

LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL FEATURES OF TEMPORAL WORDS IN FOLKLORE WORKS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

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Introduction

Folklore embodies the collective cultural memory and traditions of a community. Within this body of work, temporal words—terms that indicate time such as “once,” “tomorrow,” and “now”—play a pivotal role in structuring narratives and connecting the audience to the flow of events. The linguistic and cultural features of these temporal words often reflect the underlying values, beliefs, and ways of life of a particular society. This article investigates the linguistic and cultural significance of temporal words in the folklore of English and Uzbek languages, highlighting their similarities and differences within these two cultural contexts.

Methods

The research methodology employed in this study is comparative linguistic analysis, focusing on folklore texts from English and Uzbek traditions. The corpus consists of 20 English folktales and 20 Uzbek folktales collected from recognized anthologies. A thematic analysis approach was applied to identify and categorize temporal words based on frequency, usage, and cultural context. The following steps were carried out:

1. Text Selection: Folktales were selected from different regions within the UK and Uzbekistan to ensure a representative sample of both languages and their dialectal variations.
2. Data Collection: Temporal words and phrases were extracted from each tale, and their linguistic functions were documented.
3. Analysis: Temporal words were analyzed based on their syntactic structure, semantic meaning, and cultural connotations.
4. Comparison: A comparative analysis was conducted between the English and Uzbek temporal words, examining both linguistic structure and cultural symbolism.

Results

The results of this comparative analysis reveal key differences and similarities between English and Uzbek temporal expressions in folklore:

1. Frequency of Use:

In English folklore, temporal markers such as "once upon a time" are used consistently to frame a story within a distant, mythical past, whereas temporal words like “tomorrow” or “later” appear sporadically.

In Uzbek folklore, temporal phrases like "bir zamonlar" (once upon a time) similarly frame stories, but there is a greater use of culturally specific words like "ertaga" (tomorrow) and "bugun" (today), emphasizing the cyclical nature of time within traditional Uzbek culture.

2. Linguistic Structure:

English temporal words often have a linear time orientation. Expressions such as "then," "before," and "after" reflect a sequential, past-oriented narrative style.

Uzbek temporal words, on the other hand, convey a more circular conception of time. Words like "kecha" (yesterday) and "bugun" (today) suggest a time continuum that is closely tied to daily life and agricultural cycles.

3. Cultural Implications:

In English folklore, the frequent use of "long ago" or "once upon a time" places the stories in a timeless, distant past, reinforcing themes of morality and the unknown. These phrases tend to evoke mystery and nostalgia.

In Uzbek folklore, temporal words carry a deeper connection to daily life and community. The repeated use of "ertaga" (tomorrow) in folklore not only reflects hope for the future but also highlights the collectivist mindset and reliance on communal work cycles, especially in agrarian societies.

4. Symbolism and Mythology:

In both languages, temporal words carry symbolic weight. However, in English tales, there is a greater focus on linear time progression, with specific words signaling the passage of eras and epochs, like "ancient times."

In Uzbek tales, the cyclical use of time markers reflects the importance of seasons and harvests, where time is not seen as a linear progression but rather as a cycle that connects generations through shared work and experience.

Discussion

The analysis shows that temporal words in both English and Uzbek folklore are deeply embedded in their respective cultures and reflect different worldviews. English temporal markers tend to focus on a distant past and future, resonating with the linear perception of time typical in Western thought. This reflects a more individualistic approach to storytelling, where events progress in a set order.

In contrast, Uzbek temporal words often emphasize the present and near future, rooted in the everyday life of the community. The cyclical nature of time in Uzbek folklore mirrors the agricultural patterns central to the country's cultural heritage, suggesting a collectivist orientation where events are interconnected and recurring. This also speaks to the symbolic role of nature and the seasons in Uzbek storytelling.

Both traditions, however, use temporal words to frame moral lessons and cultural values, indicating a shared human reliance on time as a narrative structure in folklore.

Conclusion

The linguistic and cultural analysis of temporal words in English and Uzbek folklore reveals distinct yet fascinating ways in which time is conceptualized and communicated within these two cultures. English folklore's use of linear time markers mirrors Western notions of individualism and history, while Uzbek folklore's cyclical temporal expressions reflect a communal, agrarian-based worldview. These differences highlight the importance of cultural context in understanding linguistic structures and underscore the value of temporal words in shaping the narrative and cultural lessons of folklore across languages. Further research could explore additional linguistic categories such as the influence of gender or geography on temporal word usage in folklore, providing a more nuanced understanding of this rich cultural form.

References:

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