

ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE UNITS EXPRESSING “EVIL” IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK FOLK TALES

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Annotation: This article reveals the comparative study of linguistic units expressing the meaning of “evil” found in English and Uzbek folk tales, enriched with examples taken from the tales. Besides, the fundamental moral concepts within these tales and their oppositions are elaborated in detail. The similarities and differences of the symbols of “evil” in the folk tales of these two cultures are comparatively analyzed. The results of this analysis illustrate that the cultural values and mentality of each nation are reflected in their folk tales.

Key words: Uzbek folk tales, English folk tales, folklore, “evil” concept, comparative analysis, language units, lexemes and semes.

Folk tales, one of the most widespread genres of folklore, formed over centuries, reflect the hopes, lifestyles, culture, customs, traditions and attitudes towards life of the people. The struggle between good and evil is reflected as a central idea in fairy tales. In the folk tales of every nation, these concepts are expressed through various symbols. Such commonalities exist in both English and Uzbek fairy tales. However, the symbols, character names, expressions, and significance denoting “good/evil” possess unique characteristics. This article comparatively analyzes how the symbols and images expressing “evil” are reflected in English and Uzbek fairy tales, as well as, their similarities and differences.

In analyzing different systemic languages, we encounter numerous opposing concepts such as good and evil, wisdom and foolishness, crookedness and righteousness in both English and Uzbek fairy tales. The most frequently used opposition is “good/evil”, which possesses a unique content and structure. It is observed that such concepts found in Uzbek folk tales sometimes fully, and in some instances partially, resemble and align with concepts present in English fairy tales. This similarity and correspondence are observed in both their naming and lexical units.

“Evil is the opposite of good, a vice that hinders the development of an individual and society. It manifests in concepts such as lying, meanness, hypocrisy, shamelessness, ruthlessness, cowardice, and betrayal.” [5]

According to N.Y. Mospanova, “in fairy tales, a large number of lexemes with the semantic component “evil” increase expressiveness and convey the speaker’s emotional, personal attitude towards their story. The more terrible and powerful the evil, the more valuable the good that usually triumphs in the fairy tale.” [2]

There are certain symbols used in fairy tales that consistently indicate evil and wickedness. For example, the lexeme “*zahar*” (poison) in Uzbek fairy tales expresses the meaning of “*a substance that poisons or kills a living being, venom*”. Additionally, it is used in the sense of something bitter, something that poisons and turns a person’s life into suffering, a situation.

“Jobir Odilning oldiga dasturxon yozibdi va dasturxonni noz-nematlar bilan to‘ldirib tashlabdi. Ziyofat orasida bir piyola zahar olib kelib Odilning oldiga q‘oyibdi” (from the tale “Ikki tabib”)

The lexeme “*qilich*” (sword) appears frequently in fairy tales and is mainly considered a cold weapon used for evil deeds. “*Qilich*” is a single-edged weapon, carried at the side with a sheath, used to inflict damage on the enemy by chopping and stabbing, and it is also a male name. [4] This weapon is mainly used in practical applications nowadays, but historically, swords were used in battles. Phrases like *qilichdan o‘tkazmoq, ya‘ni qilich solib o‘ldirmoq, qirmoq, qilichidan qon tomadigan, qilich ko‘tarmoq yoki qilich o‘ynatmoq* appear frequently in Uzbek fairy tales. It is worth noting that, symbolically, it also represents strength, courage, and justice, and is described as the main weapon of heroes. Furthermore, the lexeme “*sword*” also appears in English fairy tales, used in attacking enemies, in battles, or in situations where princes compete.

“Oradan qirq kun ham o‘tibdi. Kulollar ko‘p boshlarini qotirib, qancha urinsalar ham piyolani tuzata olmabdilar. Shunda podsho darg‘azab bo‘lib, ularning hammasini qilichdan o‘tkazibdi” (from the tale “Jonon piyola”)

“U, “Qon!” deb deb baqirib turgan jallodga duch kelib, to‘rttasini ham qilichdan o‘tkazibdi.” (from the tale “Bahrom and Sherzod”)

Additionally, the lexeme “*khanjar*” (dagger) is used synonymously with the lexeme “*qilich*” (sword), denoting a double-edged weapon, and instances of killing with a dagger are also observed in fairy tales. In English fairy tales, we witness the use of various weapons to commit evil. For example, in “The Rose Tree”, the stepmother kills the little girl using an “axe”, while in “The Three Sillies” a “mallet” is interpreted as a weapon of evil used for killing.

“I‘m doing now, and the mallet was to fall on his head and kill him, what a dreadful thing it would be!” And she put down the candle and the jug, and sat herself down and began a-crying.” (from the tale “The Three Sillies”)

Furthermore, the “*zindon*” (dungeon) also signifies evil in Uzbek folk tales, as many tales depict instances of torture and imprisonment in dungeons as punishment. Historically, it’s known that during the times of emirs and khans, “*zindon*” referred to a damp, dark prison built underground. This lexeme, in its figurative sense, denotes a place of suffering and torment; a place of misery and hardship, and is considered one of the symbols of “evil” found in fairy tales.

“Husnobod eri bilam bu yurtni ham idora qilib, zindonda begunoh yortganlarni ozod qilibdi. Ulardan bir qanchasini shaharlarga hokim qilib tayinlabdi.” (from the tale “Malikayi Husnobod”)

In English fairy tales, “*death*” always signifies evil, and it is defined as “*the state of being dead; an occasion when someone dies; the time when something ends or the fact that it ends.*” [3]

The analysis of symbols expressing “evil” in English and Uzbek folk tales reveals that the tales of each nation are distinguished by their unique characteristics. The linguistic units, symbols, and character names denoting “evil” in the tales of different peoples possess a distinctive form, and their similarities and differences are clearly reflected in comparative analyses. Fairy tales, being the richest genre of folk oral literature, are not only an artistic heritage but also a rich source expressing the educational and moral values of the people. By studying fairy tales and conducting comparative analyses, we gain a deeper understanding of the national spirit and culture. In the future, conducting numerous comparative studies in this direction, and uncovering new facets of folk tales, holds significant scientific and educational importance.

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