



LINGUACULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ENGLISH RIDDLES

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ABSTRACT

The article determines the linguistic and cultural peculiarities of the English riddle. ". Riddle is a genre of folk art, which remains to be one of the least developed. The main characteristic of them is the search for and finding the answer to the encoded text. By analyzing English riddles, their structural, semantic and cultural features are described, mechanisms such as metaphor and homonymy lying at the basis of riddles are studied and a detailed classification of English riddles is developed. Riddles in English are found in the form of simple, complex and compound sentences, moreover they can make the text. They fall into declarative, interrogative and imperative sentences according to the communicative type. In terms of Pragmatics, sacred, educational, and entertaining riddles are classified. The style of riddles is different considering lexical formed by metaphor, comparison and personification, syntactic by antithesis and inversion and phonetic made with the help of alliteration, assonance and rhyme. Riddles can be created by individual authors and folk.

The riddle, being a multifaceted phenomenon, has been considered by many linguists and folklorists, however, some aspects (English riddles built on homonymy, cognitive mechanisms of guessing riddles) still remain little studied. Since English riddles are very diverse in form, syntax, semantics, and the canons of the genre change over time, the classification of English riddles seems problematic. The relevance and novelty of this article is due to the need to develop a detailed classification that can be used depending on the aspect of the puzzle being studied. The purpose of the article is to describe the structural, semantic and cultural features of English riddles, presenting their classification.

Despite the variety of types of English riddles, they have a characteristic of guessing the encoded name. According to Encyclopedia Britannica, an English riddle is defined as "a deliberately ambiguous question requiring a thoughtful and often witty answer" [1]. A riddle is a guessing game that has been part of the folklore of most cultures since ancient times [1]. According to A. Taylor, in a true riddle "two completely different objects are compared, and the description of the properties in the

riddle is built on a conflict of direct and figurative meanings, which confuses the person guessing the riddle, since the descriptions are contradictory" (" a true riddle consists of two descriptions of an object, one figurative and one literal, and confuses the hearer who endeavors to identify an object described in conflicting ways") [2].

The riddle researcher A. Taylor classified English riddles according to the thematic feature: comparisons to living creatures; comparisons to an animal; comparisons to several animals; comparisons to a person; comparisons to several persons; comparisons to plants; comparisons to things; enumeration of comparisons; enumerations in terms of form or form and function; enumerations in terms of color; enumerations in terms of facts [2, p. 37].

Numerous groups of English riddles include riddles about a person (his appearance, body parts), activities, professions, riddles about clothes, shoes, everyday riddles, riddles about natural phenomena, elements, riddles about time, about animals (birds, fish, insects), about plants, about space (celestial bodies), about literacy (letters, books), about religion, about modes of transport, etc.

Classification of English riddles is based on different criteria: according to the communicative type of the sentence, according to the pragmatic and stylistic features of the riddle, according to the method of coding the image, according to the type of riddle, and according to the authorship of riddles.

1. According to the purpose of the statement (communicative type of sentence), riddles can be narrative, interrogative and incentive.

White pearls were scattered on a black cloth (The sky and the stars)

Something has eyes and cannot see (A potato)

Whatever the communicative type of riddle, it is necessary to find an answer. Even if it is a declarative sentence, without a question, the riddle genre assumes that the guesser understands the intent of the questioner and gives an answer - a guess.

In incentive riddles, an invitation to search for an encrypted answer is expressed in folklore formulas: Please answer me. Who could he be? Riddle me, riddle me. There are riddles in which a reward is promised for guessing (If you tell me this riddle, I'll give you a goat).

Several communicative sentence types can be combined, as in the following example: I saw a man in white, he looked quite a sight. He was not old, but he stood in the cold. And when he felt the sun, he started to run. Please answer me. Who could he be? (A snowman). The riddle begins with a narrative, followed by an incentive part, stimulating to guess the riddle, and then a question.

2. From the point of view of structure, riddles can be divided into 1. riddles that have the form of a simple sentence (more common), 2. riddles - complex sentences and 3. riddles that are text

Riddles in complex sentences with subordinate conditions: If you drop me, I'm sure to crack. Give me a smile, and I'll always smile back. (A mirror).

In simple sentence: I'm the son of water but when I return to water I die. Who am I? (Ice)

In text: I have eyes but I can't see.

I have skin but I can't feel anything.

I can be sweet but I'm not a piece of candy.

I can be baked but I'm not a cake.

I can be peeled but I'm not a carrot. (A potato)

3. From the point of view of pragmatics, it is possible to single out that English riddles perform various functions :

1) Sacred (function of initiation / testing). In ancient times, the riddle was part of the rite (wedding, initiation rite). With the help of riddles, they tested resourcefulness, ingenuity, wisdom , such tests could lead to the death of the subjects or their punishment if the riddle remained unsolved). Such riddles are known as “neckriddles” (from the expression to save one’s neck - save your life / skin) [3; 17]. Riddles change functions as society develops.

2) Encouragement to mental activity, educational riddles. With the help of a riddle, knowledge about reality is transmitted: about the world around us, the economic structure, etc. Most modern riddles belong to this group.

3) Entertaining, comic. A feature of this type of riddles is the unusual presentation of familiar information. The functions of riddles change diachronically depending on extralinguistic factors. At the same time, a riddle can have several functions, with one of them coming to the fore.

Currently, riddles are more often intended for children of preschool and school age and have more of an educational and entertaining function. Riddles for adults can be found in quests, TV shows with elements of competition and at festive events.

Examples: What has many keys but cannot open any door? (A piano)

What kind of key do you use on Thanksgiving? (A turkey);

What is that you will break every time you name it? (Silence)

4. From the point of view of stylistic means, English riddles most often consist of lexical, syntactic and phonetic means (metaphor, personification, comparison, inversion, antithesis, alliteration /assonance, rhyme)

A long snake that smokes. What am I? (Train)

Seven brothers: Five work all day

The other two just play and pray. (Days of the week)

Murmurs, but never talks. Has a bed, but never sleeps. And has a mouth, but never eats? (A river)

5. Riddles based on morphological homonymy (What is black and white and read all over? (A newspaper)). The adjective red has the same sound as participle II of the verb to read, both words are pronounced like [red]. In this riddle, ambiguity is deliberately created: the homophone [red - read] is used together with adjectives denoting color.

6. From the point of view of authorship, riddles are divided into the following groups: (folk, borrowed from other languages and copyright).

Conclusion

Undoubtedly, there are prospects for further study of the semantics of English riddles as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon of language and culture. In particular, it would be interesting to consider the cognitive mechanisms for solving riddles based on metaphor and homonymy: how different are these mechanisms and whether they have similarities. The modern scientific paradigm no longer considers metaphor as a stylistic device or an exclusively semantic phenomenon. Metaphor is now the key to unraveling the cognitive nature of riddles

From the point of view of the culture of the people in which the riddle is born and exists,

riddles are a rich linguocultural material that reflects the most important features of the formation of culture, history and worldview of the people, their values and customs. The themes and functions of riddles change as society develops, so a riddle can provide rich historical and cultural material.

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