A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE SYNTACTIC STRUCTURE AND LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF UZBEK AND ENGLISH TONGUE TWISTERS

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Abstract

Tongue twisters show an only genre of oral folklore that combines linguistic complexity with educational and entertainment functions. They are designed to make speakers feel challenge through the repetition of same sounds, words, and syntactic patterns, thereby increasing pronunciation ability, articulation, and fluency in speaking. Despite their significance in language development and speech training, comparative studies examining the syntactic and linguistic characteristics of tongue twisters through various languages remain limited. This article researches the syntactic structures and linguistic features of Uzbek and English tongue twisters from a comparative approach. This study explores phonetic, morphological, lexical, and syntactic aspects of selected tongue twisters and identifies similarities and differences due to the typological nature of the two languages. The findings show that while both languages employ sound repetition and structural parallelism to create pronunciation difficulties, Uzbek tongue twisters exhibit greater morphological complexity due to their agglutinative nature, whereas English tongue twisters rely more heavily on phonetic patterns and fixed word orders. The research contributes to comparative linguistics, folklore studies, and language teaching methodology by highlighting the pedagogical value of tongue twisters in pronunciation training and communicative competence development.

Keywords: *tongue twisters, syntax, comparative linguistics, phonetics, folklore, Uzbek language, English language, linguistic features, articulation, language teaching.*

INTRODUCTION

Language serves not only as a means of communication tool type but also as a reflection of cultural roots, mental processes, and social interaction. Among the numerous forms of oral folklore, tongue twisters occupy a distinctive place due to their linguistic complexity and educational value. In fact, they are short expressions, phrases, or sentences intentionally constructed with repetitive sounds and challenging articulatory patterns to test and improve a speaker's pronunciation abilities and language learning. Tongue twisters have long been used in language acquisition, speech therapy, social communication, and pronunciation training because they support learners grow phonological awareness and articulatory precision (Crystal, 2003).

In both Uzbek and English linguistic traditions, tongue twisters represent an important component of oral literature. They entertain audiences while simultaneously functioning as practical tools for speech development. Although researchers have widely

studied phonetic and stylistic aspects of tongue twisters, their syntactic organization and comparative linguistic characteristics have received less scholarly attention. As languages differ in their structural organization, examining tongue twisters from a comparative perspective can expose main observations into language-specific patterns and universal linguistic principles.

The aim of this article is to learn the syntactic structures and linguistic features of Uzbek and English tongue twisters. Particular attention is paid to phonetic repetition, lexical choice, morphological construction, and syntactic arrangement. Through comparative analysis, the study seeks to find similarities and differences between the two linguistic traditions and to demonstrate how tongue twisters reflect broader typological characteristics of their corresponding languages.

Syntactic Structure of Uzbek and English Tongue Twisters

Syntax has a crucial role in the formation of tongue twisters as the arrangement of words and phrases contributes significantly to the difficulty of pronuncing and memorizing.

When analyzing Uzbek tongue twisters, they frequently employ simple sentences, parallel constructions, and repetitive syntactic patterns. Considering the following example:

“Bir tup tut, tutning tagida bir tup turp.”

This tongue twister is characterized by lexical repetition and syntactic symmetry. The repeated use of the lexical items tut and turp creates phonetic similarity while remaining grammatical coherence. The sentence structure continue relatively simple, yet the repetitive arrangement rise articulatory complexity.

Another example is:

“Oq choynakka oq qopqoq, ko‘k choynakka ko‘k qopqoq.”

The structure illustrate syntactic parallelism, where identical grammatical patterns are repeated with slight lexical variation. Such constructions facilitate memorizing while simultaneously challenging pronunciation.

And, English tongue twisters similarly apply repetitive syntactic structures. For example:

“She sells seashells by the seashore.”

This sentence follows the Subject - Verb - Object pattern typical of English syntax. The complexity arises not from grammatical structure but from the repetition of similar consonant clusters.

Another widely known example is:

“Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.”

The sentence contains repeated bilabial plosive sounds p, which create articulatory challenges. The syntactic structure remains straightforward, reflecting the fixed word orders characteristic of the English grammar.

According to Crystal (2003), repetitive sentence patterns facilitate thinking processing while increasing phonological difficulty. This observation is evident in both Uzbek and English tongue twisters, where structural simplicity contrasts with phonetic complexity.

Linguistic Features of Tongue Twisters

Phonetic Features

Phonetic repetition constitutes the first characteristic of tongue twisters as implements such as alliteration, assonance, and consonance contribute to their effectiveness.

In Uzbek tongue twisters, repeated consonants such as t, q, and k frequently appear:

“Qishda kishmish pishmasmish, pishsa kishmish qishmasmish.”

The repeated sounds create rhythmic patterns that challenge articulation and auditory discrimination.

English tongue twisters often emphasize alliteration:

“Betty Botter bought some butter.”

The repeated b sound grows articulatory demands while enhancing memorability.

Jakobson (1960) argues that sound repetition strengthens the poetic function of language by focusing attention to the message itself rather than merely its informational content. This principle is clearly reflected in tongue twisters.

Morphological Features

Morphological differences between Uzbek and English significantly influence the structure of tongue twisters.

As an agglutinative language, Uzbek allows the attachment of multiple suffixes to a single lexical stem. This characteristic often results in morphologically complex tongue twisters including numerous grammatical markers, such as complexity, it increases pronunciation difficulty while enriching linguistic variation.

English, by contrast, is primarily analytical which grammatical relationships are expressed through word order and function words rather than through extensive morphology. Consequently, English tongue twisters rely less on morphological complexity and more on phonetic manipulation.

Lexical Features

Both Uzbek and English tongue twisters frequently employ paronyms, homonyms, and semantically related lexical items.

For example, Uzbek tongue twisters often utilizes words with similar phonological forms but various meanings. This strategy increases cognitive load and contributes to humorous effects.

English examples such as seashells, seashore, and sells demonstrate how lexical similarity is able to create articulatory challenges while maintaining semantic coherence.

Stylistic Features

Tongue twisters also possess stylistic significance. Their rhythmic organization, repetition, and sound symbolism contribute to aesthetic appeal. According to Leech (2014), stylistic repetition serves both expressive and mnemonic functions. In tongue twisters, these functions facilitate oral transmission and language learning.

Comparative Analysis and Pedagogical Implications

The comparative analysis reveals both similarities and differences between Uzbek and English tongue twisters.

Similarities include:

- Extensive usage of alliteration and sound repetition.

- Reliance on syntactic parallelism.
- Educational application in pronunciation training.
- Strong connection to oral folklore traditions.

Differences include:

- Greater morphological complexity in Uzbek.
- More strict word order in English.
- Higher frequency of affixation in Uzbek constructions.
- More dependence on consonant clusters in English tongue twisters.

These findings have important pedagogical implications. Tongue twisters can be successfully integrated into pronunciation instruction, speaking courses, and speech therapy programs. Research recommends that repetitive phonological practice improves articulatory accuracy and fluency among language learners (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010). Consequently, tongue twisters represent valuable resources for both native and foreign speakers.

CONCLUSION

Tongue twisters constitute a fascinating intersection of folklore, linguistics, and language pedagogy. The comparative analysis of Uzbek and English tongue twisters shows that both traditions apply phonetic repetition, syntactic parallelism, and lexical similarity to make articulatory challenges and enhance linguistic competence. However, differences in typological structure influence the specific mechanisms through which complexity is achieved. Uzbek tongue twisters reflect the agglutinative appearance of the language through morphological richness, whereas English tongue twisters emphasize phonetic repetition within relatively fixed syntactic frameworks.

This study highlights the importance of tongue twisters as tools for pronunciation development, speech training, and language education in both languages. Future research may widen the analysis by examining pragmatic, cognitive, and psycholinguistic dimensions of tongue twisters across a wider range of languages and cultural contexts.

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