CHAPTER – II

DEFINITION AND MEANING OF THE RIDDLES WITH THEIR ANTIQUITY
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WITH THEIR ANTIQUITY

2.1. DEFINITION AND MEANING OF RIDDLES.

In folk literature, Riddles play a very important role. It gives a unique direction to folk literature. It represents the vast experience of folk-life in general words. The word ‘Riddle’ sounds very exciting. It involves a special kind of mysterious excitement, thrill, entertainment and also helps to enhance our knowledge. The answer of every Riddle is hidden within its jumble of words. When a person asks Riddle to somebody and if the person who is listening the puzzle is clever enough then he can easily find out the answer within the Riddle. Thus, in this game not only the person who asks the Riddle is entertained, but along with that the person who solves the Riddle also gets complete entertainment. Thus, it also helps to test their intelligence.

Riddles are an astonishing statement related to any object, whereas the name of the object is not given directly, it is present there mysteriously. Where most important is the expression at knowledge skill and pertaining to art. Some times to hide the confidential matter people uses these Riddles, which cannot be easily understood by public. Generally people don’t want to reveal their internal matter in front of everybody, which they try to hide. And in such condition they present their statement in such a way which is difficult for all to understand. Thus the main cause of the arisal of Riddle are human mysterious nature. Riddles are effective method of entertainment and enlightenment. It helps to develop mental alertness and the capacity of observation.

The zone of Riddles is so large that it includes several topics within it like –
Language, Literature, History, Geography, Mathematics, Science, Popular custom, Culture, Religion, Education, Art, Tradition, Treatment, Sports etc. besides acquiring knowledge about these topics, while in the process of searching the meaning of the Riddle, it helps to develop our - power of imagination, immediate decision-taking capacity, Memory, investigation - capacity etc. Along with this we can easily acquire knowledge, relating to various synonymous new words, folk language, opposite words, different powers of words - (i.e. \textit{Shabd-Shakti}) Sarcasm, metaphor etc.\textsuperscript{2} It is also a very good method to spend time, Which enhance our knowledge and entertain us. Riddles contain some mysterious knowledge, wonderful information within it.

Riddles are mainly found in the form of poetry, which creates interest and attraction in them. Because of that, it also becomes easy to learn. Generally it is very difficult to entangle the children in general knowledge, practical knowledge or in any other special knowledge basis discussion. But Riddles are such type of interesting medium through which we can easily entangle the children in them. It not only just help the children to acquire knowledge easily according to their interest, but all of a sudden they are able to learn the whole knowledge for their lifetime. These are some specialities of Riddles. Those serious topics of education, which generally children hesitate to learn, can be easily memorized through Riddles.\textsuperscript{3}

Before giving a specific definition of Riddle it is very important to discuss on the origin of Riddles.

\textbf{2.1.1.Origin of Riddle :}

People present the statement about any object in lyrical, mysterious and in the form of question, to entertain himself. These questions are known as ‘Riddles’, ‘Paheli bujhana’ is a proverb, which means to present one’s statement in such words, that it becomes difficult to understand.
According to Hindi Dictionary – Riddles are a type of question, sentence or description to examine the intelligence and understanding of a person, in which some misleading and crooked symbols / indication are given about an object, with the help of which exact answer have to be found.

Pandit Ram Naresh Tripathi stated that – “To extend / develop and enhance other’s intelligence many Riddles are found in villages, which are named as Bujhobal. Bujhobal are mysterious and having hidden meaning.\(^4\)

In modern Indian language, the word ‘Riddle’ is developed in many forms. According to different Indian language the word ‘Riddle’ is used as –

Hindi – Paheli, Bujhobal, Bhul-Bhulaiyaa.

Bangla – Dhandha, pai, karcha, heyali, paheli etc.

Assamese – saanthor, distan, pakkanna, heyali, hiyali etc.

Oriya – Paheli

Marathi – Ukhana, Aahana, Uman, Kohara, Kore, Bayana etc.

Sindi – Ukhani

Panjabi – Paheli, Bhujat

Gujrati – Ukhano or Ukhanu, Kohabhya, Akhiyanu etc.

Pali – Prashna

Tamil – vidu kathoye

Malyalum – Tol kathaye

Telegu – Pohupu katha

Gadwali – Pakhan

Hariyani – Palhoya or Malhor

Kumayu – Aahan or Aan

Thus, in Modern Indian Languages Riddles are called by many different names.
In Prakrit, ‘Hyalika’ and ‘paheli’ words are derived from the Sanskrit word ‘Hridyalika’ and ‘prahelika’. In Bhojpuri, it is called as ‘Bujhobal’. ‘Bujhobal bujhana’ an idiom is also used in Bhojpuri to ask Riddle.

In Bhojpuri after marriage, the ladies of the family ask Riddles to the groom before entering to the ‘kohbar’ (means the house or room in which family deities are kept at the time of marriage), which is known as ‘chenka’.

To reflect on the importance of ‘Malhare’ and ‘Palhaya’ creation of “Korvi or Khari boli, Dr. Vasudev Sharan Agrawal stated that it is a natural form of sanskrit’s ‘Prabhilka’. After analyzing the nature of ‘Malharo’, he presents the conclusion that they have a deep relation with Atashpralap, Prabahilka etc.

In Pavri dialect, Riddles are termed as ‘Sudovanen Kani’. Some people refer to it as – ‘kut or samasya’.

In Gadwall Riddles are called as ‘Aana’. But their occasional / incepcional use was not seen in entire community. ‘Aana’ are generally a medium of entertainment out.

People usually asked ‘Aana’ to test the intelligence of any person to spend their free time. In some places ‘Aana’ is also termed as ‘Mona’ and ‘Bujhani’. In Gadwall, many Riddles are available on the busy life of Gadwali people.

In Chattisgarh, the tradition of aksing Riddles is very old which is referred as ‘Janobal’, ‘Biskutak’, ‘Hana’ etc.

In Jonpuri region, Riddles are called as ‘Bujhmi’, ‘Bujhabal’ etc.

In Telugu, Riddles are termed as ‘Pohupu’. Which means – ‘Questionnaire poetry’ or oral mathematics developed in the form of poetry. These are called as ‘maru - kathlu’ in Rayal seema region / district. Some people called it as ‘Tatluveputa.’

In Assamese, Riddles are called as ‘Saanthar’. This ‘saanthar’ word comes or derived from the word ‘santor’ (to swim). If a person falls in water, he has to swim to
come out from it. Similarly to solve a Riddle one must know how to swim in his own knowledge and intelligence. Otherwise he will be defeated.

In Assamiya 'saanthar' is referred to many names like – Hayeli, Hiyali, Distan, Pakkana etc. ‘Hayeli’ and ‘Hiyali’ words are derived from the Sanskrit word ‘Prahelika’ and ‘Hridyalika’. In Assamese the use of the word ‘Heyali’ and ‘Hiyali’ are indicated for Riddles. Example –

“प्रहेलिका सबै कहे हेयालिकाँ छन्देको।
बलत आहार करे तिने जुनल लिबाज्जे।”

The ‘distan’ word is a form of Sanskrit word Dristan. In Assamiya the actual meaning of the word Distan is 'Patontar', it does not mean saanthar. But in some case we can see the use of this word as Riddles –

“दिस्तान दिए मनुराई।
साह पेले बाकल खाई।”

In Sanskrit – Brahmoday, Vad-Vivad, Prashilka, Prahelika, Hridyalika, Kut Prashna, Samsya etc. word are resemblance with Riddle. Vedic ‘Brahmoday’ word is the oldest word in Indian literature which persuade the meaning Riddle. The critics of ‘Yajurveda’ refered ‘Brahmodaya’ as – ‘Question – Answer based dialogues (Uttar pratiuttar mulak samvad).

“उत्तर-प्रतिउत्तर: परस्पर संवाद: ब्रह्मोद्ययम्”

Dr. Frezor stated that Riddles may be formed at that time when for some reason, speaker was unable to express his view directly.¹²

Riddles are used to examine people’s intelligence. In earlier days it is also used traditionally to examine groom’s intelligence. In Mandla district of Madhyapradesh, people of Gor, Pradhan and Birhor communities, there is an important custom of asking Riddles, during marriage ceremony.
In Bhojpuri, after marriage, the ladies of the family ask Riddles to the groom before entering to the ‘kohbar’ (means the house or room in which Family deities are kept at the time of marriage). These Bhojpuri Riddles are called as ‘chenka’.

Entertainment is also a cause of the origin of Riddles. At the end of the day, when the tired farmers assembled in a place, at that time to take relief and to entertain themselves, they usually asked Riddle to each other. Which refresh their body and mind. Thus, for few hours they forgot their physical labour, tiredness and feel relaxed and happy. At that time there is no other option in the village for their entertainment, these Riddles help a lot and become a unique medium for their entertainment. It also helps to detect their cleverness.

Riddles are an object of pleasant conversation. It is a best method of intelligence test. As the modern psychology measures the child’s intelligence through questions, thus may be in ancient period Riddles are also formed for intelligence test of the people of that time. Through these Riddle, mental exercise can be done and it is also very entertaining but then also, it does not able to create Ras (rhet, any of several tastes or sentiments characterizing a literary work – from 8 to 10 rrasas are generally distinguished). So, in concerned to poetry it is not so much important due to its obscurity which its creates obstacle in Ras. For this reason Mammatacharya does not place them in the category of Alankara. He clearly stated in his book “Sahitya darpan” that –

“रसस्य परिपक्वित्वातं मालंकरं प्रहेलिका।”

Therefore, this statement, which might be beautiful, but it was never included in the category of Alankar.

The existence of Riddles are present among many of people in the tradition of oral form. Form ancient period of adikal the tradition of Vedic study are verbally available. Shishya (i.e. students) also acquire knowledge from their gurus (teacher)
through just by hearing later on this hearing knowledge gets the shape of scripture i.e. *lipi*. Famous scholar Sitgwick stated that — "It lives only while it remains what the French with a charming confusion of ideas, call oral literature."\(^{13}\)

Human heart is the source of infinite feelings. Among those feelings some feelings can be expressed in public, but some feelings are personal which cannot be expressed easily in front of everybody. And for this only, the nature of secrecy arouse.

In such condition, people uses some secret method to express their views and feelings to some specified person. ‘Riddles’ are also such kind of thing and method, in which human’s tendency of secrecy was included.

A traditional method of statement which is difficult to be understood is called Riddles.

In the beginning, Riddles arises or formed to fulfill the need of human’s tendency to secrecy. But later on it became an entertaining measure of intelligence. In different method of our entertainment, Riddle occupies a special place. These Riddles are generally poetic. It speciality is that, it included every object of our day to day life. The analysis and thought – processes of people of thousand years ago, are also hidden in these Riddles. Its main intention was to entertainment and to express the folk culture. Riddles are used for intellectual development and it also helps to examine one’s intelligence in a secret manner.

To explain Riddle and to give its answer, in both these the criteria is intelligence.

After returning from a whole day’s tiring, hectic schedule the villagers used these Riddles to entertain themselves. It is supposed to be an intellectual exercise for all of them and it also helps to reduce their stress and pressure.

For women’s Riddles are their weapon and Arms. In father-in-laws house, ladies used to ask Riddles to examine son-in-law’s intelligence. Till today, this tradition has
been followed in many villages during marriage ceremony. Along with the description at
the financial conditions these Riddles also describe the social custom and tradition. It
presents the animate form of Indian folk-culture. Specialities of different communities
are highlighted through these Riddles.

2.1.2. Composition of Riddles:

Compared to urban areas, mostly Riddles are formed in rural areas (i.e. in
villages). Because new objects of comparisons are generally found in the villager’s
imaginations. Literally, there is no difference between Riddles and Bujhobal, but
terminologically both are different. In bujhobal secret meaning of the statement is
hidden within it.

In this the speaker accomplishe his aim through specific meaning of Bujhbol.
Whereas Riddles are generally used for just entertainment, enjoyment and for pleasant
conversation. Theoretical examination are also done through bujhobal. In the form of
any object Riddles can be easily understood through the medium of bujhobal.
Circumstances are created in some bujhobal to prove some matter. Such as – In
Gangaram Patel’s stories bujhobal are sometimes used to maintain secrecy or sometimes
it is used to present the statement in a different way. Through this medium the
questionaire ask question and answer given gives answer. Bujhobal cannot be must
solved by prediction, its requires intelligence.

In Riddles sometimes its meaning can be predicable. But to solve bujhobal inner
talent is required. In this it is necessary to find put the true essence or meaning of the
statement.

Riddles are a type of picture which are made with words. In which it is asked to
identify the object. But the pictures which are presented through comparision (upman)
are not clear. Through which intended object gets incomplete signal. But this signal is
definite and that does not suggest any other meaning of the object.
Riddles become rhyming if they are made up of more than one sentence. Due to this versifying quality of Riddles it becomes easy to memorise. As similar to the folk-songs, Riddles also has many conditions for rhyming.

Example –

"जब तक हम काले रहते
तब तक हम आदर पाते
किस्तु धवल जब वेश बनाते
रब मन ही मन पछाते"

(अर्थात् - बाल)

In the above Riddles, last words of every sentence are in rhyme.

2.1.3. Importance of Riddles:

Riddles (Bujhobal) are also very important from the point of view of human science. As Fredger gives example in ‘Golden Bough’ and shows the existence of Riddles (Bujhobal) in different human beings in their different circumstances of difficulties and doubts. Before using the proverb practically, Riddles originated in the minds of the people as folk stories and folk song.

Every object or creation of nature and also the existence of human are might be a Riddle. And in search of the solution of these Riddles, people acquire various range of knowledge. May be to show the depth and importance of acquired range of knowledge, Man asked various questions to his own companion or associates. And these questions are termed as Riddles. Thus, man’s simple and ordinary objects also come under the category of Riddles. Man’s thinking and their analysis are done in these Riddles and its importance is greater than proverbs. By solving and by explaining these Riddles man’s intelligence develop easily. Through these people come to know about many ultimate mystery. For this reason Riddles are called as Bujhobal.14
Dr. Satyendra States that ‘Riddles are a type of presentation of picture which are made with words. In which it is asked to identify the object by presenting the picture through words. In which intended objects present such type of signals, through which definite meaning can be obtained easily, it does not give any other indefinite meaning.'

As proverb, some scholars insistently accepted Riddle as Alankar (an ornament of sound or sense: figure of speech). Proverbs are benefactor of Rasanubhuti. Whereas Riddles are their obstacle. Because Riddles are an object of intelligence test and assists in its development. Which was not related to emotions and feelings. Those who are in favour of accepting Riddle as Alankar, they should give concentration on the statement of ‘Mammat’ Means although these statements are beautiful, but then also it cannot be accepted as Alankar.

To some Riddles along with the intelligence, emotions are also associated. This association of feelings & emotions in Riddles does not reduce the entertaining part of Riddles. Some special types of Riddles are also there in which some specific incidents are discussed. In Hindi literature, Amir Khusro’s Riddles are very famous.

Along with the development of intelligence in man, the tendency of entertainment is also developed in them. Till today Riddles are asked in leisure time for examining intelligence and for entertainment. Whereas in many places it is collaborated with some specific occasion. In Gond, Pradhan and Birhor communities of Mandla district of Madhyapradesh custom of asking Riddles are very famous during marriage ceremony. To examine the Groom’s intelligence and for entertainment this system was organized.

Riddles are a type of imitative magic. Behind which this conception was working that objects initiation is its achievement. If the people dance and jump for the prosperity of crops, then it means that crops may achieve the height of their jump. If
there is no then by throwing water, rains initiation was done. And it is believed that rain will come soon. This is a type of arrangement of parallelism which is based on the philosophy of imitative difference of designated object.

In conclusion it may be stated that, in Riddles some inquisitiveness and excitement are tried to be satisfied. Actually Riddles are not just a matter of entertainment, but it also reflects and represents the beauty of the society. And also enlighten and affect their interest.

To create tension and distress among others, asking difficult question is termed as Riddle.

We can also give the definition of Riddles as –

The definition of the Riddles, at the last may be stated as follows:

Riddles is a medium to express the intending meaning with a few words in rupak (metaphore), shlesh (double entendre) and anyokti (allegory) by threadbore and interesting style. Wherein an effort is made to present an unprepared suggestion by a prepared sense. In Riddles, we find most of forms of rarity of morphological and synovial words.

Except some source of Rasavadi Acharya, generally every educationist and scholar presents their views and opinions over the writing style of Riddles. Vatsyayan accepted Riddles as a form of Art. In Sanskrit literature dhwani gets the foremost position. Because of insistansy (assiduous) towards ancient Indian learning and standarised literature, those acharya's can’t able to focuses towards the symbolic meaning of the Riddles. These Riddles are an indirect skill of statement which are full with humour, entertainment, sympathy, tragedy etc.

In addition to Sanskrit rhetoric sciences, whatever the references we see in Poetry, Dramas, Stories – Riddles have confirmed its ancient glory as an independent art
which is used in folk life. Thus, the Riddle is found as knowledge of folk literature, wherein a variation and redundance of sayings inteligentsia is accumulated.

Some elements formate Riddles in a grammatical image and some poetic beauty also come out in it. Owing to grammatical elements, Riddles get lively and vitalized and due to poetic elements it becomes aesthetically flowery.

2.2. ANTIQUITY OF RIDDLES

Tradition of Riddles are very primeval. Riddles are in use in human society from the time when man learned to speak. In some special circumstances, when some statements are now occupied the form of proverb and Riddles are traditionally followed today. If we search out the beginning or origin of these Riddles then we know that time of Vedic period. As similar to the origin of language, Riddles also originated ancient. From the stage of primitive period till today form of poetry gets more important than prose. Because in the stage of primitive period ‘Rigveda’ was written in the form or rules of poetry. And the main reason behind this is that, it being very easy for people to by heart the poetry than compare to prose. Most Riddles are found in the style of poetry.

Their existance were also known from the time of Vedic period. While taking ‘Asvamedha Yajna’ it being an important part of the religious performances. Before sacrificing horse, ‘Hota’ and ‘Brahman’ asked ‘Brahmoday’ (Prahelika). Only they (Brahman and brahmoday) have the right to ask the prahelika.

With the help of rupak alankar (a figure of speech), Vedic Hrishi (esp. any of the seven Vedic hymn-singers known as Hrisi) formed many hymn, which becomes mysterious because of obscurity of its meaning. And these are now present in a form of prahelika infront of us. On the basis of the Riddles, which are found in Rigveda, Sri Ram-Narayan-Tripathi recommended rigveda as designation of ‘Veda of Riddles’.

Many scholars accepted the following mantra (a sacred verse of text) of Rigveda, as a Riddle –
It was still a matter of controversy among the scholars relating to the actual topic of the aforesaid mysterious Riddle. In aforesaid mantra the word 'brishabh' referred to whom? There was a huge dispute regarding this question among the scholars. Different (Acharya) preceptors, present their opinion according to their belief.

Thus, these Riddles are so much mysterious that it's real meaning is still a mystery for all. Vedic scholars gives its Yajna parak meaning. Many other scholars try to give its surya-parak meaning. It means it has four horns, three legs, two heads and seven hands. It was tied from three places. It was a bull seems to be Mahadev which is present among every human being. Mahabhashyakar Patanjali expresses the meaning of this verses and present this as a form of (Scripture related to grammer) Vyakaran Shastra. According to him its four horns represents four words of grammer (i.e. – name, akhyat, upsarg and nipat.) three tenses – past, present and future are its three legs. ‘Nitya’ and ‘Karya’ – two languages respresent two heads. Seven affixes of grammar are 7 heads. Heart, Throat and Mouth are three places to bind. This maharshi patanjali tried to solvel this Riddle according to grammar.

In ancient period, there was a tradition, where during the time of Yajna, the priest who were performing the yajna (a sacrificial act) asked Riddles ro each other, which were known as 'brahmoday.' When firstly of all question is asked then later on the answer is given. One example of 'Brahmoday' was given below –

**Question** –

"क: स्तिच्चेत्ताकी चारति:
क: उस्तिच्चेत्यायते पुनः"
Means who is wandering lonely? Who is born repeatedly? Which object is the means of cold? And which object is very essential to sow?

Its answer is given as —

"सूर्य: एकाकी चरति
चन्द्रमा जायते पुनः।
अर्धः ज्योतिः भ्रमणः;
भूमिकार्यवं महत्।"

Means — Sun moves alone, Moon is born repeatedly, Fire is the means of cold and Earth itself is very large.

The description about the creation of this world, given by Shri Krishna in Srimad Bhagwat gita is very mysterious. He says that whoever is able to understand this secret, can became the ‘Vedvid’ (knower of Vedic knowledge). It is actually a Riddle.

Bhagwan says that —

"उत्तममूलमधः शाख, अश्वत्थ प्राहुरव्ययम्।
छन्दाचिस्य तस्य पर्नामि।
यस्तं वेद स वेदवित।"

Here world’s comparision was given with Asvattha (i.e. – Banyan tree). It is a tree whose roots are above moving the sky and branches are down to the earth. Whose leaves are veda, and anyone who knows about such type of tree is able to know the true essence of veda. Viraj sukto at Atharveda, in which Kathitarth (narrated meaning) or Prashnotari (Question —Answer) based Riddles are as follows —

"को नु गो: क एक संधि: किमु धाम का आशिषे:।
यथां पृथिव्यामेकौत्तेकःकःसमो नु स:।"
Means – in viraj sukta (8/6), Hrishi asked this question – who is gour? Who is sandhi, what is ashih? Who is the only yaksha in this earth? What is one Hritu?

The answer given by Hrishi Kashyap was as follows –

“There is one Gou (a cow), one yaksha (a kind of demigod attending kuvera and guarding his garden and treasures), one dham (dwelling abode), one ahsish (i.e. blessing). The yaksha living in this earth is also one. There is nothing beyond one Hritu.

The description of a huge crow was given in an incantation i.e. Mantra and Rigveda.

Vedic panygyrist (strota) says that I (Aav se) call upon the crow for my protection (Vayasanam Johvimi). That crow, lived in a divine place. (Divyam). It has beautiful wings (Supergam). (Vrihantam) It is very huge. (Apangarbha) grasping water i.e. drinking lots of water. (Darshatam aushadhinam) – To have a visit of medicine always. (abhipato vristibhitarpayantam) satisfied the whole world by raining. (Sarsvantam) laving excessive water.

This crow refered to is sun. sun lives in divine place i.e. dwilok. With beautiful wings of sunbeam. It absorbs water from sea / ocean. Satisfied the world by rain and by producing medicines. It was very huge. This Riddle was really very difficult to understand.

The description of samudra shayi garur (Garur is a name of a bird, the vehicle of
bhagwan Vishnu) was given in rigveda, and in this way —

“एकः सुपर्गः स समुद्रमाविवेश स इदं विश्वं भुवनं विचन्द्रेः
तर्पित काव्यनन्द पश्यमाणिति
सतं माता रे फिह स उ रेणिः सातर्म”  

(Eka suparga) There is a garur, (sa samudram avidesha) who entered in the ocean and (so idam visham bhuvanam vichashte) watching the world or illuminated the world. (Tam panken manasa apashyam antito)

I have seen the matter with a matured heart closely in his subject that (ते माता रेणिः) he has one mother but four in numbers. Tell, who is it?

This Riddle have many meanings. First –

Scurpurg is paramatma (God). He is seating in the universe of ocean. From where he is observing the whole world. Nature (prakriti) is mother, and that nature (prakriti) depends upon paramatma (God).

Second meaning of the Riddle – suparg is Jivatma. He is seating in this body which is baving the form of ocean. While seating there he (Jivatma) is watching the whole world and tries to acquire knowledge about this world. Here also the nature is mother. And here jivatma is dependent upon nature means taking the tastes of nature’s fruits. And mother nature loved him. Thus, both jivatma and prakriti love each other.

Third meaning of this Riddle is given below –

Suparg is son, because he has beautiful wings of sun-beam. And he also seems to be flying in the sky. His place is situated in divine place (Heaven) he lives in a divine place. He is illuminating / enlightening the whole planets and satellites. The earth is the mother, who revolves around the sun. And the sun also nourishes the world through its light.
Fourthly, it can be explained as suparg is wind, because it can fly as a bird. And it lives in the sky. It looks with favour to all living creatures. Language or sound is the mother. Both wind and sound nourishes each other means both are dependent on the other. Because sound can travel from one place to another with the help of wind (air).

2.2.1. Tradition of Riddles in folk literature:

In folk literature, the first description of Riddle was found in Mahabharat. To bring to a successful conclusion of Ved-vas’s work of writing, Ganesh (Ganapati) agreed in this condition, that he will write without taking any pause. Means he writes nonstop. And if he has to stop while writing, then he will not write again. Vedvaas accepted his (Ganapati’s) condition. But Vedvaas also put a condition in front of him that he will also not write anything without understanding. He has to understand whatever he is going to write. Thus, to slow down Ganapati’s writing speed vedvaas added some difficult poetic Riddles in it. Now, during writing, Ganapti takes some time to understand the poetic Riddles and Vedvyas also takes the advantage of this time and created another poetry. In Mahabharat, there is hardly ever any section, where we do not get any poetic Riddles. In Mahabharat’s shanti parv, most of all these types of poetic Riddles are available.

The clarity and skill, which are available / found in the Riddles of Mahabharat, are the sign of pure literary Riddles, in this regard, the suggestion of Vidur was mentioned here, which was given to Yudhisthir while he is going to Vanavat.

Example –

“अल्पों निश्चित शस्त्र शरीर परिकर्तलम्
यो वेत्ति न तु तं क्षलित प्रतिभासातविर्द दिवध:!”

It means, there is a sharp weapon which is not made up of iron but it can destroy the body. Who knew about that weapon and also knew the technique to protect himself
from that weapon can never be killed by enemy.

From the discussion of *Yaksha* and *Yudhisthir*, available in *Mahabharat*, we come to know how is the form of ancient Riddles Yaksha was a supreme God of a river. Where five *Pandavas* (i.e. – Nakul, Sahdev, Arjun, Bhim & Yudhisthir) seriously one after another arrived to drink water. First Nakul reached there and *Yaksha* asked him 4 questions but he was unable to give answer. So *Yaksha* punished them. Thus one by one every one reached there, but no one was able to give the correct answer. Finally think elder brother *Yudhisthir* reached there and now *Yaksha* again asked *Yudhisthir* those 4 questions. Which are as follows –

"का वाती? किमाशयर्?
कः पन्था? कश्च मोदते?
इति मैं चतुरः प्रश्नान
उत्तरं दत्वा जतं गिताँ।"

Means – What is new in this world? What is astonishing? Which one is laudable or right way? And who lives happily in this world? *Yudhisthir* gives beautiful answer of these questions serially.

"अस्मिन्न महामोहम्ये कठाः, सूर्यायिनिना राजितदेवीद्यनेन।
माससुदर्स परिघटतन्त्रे, भूतानि कालः पचतीति वाताः” [11111]

"अहं अहं भूतानि मध्यस्य मममन्दिरसम्।
शेषः स्थानुभिन्धनिनि, किमाशयर्महत्: परम् [121]

"वेदाः विषिन्ना: स्मृतयो विषिन्ना: नैको मुनिर्वस्य वचः प्रमाणम्।
धर्मस्य तत्त्वं निहितंगुतायाः, महाजनो येन गतः: स पन्था: [131]

"पचच्चभूताः तत्र्वं वा, शाक्ति पयति वे मृहे।
अनुग्निः चाप्रवासी धम, स वारिचर! मोदते: [141]

In the vanparb of *Mahabharat* we come to know that, in the context to the
questions of Yaksha there was one condition was laid that the person has to die if he was unable to give the correct answer. In both पौराणिक विषय और धर्म शास्त्रीय basis condition, many Riddles are spiritual and philosophical. Many Riddles are related to natural environment. The questions asked by Yaksha are specially focused on moral values.

These types of praheña are available in abundant measure in Sanskrit literature, which are terminal as ‘Antarlapika’ and ‘Bahirlapika’. In some Riddles only questions are asked and their answer are given from outside.

Such as –

“पंचभगिनी न पांचाली, दिनदिनहा न च सर्वे।
कृष्णमुखी न मार्गी, यो जानाति सः पंक्तिः।”

Its answer is – Lekhi (i.e. – pen), while in some Riddles question – answer are given together. Clever people can easily find out the answer within the Riddle like –

“का काशि, का मधुरा, का शीतलवाहिनी गंगा।
कंसैंजग्न ख्रिश्चु, के बलवंत न बाधते शीतम्।”

It is a Riddle, in which the answer of the Riddle is hidden along with it.

Questionnaire asked –

Question – ka Madhura (what is Mathura?)
Answer – Kam dhura – (chakra of Kamdev)

Question – ka shital vahini Ganga (where is Ganga?)
Answer – Kashi tal vahini Ganga (Ganga is flowing near Kashi town)

Question – Kan Sanjaghan Krishna” (who was killed by Krishna?)
Answer – Kansa jaghan Krishna. (Kansa was killed by Krishna)

Question – Kam Balvantam na badhate shitam? (Which person does not feel cold?)
Answer – Kambal vantam na badhate shitam. (The person wearing blanket does not feel cold)
Thus both are mixed in one shloka through sabhang slesh (A type of alankar). In few cases, question are asked in the first three phases on section of the shloka and later on the complete answer has been given in the 4th phase.

Such as-

“किमायुष्करं लोके, जयपति: कस्य दै सुतः।
कर्म किरण पदं प्रोकरे, ततः, शक्रस्य, दुर्लभः।”

In the first three phases of the shloka, following questions are asked and in the 4th phase their answer was also given serially –

Question – What is the age giving material in this world?
Answer – Takram (i.e. Curd / yoghurt)

Question – Who’s son is Jayant?
Answer – Shakrasya (i.e. Indra)

Question – How is Vishnu’s place?
Answer – Durlabham (To obtain with great difficulty)

Verbal form remain hidden in some prahelika. Means verbal form is present in the Riddle in such a way that it cannot be easily distinguished / identified.

Example –

“विराटनगरे तातु, कीचकादपि कीचकम्।
अव क्रियापदं गुप्तं, यो जानाति सः पंडितः।”

In the above prahelika, ‘Virat’ word represents the name of a king but verb is hidden within thin word. Which is difficult to detect.

Virat is the (transition) sandhi of - वि: + आट (वि: - पक्षी; आट - घूमते थे) Thus, in this Riddle the meaning is – “Ek bans se dusre bans par pakshi gumte the.”

2.2.2.Kut Sloka:

In Hindi literature Surdas was famous for writing kut pad (code – word), and it is
difficult to find out there meaning. These *kut-pad* (code words), can be included within Riddles. These types of shloka are also abundant in Sanskrit literature, and it is very difficult to get their meaning.

Example –

‘विषं श्रृंगार महाराज।
स्वजनोऽपि विनामयः।
विना वेदं, विना नामं$;
कृपणाजीनमकंकुलम्।’

This *shloka* literally means that – ‘your majesty! You take this poison with your family. But it is a Riddle and its actual meaning is to rule unimededly.’

### 2.2.3. Mukria (Mukri means a type of brajbhasha poem):

In Hindi, Amir Khusro’s *Mukria* are very famous. He wrote many beautiful *mukriya* of old style. The tradition of these *mukria* are also found in *sanskrit*.

Such as –

“काले वारिधारणा, अवज्ञित्या मेव शक्यते गणनम्।
उक्तितितासि बहद्रे? नहि नहि सखि! पिन्चिखलः पल्प्या।”

A young lady said that it is very hard to stay without subsiding in rainy season.

On that note her friend asked her that – Are you very excited to meet her husband? She persuaded by saying no. to her friend. She says – “I just want to say that because of rain the road because slippery”. These mukria are perceived under the category of Riddle.

### 2.2.4. Tradition of Riddles in ‘Mahajan Jatak’:

In ‘*Mahajan Jatak*’ princess *sivili* asked Riddles to test the intelligence of her would be husband.

The problems or Riddles presented by her in number. Amongst the Riddles the king asked following statement –

“सरिषुगम्यं निधि अथो ओऽगम्यं निधि।
Nindhi (object or a person) is at the place of sunrise. On the other hand, 'Nindhi' is at the place of sunset also. Nindhi is inside and also outside. 'Nindhi' may not be outside neither inside. 'Nidhi' exists at the climbing place and also in dismount. Nidhi is there in all four 'Mahashala' and in all four unitive way. 'Nidhi' is there front of the teeth, on the top of hair, over the big trees in the water – all in sixteen places there is 'MahaNidhi'. It is as bow to be lift by millions, a satisfaction of Palang and Sivlee.

Mahajanak clarifies the intentions of these 'Udan(s)'. as he says that here the meaning of 'Sun' is – all 'Buddha(s)'. King took leadership at his (Buddha) arrival which is the place of sunrise and where he gave him adieu that is the place of sunset. Like this way, he decided the place of Nidhi (s) as mentioned above and accordingly he succeeded to marry the princess Silvee.

Abundance of Riddles are there in Prakrit and Apbransh. Unpublished book of Dharmda named "Vidagdha mukh mandanam" is also very important from the view point of Riddles. Dharamdas wrote many Riddles in pure prakrit and Apbransh. On the basis of Riddles antiquity, type and from the view of sequential development many examples are there, from there one example is given below–

"पाणि ग्यहन नियसानु सोहड़ कहिं मंडिंदै।
साहस व (दु) विं वीर पढ़ रिपु बल कहिं खंडिंदै।"

That means – Oh valiant hero! it looks beautiful in the marriage costumes you
are wearing. Who gave this? Oh valiant hero! by whom you have exploded the inimical power?

In the adikal of Hindi literature, Amir Khusro’s Riddles and mukriya has been very popular. In which entertainment and satire on life both are available all together. Might be Amir Khusro does not get importance in regard to emotions in Riddles, but his Riddles being always an important part of Hindi literature in regarding to the language.

Through these poetry Khari-boli was trying to establish as poetic language. To understand the historical importance of his language, one example of his Riddle is given below—

"तरतर से एक तिरिया उतरी।
उनने बहुत रिज़ाया।
बाप का उसने नाम जो पूछा
आधा नाम बताया।।
आधा नाम पिता पर प्यारा
बुझ पहली गौरी।
अमीर खुसरो सो कहें,
अपने नाम बोली।।"

(निवारी)

This style of Riddle writing does not develop further in Hindi poetry. But it surely effect on the development of mysterious tendency of Hindi literature.

The nature of amazement (miracle) and curiosity gets special place in Hindi poetry with the inspiration of Khusro. As a result, a long tradition of koutuhal – kavya (Interesting / curious poetry) has been started in Ritikal. Which was not studied by anyone till now.

Acharya Ram Chandra Sukla stated about Amir Khusro’s Riddles and Mukriya in his Itihaas Granth, that – Khusro was very eagerly desirous to write those type of
poetic Riddles which was generally used by the people of that time, in their day to day life in the form of Doha, Tukbandi, Riddles etc. These are generally popular among both urban and rural people.

2.2.5. History of Riddles in different countries:

Use of this form (Riddle) in the other languages, Hibal and Ibrani of sami-family is also very ancient Riddles are also available in Bible and Talamud. But Yahudis of spain give elevation to this Art. Among these Yahudi Riddles, Dunara ven labrat, Misses Ibn Sajara Yehuda Halebi are very famous. Recently, the Riddles published by Labrat are being very famous and important for their diversity and creativity.

Nearly, in 1500 A.D. of Spain this art form reached at Turkistan and it became very popular among the class of traders. Among Turki Riddles, spice / raw materials businessman Fani and leech selling traders name were notable. This form of art was not developed so much in France as it developed in Arab. But then also, in 10th century, Raji, Asjadi and Nisan etc. are such types of names which were enumerated among renowned Riddles. Their contemporary writer Firdosi wrote nature related Riddles in Sahanama. In Greek language tradition of Riddles are very ancient. The Riddles of Latin symphosis (of 5th A.D.) write many Riddles in both latin language and folk language from renaissance to 16th century. This art was developed enough in Germany, Italy, Spain, France and Britain. It is accepted as an independent type of poetry in Kavya shastriya Granth of Italy. Hazi Khalsa of Arab also gave credit to the Riddle as a Kavya-sheli (style of poetry)

2.2.5.1 History of literary Riddles in Eurasian countries:

The period of literary Riddles in Eurasian countries are from 10th to 16th A.D. All probable development has been made during this time. Riddles have some limitations as a literary form. It cannot excel the word skill and wonder of speech and so, it comes
under the range of entertaining poetry (*Vinod – Kavya*) rather than *Raskavya*.

But it is not right to say that it has less probability from the view point of poetry. Many Riddles are so effective and full of beauty that it was not difficult to refer them as a poem.

**2.2.5. (ii) Development of Riddles in Arab:**

The foremost development of Riddles in Middle Asia was takes place in Arab. *Hal Arini* (11th century) was its most great preceptor (*Acharya*). Other famous Riddles are – *Ibna Sukkara* (400 A.D.), *Ibra – Shabin* (1105-75 A.D.) *Abu Sarfali* (1100 A.D.) and *Abu Tahir mohammad Ib Yusout* of Kandoba. *Haji Khalifa* of 14th century wrote a book on Riddles, in which he represents the lists of Arbi Riddles.

**2.2.6. Uses of Riddles in primitive communities:**

In primitive communities, Riddles were only asked during some special time. Other than those its another use is based on occasional. Fredger also astonished that why these communities asked Riddles during some specific occasion like – Marriage – Ceremony, Rain summoning, burying etc. In Britain, the old people asked Riddle to each other after burying in graveyard.22

**2.2.6. (i) Custom of asking Riddles before marriage:**

These Riddles are extensively used to test the intelligence of Groom and Bride. Till today Turkey ladies ask Riddles to their would-be husband. And in case they can’t give the right answer then they are punished.

Many folk stories are also popular

In Eurasia, in which the person who is capable of giving the right answer of the Riddle can marry the princess or win the half state. Sometimes the person succeeded in taking both of them.

Tradition of asking Riddles are shown in many folk stories. Fredger stated that
Riddles are composed due to the difficulty of speaker to express his views in general words.

Now, Riddles are generally a medium of entertainment or 'mental pleasure' and 'intelligence test'.

As there in Hindi, the tradition of Riddles are very ancient in Assamiya literature also. Dr. Sarbeswar Rajguru stated in his book 'Heyalir chand' that – in Assamese literature the tradition and discussion of Riddles are very less but then also Riddles are in use in Assamiya society.

Through the ‘Santhor’ of Dak-Prabachan’ we get some evidence of Riddles in Assamiya literature. In dak-prabachan, come problem entrusted questions are there which are in the form of Riddle. Dak was the son of famous astrologer Barahmihir. The discussion between Dak and his father Barahmihir are basically in the form of question – Answer. Every question is very complicated. And to find out the answer is also very tough as the Riddle.

The mystical language which is found in Assamiya Charyapad is termed as “Sandhya – Bhasha”. Later on, we find that the language of Bhakatiya Fakara (as Riddle) was also very mysterious. Actually its meaning eas not the same what it seems to be externally. Secrecy is its main quality (as similar to santhor). So, these charyapad also effected the Assamese santhor.

These 'Bhakatia fakara' was developed in New-Vaishanavism period of Assam. It also comes under 'Pravad'. Narayan Thakur is one of the main composer of this Santhor or ‘Bhakatia Fakara'. In this fakara a secret message is hidden which can be only identified by a Bhakat (Devotee) who can maintain this ritual of secrecy. It means to elaborate their meaning – along with intelligence and talent, a special form of religious knowledge is also required. It can be compose with the first evidence of Riddles of Vedic period. As in 'Yajna', 'Hota' and “Brahmana’ asked prahelika,
similarly in Assam, Vaishnav Bhakat asked ‘Bhakatiya fakara’ to each other to test their knowledge during ‘naam-prasanga’ but in ‘Bhakatia fakara’ punishment system is not there, which is present in Vedic period. While in starting or ending of ‘naam-prasanga, vaishnav bhakat asked fakara to each other just for entertainment and to test intelligence.

One beautiful example of bhakatia fakara was given below –

“धेत तेरी मगरमूरी।
एकेडाल बोहर तिनिडाल गुरी॥
बुझिले बुज।
नुबुझिले युंज॥”

How it is possible to have three different roots from one Bamboo tree. It is very difficult to find out its exact meaning. This fakara means that— one bamboo refers to ‘nirgun parameshwar’. Three roots of that one bamboo tree means three forms of nirgun parmeshwar (unqualified absolute being). i.e. Sagun Iswar (qualified being — God)

Brahma, Vishnu, Maheswar. They also possess three different qualities. On the basis of Rojagun, Satgun, Tamogun. Rajogun denotes Brahma who is the creator, satogun denotes Vishnu who is protector and Tomogun denotes Mahesh who is destroyer. Thus, in many villages these types of religious based fakara are also available.

In conclusion we can say that the tradition of Riddles are very ancient. Riddles are regarding as the basis of the Ved. Ram Naresh Tirupati termed Rigveda as ved of Riddles. Dr. Satyendra accepted Riddle as an inception of Ashwamedh Yajna. He stated that Riddles are formed in the mind of primitive people.

2.3. CLASSIFICATION OF RIDDLES

Riddles are of various types. Generally Riddles are found on every topic related to the life of people. “A large number of Riddles are found in general Folk-life. Riddles
exercises intelligensia. It is used as a most excellent medium of mental testing of course, these are not related to emotions. It develops from the skill of brain and the same way it affects on the brain itself.” 23

The basis of classifications of Riddles should be considered before the discourse on the subject broadly. It means that whether the classification should be done on the basis to external form or it should be done on the basis of its content.

Most of the scholars have presented the classification of Riddles on the basis it content.

2.3.1. Classification of Riddles in Hindi:

It is true that the classification of Riddles are a tough job. Because sometimes we found such Riddles for which it is difficult to make a decision that under which category its belongs to.

Dr. Krishna Dev Upadhyay, in his book divided the Riddles into seven parts24 –

i) Riddles related to agriculture.

ii) Riddles related to food items.

iii) Riddles related to domestic appliances.

iv) Riddles related to animals and birds.

v) Riddles related to nature.

vi) Riddles related to body

vii) Miscellaneous Riddles.

Dr. Satyendra divides Riddles under following category –

i) Riddles related to Agriculture.

ii) Riddles related to food.

iii) Riddles related to Domestic appliances.

iv) Riddles related to Animals and birds.
v) Riddles related to Nature.

vi) Riddles related to Parts of human body and limbs.

vii) Others

According to Dr. Shankardayal Yadav, Riddles of Haryana are divided into eight categories, as -

i) Riddles related to Agriculture.

ii) Riddles related to Food.

iii) Riddles related to Domestic – appliances.

iv) Riddles related to Animals and birds.

v) Riddles related to Parts of human body and limbs.

vi) Riddles related to Nature.

vii) Riddles related to Ancient folk tales.

viii) Others.

Riddles gained from 'Ahirani':

Many Riddles are available in Khandesi dialects. It shows the identification of their intelligence and power of imagination. We can classify these Riddles among the following category like 25 –

i) Riddles related to Nature.

ii) Riddles related to Body.

iii) Riddles related to Mode of eating and drinking.

iv) Riddles related to Living being.

v) Others.

Dr. Vidya Chouhan, in her books 'Lok-Sahitya' in the page no. 35, divided Riddles mainly in seven category-

i) Riddles related to Agriculture.
ii) Riddles related to Food items.
iii) Riddles related to Domestic appliances.
iv) Riddles related to Animals.
v) Riddles related to Nature.
vi) Riddles related to Human body and limbs.
vii) Others

Mohan Lal Babulkar classified Riddles under following category –

i) Riddles related to using materials
ii) Riddles related to living creature.
iii) Riddles related to green vegetables, food items.
iv) Riddles related to nature and its activities.
v) Riddles related to Parts of human body.
vi) Miscellaneous.

Mostly Riddles are found related to the following topics in Baghelikhand.

i) Riddles related to animals and birds related
ii) Riddles related to tree, fruits, flowers etc.
iii) Riddles related to human body and its parts.
iv) Riddles related to sun, moon and planets.
v) Riddles related to food items.
vi) Riddles related to cloths and ornaments.
vii) Riddles related to stationary material.
viii) Riddle related to weapon and arms.
ix) Riddles related to occupation.
x) Riddles related to the thing made by wood, leather.
xi) Riddles related to domestic appliances
xii) Riddles related to Lower animals.

xiii) Contradictory.

xiv) Riddles related to water bodies and mountain.

xv) Riddles related to God-Goddess.

xvi) Riddles related to worshipping materials.

xvii) Riddles related to wind, fire etc.

Riddles at Kumauni are divided into seven categories:

i) Riddles related to Food items.

ii) Riddles related to Domestic appliances.

iii) Riddles related to Animals.

iv) Riddles related to Nature.

v) Riddles related to Body and limbs.

vi) Riddles related to Agriculture.

vii) Riddles related to Miscellaneous.

Dr. Satya Gupta classified khadi boli Riddles in to followings groups.

i) Riddles related to Body.

ii) Riddles related to Animals.

iii) Riddles related to Nature.

iv) Riddles related to Mode of eating and drinking.

v) Miscellaneous – Riddles related to the materials used in day to day life.

In Telugu Riddles are called as “Maru – Kathalu” or “Yimbu Kathalu”. These are of three types:

i) Riddles related to Race based.

ii) Riddles related to Low class folk.

iii) Riddles related to Composed.
1. Race based Riddles are mainly related to women and children. These are of two types.
   a. Possessed independent verse.
   b. Lyrical Riddles.

Riddles which possessed independent verse are of four types –
   i. Short Riddles.
   ii. Long Riddles and lyrical.
   iii. One Riddle and one answer.
   iv. One Riddle and its more than one answer.

iii) Riddles related to low class folk are of two types –
    (a) Riddles related to rhythmic poose.
    (b) Lyrical

iv) Compossed indigenous based Riddles are categorized under civilized literature.

   It has two forms –
   i) Poetic
   ii) Problematic.

In Telugu Riddles are like odes and some are formed in metre. According to the content and in view of analysis Telugu Riddles can be classified into following categories –
   i) Riddles related to Food items.
   ii) Riddles related to Domestic appliances.
   iii) Riddles related to Animals.
   iv) Riddles related to Nature.
   v) Riddles related to Body parts and limbs.
   vi) Riddles related to Agriculture.
At the end of the above discussion we can conclude that mainly Riddles can be divided into following seven parts –

2.3.1.1. Riddles related to Agriculture.
2.3.1.2. Riddles related to Nature.
2.3.1.3. Riddles related to Animals and Birds.
2.3.1.4. Riddles related to Food items.
2.3.1.5. Riddles related to parts of human Body.
2.3.1.6. Riddles related to Domestic appliances.
2.3.1.7. Miscellaneous.

Now, we present analysis of each category.

2.3.1.1. Riddles related to Agriculture:

Agriculture is the main basic source of human life. Agriculture related Riddles include – Grains produced by agriculture, useful and important tools for agriculture, useful or important tools for agriculture equipments of Irrigation, Production of fruits and flowers. A persian well (used for raising water from a well), ‘Arhat’ plough, Mot, Bullock, Cotton etc. also comes under this category. Villagers use sweet potato very much. This is a most important source of livelihood of the poor. In this context following Riddle is very popular.

"लाल छड़ी भुई में गढ़ी।
सासु ले पतलोहिं बढ़ी।"

(अर्थात् - कन्नद)

Sweet potatoes are of both type white and red. Therefore, it is called as ‘Lal chadi’.

Here another example is given regarding radish. i.e. –

"एक बाग में ऐसा हुआ।
आधा बनुला आधा सुआ।"

(अर्थात् - मूली)
2.3.1.2. Riddles related to Nature:

Nature is always regarded as man's best companion. It is roaming independently in this lap of nature with the sky for a long time ago. It gets light from the sun, cloths from trees, coolness from the Moon, food and shelter from mountains and thus the nature accomplishes its life from century to century. Thus man's attachment to the nature is practical and inseparable. Due to this reason we found such different varieties of Riddles related to the nature.

Nature related Riddles mainly include – Sun, Moon, Stars, Sky, Thunder, Lightning, Mountain, Day-Night, Year, Month, Shadow, Dew, Hail, Man, Fire etc. Riddles are available concerning different materials of nature.

Example of very popular Riddles related to the sky is given below –

“एक खाल मौलिन से भरा,
सबके सिर पर आंधा धरा।
घारों और खाल वह फर्नै, 
मौलि उससे एक न गिरे।”

(अर्थित - आकाश)

2.3.1.3. Riddles related to Animals and Birds:

Thousands of animals have created by God in this world. Which involved many types of animals. These are from different places such as – Land, Water, Air etc. Small insects, animal and tiny animals are also among them.

Many Riddles related to Fish, Louse, Spider, Ant, Bullock, Hen, Dog, Fly, Scrab, Lizard, Frog, Tortoise, Snake, Tiger, Scorpion, Elephant, Deer, Rat, Buffalo, Bed-bug, Leeche, Mosquito, Peacock, Cat etc. comes under this category.

Crocodile related Riddle is given below –

“बहुत कटोर त्वचा है उसकी, पर पानी में रहता है
Food is very important for our body. It helps us to keep our body fit and helps in proper execution of work and also gives energy to our body. Nobody can sustain without food. There are many Riddles which are related to food. These Riddles are specially related to the food items, like – bread and lentils, rice, fish, coconut, papad, black-plum (Jamun), tamarind, honey, palmyra, onion, egg, bittergourd, custard apple, banana, betel-leaf (pan), brinjal, radish, pomegranate (Anar), ghee, milk, chilli, butter, mango, salt, corn, watermelon, jalebi, puri and such type of many other cooked food.

Example:

“पानी से मैं पैदा होता, ऊजाला मेरा रंग,
स्वाद बढ़ता घुलमिल, करके मैं भोजन के संग।”

(अर्थात् - नमक)

This section includes the Riddles mainly related to actions of body and its reactions. These are concerned with followings – Man, Animals, Eyes, Nose, Hand, Legs, Teeth, Lips, Tongue, Thumb, Nails, Finger, Ear, Hair, Head, Ponytail, Shadow, Sweet, Cheeks, Eyebrows, Moustache etc. These are mainly related to our senses.

Example –

“वह कौन जानवर है जिसके शुरू में चार पैर,
फिर दो पैर और अंत में तीन पैर हो जाते है।”

(अर्थात् - मनुष्य)

The household materials, which we used regularly in our day-to-day life, comes
under this category of Riddles like – Deepak (lamp), Musal (pestle), Lodha (stone pestle), Belan (rolling pin), Khat (bed), Jhadu (sweep), Knife, Hatchet, Matchbox, Pen, Palong (bed), Book, Scissor, Batti (small lamp), Umbrella etc. At examples of Riddles on matchbox is given below –

“अपने मूँह से आग निकाले।
अपनी हड्डी आप जलावे।”

(अर्थित् - दियासाई)

2.3.1.7. Miscellaneous Riddles:

Riddles concerned with modern goods come under this category. Riddles which do not come under the above six categories have been put under miscellaneous category. For example – Telephone, Train etc.

Example –

“ग्राहम बैल के में गुण मन ही मन गाड़े।
सैकड़ी मोरों की दूरी क्षण में दूर भगाउँ।”

(अर्थित् - टेलीफोन)

In addition to this scholars described many other forms of Riddles which are as follows –

2.3.1.7. (i) Riddles related to Industrial activities:

Every people of different community in our society has to perform some specific works which is known as their specific business.

Therefore, in some Riddles we get the specific description of work – Blacksmith (Lohar), Potter (Kumar), Barber (Nai), Goldsmith (Sonar), Tailor (Darji), Washerman (Dhobi), Weaver (Julaha), A leather worker (Chamaar) etc. such as –

“तीन अक्षर का मेरा नाम।
आदि काटे तो हार बनूँ।
अंत काटे तो धातु बनूँ।”
2.3.1.7 (ii) Riddles related to social relationship:

We found many Riddles concerned with reciprocal relationship in the society. Among them we may mention Riddle on father-son, husband-wife, brother-sister, father-in-law - son-in-law, mother-in-law – daughter-in-law etc.

For example –

“हम माँ-बेटी, तुम माँ-बेटी, 
एक बाग में जाएँ 
तीन मीठू तोड़कर 
साबुत – साबुत खाएँ।’’

2.3.1.7 (iii) Riddles related to weapon & arm:

Weapon is the symbol of bravery and heroism. We may point out some weapon related Riddles, i.e. on Bow (dhanus), canin (top), arrow (ban), sword (talvar), spear (bhala), dagger (katar), gun etc. of this category.

In ancient time different types of weapons & arms were used during war.

Here, example of a Riddle related to weapon is given below –

“चौर शिवा की बहिन बड़ी में। 
समर क्षेत्र में रही खड़ी में।। 
ढीली हूँ पर सुई नहीं। 
पिंडी खून पर जोक नहीं।।”

2.3.1.7 (iv) Riddles related to God-Goddesses or eminent man:

Some Riddles are concerned with God-Goddesses or eminent personality. In
which we may consider Riddles on Brahma, Vishnu, Shiv, Parvati, Saraswati, Laksmi, Surya, Varun, Hanuman, Shesnag etc. An example is given below–

“बजा सहेली तापू रिपु,
ता जननी भरतार।
ताके सुत के मिठा को,
भजिये बारबार॥”

(अर्थात्त् - श्रीकृष्णा)

The Riddle discussed worshipping of Sri Krishna again and again.

In fact, entertainment is the intention of these Riddles. Wherein words are arranged in such a way that it arouses humour. The above Riddle of Braj is such an example of “Hasya-Ras” (Culmination of the sense of humour)

“चार पग की चापड़ चुप्पो, वापे बैठी लुप्पो।
आई सप्पो लै गई लुप्पो, राह गई चापड़ चुप्पो॥”

(It means that a frog is sitting upon a buffalo and an eagle came and swooped away the frog. Here the word ‘chapad-chuppo’ is used for buffalo, ‘luppo’ is used for frog and ‘sappo’ word is used for the eagle.)

Some Riddles signifies some specialities of particular communities. Brahmins are very popular for their love of eating habits. In this regard, chaubey’s of “Mathura’ are very famous.

“अगहन पड़ढ दैत के प्याट,
तेहि पर पंडित करें झयाट।
है मेरे पैहो ना हेरे,
पंडित कहे तिगहपुर केरे॥”

The answer of this Riddle is ‘Kachori’ (a cake made of flower stuffed with brushed pulse or boiled potato etc. fried in ghee.)
This statement is confirmed by a Bhojpuri proverb, in which it is clearly stated that Brahmin’s can go to 24 miles to eat curd and flattened rice (Dahi and chiuda) and on the other hand if they get chance to have ‘puri’ then also they can go a distance of 36 miles.

“चिउड़ा दही बारह कोस,
लूचुई अठारह कोस!”

Sometimes Riddles express ideal love in a beautiful manner. There are many events concerned with those women who wish to be sati after the death of their husband, but here the becoming a sati of a ‘batti’ (wick) is described in the Riddle below:

“जानुक नारी पिया संग सोती,
अंग सो अंग मिलाय।
पिया को बिछड़त जालिन के,
संग सती हो जाय।”

(अर्थात्- बल्ली और तेल)

2.3.2. Classification of Riddles in Assamese language:

In Assamese language or in Assamese folk-literature Riddles are called as ‘saanthar’. ‘Saanthar’ means mysterious word. After working for a whole day, when the tired farmers assemble in a place, like – under the tree or on a terrace. At time they ask Riddles to each other for their entertainment and joy. This also helps to know the intelligence of a person.

In Assamese language there are some Riddles which depict two categories. It is therefore difficult, to decide whether it is called on the basis of living world or accepted as dependent on the nature of environment.

Example:

“चराइ नहय, जन्तु नहय”
Here the Riddle is made by making a relation of a living thing with the nature. This is a problem whether this is to be kept in nature category or the animal category.

Thus it is difficult to make an appropriate classification of Riddles. Even though, scholars have tried to make the classification of Riddles on their own effort. Some scholars have tried to make the classifications alphabetically in chronological order.

In this regard Assamese language is also not an exception. Dr. Sarbeshwar Raj Guru, the famous collection master of Assamese Riddles, presented Riddles through his book ‘Heyaliyer chand’. Wherein the classification of Riddles is based on chronological order and is simple. But it is not scientific. The division, according to the category of object or thing, like related to nature, animals etc. are more acceptable and are also rational.

According to his book ‘Assamiya Loksahitya ku Bhumika.’

Dr. Bhupendra Nath Rai Choudhury divided Riddles into following categories--

(i) Riddles based on fiction:

Several Riddles are there in which some tables are hidden. With Intelligence only it is not possible to find out the correct answer. Practical knowledge is necessary to find out correct replies.

For example --

“निज़ा जरे, अमरा मरे,
मराय बाय हाल।
लक्ष्मीर टिकात विरा कालि,
मोर नाम नि:धनीये महाल।”
There is a story hidden behind the Riddle, story is described below—

Once upon a time there was a trader. He had a son, named by ‘Nirdhan’ means poor. He disliked his name and wanted to change it. So, he decided to go for a foreign trip. While on his way, he saw one stream flowing from the mountain. He asked the name of the stream to a person. The man replied – “It is ‘nirjhar’ (waterfall). Nirdhan thought, if it is nirjhar then why it is falling from the mountain. Then he saw a dry tree whose name is ‘Amara’ (means who never dies), Nirdhan was quite surprised. After going further he met a farmer whose name was ‘Mara’ (means death). Further, on in his journey he found a woman calling her daughter as ‘Lakshmi’ but Nirdhan saw that the girl is very poor and she is just wearing a very simple piece of cloth. Finally, after watching all these, Nirdhan decided not to change his name and felt better to be called as “NIDHANI”.

(ii) Riddles based on intelligencia:

Some intelligent Riddles are also there which has impact on peoples mind. After solving these types of Riddles we become enlightened and full of pleasure.

“आहिन्त्र बेडेना, जारत हय सरेरा।
एके जुपी गछेरे माह, कपाह, बेडेना।”
(अर्थात् - सेमल का वृक्ष)

(iii) Riddles based on mathematics:

Sri Dandi Ram Dutta has collected some Riddles and named them as ‘Kaitheli angk’ – These Riddles are concerned with mathematics. Of course, it is a unique form of Assamese Riddles, we may see the interesting mathematical Riddle that how a student residing abroad writes a letter to his parents for seeking money in following example –

“चन्द्रे पृष्ट्य दिया मृत्युद करि,
यतमाने अंक हय लीवा यल्ले धरि।
In Assamese figure one is written as half-moon shape, i.e. 1)

(iv) Philosophical Riddles: Riddles considering the Assamese thoughts and ideologies. It is given below as—

Once father-in-law was sitting in the courtyard area. Daughter-in-law went out to fetch water in the ghant. When she reached home with a grit of pot, at that time father-in-law asked the daughter-in-law as—

"हरिहर चक्रे जे बीर उपलिल,
तापित करणर बापे;
हुँनाशण चक्रे जे बीर उपलिल,
से बीर परिल कमन बिपाके!"

The implication is that in the creation of God – Valiant hero, who was under a hard trouble did not fail because he faced great trouble and did hard work in his journey. But the same valiant hero, how he is broken today?

Son-in-law replied to the question like this—

"सर्वधर्मधर्म ताधर ताधे
अलि बाहन बाहन हामु गइयो
शशी बाहन बाहन ठाके पाइयो
पवन सुतासुता भागी गइमो
रंबि मुत मम कर लागि रेयो!"

The meaning of ‘Sarba dharadhar’ is the word who holds everything, water holds the world and the lotus holds it (vehicle of carpenter bee). When water was being carryied on sashi’s vehicle Sadashiva. Sadashiva’s बाहन Ox plucked ‘pawan putra
Bhim'. Bhim's 'sut' 'Ghatotkoch' mean the pot is broken. Resulting 'surje sut karna' or the grit (karna) of the pot remains to my hand.

Thus, more Riddles are found in Assamese language.

Dr. Sarveshwar Rajguru discussed the Riddles of mathematical or 'Kaithali-ainak' in his book 'Heyalir – chand'. These Riddles are full of prodigy in sense. The matter of discussion on figures – numerical and maths is very poor in ancient Assam. Mathematics based Riddles are generally cultured in the kayasth-society only. These Riddles, therefore are called as 'kaithali ainak'. Most of ainak(s) (numerical) were related to a person named by Shubhankar. Therefore, this arya was called as 'Shubhankar arya.'

For example –

“शुभांकर फॉक्कि
चौतीससर परा तिनि श ग'ल
kिमान थाकिल बाकि”

It is not possible to subtract 300 out of 34, But here three sa does not indicate three hundred. Here the indication is to separation of three sa(s) (Sa, Sa, Sa) from 34 consonants. In Assamese the pronounciation of the three ‘Sa’(s), (Sa, Sa, Sa) is quite same. Now if three (Sa (s) are separated from 34 consonant then 31 consonant remain left. (So, the answer is 31)

In ancient time, authors of Assamese books used to write some specific numerical for planet, Vedas, Moon, Rasa, Vana (arrow). They didnot use numerical to denote the time period of the incidents.

These numerical denotes some symbols like – planet signifies 9 planets; which devote the number ‘9’, Ved denotes 4 types of scriptures, Rasa signifies Salraas i.e. 6, Moon means one (because in Assamese the number 1 is written as ‘S’ which seems like
half-moon. Arrow denotes *Panchban* at God Madan i.e. 5, *Vasu* (wealth) means *Astavasu* and it devotes the figure 8. Etc.

Even of the numerical word, sometimes to ask Riddles, some particulars words were used to its different meanings. Usually it happens in a figure of speech like 'yamak' (Rhetories). We may see the following Riddle as question –

"इफालेओ न घर, सिफालेओ न घर।
पदु मारे एटा, भाग करे दहोता।"

In first sight in this Riddle- there are nine houses in one side while another nine houses exist in the other side. It takes its accounts then there would be 18 houses. In the second line of the Riddle, it is says that – one deer was killed in hunting but that was divided equally in ten shares. Its surface meaning is that there are equal ten shares of the deer and among 18 people. So how can it be divided equally? Similar to the 'Yamak' (figure of speech) here 'Na ghar' denotes ‘one new house’ but cesesecond ‘na, ghar’ devotes 9 (nine) houses. So in total it becomes nine \(1 + 9 = 10\). Accordingly the flesh of deer was equally shared in 10 parts.

In conclusion we may say that Riddle has its closest relation with rural environment. In fact, Riddles describe a particular thing or good. To make an appropriate classification of Riddles is a difficult task.

2.4 ABSTRACT OF THE CHAPTER

It is seen in the definitions of aforesaid Riddles that innumerable definitions can be given for Riddles. After examining and testing of above definitions of Riddles it is difficult to mention that such and such particular definition is solid or is absolute.

Really it is easy to search out faults in Riddles. Keeping in view the shape and form of Riddles we can describe and summerise definitions of Riddles below –

Make the confirmation of his statement and aims to impart knowledge and
education to somebody. With an intention to say something unknowingly to anybody or
to make compliments to somebody of to pass a sarcastic remarks — Riddles are
independent to retain the meanings in them and the people who uses the popular,
substantial and confidential dictum or sayings.

In fact, Riddle is a complete document based on the experiences of life. Not only
a broad view of life related knowledge, there we found a beautiful sketch of agriculture,
nature, flora and fauna, seasons, omen,-social-customs advices etc.

We may quote that folk literature is the assest of people. It is careless and
colossal like the form of colossal God. Riddles retain the feelings of simplest life of
people with a natural and touching expression which in fact is unattainable.

In the second section of this chapter we have discussed on the antiquity and
tradition of Riddles. In this context, it is the conclusion that Riddles exist in the world’s
literature from a very ancient time. Riddles may perhaps be used in human society since
they get their voice. In India Riddles started to be use by man from the early period of
Vedas and Upanishads and their importance exists unimpaired in the modern society.

We therefore can say that as the other forms in the world literature are important.
Similarly that much importance of Riddles are there in folk literature and the same will
remain forever.

The tradition of Riddles are always eternal and immoral. Our cultural values
remain secured in these Riddles and therefore in such a situation studies at Riddles of
different dialects, language, its large collection and a critical appreciation is most
important.

It has been observed that Riddles are becoming extinct from man and society. It
is, therefore, needless to recount that their study, research and exercise requires to be
considered to a broad level.
A considerable classification of Riddles are discussed in the third section. In fact, classification of Riddles is a very difficult task. Because when we found typical types of Riddles, which carry dual meanings.

For example – we can consider the following Riddle –

“श्याम वरन की है एक नारी,
माथे ऊपर लगे प्यारी।’
जो मानुस इस से आर्थ को खोले,
कुल्ले की वह बोली बोले।।”

(Eyes get its beauty from their eyebrows (bhoun). Another meaning of 'bhoun' is the barking sound of dog. Thus the above mentioned Riddle indicates two different meaning of ‘bhoun’. Here, On the basis of the word and meaning ‘bhoun’ (eyebrow) is that type of word which is chronologically related to body and animals. Now, in which category does it belong to in the category of Riddles related to body or animals. Inspite of this dilemma, we have classified the Riddle under the body related section in view of its literal meaning. But it can also be classified in the order related to animals. We found such Riddles creating dilemma, there are more in number. Sometimes we would be confused to classify some Riddles under which category actually they belongs to, problems have been solved by following the principles of different scholars, we have tried to discuss on a broad classification of Riddles in this sub-section.

It is not easy to get similar classification and in Hindi and in Assamese language. It is very common to face problems and difficulties in the comparative studies of Riddles in two languages. Keeping this fact in view of this fact. Some problematic Riddles are categorized in more sections in this study. In conclusion we can say that Riddles are deeply related to the rural environment. In fact, Riddles are description of some goods, things, metal. And the proper classification of Riddles is a difficult task.
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