

## **МОВОЗНАВСТВО. ЛІТЕРАТУРОЗНАВСТВО**

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**Diana Biriukova,**

*orcid.org/0000-0002-1721-0122*

*PhD in Philology, Assistant Professor,*

*Acting Head of the Department of Foreign Philology, Translation and Professional Language Training*

*University of Customs and Finance*

*(Dnipro, Ukraine) kuzunchik@email.ua*

### **STUDYING SEMANTIC ASPECT AS A LINGUO-CULTURAL COMPONENT IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH FOLKTALES**

*The article presents the analysis of stylistic phenomena as a linguistic and cultural component through a comparison of English and Spanish folktales. The materials of British and Spanish folktales were analyzed. A study of certain phenomena was carried out, which contribute to a better understanding of the culture of the British and Spanish people. In the course of this study, it was found that English and Spanish folktales use such folklore artistic means as epithets, hyperbole, clichés, etc. The relevance of this research lies in the study of the ethno linguistic phenomena of the English folktale and the Spanish folktale in linguistic, cultural and communicative aspects. In modern linguistics, the concept "folklore" is understood as a part of national culture. This culture is based on the experience of the people and the transmission of morality, which is determined by certain expectations, hopes and values. Each folktale presents signs of the culture of one or another nation, tribe, through which they could transmit their mentality. Thus, on the basis of the linguistic and cultural approach to the study of English and Spanish folktales, the semantic features of the text of the folktales of England and Spain, as countries whose language belongs to the same linguistic group of Romano-Germanic languages, were revealed. Within the framework of this work, emphasis was placed on highlighting the following aspects: epithets, clichés, titles, names that characterized the people. It was determined that the names of English and Spanish folktales are semantically divided into those that characterize the age of the main character, those that describe the personality and character of the main character or characters, and tales that characterize the object itself. In addition, it was found that both English folktales and Spanish folktales use the same means of expressing fabulousness and the same images. These images can be both real and fictional. This work can be used for further linguistic studies of the structural-semantic and communicative features of English and Spanish folktales for their more detailed study and development of methodical and reference literature.*

**Key words:** *semantics, folktale, epithet, vocabulary, linguistic and cultural aspect.*

**Діана БІРЮКОВА,**

*orcid.org/0000-0002-1721-0122*

*кандидат філологічних наук, доцент,*

*в.о. завідувача кафедри іноземної філології, перекладу та професійної мовної підготовки*

*Університету митної справи та фінансів*

*(Дніпро, Україна) kuzunchik@email.ua*

### **ВИВЧЕННЯ СЕМАНТИЧНОГО АСПЕКТУ ЯК ЛІНГВОКУЛЬТУРНОГО КОМПОНЕНТУ У АНГЛІЙСЬКИХ ТА ІСПАНСЬКИХ НАРОДНИХ КАЗКАХ**

*У статті представлений аналіз стилістичних явищ як лінгвокультурний компонент через порівняння англійської та іспанської народної казки. Проаналізовано матеріали британських та іспанських народних казок. Здійснено дослідження певних явищ, які сприяють кращому розумінню культури британського та іспанського народу. Протягом даного дослідження виявлено, що у англійських та іспанських народних казках використовуються такі фольклорні художні явища, як епітети, гіпербола, кліше тощо. Актуальність даного дослідження полягає у вивченні етнолінгвістичних явищ англійської народної казки та іспанської народної казки в лінгвокультурному та комунікативному аспектах. У сучасній лінгвістиці поняття "фольклор" розуміється як частина народної культури. Ця культура оснований на досвіді народу та передачу моралі, яка зумовлена певними сподіваннями, надіями та цінностями. В кожній народній казці представлені ознаки культури того чи іншого народу, племені, через яку вони могли передати свою ментальність.*

*Таким чином, на основі лінгвокультурного підходу до вивчення англійських та іспанських народних казок виявлено семантичні особливості тексту народних казок Англії та Іспанії, як країн, мова яких належить до однієї лінгвістичної групи романо-германських мов. У рамках даної роботи акцент було зроблено на виділенні*

наступних аспектів: епітети, кліше, назви, імена, які характеризували народ. Визначено, що назви англійських та іспанських народних казок семантично поділяються на ті, що характеризують вік головного героя, ті, що описують особистість та характер головного героя або героїв, та казки, які характеризують сам об'єкт. Крім того, виявлено, що і в англійських народних казках, і в іспанських народних казках використовуються однакові засоби вираження казковості та однакові образи. Ці образи можуть бути як реальними, так і вигаданими. Дану роботу можна використовувати для подальших лінгвістичних досліджень структурно-семантичних та комунікативних особливостей англійської та іспанської народної казки для більш детального їх вивчення та розробки методичної і довідкової літератури.

**Ключові слова:** семантика, народна казка, епітет, лексика, лінгвокультурний аспект.

**Formulation of the problem.** Semantics is the branch of linguistics that studies the meaning of language units. Semantics is also called semasiology. Semasiology from Greek is *semasia*, signification. Semantics studies the meaning of words; words are lexics. Therefore, lexics and semantics are directly connected branches that should not be omitted during our research. Semantics studies not only the meaning of words, but also the meaning of word-combinations, sentences etc.



**Research analysis.** Folktales of different cultures have been studied since the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some of scholars have been researching folktales as a subject of teaching children, for example, a scientist Gómez J.A. studies them as a pedagogical tool (Gómez, 2016: 18), while Davidenko G.V. analyzes linguistic and structural characteristics of folktales (Davidenko, 2004: 19).

**The aim of the article.** The following article is dedicated to the research of culture-semantic aspect comparing English and Spanish folktales. These languages have been taken into consideration due to the fact that they are the part of Romano-Germanic languages group. The aim of the research is to analyze similarity in semantic phenomenon both in English and Spanish folktales.

**Presenting the main material.** Hence, English and Spanish folktales were created by people who were trying to contribute to them as much sense as possible, to reflect the character of heroes through descriptive means of language, these language units have deep semantic meaning.

Studying semantic characteristics of titles in English and Spanish folktales.

As it was described above, English and Spanish folktales have titles that are named after their

protagonists. Why people were creating these titles in that manner? They were trying to put a special sense into these folktales. As folktales main task is to carry the moral side to the listener, they were created with deep semantic meaning.

Semantically, titles of folktales are divided into the following:

- those which describe personal features and character of the main hero or heroes;

For example, “Lazy Jack”, the English folktale. Here this title was created to put an emphasis on the personal feature such as laziness. Another example is “The three sillies”. The semantics of the title shows poor mental health of main heroes. In Spanish folktales there is the folktale named “Good St. James, and the Merry Barber of Compostella”, here personal characteristics as goodness and merriness are chosen to create the title of this folktale to express these personal features and the behavior of main heroes. Another Spanish folktale “The Wise King of Leon” uses the word *wise* to describe the king from the view of wisdom and intelligence.

- those which determine the age of protagonists;

Thus, in the folktale “The old woman and her pig” in the title the listener can from the very beginning understand that the woman is elderly. Besides, semantically the author of the folktale uses the description of the woman’s age during all the storytelling: *An old woman was sweeping her house. So away went the old woman to the cow. So away went the old woman to the haystack and she brought the hay to the cow.* (Jacobs, 1996: 117).

- those which characterize the object;

In the English folktale “The rose tree” the characteristics of the tree is shown. In the folktale “Teeny-Tiny” the epithets *teeny* and *tiny* in such interesting word-combination are used to describe a small size of the main hero. It is an old lady who was very small and lived in a very small house situated in a very small village. Semantically to use lexics *teeny-tiny* is more reasonable to emphasize the tiny size of a woman and the location. Also, this word-combination was used here with an ulterior motive, as for children who are the direct listeners of folktales,

such word-combinations attract their attention more to the folktale.

In Spanish folktales such as “The Wicked King”, “The Ingenious Student”, “The Watchful Servant” lexical means with exact semantic meaning to express the characteristic of protagonists are used. *There was once a king who was so wicked that he would not allow any widows to live in his kingdom. But Juan Rivas was endowed with a wonderfully fine gift of ingenuity.* (Kay, 1996: 294).

Oral forms of canonical names are brightly represented in English and Spanish folktales. John (Ioann, a gospel writer), Mary (Mariam, a prophetess), St. Barbara, an early Christian Lebanese and Greek saint and martyr, St. Bartholomew, Bartholomew the Apostle or José, a short version of Joseph, saint Joseph who was Jesus' earthly father and the spouse of the Virgin Mary.

The most common proper names in English folktales are John, Tom, Jack, women's names – Mary, Ann; in Spanish are Juan, José, Pablo, Pedro and women's names are Maria, Anna. To show high social status such lexical units are used: Mr., Mrs., Miss, master, Your Grace, Your Majesty.

Lexico-semantic means to express fabulousness.

Kings, queens, princesses, princes, fairies and knights live in folktale world of England and Spain. Their images are used almost in every folktale. These images help to create the whole folktale atmosphere in the eyes of the listener. Hence in the English folktale “Binorie” the images of kings and their daughters, princesses are used: *And the princess floated down the mill-stream. And she turned and went home to the king's castle.* (Jacobs, 1996: 186).

Besides application of fairy images of kings and queens, princes and princesses, the image of fabulous homes is used – castles. The semantic meaning of this lexical unit means a large fortified building or set of buildings that are not represented in the real life, they are only in the folktale world.



An illustrative example of fabulousness in folktale is represented in the Spanish folktale “The Seven Pigeons”, where king and princess lived in their castle and the princess met a knight; all these lexical means of language are covered with fabulous semantic signification:

*I am daughter of a king  
Who rules in Aragon,  
My messengers they bring  
Me food to live upon.  
My father thinks me dead;  
My death he did ordain,  
For that I would not wed  
A wicked knight of Spain.*

Fairy world of folktales is connected with representatives of other world, therefore in English and Spanish folktales commonly used names are names of witches, elves, fairies, spirits, ghosts, giants and other fabulous creatures: *I have destroyed this monster; After this the giant locked poor Jack in an immense chamber; where lived a beautiful lady possessed with seven evil spirits.* Therefore, the images of a monster, a spirit and a giant are most commonly used.

Furthermore, to express the fairy meaning of the folktale many objects in these folktales were animated. Chairs, tables, windows and other household objects became living in folktales to send the special motive and understanding of the entire folktale and to allow the listener to perceive it deeper: *And Tatty Mouse put her pudding into the pot to boil. But when Titty went to put hers in, the pot tumbled over, and scalded her to death. Then Tatty sat down and wept; then a three-legged stool said: "Tatty, why do you weep? Then a broom in the corner of the room said, "Stool, why do you hop?"*

Epithets to express fairy aspect in folktales.

Epithet is a literary tool to describe people, places or objects to characterize them from a certain point of view or to contribute to the meaning of a particular word a certain deep sense, to emphasize something or to pay more attention to it. In the folklore, in particular, in folktales epithets are used as a basics to add appropriate weight and sounding to the words. Epithets express the worldview of people. Epithets add a precise visual or other determinacy to the noun, making the listener or reader perceive the object in the way the storyteller wants. (Коваленко, 2018: 82).

There are two types of epithets: positive and negative. Those which define positive features of characters are as follows: good, magnificent, wise, fine, nice, kind, fair etc. They introduce a positive semantic meaning of nouns. In English folktales examples of such epithets are the following: *they lived in a great forest; there was a pretty young man; But of them all, the bravest and most gallant, was a Mr. Fox; there was a splendid breakfast before that.*

In Spanish folktales: *My noble sir, this house is too humble for such as you; he saw the forms of lovely young maidens; She was so beautiful and so good, that she contributed in no small degree in rendering her father's reign famous. This was*

the *wise King of Leon*; *But this poor fellow was too kind-hearted to keep it all to himself.*

If to speak about negative epithets used in English and Spanish folktales, the most commonly applied are cruel, horrible, terrible, wicked, dreadful and others. For example, in English folktales: *There lived a dreadful monster*; *I had horrible dreams*; *It made the ill-tempered cook jealous of poor Dick.*

In Spanish folktales the usage of similar epithets is common: *he was cruel to his victims*; *vermin are dreadful in a court*; *and even to the ill-natured old cook.* The antonym for good with negative semantic meaning is evil in folktales, for beautiful is ugly: *she was so very ugly and deformed.* Such negative epithets were used to frighten the listener of a folktale.

Thus, various epithets both positive and negative were used in English and Spanish folktales for emphasizing main features, peculiarities and functions of characters, which create predictability of folktales. The epithets determining positive and negative characters are mostly the same in English and Spanish folktales.

Talking about epithets and fabulousness in English and Spanish folktales, there are those which hold semantic color of fabulousness. Different fairy lexics is used in them, such as monstrous, enchanted, fairy. Here are some examples: *The princess lived in an enchanted castle. The monstrous giant chased them.*

Semantics of clichés in English and Spanish folktales.

It should be noticed that the language of folktales has particular lexico-semantic peculiarities. One of these linguistic peculiarities is the usage of fixed initial phrases at the beginning of folktales and fixed final phrases completing folktales. These phrases are called clichés. Cliché is a figure of speech, template phrase with a predictable and understandable function. Cliché forms its unique semantics. Cliché holds a specific psychological stereotype and it eases the way of communication.

Clichés in folktales play the same role and carry the function of stereotypic means of transferring the culture of people. There are particular traditional ways to start or finish a folktale. More than a half of English and Spanish folktales begin with tropes, or in other words clichés. They mean a traditional expression for beginning and ending folktales.

A lot of English and Spanish folktales start with the following phrases:

Once upon a time	Érase una vez
Once upon a time there lived	Érase una vez vivió
One day	Un día

Long, long ago there was	Hace mucho, mucho tiempo hubo
There was once a man	Una vez hubo un hombre
There was once a woman	Una vez hubo una mujer
There was once a king	Una vez hubo un rey



Thus, phrases once upon a time or one day are phrases that are used to introduce a narrative of past events. There are examples of starting clichés in English and Spanish folktales:

*There was once a king who was so wicked.*

*Once on a time there was a boy named Jack.*

*There was once upon a time a good man who had two children.*

*There was once a little boy called Sigli.*

*There once lived a king and a queen as many a one has been.*

*Once upon a time there was a farmer and his wife who had one daughter.*

*Once upon a time, and a very good time it was.*

*There was once a princess who had a black man slave.*

Moreover, English and Spanish folktales finish with stocked phrases or clichés which have their semantic aspect to show a reader or a listener the good outcome of a storytelling, to express the happy end of characters.

And they lived happy ever afterwards.	Y ellas vivieron felices para siempre.
And they lived happy all their days.	Y vivieron felices todos sus días.
Then was the wedding held	Entonces se celebró la boda

In English and Spanish folktales the examples of ending clichés are the following:

*Where he and his lady lived in great joy and happiness all the rest of their days.*

*Her stepdaughter was married to a prince.*

*They shall now be man and wife for ever.*

*Alaric was married to Elvira.*

*He married the archbishop's niece.*

*So the sick son married the well sister, and the well son married the sick sister, and they all lived happy and died happy, and never drank out of a dry cappy.*

Besides happy finishing with marriages, folktales can be completed expressing a happy outcome of some fights with giants, monsters and other evil:

*And she never saw it any more.*

*And she never saw the giant again.*

*And was never seen or heard of afterwards.*

**Conclusion.** To conclude, both English and Spanish folktales make up a significant part of world folklore treasure. Folktale is one of the most widespread and common type of folklore. In English and Spanish folktales dominate semantic means, such as titles which reflect the characters of a storytelling from the very

beginning, epithets characteristic for folktale genre which create imagination and perception while listening the folktale, and clichéd words, word-combinations and sentences that have informative and necessary character. All these means are used in English and Spanish folktales to reveal the atmosphere of a folktale and deepen a listener or a reader into socio-cultural life of people of past time. Any folktale would not have been interesting without these semantic means.

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