CONTEMPORARY LINGUISTIC TRENDS IN THE STUDY OF TONGUE TWISTERS

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Abstract: This article examines the fact that modern linguistic trends require us to consider tongue twisters not within the confines of a single scientific field, but at the intersection of several scientific paradigms. Today, tongue twisters have become objects of study in phonetic-phonological analysis, articulatory phonology, psycholinguistics, cognitive linguistics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, cultural linguistics, pedagogical linguistics, and even computational linguistics. The reason for this is simple: tongue twisters, although short, engage multiple levels of the linguistic system, operating simultaneously.

Keywords: tongue twisters, sound repetition, sound system, phonetic analysis, discursive analysis

INTRODUCTION

Modern linguistic directions allow studying tongue twisters simultaneously as a phonetic, articulatory, cognitive, functional, pragmatic and linguocultural unit. Phonetic-phonological analysis identifies the sound center. Articulatory phonology reveals the mechanism of action. Psycholinguistics explains the process of error and memory. Pragmatics shows the power of utterance and laughter. Discourse analysis illuminates the situation, and linguocultural studies illuminates the image and cultural code. These directions, taken separately, give partial results, but when integrated, the complex essence of tongue twisters is revealed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Difficulty in tongue twisters is often due not to the similarity of sounds, but to the need for rapid alternation of speech organs. C. Browman and L. Goldstein explain phonological units as articulatory movements in articulatory phonology [3]. C. Wilshire describes the tongue twisters paradigm as a technique for studying phonological coding [8]. In this approach, tongue twisters are used as a material that purposefully causes speech errors. D. Acheson and M. MacDonald show that tongue twisters reveal the connection between verbal working memory and speech production [1]. Therefore, tongue twisters are natural and effective tool for testing cognitive processes. The alternation of /s/ and /ʃ/ in the English “She sells seashells” tests the speaker’s phonological ordering ability; in the Uzbek rapid speech “Qishda kishmish pishmasmish”, the density of /q/, /sh/, /s/, /m/ simultaneously loads memory and articulation. The pragmatic approach interprets these units as speech acts. In the theories of J. Austin and J. Searle, speech is considered not only as a means of providing information, but also as a means of performing a certain action [2],[7]. Fast speaking is such a unit. It contains hidden directives such as “say it”, “say it without mistakes”, “repeat it faster”, “who says it better?”. H. Grice’s approach is useful in explaining the mechanism of laughter and play in such texts. Conversational principles usually serve to ensure the effectiveness of information exchange [4]. D. Hymes’s ethnography of communication suggests analyzing a speech event

through such components as setting, participants, ends, act sequence, key, instrumentalities, norms and genre [5]

METHODOLOGIES

Currently, it is necessary to propose an integrated model for analyzing tongue twisters. Tongue twisters can be assessed in five dimensions: phonemic similarity, articulatory alternation, sound density, rhythm-rate load, and semantic-cultural attention factor: Phonemic similarity is determined by pairs such as /s-ʃ/, /r-l/, /q-k/. Articulatory alternation indicates the rapid movement of the lips, tongue tip, front of the tongue, back of the tongue, and palate. Sound density indicates the proportion of target sounds in the total text. Rhythm-rate load is related to the distribution of repetition, stress, syllables, and breath. The semantic-cultural attention factor indicates the ability of meaningful, humorous, or cultural images to draw attention from sound to meaning. If each criterion is scored from 0 to 3, the phonocognitive complexity of rapid utterances can be indicated as low, medium, or high. Such a model makes scientific analysis systematic and gives a clear result in comparison of English-Uzbek tongue twisters.

A practical example shows how this model works. For example, in the example “She sells seashells by the seashore”, the phonemic similarity is high, because the close sibilants /s/ and /ʃ/ alternate; the articulatory alternation is medium-high, because the prelingual movement moves between close points; the sound density is high; the rhythm-speed load is medium; the semantic-cultural attention factor is medium with the images of the sea and shells. In the tongue twister “Oq choynakka ko‘k qopqoq, ko‘k choynakka oq qopqoq” the alternation of /q/, /k/, /ch/ is very articulatorily active; the color opposition and the everyday object reinforce the cultural code. In the example “Red lorry, yellow lorry”, the sonorous difference /r-l/ is in the center; In "Qishda kishmish pishmasmish" the repetition of /q/, /sh/, /s/, /m/ and the paronymic proximity "qish-kishmish-pishmasmish" increase the cognitive load. In this way, each tongue twister is compared in the same model.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

From a methodological point of view, the most important condition for modern analysis is the creation of a corpus. The corpus should consist of at least 100-150 English and Uzbek tongue twisters, each unit should be classified by source, variation, language, phonetic center, articulatory type, cognitive load, pragmatic task, and linguocultural code. In N. Mamataliyeva’s study, it is noted that more than three thousand tongue twisters were analyzed [6]; in the new analysis, in addition to the number of materials, the quality of coding is important. If the source of each tongue twister is not clearly indicated, folk, didactic, and Internet variations will be mixed. If it is not determined which sound is in the center in each example, phonetic analysis will remain a general statement. If the phonetic function of each cultural unit is not indicated, linguocultural analysis will turn into only a subject enumeration. Therefore, modern directions require corpus, coding, and criterion-based evaluation. From a critical point of view, there are two limiting factors in the study of this genre. The first factor is their excessive folklorization: in this case, each tongue twister is seen as folk wisdom, but its sound, articulation and memory mechanisms are not revealed. The second factor is their excessive phoneticization: in this case, tongue twister is seen only as a sound exercise, but its cultural images, performance situation

and pragmatic power are ignored. A modern scientific approach must overcome these two limitations.

Tongue twisters may have folkloric roots, but each variant requires specific evidence to claim that it comes from the oral tradition of the people. Tongue twisters may be a phonetic exercise, but they are also wrong to consider its meaning as completely unimportant. The most correct way is to see phonetic form, performance, meaning, function and culture in a single system.

CONCLUSION

For linguistic analysis to yield practical results, conclusions should also be translated into practical recommendations. If English tongue twisters are chosen for practicing sibilants, interdental sounds and consonant clusters for foreign language learners, then Uzbek tongue twisters can be used to teach sounds such as /q/, /g‘/, /x/, /ng/, /sh/, /ch/. However, the level of complexity of each tongue twister must be indicated in advance. It is advisable to provide short texts with one or two sounds repeated at a low level, examples with alternating close sounds at a medium level, and texts with a combination of several articulatory movements and rhythmic pressure at a high level. Then the scientific analysis will become a methodological result that can be used in practical phonetics, speech culture, translation exercises and language and culture lessons. The final methodological requirement is that each conclusion should be linked to evidence. It is easy to make a general statement about tongue twisters, but for a scientific result, the source, corpus, phonetic sign, error type and cultural explanation must be indicated. Then, quick sayings appear not as a small folklore genre, but as a reliable object of research connecting various areas of linguistics.

This approach is especially important in comparing English and Uzbek. Because comparative analysis requires not only listing similarities and differences, but also showing the reasons for these differences related to the phonetic system, articulatory habits, speech situations, and cultural experience. Therefore, modern analysis should shed light on the cause, mechanism, and effect together.

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