

The Depiction Of Magical Objects In English And Uzbek Fairy Tales

Safarova Zilola Tolibovna

Associate professor, BSU

Temurova Dilorom Turob kizi

MA student, Bukhara state university

Abstract.

It is widely known that magical objects constitute core narrative and symbolic parts of folk tales. Through the analysis of English and Uzbek fairy tales it has been proved that such objects not only help develop the plot of the narrative but also illustrate national culture, moral values and religious beliefs of people. The following article investigates the depiction and artistic functions of magical images in English and Uzbek folk tales. Through the comparative literary analysis of fairy tales and textual examples, the article reveals that magical objects used in English and Uzbek folklore share common literary functions, though their forms and meanings have been shaped in different cultural contexts.

Keywords: folk tales, magical objects, national identity, English fairy tales, Uzbek fairy tales, symbolic meanings.

INTRODUCTION

In all the cultures fairy tales are considered to be an essential component of folklore through which people pass from generation-to-generation cultural traditions, ethical norms, and collective imagination. The presence of magical objects – extraordinary items embodied with supernatural power – is one of the distinctive features of folk tales. This kind of items serve as helpers or protectors of the main heroes, when they face with difficulty. Sometimes magic objects are presented to them as a tool that punish the negative characters.

So, in both English and Uzbek fairy tales, magical objects carry similar narrative functions, however, due to cultural, historical and religious factors their symbolic meanings may differ. In English fairy tales, magical objects are often associated with heroism, royal authority, and divine destiny, while Uzbek fairy tales embed magic in everyday household items and traditional artifacts. These differences can be seen through the analysis of the examples given below.

In Uzbek folk tales, magical devices are one of the main elements that drive the plot. For example, the tale “Ur toqmoq” is of particular importance in this regard, in which several magical devices appear in sequence and determine the fate of the hero. These magical devices serve to artistically express the moral views of the people, their ideas about justice, and the struggle between good and evil.

The first magical device in the tale is “Ochil dasturxon” – a magic tablecloth, which is presented as a reward for the hero’s hard work and good intentions. This situation is described in the tale as follows:

“When he spread the tablecloth and said, ‘Open!’, various delicacies appeared.”[3]

As can be seen from this passage, the tablecloth is activated by a command. This aspect shows that the magical device obeys to the power of words. In Uzbek people’s imagination, words have sacred power, and therefore in the tale, miracles happen through words.

The word “dastarxon” has a special meaning for Uzbek nation. It represents prosperity, hospitality, generosity, and divine blessing—core values in Uzbek culture.

At the next stage of the tale, the hero acquires “Qaynar xumcha” – a magic pot. This item also works on command: *He says, “Boiling pot, boil!” and gold begins to pour out of the pot.*[3]

The pot is depicted in the tale as a source of material wealth. However, when it is used incorrectly or when greed increases, it can also lead to negative consequences. Through this, the tale teaches that the attitude towards it, not wealth itself, is important.

The next item is “Ur toqmoq” — a punitive magic device. The main magic device that gave the name to the fairy tale is the hammer, which is presented as a means of restoring justice. In the fairy tale, it is described as follows:

“Hammer, hit!” — as soon as the hammer jumped out and hit the tyrants.[3]

This magical item is fundamentally different from other magical devices. While the tablecloth and the pot grant blessings, the hammer acts as a punitive force. The hammer acts only on command and only against the guilty. It’s artistic function is a symbol of justice and represents the social equality that the people dream of.

In the fairy tale “Ur toqmoq”, magic devices are given not randomly, but in a logical sequence: the dastarxan — for livelihood; the pot — for testing wealth; and the hammer — to restore justice.

Similarly, in English fairy tales, a magical gift helps the poor hero achieve wealth. In the fairy tale “Jack and the Beanstalk” several magical objects have been depicted as a means of achieving prosperity. One such magical image is the bean seeds gifted by a strange old man. At first, Jack’s exchange of a cow for 4 beans seems like a foolish act, but later his courage and resourcefulness become clear. Jack could get rid of poverty and live a full life with his mother. The harp and the chicken in the tale are also depicted as symbols of abundance. Symbolically, the harp reflects the beliefs of medieval English people in the rightful ownership and divine justice.

In the following lines the magic power of the beans have been described:

“Ah! You don’t know what these beans are,” said the man. “If you plant them overnight, by morning they grow right up to the sky.”[2,2]

The analysis of English and Uzbek fairy tales reveal certain cultural difference related to the type of magical images. In most English tales the objects such as, swords, cloaks and harps reflect feudalism and Christian symbolism, while in Uzbek fairy tales magical objects like – dastarxans, chests and musical instruments such as flute and dutar – are closely associated to daily life and national traditions.

CONCLUSION

The depiction of magical objects in English and Uzbek fairy tales shows that such objects are not just fantastic elements, but also powerful carriers of cultural meaning. Magic objects, through their form and function, reflect national identity, moral values, and worldview. While English fairy tales emphasize strength, destiny, and heroism, Uzbek fairy tales emphasize generosity, patience, and moral integrity. In conclusion, a comparative study of magical objects deepens our understanding of fairy tale poetics and the cultural significance of folklore. The analysis shows that, despite some differences, it is true that both folk tales fulfill the same purpose and educational function.

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