

Narrative Time And Moral Encoding In English And Uzbek Legends

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Annotation

This article examines the structural and semantic peculiarities of narrative time and moral encoding in English and Uzbek legends from a comparative lingua-cultural perspective. Legends, as a form of traditional narrative, play a crucial role in preserving cultural memory and transmitting ethical values across generations. The study focuses on how temporal organization and moral meaning are linguistically and culturally constructed in the two traditions. The analysis reveals that English legends typically employ a linear and chronological model of narrative time, where moral meanings are conveyed implicitly through character behavior and narrative outcomes. In contrast, Uzbek legends demonstrate a more flexible and sometimes cyclic perception of time, accompanied by explicit and didactic moral expressions reinforced through proverbs and culturally significant symbols.

Key words: supernatural elements, Uzbek narrative, English folk narrative, folklore typology, comparative analysis, oral tradition

Introduction: Legends constitute an essential component of oral and written traditions, reflecting the cultural, historical, and moral frameworks of a society. As narrative texts, they are not only structured through linguistic means but are also shaped by the cultural contexts in which they emerge. Among the various aspects of narrative construction, temporal organization and moral encoding stand out as key elements that influence both the form and interpretation of the story. Narrative time determines how events unfold and how the audience perceives causality, continuity, and significance. Moral encoding, in turn, defines how ethical meanings are embedded within the narrative—either explicitly stated or implicitly suggested. These elements are deeply interconnected and often reveal underlying cultural patterns. This article aims to investigate the differences and similarities in the representation of narrative time and moral meaning in English and Uzbek legends. By adopting a comparative approach, the study seeks to uncover how linguistic and cultural factors shape narrative strategies and influence the reader's or listener's interpretation.

Main Part

The comparative analysis of English and Uzbek legends demonstrates notable distinctions in both temporal structuring and moral expression, reflecting broader differences in cultural cognition and communicative styles. In English legends, narrative time is predominantly linear and sequential. Events unfold in a clear chronological order, often marked by temporal connectors such as "once," "then," and "after." This linear progression reinforces a cause-and-effect relationship, enabling the reader to trace the logical development of the narrative. The clarity of temporal sequencing contributes to a structured and coherent storytelling style.

Moral encoding in English legends tends to be implicit. Rather than directly stating the moral, the narrative allows it to emerge through the actions and consequences experienced by characters. For example, a character's downfall due to arrogance or dishonesty subtly communicates ethical lessons without overt explanation. This indirect approach encourages readers to engage in interpretation and derive meaning independently, reflecting a tendency toward individual cognitive involvement. In contrast, Uzbek legends often exhibit a more flexible

approach to narrative time. While chronological order is not entirely absent, the narrative may include shifts between temporal layers, repetitions, or reflective insertions that create a sense of cyclicity. Expressions such as “qadim zamonlarda” or “bir kuni” function not only as temporal markers but also as cultural signals that situate the narrative within a shared historical imagination. Moral encoding in Uzbek legends is generally explicit and didactic. The narrator frequently provides clear guidance on the intended moral lesson, sometimes concluding the story with a direct statement or reinforcing it through proverbs. These proverbs serve as culturally embedded units of meaning, linking the narrative to collective wisdom and social norms. The presence of evaluative language and rhetorical emphasis further strengthens the didactic function of the text.

Another significant difference lies in audience positioning. English legends tend to treat the reader as an active interpreter, while Uzbek legends position the audience within a framework of shared understanding, where the moral message is collectively recognized and accepted. This reflects a broader distinction between individualistic and collectivistic orientations in discourse. From a lingua-cultural perspective, these differences illustrate how narrative structures are influenced by cultural models of thought. The linearity and implicitness found in English legends correspond to analytical and interpretive tendencies, whereas the flexibility and explicitness in Uzbek legends align with holistic and community-oriented modes of communication.

In Uzbek narratives, the supernatural emphasizes spiritual harmony and moral order. In English narratives, it often introduces dramatic tension and explores the boundary between the natural and the otherworldly. Typological comparison reveals both convergence and divergence. Both Uzbek and English narratives utilize supernatural elements to connect human experience with higher powers or unseen worlds. However, the narrative emphasis differs. Uzbek narratives integrate supernatural motifs within a realistic and ethical framework, while English narratives frequently foreground the supernatural as an independent and dominant force. Despite these differences, the shared presence of supernatural motifs demonstrates universal narrative strategies shaped by cultural context. These strategies highlight humanity’s collective need to explain the unknown and reinforce moral values.

Conclusion: This comparative typological study demonstrates that supernatural elements play a crucial role in both Uzbek and English narratives, despite differences in cultural expression and narrative emphasis. Uzbek narratives employ supernatural motifs to reinforce spiritual belief, moral instruction, and historical continuity. English folk narratives, in contrast, emphasize imaginative diversity, dramatic conflict, and moral judgment through supernatural imagery. The analysis confirms that supernatural elements function as universal narrative tools adapted to specific cultural and historical contexts. Further research may expand this comparative framework by including additional narrative traditions or by focusing on specific motifs in greater detail.

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