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Riddles in East Baltic and West Slavic Folktales

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ABSTRACT. Unlike riddle compilations, which typically present fixed questions and their answers with minimal information about the riddles' origin or narrative function, folktales offer a rich context for gaining deeper insight into how riddles emerge, operate and acquire meaning. This study explores the prevalence and characteristics of riddles within a corpus of 1914 folktales from East Baltic and West Slavic traditions, specifically from Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czechia and Slovakia, focusing mainly on those written down in the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century. The study examines the functional, structural and procedural aspects of riddling as a narrative device, as well as the roles and genders of the participants involved. The findings are supported by a comprehensive table at the end of this study that lists all the riddling episodes identified within the given corpus of folktales. The study provides a detailed account of how riddles operate within these specific traditions and reveals that riddles are a relatively rare phenomenon in the folktales of these peoples. In addition, the study demonstrates that there are no substantial differences in folktale riddles between East Baltic and West Slavic traditions.

KEYWORDS: folktales, riddles, Baltic, Slavic.

Mįslės Rytų baltų ir Vakarų slavų pasakose

SANTRAUKA. Kitaip nei mįslių rinkiniuose, kur paprastai aptinkame fiksuotus klausimus ir atsakymus, suteikiančius labai nedaug žinių apie mįslių kilmę ar naratyvinę funkciją, pasakose matome turtingą kontekstą, padedantį giliau suprasti, kaip mįslės atsiranda, veikia ir yra įprasminamos. Šiame tyrime nagrinėjamas mįslių paplitimas ir joms būdingi bruožai, išryškėjantys rinkinyje, sudarytame iš 1914 pasakų, priklausančių Rytų baltų ir Vakarų slavų tradicijoms, konkrečiai – latvių, lietuvių, lenkų, čekų ir slovākų. Daugiausia dėmesio skiriama

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pasakoms, užrašytoms XIX a. ir XX a. pradžioje. Tyrime nagrinėjami funkciniai, struktūriniai ir procedūriniai mįslių, kaip naratyvinės priemonės, aspektai, taip pat atskirų proceso dalyvių vaidmenys ir lytis. Išvadas patvirtina išsami lentelė straipsnio pabaigoje, kurioje išvardyti visi mįslių minimo epizodai, aptikti minėtame pasakų rinkinyje. Straipsnyje išsamiai nagrinėjama, kaip mįslės veikia atskirose tradicijose, atskleidžiant, kad minėtų tautų pasakose jos gana retos. Negana to, parodoma, kad Rytų baltų ir Vakarų slavų tradicinėse pasakose mįslės iš esmės nesiskiria.

RAKTAŽODŽIAI: pasakos, mįslės, baltai, slavai.

INTRODUCTION

The present study examines the presence of riddles within the folktales of East Baltic (Latvian and Lithuanian) and West Slavic (Polish, Czech and Slovak) traditions. By analysing variations of folktale riddles across these cultures, this study investigates their thematic foundations, structural types and narrative functions. Central to this analysis is the riddling process, an interaction involving the riddler and the riddlee, without whom the folkloric act would be incomplete.

The selection of these specific linguistic groups is predicated on deep-seated cultural and historical affinities. While the Czech, Slovak and Polish peoples are West Slavic, and the Latvians and Lithuanians are East Baltic, their histories are inextricably intertwined through centuries of political unions and shifting borders.

Historical milestones, such as the Jagiellonian dynasty (1368–1572) and the Polish–Lithuanian administration of the Latgale region (1561–1772), facilitated a prolonged cultural exchange. This interconnectedness provides a compelling framework for a comparative study, allowing for a detailed investigation into whether shared political and social histories resulted in similar riddling traditions, the development of distinct local forms or the transmission of specific motifs across linguistic boundaries.

Moreover, comparative studies of East Baltic and West Slavic folklore traditions, particularly those focusing on riddles in folktales, remain scarce.

Before analysing the riddle within the folktale, one must address the inherent difficulty in defining the riddle itself. Scholarly definitions often share core characteristics while exhibiting divergent nuances. *A Dictionary of English Folklore* describes the riddle as a “word game or joke” consisting of a “deliberately puzzling” statement requiring a solution through embedded clues (Simpson, Roud 2000: 294). Similarly, Archer Taylor (1943) posits that a “true riddle” consists of two descriptions – one figurative and one literal – that confuses the hearer, requiring no information beyond what is provided in the question. Thomas A. Green and W. J. Pepicello (1979) hold the opinion that true riddles are solvable with the available information. However, a cross-linguistic comparison of definitions from the regions under study reveals a broader interpretation:

Language	Definition
Latvian	“ <i>Alegorisks, parasti īsi formulēts, uzdevums vai jautājums un tā atminējums, atbilde</i> ” (An allegorical, usually briefly formulated task or question and its solution, answer) [1].
Lithuanian	“ <i>Alegorinis posakis, reikalaujantis atminti, įspėti</i> ” (An allegorical saying requiring one to recall and to guess) [2].
Polish	“ <i>Krótkie, efektywnie sformułowane pytanie, przyjmujące często formę wierszowaną, na które trzeba znaleźć odpowiedź</i> ” (A short, effectively formulated question, often in verse form, to which an answer must be found) [3].
Czech	“ <i>Hříčka, která jen naznačuje, oč jde, ale tak, že je možno důvtipem si to domyslit</i> ” (A game that merely suggests the matter, yet allows one to deduce it through cleverness) [4].
Slovak	“ <i>(Slovná) hra vyžadujúca pri hľadaní naznačeného riešenia dôvtip</i> ” (A (word) game requiring ingenuity in the search for the indicated solution) [5].

These definitions suggest that a riddle does not necessarily need to be solvable in a logical vacuum, nor must it follow a fixed poetic form. For the purposes of this study, the riddle is understood as a competitive performance that may take various forms and involves at least two parties. It is a testing of minds that measures the wit of the participants while serving as a display of dominance, power and social status. Moreover, the riddle may be solved not only through the information encoded within it.

Despite a robust understanding of the riddle's structural elements, its true meaning often remains elusive when divorced from its performance context. In many compiled collections, riddles are presented merely as fixed pairs. For instance, the Polish example, “*W dzień pracuje, a w nocy wisi [Cepy]*” (During the day, it works, and during the night, it hangs (A flail), Gustawicz 1893: 8), and the Latvian, “*Balta zoss, zaļi spārni [Bērzs]*” (A white goose, green wings (A birch), Birkerts 1927: 70, 183), exist as isolated fragments. While such collections are vital for preserving cultural heritage, they frequently obscure the mechanisms of the riddling process and offer little insight into a riddle's situational genesis.

The significance of context and folk knowledge has been emphasised by Green and Pepicello (1979), who argue that while riddles have been studied from structural and cognitive perspectives, their cultural and situational influences have been largely overlooked. Furthermore, Green and Pepicello (*ibid.*) note that while there have been attempts to analyse riddles linguistically, these efforts have often lacked precision and yielded limited results. Annikki Kaivola-Bregenhøj emphasises the

importance of context in analysing riddles, saying that “the riddle genre does not have a universal structure, content, performance or functions, but that it is bound to a specific cultural use and performing context” (2001: 37).

Consequently, by shifting the analytical focus from the archive to the narrative, we can better observe how riddles are brought to life through social interaction. To achieve a comprehensive understanding of these puzzles, it is essential to study them within their original narrative environment, such as the folktale. This medium is particularly illuminating because, as Jack Zipes (2002) argues, folktales serve as direct reflections of human life and social dynamics. By examining the complete lifecycle of a riddle within a story, tracing it from the moment it is posed out of necessity to its eventual resolution, we can move beyond static definitions. This approach allows us to see the riddle not merely as a linguistic puzzle, but as a functional tool used by folktale characters to navigate conflict, demonstrate wit or alter their destiny.

METHODOLOGY

For the purposes of this study, 21 East Baltic and West Slavic folktale collections were examined. The primary sources include Karel Jaromír Erben’s collections of Czech (1955) and Slavic (1865) folktales, Matěj Mikšíček’s Moravian and Silesian folktales (1897), three volumes of Antoni Józef Gliński’s Polish tales (1853), seven volumes of Pavol Dobšinský’s Slovak folktales (1880–1882), August Schleicher’s Lithuanian folktales from *Handbuch der Litauischen Sprache 2: Lesebuch und Glossar* (1857), four volumes of Jonas Basanavičius’s Lithuanian folktales (1903–1905) and three volumes of Pēteris Šmits’s Latvian folktales and legends (1926–1927).

These collections contain tales gathered from approximately the same epoch, a period when nations were forming and shaping their national identities as a result of the Romantic movement that dominated in Europe from the late 18th century until the beginning of the 20th century.

The objective of this study was to compile a corpus of at least 1,000 folktales. Ultimately, in total 1,914 folktales were analysed, with 905 of them being of Latvian origin, 787 of Lithuanian origin, 90 of Czech origin, 89 of Slovak origin and 43 of Polish origin. The predominance of East Baltic folktales in this corpus can be explained by their greater abundance in East Baltic traditions compared to West Slavic. Furthermore, both Latvian and Lithuanian folktales are, on average, significantly shorter than West Slavic folktales. For instance, Gliński’s collection of Polish folktales (1853 1), which is approximately 260 pages long, contains only 12 tales, whereas Basanavičius’s collection of Lithuanian folktales (1903), at 280 pages long, contains 141 stories. Concerning the final number of folktales examined some additional clarifications are required.

In this study, several folktales categorised as Czech are, in fact, Moravian or Silesian. Since they are written in standard Czech and appear in Mikšiček's collection (1897), which does not clearly distinguish between Moravian and Silesian tales, these folktales are classified here as Czech. The same principle is applied to the Moravian folktales found in Erben's collection of Slavic folktales (1865). A similar approach can be seen with the Latvian and Lithuanian collections: the Latvian collections often include tales in Latgalian and other dialects, yet Šmits consistently classified them as Latvian. Likewise, the collections compiled by Basanavičius include folktales written down in various dialects, although he categorised them all as Lithuanian rather than ascribing them to separate ethnic or national identities. Following this precedent the Moravian and Silesian folktales are grouped under the category of Czech in the present study.

All folktales were examined in their original languages; no translated versions were used for the purposes of this study. During the compilation of the final corpus, duplicate folktales were removed.

It should also be noted that, apart from Basanavičius and Gliński's collections, none of the folktale compilations contained a strict and correct numerical ordering of tales. For the remaining collections, the number of tales had to be counted manually.

Brief information on all folktales containing riddles is provided in the table in the appendix of this study. The table includes: (1) the original language of each folktale; (2) the collection in which it appears, along with specific page numbers; (3) the title; (4) the type of riddle it contains; and information regarding the (5) riddler, (6) riddlee and (7) helper. Additionally, it indicates whether (8) the riddle was solved or remained unsolved, and whether (9) it was attempted by multiple riddlees. The gender of the subjects was inferred based on morphosyntactic markers within the respective source language.

In order to enable a systematic and comparable analysis of riddles and their participants, this study adopts the individual riddling episode as its basic unit of analysis. The individual riddling episode is defined as a single riddle posed within a specific narrative situation, irrespective of the broader tale in which it occurs or the identity of participants involved.

This approach is necessary because folktales frequently contain multiple riddles within a single narrative, which may be posed sequentially by the same riddler to the same riddlee or to multiple riddlees. Accordingly, each riddle is treated as a distinct riddling episode. This reflects the narrative logic of folktales, in which each riddle constitutes an independent test or challenge. Although such interactions may appear continuous on the surface, individual riddles often differ in type, difficulty, framing, conditions, forms of assistance or outcome. Treating them as a single analytic unit would obscure these distinctions and distort quantitative results.

In cases where a riddle is posed to multiple characters sequentially or collectively, only the participant who ultimately provides the correct solution is coded as the riddlee for statistical purposes. This decision is based on the narrative conventions of folktales, which assign interpretative and functional significance to the successful solver rather than to unsuccessful attempts. Unsuccessful participants and failed attempts are recorded qualitatively in the notes but are not counted as separate riddling episodes.

The presence of helpers is coded independently for each riddling episode. The helper is defined as any character who actively assists the riddlee in understanding, solving or completing the riddle.

Each riddling episode is additionally coded for outcome (solved or unsolved). By treating each riddle as a discrete analytic unit, this methodology ensures consistency across the corpus and enables meaningful quantitative comparison of riddlers, riddlees, helpers and outcomes. At the same time, the inclusion of qualitative notes preserves narrative complexity without compromising statistical integrity.

It must be noted that for the purposes of this study, a unique classification system¹ has been developed to categorise folktale riddles according to their structural, formal and solution-based characteristics.

RESULTS

1. Riddles in the selected folktales

Riddles were found in 57 of 1,914 folktales. In other words, 2.98 % of the given folktales contain riddles, some of which contain more than one riddle. It is worth nothing that, among the 1,692 East Baltic folktales examined, riddles occur in 2.36 %, whereas in the corpus of 222 West Slavic folktales, riddles are present in 7.66 % of the narratives.

It should be noted that it was not always easy to decide if a situation depicted in a folktale truly represents a riddle. In some cases, this was not made explicitly clear. Even a keyword such as ‘to guess’, which is commonly associated with riddles, was not necessarily a clear indication that the depicted situation was a riddle. For instance, in the Slovak folktale “Godmother Death and a Miracle Doctor”² (Dobšinský 1881 5: 65–74), a man looks at an old woman and guesses that she is Death, but he does not say anything. After this, Death begins to help him.

1 More information can be found in Section 2. Types of Riddle.

2 *Smrt' kmotra a zázračný lékař* (Dobšinský 1881 5: 65–74).

A similar uncertainty arises in the Lithuanian folktale “Mountain, Open Up!”³ (Basanavičius 1903: 145–146). In this story, a woman overhears the magic word needed to open a mountain. She uses it to enter a cave, but when she later wants to leave, she cannot recall the word and guesses incorrectly. Only after spending some time in the cave does she overhear the correct word. Upon pronouncing the word correctly, she is finally able to exit the cave. Neither example was considered to be a riddle, so they were not included in the final number of riddles.

As a result, this study included only those tales in which riddling is depicted under the following conditions: (1) both the riddler(s) and riddlee(s) are human or human-like beings and are aware of their participation in the riddling process; (2) the riddler poses a question or task that requires a solution; (3) the riddlee provides a clear verbal answer or attempts to solve a task through the appropriate actions; (4) helper(s) may be present and take various forms; and (5) the riddle functions as a means of retaining or gaining control over circumstances.

A total of 112 riddles, or more specifically riddling episodes, were identified within 57 folktales under consideration. We discovered that riddles frequently take place in the middle of these folktales, where they serve to advance the narrative.

A comprehensive examination of the given folktales has shown that although riddling is recognised in East Baltic and West Slavic traditions, it is not commonly used in their narratives.

2. Types of riddle

Riddles, woven into the fabric of these folk narratives, come in diverse forms, each serving a specific purpose and testing the wit, knowledge and even fate of folktale heroes. Various objects, people and even experiences can serve as a basis for riddles that test heroes’ abilities to identify specific materials or discern true identities from similar choices. Not all riddles in the given East Baltic and West Slavic folktales necessitate a verbal response; some of them demand active engagement and problem-solving skills to reach a solution.

For the purposes of this study, these folktale riddles can be classified into five categories: (1) identificatory riddles, (2) compositional riddles, (3) interrogative riddles, (4) allegorical riddles, and (5) conundrums. To elaborate further, within the 57 folktales were found 51 identificatory riddles, 24 interrogative riddles, 23 allegorical riddles, 10 compositional riddles and four conundrums. In the West Slavic folktales, the most prevalent riddle type is the allegorical, while in the East Baltic folktales, the most common type is the identificatory riddle.

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3 *Kalne, atsiverk!* (Basanavičius 1903: 145–146).

Each of the 112 riddles was systematically assigned to a category on the basis of the response it elicited from the riddlee, as well as its formal and functional characteristics.

Riddles were classified as identificatory when they required the riddlee to identify the correct referent – whether an object or a person – from a set of similar alternatives. The defining criterion of this category is the act of recognition among competing possibilities.

The label compositional riddles was applied to cases in which the riddlee was asked to specify the material, structure or constituent elements of a given entity. Such riddles foreground questions of composition and internal makeup.

Riddles were categorised as interrogative riddles when they took the form of direct questions eliciting a specific, typically brief and determinate answer. Here, the primary feature is the demand for a concise verbal response.

The category of allegorical riddles was assigned to riddles expressed in figurative or poetic language, often resembling short, metaphorically dense compositions. These riddles rely on symbolic representation and require interpretative reasoning.

Finally, riddles were classified as conundrums when the riddlee was expected not only to solve the riddle by interpreting its elements, but also to act upon the solution or perform a corresponding task. This type involves both cognitive decoding and practical application.

A throughout examination of the riddles in question has revealed that each of these five riddle types possess a distinct form. Although these riddles differ in their form, they have pretty similar functions: if the answer is guessed or the task is performed correctly, the riddlee is rewarded; if not, the riddlee leaves empty-handed or meets a bad end.

In essence, 111 of 112 riddles (riddling episodes) can be categorised as “false” by Taylor (1943) on three grounds: they necessitate information not inherent in the question; they seldom contain opening or closing formulae; and they rarely – if ever – feature both positive and negative descriptive elements.

It is significant that only one instance of a “true riddle” was identified within the corpus. This occurs in the Latvian folktale “A Dead Bridegroom Takes a Bride Away”⁴ (Šmits 1927 4: 248–249); the riddle is as follows: “*Zaļā zālīt[e], sarkana galviņa [Zemene]*” (In the green grass there is a red head (A strawberry), *ibid.*: 248).

Identificatory Riddles. The term identificatory riddle denotes a riddle that requires its solver to distinguish a specific individual from a group of similar-looking people or animals, most commonly a set of three or twelve. A riddle of

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4 *Mirušais precinieks aizved līgavu* (Šmits 1927 4: 248–249).

this type is found in the Czech folktale “Goldilocks”⁵ (Erben 1955: 55–60). In this tale, a young man must recognise a golden-haired maiden among twelve lookalikes. With the help of a fly, he guesses correctly and is allowed to leave with her. Another riddle that necessitates the identification of a specific individual among a group of indistinguishable individuals can be found in the Polish folktale “About the Crown Prince, Named Surprise”⁶ (Gliński 1853 1: 121–141). Here, a young man must also distinguish a certain woman from twelve identical women. He succeeds because the woman tells him beforehand that he can recognise her by a ladybird above her right eyebrow. These riddles are usually solved with the help of a guide and often appear in the given folktales as obstacles preventing someone from reclaiming a son or beloved woman.

Compositional Riddles. This category of riddles encompasses those that require the riddle solver to determine the composition of an object or to identify what it really is. For instance, such a riddle appears in the Lithuanian folktale “About the Three Clever Ones”⁷ (Basanavičius 1904 2: 211–212) which depicts three brothers who are tasked by a devil to identify the composition of three objects. Similarly, in the Slovak folktale “Tinkers and the Bad One”⁸ (Dobšinský 1881 5: 31–34), six young men are required to determine what three objects are made of. In both instances the riddlees successfully address the issue.

Interrogative Riddles. Let’s imagine a hero facing seemingly simple questions like: “*Co je to: klipy klap?* [Lžička]” (What is a clip clap? (A tablespoon), Mikšíček 1897: 242), “[...] *ką skrynele’ parnešu?* [Kudikėlj]” ((...) what have I brought in the little chest? (A baby), Basanavičius 1903: 150), or “[...] *kaip ašz vardu?* [Bigutė]” ([...] what is my name? (Bigutė), Schleicher 1857: 202). This is the essence of an interrogative riddle, designed to test a hero’s knowledge and wisdom. These riddles are frequently presented in a straightforward, short format and require the riddlee to provide a response that corresponds with the riddler’s intended answer. The answers to these riddles are usually brief, unlike allegorical riddles, which require more extended or explanatory responses.

Allegorical Riddles. Allegorical riddles can be perceived as enigmatic challenges, which are frequently present as metaphors within folktales and extend beyond the scope of mere knowledge tests. Their riddlees are invited to transcend the

5 *Zlatovláska* (Erben 1955: 55–60).

6 *O królewiczu Niespodzianku* (Gliński 1853 1: 121–141).

7 *Apie tris vingrius* (Basanavičius 1904 2: 211–212).

8 *Drotári a ten špatný* (Dobšinský 1881 5: 31–34).

literal meaning and conceptualise through the utilisation of similes and figurative language. Frequently, these riddles are rooted in riddlers' own life experiences. Often taking the form of short poems or symbolic narratives, they present veiled wisdom or hidden truths that heroes must decipher to learn or grow. By unravelling these metaphorical layers, heroes gain valuable insights into themselves, the world around them and the deeper meaning of the story. An allegorical riddle incorporating four distinct referents is found in the Czech folktale "The Riddle"⁹ (Erben 1955: 125–126):

I am sitting on love,
I am looking at love,
I wrap myself in love,
I toast you with love¹⁰ (ibid.: 126).

A young queen employs this riddle as a means of revealing and bringing attention to a prince's crime: the killing of her lover. When the prince proves unable to answer this riddle, the queen discloses the situation as follows: "Here I sit on the legs of my love whom you killed. Then she pointed to the candlesticks – here I look upon the hands of my love. This belt is made out of his beautiful hair. And from his skull, I toast you – revenge. Head for head"¹¹ (ibid.).

Following the exposure of the criminal act, the queen gives the order to execute the prince.

Another illustration of an allegorical riddle is found in a different Czech folktale bearing the same name, "The Riddle"¹² (Mikšiček 1897: 179–181):

Snow on mountains,
water in the valley;
friends fly away,
the forest in the hands.
If you can guess, my dear,
you will be mine today¹³ (ibid.: 179–180).

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9 *Hádanka* (Erben 1955: 125–126).

10 *Na lásce sedím, / na lásku hledím, / láskou se ovijím, / z lásky ti připíjím* (Erben 1955: 126).

11 *"Tuto sedím na nohou lásky své, kterou tys úkladně zabil." Pak ukázala na svícny: "Tuto hledím na ruce lásky své; toto je pás z pěkných její vlasů – a z její lebky připíjím tobě – pomstu: hlava za hlavu"* (Erben 1955: 126).

12 *Hádanka* (Mikšiček 1897: 179–181).

13 *Na horách sníh, / v údolí voda; / přátelé se rozlínou, / v rukou les. / Uhodneš-li to, můj milý, / budeš můj dnes* (Mikšiček 1897: 179–180).

The riddle in question is ultimately deemed unsolvable without recourse to external aid. Fortunately, the protagonist encounters an elderly individual on his journey, who provides the necessary insights to solve it. The solution is as follows:

“Snow in the mountains” – just look at my head! – See, it is the snow-white grey hair.
 “Water in the valley” – are the sunken, weeping eyes of the old men whom God has granted long life. They are continually watered with tears, as they are to me. “Friends fly away” – are the teeth that are falling out. “The forest in the hands” – the wooden crutch grown in the forest, on which I must lean¹⁴ (ibid.: 180).

By answering correctly, the riddlee earns the right to marry the girl he desired, with her mother’s approval.

The Polish folktale “A fairy tale about a prince with a golden fist, a princess with golden hair, a self-heating cap, and a self-cooling bottle”¹⁵ (Gliński 1853 3: 43–68) contains six allegorical riddles. Here is one of them:

No fire will illuminate me,
 No brush will sweep me away,
 No painter will paint over me,
 No bricklayer will wall me up¹⁶ (ibid.: 67).

The answer to this riddle is sunlight.

It is noteworthy that in the Slavic folktales, allegorical riddles tend to resemble poems; in contrast, the Lithuanian examples – no allegorical riddles were found in the Latvian corpus – are structured more like short stories.

Conundrums. These riddles differ from other types of riddle in that they require action rather than a verbal answer, and for this reason some do not classify them as riddles. However, given that they necessitate wit and creative problem-solving skills, they still fit within the category. They also function as a kind of competition between two parties, which resembles the nature of the riddle. There are always a

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 14 “Na horách sníh”, to je – podívej se jenom na mou hlavu! – Vidíš, to jsou ty šediny sněhobílé. “V údolí voda” jsou oči vpadlé, uplakané, neb komu Bůh dlouhého věku dočkati se dá, neustále se mu jako mně slzami zalévají. “Přátelé se rozlínou”, to jsou zuby, neboť nám vypadají; “v rukou les”, to je tato berla dřevěná, v lese vyrostlá, o kterou se podepírati musím (Mikšiček 1897: 180).

15 *Baśń o królewiczu ze złotą pięścią, królownie złotowłosej, czapce samogrzejce, i o flaszy samochłodce* (Gliński 1853 3: 43–68).

16 *Nie mię ogień oświeci, / Ni szczotka wymiecie, / Ni malarz zamaluje, / Ani mularz zamuruje* (Gliński 1853 3: 67).

winner and a loser. In the East Baltic and West Slavic folktales, conundrums are used to test whether someone is worthy or to thwart potential marital unions.

The four examples of conundrums found in the given folktales share the same task and follow the same pattern: their function and conditions are identical. Each serves to teach a young woman a lesson and to test her worthiness before marriage. One such example appears in the Lithuanian folktale “About the Clever Girl”¹⁷ (Schleicher 1857: 117–118): “If you come to me neither naked nor clothed, neither on foot nor on horseback, neither on the road nor by the way, neither in summer nor in winter, I will marry you”¹⁸ (ibid.: 117).

A very similar conundrum is found in the Slovak folktale “Women’s Joke”¹⁹ (Dobšinský 1882: 52–62): “But let her come to me neither by day nor by night, neither on foot, nor in a carriage, nor on horseback, neither on the road or off it, neither dressed nor naked, and let her bring me both a gift and no gift at the same time”²⁰ (ibid.: 57).

3. Solved and unsolved riddles: success rates of riddlees

Either independently or with someone’s help 97 of 112 riddles are answered correctly, which is 86.61 % of them. While 97.22 % of the riddling episodes in the West Slavic folktales are solved, the corresponding figure for the East Baltic folktales is 81.58 %. To be more specific, in the given corpus of folktales, all (100 %) conundrums and compositional riddles are solved, 88.24 % of the identificatory riddles are guessed, 83.33 % of the interrogative riddles are answered and 78.26 % of the allegorical riddles are explained correctly.

4. The riddle as a device of dominance

The examination of the selected folktales showed that heroes of these narratives often utilise riddles to achieve various goals, including acquiring benefits, testing other individuals and even solving crimes. Both riddlers and riddlees can resort to riddle-guessing to navigate a challenging situation. For instance, in the Slovak folktale “Women’s Joke”²¹ (Dobšinský 1882: 52–62), a man asks two other men three questions to help them stop arguing and resolve their quarrel: (1) What is the most fertile? (2) What is the fastest? (3) What is the cleanest? One of the men is

17 *Apė kytrię mergą* (Schleicher 1857: 117–118).

18 *Kad tu pas manę ateisi nei nūga nei apsirėdžusi, nei raita nei pėsce nei vaziūta, nei keliu nei taku nei szale kelio, prė vasaros bei prė žėmos, asz tavę vesiu* (Schleicher 1857: 117).

19 *Ženský vtip* (Dobšinský 1882: 52–62).

20 *Ale nech mi príde ani vo dne ani v noci, ani pešky ani vezky ani nie na koni, po ceste i nie po ceste, ani oblečená ale ani nahá, a nech mi pritom donesie aj dar aj nie dar!* (Dobšinský 1882: 57).

21 *Ženský vtip* (Dobšinský 1882: 52–62).

helped by his wife, and the other by his daughter. The latter wins, as his daughter gives him the right answers. The other man's answers are perceived as incorrect. The correct answers are: (1) soil, (2) the Moon and (3) the Sun.

In essence, a riddle becomes a contest of power, where the victor retains or gains control of the defeated. This observation aligns with Roger D. Abrahams's idea that

[w]hen a riddler questions, whether the audience knows the answer or not, he is demonstrating a certain control over the focal points of the environment or the crucial transactions or interactions of the community (1972: 182).

This yearning for control in the folktales is particularly evident when a riddler lays out the ground rules for a riddlee. This includes details like time limit for solving the riddle and consequences for an incorrect answer.

It can be said that, in the folktales, a riddle serves one primary function, retaining or gaining control over one's circumstances; it operates as a narrative device that reflects a fundamental human drive for agency.

5. *Temporary aspects of riddling*

While most of the selected folktales do not explicitly state the time of day at which the riddling episode occurs, some narratives suggest that it takes place in the evening or at night, as can be seen in the Czech folktale "The Riddle"²² (Erben 1955: 126–127):

"All right", replied the queen, "come to me tomorrow for supper, and I will give you a riddle. If you guess it, I will be your wife, if you do not guess it, you will lose your head..."²³ (ibid.: 126).

The absence of clearly defined temporal conditions at the beginning of the riddles in these folktales corresponds with Max Lüthi's (1986) observation that a lack of temporal depth is a characteristic feature of European folktales. It is therefore logical to assume that the riddle reflects and reinforces the broader structural features of the European folktale tradition.

Nevertheless, the time allotted for solving riddles can vary. In some cases, riddling involves time constraints, emphasising the need for an immediate response. In other cases, a longer timeframe may be allotted, sometimes up to a day or

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²² *Hádanka* (Erben 1955: 126–127).

²³ "Dobře," odpověděla královna; "přijď ke mně zejtra k večeri, dám ti hádanku: uhodneš-li ji, budu tvou ženou; pakli neuhodneš, přijdeš o hlavu [...]" (Erben 1955: 126).

more, to solve them. For instance, in the Slovak folktale “A Golden Spinner”²⁴ (Erben 1865: 67–71), a riddler grants a riddlee one year to guess his name. If she (the riddlee) fails to guess, she must marry him (the riddler), if she succeeds, she is free. With the assistance of her husband who discloses the riddler’s name, she ultimately guesses correctly.

6. Riddlers and riddlees

Riddling in folktale narratives may take place when antagonists and protagonists interact in an attempt to resolve a situation or acquire something. Typically, the antagonist poses a riddle and the protagonist is tasked with solving it. It is noteworthy that the initiation of riddling is not exclusively the role of a riddler, since a riddlee can also initiate a riddling challenge. One such example can be found in the Lithuanian folktale “About a Forester’s Son Who Married a King’s Daughter”²⁵ (Basanavičius 1904 3: 298–301). This story tells of a king who declares that his future son-in-law will be the one whose riddle he cannot solve. However, if he successfully guesses the riddle, he will have the riddler executed. One day, the king is presented with the following riddle: “[...] the dead killed the living, that one dead killed three living, and those three dead killed twelve living”²⁶ (ibid.: 299). Unable to answer the riddle himself, the king sends his daughter to find the solution to this riddle.

In certain instances, riddles may encompass multiple riddlees, transforming into competitions involving several participants. There are folktales that portray scenarios in which multiple individuals endeavour to solve a riddle before a single individual ultimately achieves success. Out of the 112 riddling episodes studied, 36 involve multiple riddlees.

It is noteworthy that in the East Baltic and West Slavic folktales, riddlers and riddlees are predominantly male. To elaborate further, the proportion of the male riddlers is 74.11 %, while the proportion of the male riddlees is 84.82 %. More specifically, 47.22 % of the riddlers and 83.33 % of the riddlees in the West Slavic folktales are male, whereas 86.84 % of the riddlers and 85.53 % of the riddlees in the East Baltic folktales are male. This detail deserves attention, as it directly challenges, at least to some extent, Taylor (1943: 135) and Ian Hamnett’s (1967: 381) claim that riddling is primarily a female-associated activity.

For instance, folktale fathers – whether kings, farmers or even devils – commonly resist giving their daughters’ hands in marriage. To thwart potential

24 *Zlatá priadka* (Erben 1865: 67–71).

25 *Ape miškasargio sunų, kurs karaliaus dukterį vedė* (Basanavičius 1904 3: 298–301).

26 [...] *negyvas užmušė gyvą, tas vienas negyvas užmušė tris gyvus, o tie trys negyvi užmušė dvyliką gyvų* (Basanavičius 1904 3: 299).

unions, these fathers often challenge potential suitors with riddles. Most often they ask to identify the bride among other women, as can be seen, for example, in the Latvian folktale “A Soul in an Egg”²⁷ (Šmits 1926: 352–353).

Additionally, some folktales depict fathers who have lost their sons to some villain, for instance, a devil. To regain their sons, these fathers must overcome a challenge set by the villains, often involving identifying their sons among identical-looking animals, such as blackbirds or dogs. In the Lithuanian folktale “About a Wicked Child Taught by a Devil”²⁸ (Basanavičius 1904 3: 328–329), a devil asks a father to identify which of three blackbirds is his son. The father succeeds with his son’s help, as the son beforehand tells him how he can be recognised. It should be noted that the father previously attempted to distinguish his son twice and failed both times. Each time, the devil instructed him to return and try again.

7. Riddle-guessing strategies and techniques

It is noteworthy that some riddlees are confident in their ability to withstand any challenge, while others express immediate uncertainty and a sense of defeat, acknowledging the daunting task ahead.

A variety of techniques used by riddlees to solve riddles have been revealed. These techniques include deductive reasoning through similes, meticulous analysis of clues and the utilisation of knowledge about the riddler or their surroundings. In certain instances, the resolution of riddles by folktale heroes appears to be a matter of happenstance. For instance, in the Lithuanian folktale “About the Omniscient One”²⁹ (Basanavičius 1904 3: 290–294), a man who claims to know everything is asked to guess what is inside a covered bowl. After exhausting all logical possibilities and losing hope, he exclaims in frustration, “A dung beetle!” Upon hearing the answer “dung beetle”, his challengers are taken aback, as under the bowl there is, in fact, a dung beetle. A very similar situation is depicted in the Slovak folktale “The Prophet Crayfish”³⁰ (Dobšinský 1881 4: 31–39). In this story, a man guesses the 13th food correctly just because he utters his own nickname, which is Crayfish.

Although most riddlers honour their commitments by granting the promised reward for a correct answer, the same cannot always be said for riddlees. In many cases, riddlees employ dishonest tactics, often seeking external assistance to solve a riddle. Notably, most of these folktales never explicitly state that riddlers forbid riddlees from obtaining external help.

.....
27 *Dvēsele olā* (Šmits 1926: 352–353).

28 *Apė netikusį vaiką, kurį velnias mokino* (Basanavičius 1904 3: 328–329).

29 *Apė didį žinuną* (Basanavičius 1904 3: 290–294).

30 *Prorok Rak* (Dobšinský 1881 4: 31–39).

8. *Helpers*

Independent riddle solving is quite uncommon in these folktales, as riddlees are more frequently assisted by other narrative characters. In 54.46 % of the given riddling episodes, the riddlee receives external assistance. There is similarity in the data when the regions are viewed independently: helpers appear in 50 % of the West Slavic riddling episodes and 56.58 % of the East Baltic ones. While riddlers and riddlees are usually the protagonists or antagonists, helpers typically play a secondary role in the folktales. These helpers manifest in diverse forms, including individuals or animals previously aided by riddlees, young women seeking to secure their suitors' hand in marriage, or even seemingly random characters who materialise with the required answer.

The Czech folktale "A Firebird and Red Fox"³¹ (Erben 1955: 38–49) depicts how a helper assists a riddlee in finding the answer to a challenge. In this tale, a prince falls in love with one of the sea queen's three daughters, all of whom are identical in appearance. To win the hand of his beloved, he must correctly identify her among her sisters. Distraught and unable to sleep, the prince is visited by the very daughter he loves, who secretly reveals how he can distinguish her from the other women. The princess informs him that he will be able to distinguish her from the others by the presence of a fly circling around her. Another example of a helper helping with riddle solving is found in the Lithuanian folktale "About a Fat Priest and a Smart Miller"³² (Basanavičius 1904 2: 144–145). In this tale, a helper himself answers three questions instead of the riddlee. Here are three short excerpts from this tale depicting the situation:

The duke asked "How much am I worth?" The miller replied: "The Jews sold Christ for thirty shekels. You, duke, are cheaper"³³ (ibid.: 145).

"And where is the middle of the world?" "There, in the middle of the manor, I have stuck a stick. There is the middle of the world, and if you don't believe me, you can remeasure"³⁴ (ibid.).

And the duke asked: "What am I thinking?" The miller replied, "You think you are talking to the priest, but you don't know you are talking to the miller"³⁵ (ibid.).

.....
31 *Pták ohnivák a liška ryška* (Erben 1955: 38–49).

32 *Apie riebę kunigą ir gudrą melniką* (Basanavičius 1904 2: 144–145).

33 *Kunigaikštis klausė: „kiek aš esmu vertas?“ Melnikas atsakė: „kad žydai Kristų už trisdešimtis skatų pardavė, tai kunigaikštis esi pigesnis“* (Basanavičius 1904 2: 145).

34 *„O kur yra vidurys pasaulės?“ – „Štai viduryje dvaro įsmeigiau lazdelę, tai ten pats vidurys pasaulės, o jei man netiki, tai gali ir parmiruoti“* (Basanavičius 1904 2: 145).

35 *Dar toliaus klausė kunigaikštis: „ką aš mįsliju?“ Melnikas atsakė: „mislį, kad su kunigu kalbi, o nežinai kad su melniku“* (Basanavičius 1904 2: 145).

While the riddlers and riddlees in these folktales are predominantly men, a similar male bias is evident among the helpers. Overall, 54.1 % of the helpers are male. Specifically, 55.56 % of the helpers in the West Slavic folktales are male, and 53.49 % of the helpers in the East Baltic folktales.

CONCLUSIONS

The study revealed that although riddles are present in the East Baltic and West Slavic folktales, they cannot be regarded as prevalent or essential element within these narratives. The riddles examined in this study display notable parallels in both function and structure across the folktale traditions of these cultures. In fact, very similar riddles are found in the folktales of these peoples.

Based on their formal characteristics, these folktale riddles can be classified into five distinct typological categories: (1) identificatory, (2) compositional, (3) interrogative, (4) allegorical, and (5) conundrums. Identificatory riddles require the riddlee to identify a specific person from a set of similar options. Compositional riddles are designed to test the ability of the person answering to tell the composition of a given item. Interrogative riddles are short enquiries that require concise answers matching the riddler's intended solution. Allegorical riddles, often presented as poems or stories, necessitate thinking in similes and interpreting a deeper, non-literal meaning. In contrast, conundrums require a physical action rather than a verbal response for their solution. All the riddle types under discussion are present in both the East Baltic and West Slavic folktales.

In the folktales of these peoples, riddling occurs whenever the situation requires it, but it typically happens between antagonists and protagonists. The antagonists are commonly the riddlers and the protagonists the riddlees. Helpers, if present, are secondary characters. In the East Baltic and West Slavic folktales, the participants in riddling episodes are predominantly male.

In the folktales under consideration, anything can serve as a riddle: objects, people or life experiences. Heroes of these folktales employ various techniques to solve them, including wit, thinking in similes, seeking external assistance or relying on luck. Riddles in the East Baltic and West Slavic folktales are more often solved than left unresolved, and success is frequently achieved through external help.

The riddle in these stories often functions as a device of dominance, allowing folktale characters to navigate challenging situations and drive the plot forward. In essence, the riddle within these narratives can thus be interpreted as a contest of power, where the victor gains or retains control of the defeated.

APPENDIX

FT ³⁶ no.	Lang.	Source	Title	RE ³⁷ no.	Type	Riddler	Riddlee	Helper	Solved	Notes
1.	CZ	Erben 1955: 38–49	Pták ohnivák a liška ryška	1.	Identificatory	fem.	masc.	fem.	yes	
				2.	Identificatory	fem.	masc.	fem.	yes	
2.	CZ	Erben 1955: 55–60	Zlatovláska	3.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	
3.	CZ	Erben 1955: 125–126	Hádanka	4.	Allegorical	fem.	masc.	no	no	
4.	CZ	Mikšiček 1897: 179–181	Hádanka	5.	Allegorical	fem.	masc.	masc.	yes	
5.	CZ	Mikšiček 1897: 240–242	Klipy klap	6.	Interrogative	masc.	neut.	no	yes	Multiple riddles
6.	PL	Gliński 1853 1: 121– 141	O królewiczu Niespodzianku	7.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	
7.	PL	Gliński 1853 1: 209– 225	Baśń o czarow- niku i jego uczniu	8.	Identificatory	masc.	fem.	masc.	yes	
				9.	Identificatory	masc.	fem.	masc.	yes	
				10.	Identificatory	masc.	fem.	masc.	yes	
8.	PL	Gliński 1853 3: 7–41	Baśń o dywanie samolocie, czapce niewid- ce, pierścieniu złotodajnym, i o kiju samo- biju	11.	Allegorical	fem.	masc.	no	yes	
				12.	Allegorical	fem.	masc.	no	yes	
				13.	Allegorical	fem.	masc.	no	yes	
				14.	Allegorical	fem.	masc.	no	yes	
				15.	Allegorical	fem.	masc.	no	yes	
				16.	Allegorical	fem.	masc.	no	yes	

.....
36 Folktale.
37 Riddling episode.

9.	PL	Gliński 1853 3: 43–68	Baśń o królewiczu ze złotą pięścią, królownie złotowłosej, czapce samogrzejce, i o flaszy samochłódce	17.	Allegorical	fem.	masc.	no	yes	Multiple riddlees
				18.	Allegorical	fem.	masc.	no	yes	Multiple riddlees
				19.	Allegorical	fem.	masc.	no	yes	Multiple riddlees
				20.	Allegorical	fem.	masc.	no	yes	Multiple riddlees
				21.	Allegorical	fem.	masc.	no	yes	Multiple riddlees
				22.	Allegorical	fem.	masc.	no	yes	Multiple riddlees
10.	SK	Dobšinský 1880 1: 63–73	Červenkrál' a Žltovláska	23.	Compositional	fem.	masc.	fem.	yes	Multiple riddlees
11.	SK	Dobšinský 1880 2: 92–96	O troch grošoch	24.	Allegorical	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	Multiple riddlees
12.	SK	Dobšinský 1881 4: 31–39	Prorok Rak	25.	Interrogative	masc.	masc.	no	yes	
13.	SK	Dobšinský 1881 4: 79–88	Klinko a Kom-pit král'	26.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	no	yes	
14.	SK	Dobšinský 1881 5: 3–12	Král' času	27.	Identificatory	fem.	masc.	no	yes	
				28.	Identificatory	fem.	masc.	masc.	yes	
15.	SK	Dobšinský 1881 5: 31–34	Drotári a ten špatný	29.	Compositional	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	Multiple riddlees
				30.	Compositional	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	Multiple riddlees
				31.	Compositional	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	Multiple riddlees
16.	SK	Dobšinský 1882: 52–62	Ženský vtip	32.	Interrogative	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	Multiple riddlees
				33.	Interrogative	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	Multiple riddlees
				34.	Interrogative	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	Multiple riddlees
				35.	Conundrum	masc.	fem.	no	yes	
17.	SK	Erben 1865: 67–71	Zlatá priadka	36.	Interrogative	masc.	fem.	masc.	yes	

18.	LT	Schleicher 1857: 117–118	Apė kytrięjė mergą	37.	Allegorical	fem.	masc.	no	yes	
				38.	Conundrum	masc.	fem.	no	yes	
19.	LT	Schleicher 1857: 197–202	Apė Laumes	39.	Interrogative	fem.	fem.	no	yes	
20.	LT	Basanavičius 1903: 149–153	Aksaplaukis ir Aksažvaigždi	40.	Interrogative	masc.	fem.	no	no	
21.	LT	Basanavičius 1903: 264–265	Kaip viena merga karalių apgavo	41.	Interrogative	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	Multiple riddles
				42.	Interrogative	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	Multiple riddles
				43.	Interrogative	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	Multiple riddles
				44.	Conundrum	masc.	fem.	no	yes	
22.	LT	Basanavičius 1904 2: 34–35	Apie gudrų uodininką (garborių)	45.	Allegorical	masc.	masc.	no	no	
23.	LT	Basanavičius 1904 2: 67–68	Apė laimingą jaunikaitį	46.	Allegorical	masc.	fem.	no	no	
24.	LT	Basanavičius 1904 2: 73–85	Pasaka apė žvejį	47.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	
				48.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	
				49.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	
25.	LT	Basanavičius 1904 2: 144– 145	Apie riebų kunįgą ir gudrą melninką	50.	Interrogative	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
				51.	Interrogative	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
				52.	Interrogative	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
26.	LT	Basanavičius 1904 2: 179– 181	Apė Kazimėrą ir Anciją	53.	Allegorical	masc.	masc. and fem.	no	no	Multiple riddles
27.	LT	Basanavičius 1904 2: 211– 212	Apie tris vingrius	54.	Composi- tional	masc.	masc.	no	yes	Multiple riddles
				55.	Composi- tional	masc.	masc.	no	yes	Multiple riddles
				56.	Composi- tional	masc.	masc.	no	yes	Multiple riddles
28.	LT	Basanavičius 1904 3: 41–47	Apė tulą pirklio sunų ir gulbę	57.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	
29.	LT	Basanavičius 1904 3: 76–77	Apė velnių, žmogų ir jo sunų	58.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	no	no	

				59.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	no	no	
				60.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
30.	LT	Basanavičius 1904 3: 89–91	Apé tris seseris	61.	Allegorical	masc. and fem.	fem.	no	yes	Multiple riddles
31.	LT	Basanavičius 1904 3: 146– 147	Apé vieną karalių ir grabių kasiką	62.	Allegorical	masc.	masc.	no	no	
				63.	Allegorical	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	Multiple riddles
32.	LT	Basanavičius 1904 3: 166– 169	Apé karaliaus sūnų	64.	Interrogative	masc.	masc.	no	yes	Multiple riddles
33.	LT	Basanavičius 1904 3: 290– 294	Apé didį žinuną	65.	Interrogative	masc.	masc.	no	yes	
34.	LT	Basanavičius 1904 3: 296– 298	Apé kytrą mergą, kurią ponas vedė	66.	Conundrum	masc.	fem.	no	yes	
35.	LT	Basanavičius 1904 3: 298– 301	Ape miškasar- gio sūnų, kurs karaliaus dukterį vedė	67.	Allegorical	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	
36.	LT	Basanavičius 1904 3: 328– 329	Apé netikusį vaiką, kurį velnias mokino	68.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
				69.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
				70.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
37.	LT	Basanavičius 1905: 133	Kaip laumės gasdina	71.	Interrogative	fem.	masc.	no	yes	Multiple riddles
38.	LT	Basanavičius 1905: 242–244	Apé gudrią mergą ir vaitą	72.	Interrogative	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	Multiple riddles
				73.	Interrogative	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	Multiple riddles
				74.	Interrogative	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	Multiple riddles
39.	LV	Šmits 1926: 352–353	Dvēsele olā	75.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	Multiple riddles
40.	LV	Šmits 1926: 441–445	Labie brāļi	76.	Interrogative	masc.	masc.	no	yes	Multiple riddles
41.	LV	Šmits 1927 3: 130–131	Maģiskā bēģša- na ar meitenes palīdzību	77.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	
				78.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	
				79.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	

42.	LV	Šmits 1927 3: 167–168	Maģiskā bēgšana ar meitenes palīdzību	80.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	
				81.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	
				82.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	
43.	LV	Šmits 1927 3: 225–229	Maģiskā bēgšana un aizmirstā līgava	83.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	
				84.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	fem.	yes	
				85.	Interrogative	masc.	masc. and fem.	no	no	Multiple riddles
44.	LV	Šmits 1927 3: 333–334	Neuzticamā māsa	86.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
45.	LV	Šmits 1927 3: 400–402	Burvis un viņa māceklis	87.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
				88.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
				89.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	no	no	
46.	LV	Šmits 1927 3: 402–404	Burvis un viņa māceklis	90.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	no	no	
				91.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
				92.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
47.	LV	Šmits 1927 3: 404–406	Burvis un viņa māceklis	93.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
				94.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
				95.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
48.	LV	Šmits 1927 3: 406–408	Burvis un viņa māceklis	96.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
				97.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
				98.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
49.	LV	Šmits 1927 3: 412–414	Burvis un viņa māceklis	99.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
				100.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
				101.	Identificatory	masc.	masc.	masc.	yes	
50.	LV	Šmits 1927 3: 416–421	Burvis un viņa māceklis	102.	Identificatory	masc.	fem.	no	no	
51.	LV	Šmits 1927 3: 424–426	Burvis un viņa māceklis	103.	Identificatory	masc.	fem.	no	no	
				104.	Identificatory	masc.	fem.	masc.	yes	
				105.	Interrogative	fem.	fem.	no	no	A true riddle
52.	LV	Šmits 1927 4: 248–249	Mirušais precinieks aizved līgavu	106.	Identificatory	fem.	masc.	no	yes	
53.	LV	Šmits 1927 4: 418–419	Zaltis par precinieku							

				107.	Identificatory	fem.	masc.	no	yes	
				108.	Identificatory	fem.	masc.	no	yes	
54.	LV	Šmits 1927 4: 438–439	Kurpju ādas uzminētājs par precinieku	109.	Compositional	fem.	masc.	no	yes	Multiple riddles
55.	LV	Šmits 1927 4: 439–440	Kurpju ādas uzminētājs par precinieku	110.	Compositional	masc.	masc.	no	yes	Multiple riddles
56.	LV	Šmits 1927 4: 440–441	Kurpju ādas uzminētājs par precinieku	111.	Compositional	fem.	masc.	no	yes	Multiple riddles
57.	LV	Šmits 1927 4: 472–473	Kēniņa dēls par putnu	112.	Interrogative	fem.	masc.	no	no	Multiple riddles

Table 1. Examples of Riddles Found in East Baltic and West Slavic Folktales

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INTERNET SOURCES

- [1] Tēzaurs: mikla (<https://tezaurs.lv/m%C4%ABkla:2>).
- [2] Lietuvių kalbos žodynas: mįslė (<http://www.lkz.lt/?zodis=m%C4%AFsl%C4%97&p;id=19063810000>).
- [3] Wielki słownik języka polskiego: zagadka (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/37395/zagadka/3884129/pytanie>).
- [4] Slovník spisovného jazyka českého: hádanka (<https://ssjc.ujc.cas.cz/search.php?hledej=Hledat&heslo=h%C3%A1danka&sti=EMPTY&where=hesla&hsubstr=no>).
- [5] Elektronický lexikón slovenského jazyka: hádanka (<http://www.slex.sk/index.asp>).

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