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Linguistic Aspects of Mythological Units in Uzbek and English Languages: Comparative Analysis

Abstract

This research examines the linguistic features of mythological units in Uzbek and English languages, analyzing their structural, semantic, and functional characteristics from a comparative perspective. The study employs a corpus-based approach to identify and classify mythological lexical units in both languages, revealing significant patterns in their formation, usage, and cultural embedding. Results indicate that while English mythological units demonstrate greater polysemy and metaphorical extension into contemporary discourse, Uzbek mythological units retain stronger connections to traditional belief systems and oral literature. Both languages show distinct patterns in word-formation processes when creating mythological terminology, with Uzbek favoring affixation and compounding based on Turkic roots, while English draws heavily from Greek, Roman, and Germanic etymological sources. The functional analysis reveals that mythological units serve not only as cultural referents but also as productive sources for contemporary idioms, metaphors, and conceptual frameworks in both languages, though with differing degrees of semantic transformation. This comparative study contributes to the fields of cultural linguistics, lexicology, and mythological studies by providing insights into how linguistic structures encode and transmit mythological concepts across different language families.

Keywords: *Mythological units, comparative linguistics, linguoculturology, Uzbek language, English language, semantic fields, lexical borrowing, cultural metaphors, etymology, conceptual metaphor*

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Özbək və ingilis dillərində mifoloji vahidlərin linqvistik aspektləri: müqayisəli təhlil

Xülasə

Bu tədqiqatda özbək və ingilis dillərində mifoloji vahidlərin linqvistik xüsusiyyətləri araşdırılır, onların struktur, semantik və funksional xüsusiyyətləri müqayisəli şəkildə təhlil edilir. Tədqiqat hər iki dildə mifoloji leksik vahidləri müəyyən etmək və təsnif etmək üçün korpusa əsaslanan yanaşmadan istifadə edir, onların formalaşmasında, istifadəsində və mədəni şəkildə yerləşdirilməsində mühüm nümunələri aşkar edir. Nəticələr göstərir ki, ingilis mifoloji vahidləri müasir diskursa daha çox çoxmənalılıq və metaforik genişlənmə nümayiş etdirsə də, özbək mifoloji vahidləri ənənəvi inanc sistemləri və şifahi ədəbiyyatla daha güclü əlaqə saxlayır. Hər iki dil mifoloji terminologiyayı yaradarkən söz əmələ gəlmə proseslərində fərqli nümunələr göstərir, özbək türk köklərinə əsaslanan affiksasiya və mürəkkəbləşməyə üstünlük verir, ingilis dili isə daha çox yunan, roma və alman etimoloji mənbələrindən istifadə edir. Funksional təhlil göstərir ki, mifoloji vahidlər təkcə mədəni referent kimi deyil, həm də müxtəlif semantik transformasiya dərəcələrinə malik olsalar da, hər iki dildə müasir idiomlar, metaforalar və konseptual çərçivələr üçün məhsuldar mənbə rolunu

oynayır. Bu müqayisəli tədqiqat linqvistik strukturların müxtəlif dil ailələri arasında mifoloji anlayışları necə kodlaşdırdığı və ötürdüyünə dair anlayışlar təqdim etməklə mədəni dilçilik, leksikologiya və mifoloji tədqiqatlar sahələrinə töhfə verir.

Açar sözlər: *mifoloji vahidlər, müqayisəli dilçilik, linqvokulturologiya, özbək dili, ingilis dili, semantik sahələr, leksik alınma, mədəni metaforalar, etimologiya, konseptual metafora*

Introduction

Mythology represents one of the most ancient forms of cultural knowledge and collective memory, encoded and transmitted through language. As repositories of pre-scientific worldviews, ethical principles, and cultural archetypes, mythological narratives have long shaped human understanding of natural and social phenomena. These cultural understandings become embedded in language through specific lexical units that denote mythological beings, objects, places, and concepts. The linguistic encoding of mythological knowledge thus offers a unique window into historical cultural consciousness and its evolution across generations.

Comparing the linguistic aspects of mythological units across languages from different families provides valuable insights into both universal and culture-specific patterns of conceptualization. Uzbek, a Turkic language with significant Persian and Arabic influences due to historical and cultural contacts, possesses a rich mythological vocabulary drawing from pre-Islamic Turkic beliefs, Zoroastrian elements, and Islamic traditions. English, as a Germanic language extensively influenced by Latin, Greek, and Celtic sources, carries mythological units derived from diverse European traditions. The comparison of these two linguistically unrelated systems offers a fertile ground for examining how different cultures linguistically encode supernatural and mythological concepts.

The linguistic study of mythological units goes beyond mere cataloging of terms; it involves analyzing how these units are formed, how they develop semantically, how they function in discourse, and how they relate to broader cultural knowledge systems. Mythological units often undergo processes of semantic transformation, extending from literal references to metaphorical usages in contemporary discourse. They frequently serve as sources for idioms, euphemisms, and conceptual metaphors that structure everyday thought and communication, even in modern, secularized contexts (Allwood, Gärdenfors, 1999; Atabaki, 2009).

Despite the rich potential for cross-linguistic inquiry in this domain, comparative studies examining mythological units in Uzbek and English remain scarce. Previous research has typically focused on either documenting mythological elements within a single cultural tradition or tracing etymological connections within language families. The present study aims to bridge this gap by adopting a systematic linguistic approach to comparing mythological units across these two unrelated languages.

Research

Theoretical Framework. This study is situated at the intersection of several theoretical approaches. From cognitive linguistics, we draw on conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) and frame semantics (Fillmore, 1982) to understand how mythological units contribute to conceptual frameworks and knowledge organization. From ethnolinguistics and cultural linguistics, we adopt the view that language serves as a repository of cultural knowledge and that lexical units reflect cultural models and categories (Sharifian, 2017).

Additionally, the study employs principles from comparative lexicology (Zgusta, 1971) and etymological analysis to trace the historical development of mythological units. The functional dimension of the analysis draws on discourse analysis and pragmatics to examine how these units are deployed in contemporary communication contexts.

This integrated theoretical framework allows for a comprehensive analysis that accounts for the structural, semantic, and functional dimensions of mythological units across the two languages, while also considering their historical development and cultural embeddedness.

Methods. Research Design. This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining corpus-based quantitative analysis with qualitative interpretive methods to examine mythological units in

Uzbek and English languages. The research design followed a four-phase process: (1) corpus compilation and data collection, (2) structural analysis, (3) semantic analysis, and (4) functional analysis.

Corpus Compilation and Data Collection. Two specialized corpora were developed for this study: the Uzbek Mythological Corpus (UMC) and the English Mythological Corpus (EMC). The UMC consisted of 250 texts (approximately 780,000 words) from various genres including folklore collections, literary works, historical texts, and ethnographic studies published between 1950 and 2023. The EMC comprised 275 texts (approximately 850,000 words) from similar genres published during the same period.

Mythological units were identified and extracted from these corpora based on predetermined criteria:

1. Lexical items directly referring to supernatural beings, objects, or phenomena;
2. Terms denoting mythological places, events, or time periods;
3. Words and phrases associated with mythological rituals, practices, or concepts;
4. Names of deities, heroes, and other mythological characters.

The initial extraction yielded 842 unique mythological units in Uzbek and 1,157 in English. After eliminating items with fewer than five occurrences in the corpus, the final dataset comprised 578 Uzbek and 743 English mythological units for further analysis.

Supplementary data sources included:

- The Uzbek National Corpus (15 million words)
- The British National Corpus (100 million words)
- Specialized dictionaries of mythology and folklore
- Etymological dictionaries for both languages

Structural Analysis. The structural analysis focused on morphological composition, word-formation patterns, and etymological origins of mythological units in both languages. Each unit was classified according to:

1. Word structure (simple, derived, compound, or phrasal);
2. Word-formation processes (derivation, compounding, conversion, borrowing);
3. Etymological source (native, borrowed, or hybrid)

For derived and compound words, constituent morphemes were identified and analyzed for their semantic contribution to the overall meaning (Bascom, 1965). Statistical analysis was performed to determine the frequency distribution of different structural patterns in each language.

Semantic Analysis. The semantic analysis involved several complementary approaches:

1. Componential analysis: Identifying the semantic features of each mythological unit;
2. Semantic field mapping: Organizing units into conceptual domains (e.g., celestial beings, underworld entities, supernatural phenomena);
3. Polysemy analysis: Documenting and categorizing multiple meanings of mythological units;
4. Connotative meaning assessment: Evaluating emotional, cultural, and pragmatic associations.

The semantic relationship between mythological units and their contemporary extensions was mapped using a modified version of the Historical Thesaurus methodology (Kay et al., 2009), which traces semantic development over time.

Functional Analysis. The functional analysis examined how mythological units operate in discourse contexts. This involved:

1. Collocation analysis: Identifying statistically significant word associations;
2. Phraseological analysis: Documenting fixed expressions, idioms, and formulaic language incorporating mythological units;
3. Metaphorical mapping analysis: Analyzing conceptual metaphors and metonymies based on mythological references;
4. Discourse function analysis: Identifying rhetorical and pragmatic functions in contemporary usage.

Concordance lines (n=150 per unit) were extracted for high-frequency mythological units in both languages and analyzed for patterns of usage across different genres and time periods.

Data Analysis Procedures. The data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative analysis included frequency calculations, distribution statistics, and corpus linguistic measures such as mutual information scores for collocational strength. Qualitative analysis involved close reading of contextual usage, interpretive categorization, and cross-linguistic comparison of semantic and functional patterns (Abdurahmonov, Mahmudov, 2011).

Inter-rater reliability was ensured through independent coding of a subset of data (20%) by two researchers, with a Cohen's kappa coefficient of 0.84, indicating strong agreement. Discrepancies were resolved through discussion and consensus-building.

Ethical Considerations. All texts included in the corpora were either in the public domain or used with appropriate permissions. When collecting data from contemporary speakers, informed consent was obtained, and participants were informed about the research purpose. The study protocol was approved by the University Research Ethics Committee (Protocol #UZ-EN-2023-047).

Results. Structural Characteristics of Mythological Units. The analysis of morphological structure revealed significant differences between Uzbek and English mythological units (Rakhmatullayev, 2000). Table 1 presents the distribution of structural types across both languages.

Within derived words, affixation patterns showed language-specific tendencies. In Uzbek, the most productive suffixes in forming mythological units were *-chi* (agentive), *-lik* (abstract quality), and *-don* (container/place). For example:

- *afsunchi* ('sorcerer', from *afsun* 'spell' + *-chi*)
- *alvastlik* ('the quality of being an *alvasti*', a female demon)
- *arvohdon* ('place of spirits', from *arvoh* 'spirit' + *-don*)

In English, the most frequent derivational affixes were *-er/-or* (agentive), *-ism* (system of belief), and *-ic* (adjectival). For example:

- *soothsayer* (from *sooth* 'truth' + *-sayer*)
- *shamanism* (from *shaman* + *-ism*)
- *demonic* (from *demon* + *-ic*)

Compound word formation in mythological units also revealed distinctive patterns. Uzbek compounds predominantly followed the modifier-head structure, with the first element typically specifying a characteristic of the second element:

- *olovqush* ('firebird', from *olov* 'fire' + *qush* 'bird')
- *suvadam* ('water man', from *suv* 'water' + *adam* 'man')
- *yerosti* ('underworld', from *yer* 'earth' + *osti* 'under')

English compounds displayed more diverse structural patterns, including modifier-head (*werewolf*), head-modifier (*thundergod*), and coordinate compounds (*witchdoctor*).

The etymological analysis revealed that 41.2% of Uzbek mythological units were of Turkic origin, 32.8% from Persian, 18.5% from Arabic, and 7.5% from other sources. In contrast, English mythological units were predominantly derived from Greek (34.7%), Latin (27.3%), Germanic (21.9%), and Celtic (9.2%) sources, with the remaining 6.9% from diverse origins including Sanskrit, Hebrew, and various indigenous languages from colonized regions.

Semantic Features of Mythological Units. The semantic field analysis identified 14 major conceptual domains across both languages, with varying distributions as shown in Table 2.

Table 1. Distribution of Mythological Units Across Semantic Fields

| Semantic Field | Uzbek (%) | English (%) |
|------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Supernatural beings | 32.5 | 28.7 |
| Mythological places | 13.8 | 16.2 |
| Magical objects | 11.2 | 13.9 |
| Supernatural phenomena | 10.6 | 9.8 |
| Mythological events | 7.3 | 8.5 |
| Cosmological concepts | 8.7 | 6.4 |

| | | |
|---------------------|-----|-----|
| Ritual practices | 9.2 | 5.8 |
| Fate and destiny | 2.8 | 3.9 |
| Afterlife concepts | 1.9 | 3.4 |
| Prophetic phenomena | 1.2 | 1.8 |
| Other | 0.8 | 1.6 |

Both languages showed the highest concentration of mythological units in the category of supernatural beings, but with notable differences in subcategorization. Uzbek exhibited a richer inventory of nature-associated spirits (n=78 unique units) compared to English (n=41), while English contained more units referring to hybrid creatures (n=67) than Uzbek (n=39).

The polysemy analysis revealed that English mythological units had a higher average number of distinct meanings (mean=3.7, SD=1.8) compared to Uzbek units (mean=2.3, SD=1.2), $t(1319)=15.63$, $p<0.001$. This indicates more extensive semantic development and metaphorical extension in English. For example, the English word "giant" has developed at least six distinct meanings, ranging from its original mythological sense to metaphorical applications in astronomy ("giant star"), botany ("giant sequoia"), and business ("industry giant").

Connotative meanings showed interesting patterns of cultural divergence. In Uzbek, mythological units related to female supernatural beings carried stronger negative connotations (mean valence rating=-0.78, SD=0.24) compared to their English counterparts (mean=-0.45, SD=0.31), $t(97)=5.82$, $p<0.001$. Conversely, English showed stronger negative connotations for underworld entities (mean=-0.83, SD=0.18) than Uzbek (mean=-0.62, SD=0.26), $t(73)=4.37$, $p<0.001$.

Functional Characteristics of Mythological Units. The collocation analysis revealed that Uzbek mythological units most frequently occurred with verbs denoting appearance (*paydo bo'lmoq* 'to appear'), disappearance (*g'oyib bo'lmoq* 'to disappear'), and power (*hukmronlik qilmoq* 'to rule'). In English, the strongest collocates were adjectives indicating size (*enormous*, *gigantic*), emotional impact (*terrifying*, *awe-inspiring*), and authenticity (*real*, *true*, *legendary*).

Phraseological analysis identified 287 fixed expressions containing mythological units in Uzbek and 412 in English. These expressions served various functions, as shown in Table 3.

Table 2. Functional Types of Phraseological Units Containing Mythological References

| Function | Uzbek examples | English examples |
|------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| Comparison | <i>dev kabi kuchli</i> (strong as a giant) | <i>as strong as a titan</i> |
| Intensification | <i>shayton ham qo'rqadigan</i> (even the devil fears it) | <i>like the devil himself</i> |
| Warning | <i>albastilar olib ketadi</i> (the alvastis will take you away) | <i>the bogeyman will get you</i> |
| Characterization | <i>pari yuzli</i> (fairy-faced) | <i>siren song</i> |
| Explanation | <i>jinlar aralashgan</i> (jinns have interfered) | <i>gremlins in the machinery</i> |

The metaphorical mapping analysis identified multiple patterns of conceptual extension from mythological domains to everyday concepts. In Uzbek, dominant mappings included:

1. SUPERNATURAL BEINGS → HUMAN CHARACTER TRAITS

- *pari kabi go'zal* ('beautiful like a fairy')
- *dev kabi kuchli* ('strong like a giant')

2. SUPERNATURAL INTERVENTIONS → UNEXPECTED EVENTS

- *jin urgandek* ('as if struck by a jinn')
- *ko'z tegdi* ('the evil eye affected it')

In English, prominent mappings included:

1. MYTHOLOGICAL BEINGS → SOCIAL ROLES

- *guardian angel*

- *mentor* (from the character in Homer's Odyssey)
- 2. MYTHOLOGICAL PLACES → EMOTIONAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL STATES
- *in seventh heaven*
- *pandora's box*
- *between scylla and charybdis*

The discourse function analysis showed that both languages employed mythological units for similar rhetorical purposes, but with different frequencies (Table 4).

Table 3. Discourse Functions of Mythological Units in Contemporary Usage

| Discourse Function | Uzbek (%) | English (%) | χ^2 | p-value |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-------------|----------|---------|
| Explanation of natural phenomena | 23.7 | 9.3 | 38.42 | <0.001 |
| Cultural identity reinforcement | 19.8 | 14.6 | 6.71 | 0.010 |
| Moral instruction | 17.5 | 12.8 | 5.94 | 0.015 |
| Hyperbole | 13.2 | 21.7 | 15.63 | <0.001 |
| Euphemism | 10.4 | 16.2 | 9.28 | 0.002 |
| Humor | 8.6 | 13.9 | 8.45 | 0.004 |
| Other | 6.8 | 11.5 | 7.92 | 0.005 |

Uzbek showed significantly higher usage of mythological units for explaining natural phenomena, reinforcing cultural identity, and providing moral instruction. English demonstrated greater deployment of mythological references for hyperbole, euphemism, and humor. All these differences were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

Diachronic analysis of usage patterns revealed that both languages showed declining frequencies of literal references to mythological concepts over the 1950-2023 period, but with increasing metaphorical extensions. This trend was more pronounced in English (correlation between year and metaphorical usage: $r = 0.78$, $p < 0.001$) than in Uzbek ($r = 0.43$, $p < 0.01$).

Discussion. The structural, semantic, and functional analyses of mythological units in Uzbek and English reveal both universal tendencies and language-specific patterns that merit further interpretation. These findings contribute to our understanding of how linguistic systems encode mythological concepts and how these encodings reflect broader cultural frameworks (Basilov, 1994; Goldstein, 1964).

Structural Patterns and Their Cultural Implications. The predominance of derived words in Uzbek mythological terminology compared to the higher frequency of simple words in English reflects fundamental differences in the morphological typology of these languages. Uzbek, as an agglutinative Turkic language, naturally favors affixation as a primary word-formation strategy. This structural tendency allows for more transparent relationships between mythological concepts, as the morphological components often provide semantic cues about the nature or function of the entity (e.g., *afsunchi* clearly indicates an agent who performs *afsun* 'spells').

The prevalence of borrowed mythological terminology in both languages—from Persian and Arabic in Uzbek, and from Greek and Latin in English—reflects the historical patterns of cultural contact and influence. However, an important distinction emerges in how these borrowings have been integrated into each language. In Uzbek, borrowed mythological terms often maintain clearer connections to their source traditions and frequently coexist with native Turkic equivalents, creating parallel systems (e.g., Arabic *jinn* alongside Turkic *ipe*). In English, the extensive naturalization and semantic transformation of borrowed mythological terms have often obscured their original meanings and contexts, leading to more autonomous semantic development.

These structural patterns reflect deeper aspects of cultural history. The multi-layered etymological sources in Uzbek mythological vocabulary (Turkic, Persian, Arabic) correspond to the historical superimposition of belief systems in Central Asia: indigenous Turkic shamanism overlaid with Zoroastrian elements, followed by Islamic influences. Similarly, the diverse etymological sources in

English mythological vocabulary (Germanic, Celtic, Greco-Roman) reflect the historical stratification of pagan traditions, Classical influences, and Christian reinterpretations.

Semantic Evolution and Cultural Worldviews. The semantic analysis reveals that while both languages organize mythological concepts into similar broad categories (supernatural beings, places, objects, etc.), they differ significantly in their internal categorization and semantic development. The richer inventory of nature-associated spirits in Uzbek compared to the greater number of hybrid creatures in English reflects different conceptual emphases in the respective mythological systems. The Uzbek pattern suggests a worldview more focused on the personification of natural forces and locations (*suv parisi* 'water fairy', *tog' odami* 'mountain man'), while the English pattern indicates greater interest in categorical boundary-crossing and transformation (*werewolf*, *mermaid*, *centaur*).

The higher degree of polysemy in English mythological units suggests more extensive semantic bleaching and metaphorical extension, consistent with earlier secularization processes in Western societies compared to Central Asian contexts. As mythological concepts lose their literal religious significance, they become available for novel semantic applications. This explains why terms like "titan," "odyssey," or "pandora's box" have developed rich networks of figurative meanings in English, while their Uzbek equivalents often retain closer ties to their original mythological referents.

The analysis of connotative meanings reveals how mythological units encode cultural attitudes and values. The stronger negative connotations associated with female supernatural beings in Uzbek mythological vocabulary reflect traditional gender constructions in Central Asian societies, where female autonomy and power have often been viewed with suspicion. Conversely, the stronger negative associations with underworld entities in English mirror Western theological traditions that sharply differentiate heavenly and hellish realms, compared to more fluid cosmological boundaries in Central Asian traditions influenced by shamanic practices.

Functional Adaptation in Contemporary Discourse. The functional analysis demonstrates how mythological units have been adapted to serve contemporary communicative needs in both languages, though with different emphases. The greater use of mythological references for explaining natural phenomena in Uzbek suggests the persistent role of mythological frameworks in everyday reasoning about the physical world. This pattern is consistent with the continued vitality of traditional beliefs in rural Uzbek communities, where explanations involving supernatural intervention remain culturally acceptable alongside scientific accounts (Rahmonov, 2014; Mamadaliyev, 2015).

The more frequent deployment of mythological references for humorous and hyperbolic effects in English indicates a greater distance from literal belief. When mythological concepts are no longer treated as potential realities, they become available for creative and playful manipulation. This functional shift in English parallels the semantic development discussed earlier, with both reflecting the consequences of secularization processes.

The diachronic analysis showing increasing metaphorical extensions in both languages, but more rapidly in English, points to an ongoing process of mythological vocabulary adapting to contemporary needs. Rather than disappearing from the lexicon as literal beliefs wane, mythological units undergo functional specialization, finding new niches in the communicative ecosystem. This process appears to be universal, though its pace varies according to sociocultural factors.

Theoretical Implications. These findings have several implications for linguistic theory. First, they support the view that lexical systems are not merely collections of labels but structured repositories of cultural knowledge. The systematic differences in how Uzbek and English encode mythological concepts reflect different underlying conceptual frameworks and cultural histories.

Second, the research demonstrates the value of combining structural, semantic, and functional analyses to understand the full complexity of lexical domains. Each level of analysis reveals different aspects of how languages organize conceptual territories and how these organizations evolve over time.

Third, the study provides evidence for both universality and relativity in lexical semantics. The similar broad semantic fields across these unrelated languages suggest universal tendencies in how humans conceptualize supernatural domains, while the differences in internal categorization,

connotative meanings, and functional adaptations point to the influence of specific cultural and historical factors.

Finally, the findings challenge simplistic views of secularization as merely the disappearance of religious concepts from language and thought. Instead, they suggest a process of functional redistribution, whereby mythological concepts gain new semantic and pragmatic functions as their literal religious significance diminishes. This perspective helps explain the persistence of mythological vocabulary in contemporary discourse across cultures.

Limitations and Future Directions. Several limitations of this study should be acknowledged. First, the corpus-based approach, while enabling systematic analysis, cannot capture the full richness of mythological concepts as experienced in living cultural contexts. Ethnographic approaches could complement this linguistic analysis by investigating how speakers actually understand and use mythological references in everyday interactions.

Second, the focus on two languages, while allowing for detailed comparison, limits the generalizability of the findings. Future research could extend this comparative framework to additional languages, particularly from other language families, to test whether the patterns identified here reflect broader typological tendencies or specific cultural-historical developments.

Third, the diachronic analysis covered only the period from 1950 to 2023, providing a relatively short time window for observing semantic change. Historical linguistic approaches extending further back could provide valuable insights into the longer trajectories of semantic development in mythological vocabulary (Kay, Roberts, Samuels, Wotherspoon, 2009).

Future research directions might include:

1. Investigating the comprehension and interpretation of mythological references among contemporary speakers, particularly across generations, to assess ongoing semantic shifts;
2. Examining how mythological units function in specialized discourses, such as literature, politics, or advertising;
3. Analyzing how translation practices handle mythological references, particularly when equivalent concepts are absent in the target language;
4. Exploring how new mythological concepts (e.g., from popular culture) are integrated into existing semantic networks.

Conclusion

This comparative analysis of mythological units in Uzbek and English has revealed systematic patterns in how these unrelated languages encode supernatural concepts. The findings demonstrate that mythological vocabulary constitutes not merely an archaic lexical stratum but a dynamic component of the linguistic system that continues to evolve in response to changing communicative needs.

The structural analysis identified language-specific preferences in word-formation patterns, with Uzbek favoring derivation through affixation and English showing a higher proportion of simple lexical units. These differences reflect the typological characteristics of each language but also suggest different approaches to conceptualizing mythological entities.

The semantic analysis revealed both similarities in broad conceptual organization and significant differences in categorization, polysemy, and connotative meanings. English mythological units demonstrated greater semantic extension and metaphorical productivity, while Uzbek units maintained stronger connections to their original referents and contexts.

The functional analysis showed how mythological units serve various communicative purposes in contemporary discourse, with Uzbek showing greater use for explanation and cultural reinforcement, and English displaying more frequent deployment for rhetorical effects like hyperbole and humor.

These linguistic patterns reflect broader cultural and historical developments, particularly the different trajectories of secularization in Western and Central Asian societies. Rather than

disappearing from the lexicon as literal beliefs wane, mythological units undergo functional specialization and semantic extension, finding new niches in the communicative ecosystem.

This research contributes to our understanding of the relationship between language, thought, and culture by demonstrating how lexical systems encode not only referential content but also cultural frameworks, historical experiences, and conceptual models. The comparative study of mythological vocabulary offers a window into both universal cognitive patterns and cultural-historical specificities, revealing how humans across different linguistic traditions conceptualize and communicate about domains beyond everyday experience.

Future research can build on these findings by extending the comparative framework to additional languages, investigating contemporary usage patterns through ethnographic methods, and exploring the ongoing evolution of mythological references in response to globalization and cultural exchange.

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