

**THE ROLE OF ALLITERATION IN CHILDREN'S TONGUE TWISTERS: A
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH AND UZBEK EXAMPLES**

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Abstract: Tongue twisters are linguistic phenomena that challenge articulation through repetitive sounds, particularly alliteration—the repetition of initial consonant sounds. This paper examines the role of alliteration in children's tongue twisters in English and Uzbek languages. Alliteration enhances phonetic difficulty, aids speech development, and adds rhythmic appeal for children. Examples from both languages illustrate similarities in using alliteration for pronunciation practice, while highlighting phonological differences. The analysis underscores alliteration's universal function in folklore and education.

Keywords: alliteration, tongue twisters, children's folklore, English language, Uzbek language, phonetics

Introduction

Tongue twisters, known as "tez aytishlar" in Uzbek, are short phrases designed to be difficult to articulate rapidly due to similar or repeating sounds. They are prevalent in children's oral traditions worldwide, serving as playful tools for improving pronunciation, fluency, and diction. Alliteration plays a central role in many tongue twisters by repeating initial consonant sounds, creating both challenge and memorability.

In English, classic examples like "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers" rely heavily on alliteration to trip the tongue. Similarly, in Uzbek, phrases such as "Bu bog'cha boshqa bog'cha" use repetitive consonant clusters. This comparative study explores how alliteration functions in children's tongue twisters in these two languages, emphasizing its contributions to phonetic complexity and developmental benefits.

The Role of Alliteration in Tongue Twisters

Alliteration involves the repetition of the same initial consonant sound in closely placed words, making phrases rhythmic and memorable while increasing articulation difficulty. In tongue twisters, this device forces rapid tongue repositioning, often leading to speech errors when repeated quickly.

For children, alliteration in tongue twisters promotes phonological awareness, enhances speech clarity, and fosters language play. It is widely used in education and speech therapy to strengthen articulatory muscles and improve accent reduction.

Alliteration in English Children's Tongue Twisters

English tongue twisters frequently employ alliteration to target specific consonants, making them ideal for children's pronunciation practice. Prominent examples include:

"She sells seashells by the seashore." (Repetition of /s/ and /ʃ/ sounds creates sibilant challenges.)

"Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers." (Heavy /p/ alliteration combined with internal repetitions.)

"Betty Botter bought some butter, but she said, 'This butter's bitter.'" (Alliteration with /b/ emphasizes bilabial sounds.)

These examples demonstrate how alliteration not only heightens difficulty but also adds humor and rhythm, engaging children in repetitive practice.

Alliteration in Uzbek Children's Tongue Twisters

Uzbek tongue twisters, rooted in folk oral tradition, similarly utilize alliteration, often focusing on consonant clusters unique to Turkic phonology, such as velar and affricate sounds.

Common children's examples include:

"Bu bog'cha boshqa bog'cha." (Repetition of /b/ and guttural sounds in "bog'cha" and "boshqa.")

"Chaqaloq chaqaloqqa chaqchaq chaqdi." (Alliteration with /tʃ/ affricates, testing rapid articulation.)

"Tez aytishni tez-tez ayt." (Meta-alliteration emphasizing speed and repetition.)

These phrases exploit Uzbek's vowel harmony and consonant richness, creating challenges comparable to English but adapted to native phonemes.

Comparative Analysis

Both English and Uzbek children's tongue twisters rely on alliteration to generate phonetic obstacles, aiding diction development. English often targets sibilants (/s/, /ʃ/) and plosives (/p/, /b/), reflecting Indo-European traits, while Uzbek emphasizes affricates (/tʃ/) and gutturals, aligned with Turkic structures.

Similarities:

Alliteration enhances memorability and playfulness for children.

Both serve educational purposes in folklore.

Differences:

English examples frequently combine alliteration with assonance.

Uzbek ones integrate cultural elements, like everyday objects (e.g., "bog'cha" meaning kindergarten).

Overall, alliteration's role is universal: it amplifies difficulty while supporting language acquisition.

Conclusion

Alliteration is fundamental to the structure and appeal of children's tongue twisters in English and Uzbek, promoting phonetic skills through engaging repetition. This comparative view reveals shared linguistic strategies across cultures, highlighting tongue twisters' value in child development and cultural preservation. Future research could explore empirical effects on bilingual children.

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