

LINGUISTIC AND LINGUACULTURAL ASPECTS OF CHILDREN'S
ANECDOTES IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES

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Abstract: This article presents a comparative analysis of the linguistic and linguacultural aspects of children's anecdotes in the Uzbek and English languages. Children's anecdotes, as a distinct genre of oral discourse, reflect children's cognitive processes, communicative strategies, and the transmission of cultural values through language. The main aim of the study is to identify both universal and culture-specific features found in children's anecdotes across different linguistic and cultural contexts.

The research adopts a qualitative approach and is based on a corpus of children's anecdotal texts in Uzbek and English. The analysis employs lexical, syntactic, stylistic, pragmatic, and linguacultural frameworks. Lexical analysis focuses on everyday vocabulary and humor-generating mechanisms, while syntactic analysis examines sentence structure and dialogic patterns. Stylistic and pragmatic approaches are applied to identify expressive means and communicative intentions, and linguacultural analysis reveals the reflection of national mentality and social values in humorous discourse.

The results demonstrate that children's anecdotes in both languages share universal characteristics such as simplicity, cognitive accessibility, and humor based on logical incongruity. At the same time, significant linguacultural differences are observed. English children's anecdotes tend to rely on wordplay, irony, and individualistic expression, whereas Uzbek anecdotes are more often based on situational humor, literal interpretation, and culturally familiar contexts that emphasize collective and moral values.

The study highlights the close interaction between language and culture in children's discourse and contributes to the fields of comparative linguistics, folklore studies, and intercultural communication.

Keywords: children's anecdotes; humor; linguacultural analysis; comparative linguistics; Uzbek and English languages

Introduction

In contemporary linguistics, increasing attention is being paid to the study of language as a reflection of culture, cognition, and social interaction [3]. Within this framework, children's folklore—and particularly children's anecdotes—represents a valuable yet insufficiently explored area of research [4]. Children's anecdotes are short humorous narratives that reflect children's perception of the world, their communicative strategies, and the cultural norms transmitted through language. As a distinct genre of oral discourse, they combine linguistic simplicity with deep linguacultural meaning [2].

Children's anecdotes are not merely a source of entertainment; they play an important role in the development of linguistic competence, pragmatic awareness, and cultural identity [5].

Through humorous situations, children learn patterns of dialogue, semantic contrast, and social behavior. Therefore, the analysis of children's anecdotes contributes to a broader understanding of how language functions in early cognitive and cultural development [1].

From a comparative perspective, the study of children's anecdotes in different languages allows researchers to identify both universal and culture-specific features of humor [1][2]. Uzbek and English, as languages belonging to different linguistic families and cultural traditions, provide a productive basis for contrastive analysis. While English children's anecdotes often rely on wordplay, irony, and individualistic expression, Uzbek anecdotes tend to emphasize situational humor, moral values, and collective cultural norms. These differences reflect deeper linguacultural distinctions in worldview, social relations, and communicative etiquette [5].

Despite the growing body of research on humor, discourse analysis, and folklore studies, children's anecdotes have rarely been examined as an independent genre in a cross-linguistic and linguacultural framework. Most existing studies focus either on adult humor or on general aspects of children's speech, leaving children's anecdotal discourse relatively understudied [6].

The present article aims to explore the linguistic and linguacultural aspects of children's anecdotes in Uzbek and English. The study focuses on their lexical, syntactic, stylistic, and pragmatic features, as well as on the cultural values encoded in humorous discourse. By adopting a comparative approach, the article seeks to contribute to the fields of linguistics, folkloristics, and intercultural communication, offering new insights into the interaction between language, culture, and humor in children's discourse.

Methodology

Research Design

The present study adopts a qualitative and comparative research design aimed at identifying and interpreting the linguistic and linguacultural features of children's anecdotes in Uzbek and English [7]. A contrastive approach is employed to reveal both universal characteristics of children's humorous discourse and culture-specific patterns shaped by linguistic structure and sociocultural context.

Data Collection

The corpus of the study consists of children's anecdotes in Uzbek and English collected from multiple sources, including children's folklore collections, educational materials, printed anecdote compilations, and reputable online resources oriented toward children's humor. Only short anecdotal texts intended for or produced by children were selected to ensure genre consistency [8].

To maintain balance, an approximately equal number of anecdotes was selected for each language. The texts were chosen based on the following criteria:

- relevance to children's discourse,
- presence of humorous intent,
- linguistic clarity and completeness,
- cultural representativeness.

Analytical Framework

The analysis is based on an integrated linguistic and linguacultural framework combining methods from discourse analysis, semantic analysis, and pragmatics. The study examines anecdotes at several interconnected levels:

Lexical analysis focuses on commonly used vocabulary, semantic fields, wordplay, and culturally marked lexical units.

Syntactic analysis investigates sentence structure, dialogue patterns, repetition, and simplicity typical of children's speech.

Stylistic analysis explores the use of expressive means such as irony, hyperbole, contrast, and unexpected semantic shifts.

Pragmatic analysis examines communicative intent, humorous mechanisms, speech acts, and violations of conversational expectations[9].

Linguacultural Analysis

The linguacultural dimension of the study involves identifying cultural values, social norms, and worldview elements embedded in children's anecdotes. Special attention is paid to:

- representation of family relations and social hierarchy,
- cultural models of behavior and politeness,
- child–adult interaction patterns,
- culturally specific humor strategies.

The analysis considers how national mentality and cultural experience influence the structure and interpretation of humorous discourse in each language[10].

Comparative Procedure

A contrastive method is applied to compare Uzbek and English anecdotes across all analytical levels. Similarities and differences are identified and systematized to distinguish universal features of children's humor from language- and culture-specific characteristics. The comparative findings are interpreted within a broader intercultural and cognitive context.

Reliability and Validity

To ensure reliability, the analysis follows consistent criteria and analytical steps for both language corpora. Multiple examples are examined for each identified feature to avoid subjective interpretation. Cultural interpretations are supported by contextual analysis and established theoretical frameworks in linguistics and folklore studies.

Ethical Considerations

All anecdotal texts analyzed in this study are publicly available and used exclusively for academic purposes. No personal or sensitive data involving children were collected or disclosed, in accordance with ethical standards of qualitative research.

Research Results

The comparative analysis of children's anecdotes in Uzbek and English reveals both shared and language-specific patterns at lexical, syntactic, stylistic, pragmatic, and linguacultural levels. The results are presented below in a structured manner.

Lexical Features

The analysis shows that children's anecdotes in both languages predominantly employ basic, everyday vocabulary closely related to children's immediate environment, such as family members, school life, animals, and common objects. However, notable differences were observed in the sources of humor at the lexical level.

In English children's anecdotes, humor frequently arises from wordplay, including homonymy, polysemy, and ambiguity. Puns and double meanings are commonly used to create humorous effects. In contrast, Uzbek children's anecdotes rely less on lexical ambiguity and

more on literal interpretation of words, exaggeration, and unexpected semantic shifts rooted in context rather than in lexical form[7].

Syntactic Features

At the syntactic level, both Uzbek and English anecdotes are characterized by short, simple sentence structures and a high frequency of dialogue-based constructions. Question–answer formats and repetitive sentence patterns are particularly common, reflecting children’s conversational style.

The results indicate that Uzbek anecdotes tend to use elliptical and context-dependent constructions, where meaning is often implied rather than explicitly stated. English anecdotes, by contrast, more frequently use complete syntactic structures, even in short humorous exchanges, which contributes to clarity and directness in humor delivery [5].

Stylistic and Pragmatic Features

Stylistically, the dominant devices identified in both languages include hyperbole, contrast, irony, and incongruity. The humorous effect is commonly achieved through the violation of logical or communicative expectations.

Pragmatic analysis reveals that humor in children’s anecdotes is often based on naïve reasoning, misunderstandings between children and adults, or unexpected responses to conventional questions. In English anecdotes, pragmatic humor frequently involves quick verbal responses and witty repartee. In Uzbek anecdotes, humor more often emerges from situational contexts and culturally familiar scenarios.

Linguacultural Features

The linguacultural analysis demonstrates that children’s anecdotes reflect culture-specific values and social norms. Uzbek children’s anecdotes prominently feature themes of respect for elders, family hierarchy, politeness, and collective responsibility. The child character is typically portrayed as innocent yet socially aware, operating within accepted cultural norms.

In English children’s anecdotes, themes of individualism, independence, and self-expression are more prevalent. Humor often arises from the child’s ability to challenge adult authority in a playful or ironic manner. Cultural references in English anecdotes commonly include school environments, peer interaction, and everyday domestic situations.

Comparative Findings

Despite these differences, the study identifies several universal features across both languages: child-centered worldview, cognitive simplicity, reliance on incongruity, and the use of humor as a communicative strategy. These shared features suggest that while children’s humor is shaped by cultural context, it is also grounded in universal cognitive mechanisms.

Overall, the results indicate that children’s anecdotes function as a linguistically simple yet culturally rich genre. The contrastive analysis highlights how language structure and cultural values jointly influence the formation and interpretation of humorous discourse in Uzbek and English children’s anecdotes.

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