



REFLECTIONS ON THE STUDY OF CHILDREN'S FOLKLORE TEXTS

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Abstract. *This article provides a comprehensive analysis of the study of children's folklore texts in Uzbek linguistics, including their historical development, genre classification, linguopoetic features, phonetic-rhythmic structure, and lexical-semantic characteristics, as well as pragmatic and discursive approaches. The role of children's folklore texts in language acquisition, speech development, transmission of cultural codes, and formation of social experience is scientifically substantiated. The prospects for further research are outlined using modern linguistic methodologies such as cognitive linguistics, psycholinguistics, cultural linguistics, discourse analysis, and linguistic poetics.*

Keywords: *children's folklore, Uzbek linguistics, poetics, rhythm, semantics, speech development, phonetics, counting rhyme, tongue twister, folklore discourse.*

Children's folklore represents one of the oldest layers of Uzbek oral creativity. It comprises a unique set of texts that shape children's understanding of the world, develop their linguistic competence, cultivate their aesthetic taste, and transmit elements of national culture. The folklore genres intended for children—such as **alla**, **sanama**, tongue twisters, game songs, riddles, proverbs, lullabies, soothing chants, and fairy tales—function not only as literary texts but also as active instruments in language development, cultural education, and worldview formation.


In Uzbek linguistics, children's folklore texts were studied for many years primarily within the framework of folklore studies, focusing on literary-aesthetic, ethnographic, and educational aspects. However, the development of independent linguistic analysis as a separate field emerged only at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. Children's folklore reflects the most natural and lively forms of language, embodying the phonetic norms of the people, rhythmic patterns, syntactic structures in their natural state, and simplified forms of imagery.

The earliest records of Uzbek children's folklore were collected by Russian Orientalists, Jadid intellectuals, and representatives of educational reform movements. At that time, the focus was primarily on:

- recording texts,
- classifying them by genre, and
- determining their role in children's educational life.

Linguistic analysis was almost entirely absent.

During the 1960s–1980s, studies on children's folklore explored genre classification, poetic structure, and educational function, yet linguistics treated these texts mainly as



literary material. From the 21st century onward, linguists began analyzing children's folklore in terms of:

- phonetic system,
- lexical layer,
- rhythmic structure,
- syntax,
- semantics, and
- discursive organization.

The development of psycholinguistics, cognitive linguistics, and cultural linguistics provided new scientific methods for analyzing folklore texts.


Children's folklore consists of distinct genres, each differing in linguistic characteristics:

- **Alla** — based on phonetic harmony, featuring numerous rhythmic repetitions,
- **Sanama** — texts structured around rhythmic and phonetic play,
- **Tongue twisters** — phonetic complexes enhancing articulation,
- **Game songs** — communicative and situational texts,
- **Fairy tales** — simplified narrative discourse for children,
- **Riddles** — featuring metaphor, analogy, and logical structures,
- **Lullabies and soothing chants** — centered on emotional lexicon.

These genres' differences in language system, rhythm, imagery, syntax, and semantics necessitate linguistic analysis.

Phonetic analysis is particularly important, as these texts:

- rely heavily on sound repetition,
- are constructed rhythmically, and
- preserve melodic qualities.



In **sanama**, tongue twisters, and proverbs, repetitive consonant and vowel usage creates rhythmic resonance, e.g., “*Chittak, chittak, chutaklar chirqillaydi.*” Many texts use repetitive units such as “*yur-yur,*” “*kel-kel,*” “*tep-tepa*” to facilitate phonetic simplicity. In **alla** and proverbs, pitch and melody play a key role, with extended vowels, soft consonants, and resonant sounds predominating.

The vocabulary of children's folklore, while simple, is semantically rich and emotionally expressive. Diminutive forms such as *bolajon, qushcha, oyijon, quyoncha, qo'g'irchoqcha* convey:

- affection,
- closeness, and
- emotional trust.

As children's perception of the world is closely linked to nature, folklore texts frequently feature elements such as the sun, moon, rain, wind, birds, flowers, and trees. Words like *shirin, yoqimli, oppoq, yumshoq, shodon, kulgili* correspond to children's emotional states.

The syntax of children's folklore is distinctive, with short sentences like:

- “Keldi ayiq.” (The bear came.)
- “Qani, yur!” (Come on, go!)

Imperative structures are commonly used in game texts:

- “Kelinglar!” (Come!)
- “Aytinglar!” (Say it!)

Parallel syntactic constructions create rhythm: “*U yurdi, u topdi, u kuldi.*”

Children’s folklore functions not only as text but also as a communicative act, a means of socialization, and a mechanism for speech development. Examples of specific functions include:

- **Alla** → nurturing affection and calmness,
- **Game songs** → promoting teamwork,
- **Riddles** → developing logical thinking,
- **Sanama** → teaching patience and game rules,
- **Tongue twisters** → enhancing articulation skills.

In conclusion, the study of children’s folklore in Uzbek linguistics has reached a new qualitative stage since independence. Analyses of phonetic, lexical, grammatical, and pragmatic features demonstrate that these texts:

- develop children’s speech,
- transmit national culture,
- foster communicative skills, and
- serve as a primary source for linguistic poetics.

A thorough linguistic study of children’s folklore texts is of not only scientific but also socio-cultural significance, offering a promising avenue for future research.

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