

## THE ALGORITHM TO COMPLEX STUDY OF OBSOLETE WORDS AND FIGURATIVE MEANS IN FOLK MUSIC

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**Abstract.** *A study of the texts by one of the most popular performers in contemporary folk music Loreena McKennitt was conducted to identify obsolete words and archaisms. A definition or synonym was given to every linguistic unit under study. The modifiers frequently used in preposition to the obsolete words were analyzed in British and American English. The semantic structure of the material involved four parameters: person, artifact, action, and time.*

**Keywords:** *obsolete words, archaisms, modifier, folk music, thematic classification.*

A complex algorithm is applied to the research described in this paper. The hypothesis of the research is that obsolete words provide the context and semantic groundings for thematic classification. Furthermore, methodological integration allows thorough research procedure and thus detailed results.

The subject of our research are obsolete words that are used in folk songs of singer Loreena McKennitt (1982-present days). The goal is to explore the use of the old English language in modern realities. This goal defines research tasks: 1. to select lyrics in contemporary folk style; 2. to identify obsolete words and figurative means; 3. to classify elicited units according to the parameters; 4. to choose similar words and expressions for them; 5. to find the modifiers that are most commonly used.

**The first stage (I)** was the choice between contemporary performers in the style of folk. Loreena McKennitt stands out for a special approach to creating text, as she bases her songs on legends or traditions. Mystical singing, Shakespearean tragedies and an abundance of historical events allow the listener to plunge into the Middle Ages of Europe.

**At the second stage (II)**, we used the method of continuous sampling to select texts. In the course of the study, 10 obsolete words from three songs of the singer were selected. Traditional lullaby "Balulalow" (1987), version of Scottish folk song "Annachie Gordon" (1989) and "Blacksmith" (1985) which is a traditional

English folk song [1]. As a result, we analyzed 10 words and expressions. We used the Internet resource to identify and understand obsolete words. Dictionaries: Wiktionary [2], Cambridge Dictionary [3], Dictionary.com [4], Merriam-Webster dictionary [5] and Oxford living dictionaries [6]; corpora: the British National Corpus (BNC) [7] and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) [8]. The application of corpora texts allowed a wide range of contexts, used to obtain modifiers. The methodology was proved effective when analyzed professional jargon, and its' figurative means, in particular [9, p. 94].

**The third stage (III)** comprised the analysis of the dictionary definitions of the units under study. Due to the complexity of the stage, a stylistic marking of the studied material is implemented. In the texts by Loreena McKennitt, we found three obsolete words: "**Rycht Balulalow**" with the meaning "*Tender Song*", and word "**unto**" meaning "*up to the time*", marked as obsolete and poetic. Two archaisms: "**tide**", or "*time*" and "**I beg for my bread**" with the meaning "*Live by begging*" and two words with a mark "rare": "**Maidens**" synonymic to "*unmarried young woman*" and the expression "**Gold to my head**" meaning "*to provide*". The word "**Billycock**", meaning *bowler hat*, was stylistically marked as historical. Moreover, idiomatic expressions like "**Heart it turned to stone**" and "**God Almighty**" were emphasized.

## Thematic classification

1. Person	1. Artifact
2. Personal action	2. Characteristic of artifact
	3. Action of artifact
	4. Temporal characteristic

**The IV stage** of the research is marked by the distribution according to thematic classifications [10, p. 93]. Based on the values of the words found, sorting was carried out into the corresponding groups: person (Maidens), personal action (I beg for my bread, gold to my head, God Almighty); artifact (Balulalow, Billycock), characteristic of artifact (Rycht), action of artifact (heart it turned to stone), temporal characteristic (unto, tide).

**The fifth stage (V)** rested on the study of the nearest context of the words and combinations under study. With regard to the theory of context environment, introduced by M.T. Tagiev and developed in the works of A.V. Kunin, explicate and structurally binding relationships are studied. Thus, Tagiev calls the construction formed "on the basis of the actual structural connection between phraseological units and the unit associated with it, the configuration [11]. The context was borrowed from the texts of the British National Corpus (BNC), the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) and lyrics. The elements in the preposition to the units under study were explored [12]. The analysis demonstrates the predominance of the following modifiers:

- Noun includes 3 words: (1) Publicist: *I in the **role** of God Almighty*; (2) Lyrics: *With **Annachie Gordon** I beg for my bread*; (3) Publicist: *He escaped and reached **home** by begging*.

- The following verbs were studied: (1) Review: *Karine Polwart **sang** Balulalow live at The Queen's Hall*; (2)

Lyrics: ***Save** God Almighty*; (3) Publicist: *and then the next one is **come** unto him*:

- 3 adjective are as following: (1) Lyrics: *And sing that **rycht** Balulalow*; (2) Lyrics: *And his good **black** Billycock on*; (3) News: *Economic factors alone don't account for the **rising** tide of deaths of despair*.

- The lyrics demonstrate the application of the preposition:

1. Lyrics: *young Annachie came home **on** the tide*

- 6 pronouns studied comprise: (1) Lyrics: *And sing **that** rycht Balulalow; And before I marry Sultan **his** gold to my head; When she and **her** maidens so merry should have been*; (2) News: *Chinese-made passenger jetliner is making **its** maiden test*; (3) Lyrics: *he kissed her cold till **his** heart it turned to stone*; (4) Publicist: *Sweat trickled from under **his** billycock hat*.

- The conjunction was found in the following context: (1) Lyrics: ***But** unto Lord Sultan*.

Thus, the algorithm, described in the research proves to be effective to analyze obsolete words and word combinations, elicited from various sources. It is to be emphasized that the stylistics of folk music provides wide range of linguistic material, pertaining to archaisms and obsolete words found in lyrics. The hypothesis, stated above was proved to be valid as the material of the research is easily distributed into thematic groups, and open to further context study.

## References

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### **АЛГОРИТМ КОМПЛЕКСНОГО ИЗУЧЕНИЯ УСТАРЕВШИХ СЛОВ И ИЗОБРАЗИТЕЛЬНЫХ СРЕДСТВ В НАРОДНОЙ МУЗЫКЕ**

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***Аннотация.** Проводилось изучение текстов одной из популярнейших исполнительниц в стиле фолк музыки Лорины Маккеннитт для выявления устаревших слов и архаизмов. К каждому из которых были найдены значения и/или их синонимы. Были рассмотрены модификаторы исследуемых языковых единиц, чаще всего употребляемые в Британском и Американском английском. Выявлена семантическая структура материала работы, включающая четыре аспекта: лицо, артефакт, действие, время.*

***Ключевые слова:** устаревшие слова, архаизмы, модификатор, народная музыка, тематическая классификация.*