



THE EXPRESSION OF METAPHORICAL NOMINATION IN CHILDREN'S GAME NAMES IN UZBEK, ENGLISH, AND RUSSIAN LANGUAGES

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Abstract

This article explores the metaphorical nomination of children's game names in three languages: Uzbek, English, and Russian. By examining how metaphor is used in naming games, the study highlights the cultural, cognitive, and linguistic dimensions of games that shape children's understanding of the world. The study analyzes how metaphorical elements in game names evoke certain imagery, values, or concepts and reflect cultural traditions. A comparison between the three languages reveals both universal themes and unique cultural differences in metaphorical expression.

Keywords: Metaphorical nomination, children's games, Uzbek language, English language, Russian language, cultural metaphors, cognitive development, linguistic analysis.

Introduction

The names of children's games are often rich with metaphorical content, serving as more than simple descriptors of the activity. These names frequently evoke abstract concepts, values, and imagery that mirror the cultural contexts in which they arise. Through metaphor, game names can reflect the rules of play, the skills or virtues the game seeks to develop, or symbolic representations of nature, mythology, and social roles.

In Uzbek, English, and Russian, children's game names carry metaphorical meanings that not only define the activity but also resonate with broader cultural values. For example, games might metaphorically emphasize competition, cooperation, or the mastering of specific skills, often wrapped in symbols and imagery from nature, animals, or heroic figures. This study aims to investigate the metaphorical nomination in children's game names across these three languages, focusing on how the metaphorical elements contribute to the games' overall meaning and how they reflect cultural worldviews.





Review of Literature

Metaphorical language is a key feature of both communication and cognition, shaping the way people perceive and interact with the world. Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) *Metaphors We Live By* provided a foundational understanding of metaphor as a cognitive tool that helps individuals comprehend abstract concepts through more concrete, familiar imagery. This theory has been widely applied in linguistic analysis, including studies on metaphorical naming in various cultural contexts (Kövecses, 2005).

In the context of games, Sutton-Smith (1997) explored the symbolic and metaphorical dimensions of play, arguing that games are not just recreational activities but also serve as simulations of social and cultural experiences. Children's games, in particular, often embody metaphorical elements that reflect societal expectations, values, and educational goals (Garvey, 1990).

Cultural linguistics has further emphasized the importance of metaphor in naming conventions within specific cultural frameworks (Sharifian, 2011). Studies on metaphorical nominations in names across different languages show that the names of objects, animals, and even activities like games carry deeper metaphorical significance, often tied to cultural beliefs and practices (Ahrens & Lee, 2009).

In this article, metaphorical analysis is applied to the names of children's games in Uzbek, English, and Russian to explore how metaphors shape cultural narratives and cognitive development through play.

Methods

The study employs a comparative linguistic analysis of children's game names in Uzbek, English, and Russian, focusing on metaphorical elements. The following methods were used:

- 1. Data Collection:** A list of popular children's games from Uzbek, English, and Russian cultures was compiled. Each game's name was analyzed for its metaphorical content, with a focus on the imagery and cultural references embedded in the names.
- 2. Metaphor Identification:** Using the conceptual metaphor theory framework, each game's name was examined for underlying metaphors that connect concrete actions or objects in the game to abstract ideas or values.
- 3. Cultural Comparison:** The metaphorical elements in game names from the three languages were compared to identify both shared metaphors and unique cultural expressions.





4. Cognitive Analysis: An additional cognitive analysis was conducted to explore how the metaphors in these game names might influence children's cognitive development and understanding of their social and natural environments.

Results

The analysis revealed several key findings regarding the metaphorical nomination in children's game names across the three languages:

1. Uzbek Game Names: Metaphors in Uzbek children's game names often draw on nature and animals to symbolize strength, agility, or wisdom. For example, the game "Qoplon" (leopard) metaphorically associates the player with the strength and speed of the animal, while "Baliq tutish" (catch the fish) evokes the metaphor of cunning and quickness. These names reflect cultural values of nature, community, and traditional knowledge.

2. English Game Names: English children's game names frequently use metaphors of competition, exploration, and role-playing. For instance, "Tag" metaphorically represents the act of being 'marked' or singled out in a social context, while "Capture the Flag" evokes metaphors of conquest and territory. The focus on physicality and competition in these names reflects cultural ideals of individuality, achievement, and strategy.

3. Russian Game Names: Russian game names often use metaphorical elements related to heroism, endurance, and nature. The game "Казачьи разбойники" (Cossacks and Robbers) metaphorically draws from historical and social roles, representing themes of good versus evil or order versus chaos. "Горелки" (burners) metaphorically connects the idea of speed and evasion with the heat and danger of fire, reflecting a cultural focus on resilience and survival.

Discussion

The study demonstrates that metaphorical nomination in children's game names serves as a reflection of cultural values and cognitive frameworks in each language group. In Uzbek, the emphasis on animals and natural elements in game names reflects the cultural closeness to nature and a focus on traditional knowledge. In English, the metaphors of competition, conquest, and role-play mirror societal values of individualism and achievement. Meanwhile, in Russian, the metaphorical nomination often ties into historical narratives and social structures, reflecting a culture deeply rooted in its collective history and survival.





These findings suggest that while metaphorical nomination is a universal feature of language, its specific expressions in children's games vary widely depending on the cultural and social contexts. The metaphors in game names help children internalize and understand complex concepts such as cooperation, strategy, and social roles in a way that is accessible and enjoyable.

Conclusion

Metaphorical nomination in children's game names is a powerful linguistic tool that bridges play with cultural education and cognitive development. In Uzbek, English, and Russian, these metaphors reflect not only the activities of the games themselves but also the deeper cultural values that shape the socialization of children. By embedding abstract concepts such as strength, agility, heroism, and competition in game names, these cultures provide children with frameworks to understand their world through play.

This study highlights the importance of understanding the metaphorical content of language in children's activities, as these metaphors shape cognitive development and cultural identity from a young age. Future research could further explore how these metaphorical structures influence behavior and social learning in different cultural contexts.

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