

**Т. Кулаков** (*УО «Минский государственный областной лицей»*)

**В. А. Полещук, Н. Ю. Соколова** (*научные руководители*)

## **KEY CONCEPTS IN ENGLISH AND BELARUSIAN LULLABIES**

The relevance of the work is determined by the significance of the problem of the relationship between the language and culture. The hypothesis that the key concepts of English and Belarusian lullabies are the same was proposed. For the conceptual analysis 250 Belarusian and 35 English folk lullabies were taken. They were considered at the story level and the level of the whole text.

As a result of the conceptual analysis the hypothesis was partly proven. Although the same concepts both in Belarusian and English lullabies were found, they are made up of different images. Besides, there are some concepts typical of only Belarusian and English lullabies.

The wisdom of generations is reflected in fairy tales and legends, proverbs and sayings, songs and dances. Folk songs tell us about everything that happened to people: about happiness and grief, about birth and death, about the difficulties of everyday life, about the hope for a better life. People used to sing everywhere and on any occasion: while working in the field or at home, at weddings, on birthdays and other holidays.

The relevance of the research of key concepts of Belarusian and English lullabies is due to the fact that every day, every minute someone sings a lullaby in the world and passes it on as a heritage to the next generation. Nevertheless, many lullabies are forgotten. This is primarily because not all of them were collected in their time. Now that the number of traditional culture bearers is becoming smaller

every year, the possibility of collecting authentic texts seems more and more unlikely. That's why the lullabies that have already been recorded are of great value to researchers and their conceptual analysis is rather important.

The aim of the study was to investigate the features of concepts in lullabies of the English and Belarusian languages within the framework of linguocultural aspect. We came up with the hypothesis that the key concepts of English and Belarusian lullabies are the same or very similar.

The term "concept" in modern linguistics deals with the term "concept" that is intended to designate the content side of a linguistic sign, which allows to remove the functional limitation of the traditional terms "meaning" and "sense". The use of the term "concept" is connected with the deepening of the subject area of linguistics and the sphere of its interaction with other sciences, in particular, with philosophy and psychology.

The first thing a baby hears when it is born is its mother's speech. She is his guide and mentor at the first stages of life. Naturally, the baby does not yet realise the meaning of the words sung, although it perfectly perceives the intonation. The intonation of the lullaby fulfils its purpose: the lullaby is sung by the mother in a special way to soothe the baby and make it easier to fall asleep.

Lullaby song differs from other folklore genres first of all by its purpose – here along with aesthetic and educational function there is a pragmatic one: to make the child fall asleep. Invariably, in all nations, a lullaby does not require any instruments for its performance, only the voice is enough.

Lullabies have existed since ancient times. Scientists call different dates of their origin, but all of them are quite ancient. This is the rational link that, in spite of modern methods of education, has been preserved and practically unchanged.

The texts of lullabies are woven of nouns and verbs. Such lexical impoverishment is not accidental, because a child in the period when they start singing lullabies cannot yet understand abstract concepts. The song was mainly based on what the child could perceive with the senses. Through the lullaby song the child learns the primary vocabulary, without which it is impossible to cognise the surrounding world and develop thinking. That is why the introduction of words and concepts into the song is strictly limited.

250 Belarusian folk lullabies were taken for the research from different sources. The number of them is quite large, but it should be noted that there are many similar songs that differ only by a few lines.

A conceptual analysis of traditional English and Belarusian lullabies has been conducted at two levels: the story level and the level of the whole text. So, as a result of conceptual analysis of Belarusian lullabies at the story level, 7 main, leading concepts were identified: animals, nature, gift, sleep, work, family and personality. If we take into account the level of the whole text, then for 250 lullabies considered by the author there are: 85 – environment, 83 songs – care, 33 – good wishes, 37 – call to sleep and 12 – intimidation.

35 different English lullabies were analysed as well. So, as a result of conceptual analysis of English lullabies at the story level, 7 main, leading concepts were identified: animals, nature, gift, sleep, tiredness, mother and child. If we take

into account the level of the whole text, then for 35 original lullabies considered by the author there are: 9 songs – care, 8 – cosiness, 6 – call to sleep, 6 – surrounding world, 4 – dream and 2 – intimidation.

As a result of the conceptual analysis of Belarusian and English lullabies at the story level, similar concepts were identified: animals, nature, gift and dream.

The concept “animals” in Belarusian lullabies is represented primarily by the image of a cat. 21,2 %. Apart from the cat, images of domestic animals are quite often found: dog, chicken, horse. In English lullabies the image of a cat is absent. Domestic animals are those with which traditional economy is connected: cows, sheep, horses. Wild animals are represented by those that live in England: goats, deer, fish, birds and frogs. In Belarusian lullabies wild animals are rare. The most frightening character is the wolf.

The concept "nature" in Belarusian lullabies is expressed by a great variety of images. These are natural objects, such as forest, marsh, meadow and field. There are also a variety of plants of native flora. In English lullabies the concept of nature is represented by various natural phenomena: night, stars, wind, day, sun, rainbow, clouds. Plants and flowers are absent in English lullabies.

One of the effective ways to achieve the purpose of the lullaby – to put the child to sleep – is to promise him a reward or a gift on condition that he falls asleep (the concept “gift”) In English lullabies rabbit skin, cake, sultanas and almonds are presented as a gift. The gift can also be an animal, a horse or a bird. In Belarusian lullabies, children are offered something tasty as a present: a pie, gingerbread, fish or items of clothing such as a belt, shirt, trousers and boots.

The concept “sleep” is conditioned by the specificity and purpose of the lullaby as such, the main purpose of which is to help the child to fall asleep. Not surprisingly, this concept is observed in lullabies of both languages.

Thus, although in lullabies of both languages the same concepts are highlighted, the images that make up these concepts are different.

The following highlighted concepts are close in essence, but also have a significant difference.

In Belarusian lullabies it is the concept “family”, and in English lullabies it is the concept “mother”. A frequent character in English lullabies is the mother, often depicted in the lullaby in the present tense, at the moment of singing the song next to the child. In Belarusian lullabies there are images of all family members: mum, dad, grandma, grandpa, brother, sister, son. The main character in the family is the grandmother. She plays an important role in the child's life. It was the grandmother who was at home and took care of the child, while the father and other family members worked in the field or in the yard to feed the family.

The next pair of concepts is the concept “child” in English lullabies and the concept “personality” in Belarusian lullabies. Almost all Belarusian lullabies are very personal. Children are addressed by name. Here one can find the most beautiful Belarusian names: Vanechka, Marylka, Mihas, Syarozha, Yurka,

Rygorka, Valechka, Svetochka, Yanka. Many English lullabies directly mention the child, but the child is not called by name, such addresses as my little baby, mummy's delight, my darling are used.

The concept of “tiredness” is also found in English lullabies. In the content of the lullaby the necessity to go to bed is explained by the fact that the child is tired and needs to rest. The concept of tiredness is absent in Belarusian lullabies.

The author identified the concept “work” in the plot of Belarusian lullabies. Belarusian peasant families always had a lot of work in the fields and on farms. That is why mum sometimes combined the process of rocking the baby with some work, for example, spinning.

At the level of the whole text both in English and Belarusian lullabies such concepts as “surrounding world”, “care”, “call to sleep” and “intimidation” were identified. Besides, there are English lullabies with the concept of “cosiness” and “dream”. Many Belarusian lullabies reflect the concepts of “good wishes” and “love”.

Thus, the hypothesis that the key concepts of English and Belarusian lullabies are the same or very similar can be considered partly proven. Although we have found the same concepts both in Belarusian and English lullabies, they are made up of different images. Besides, there are some concepts which are typical of only Belarusian lullabies and English ones.