SIMILES AND METAPHORS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK FAIRYTALES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Annotation: *This article explores the use of similes and metaphors in English and Uzbek fairytales, analyzing their role in enriching storytelling, shaping cultural identity, and transmitting moral values. Both figures of speech enhance narratives by creating vivid imagery and deeper symbolic meanings. However, their application differs based on linguistic, historical, and cultural factors. Through an examination of examples from both traditions, this study highlights key similarities and differences in the rhetorical and stylistic use of simile and metaphor.*

Keywords: *simile, metaphor, fairytale, English, Uzbek, linguistics, folklore, culture, oral tradition.*

Fairytales have been a primary type of storytelling across cultures for centuries, often passed down orally from one generation to the next. These tales usually enthrall audiences with their magical aspects, moral messages, and fantastical animals. Figurative language, particularly similes and metaphors, is one of the most effective strategies authors employ to captivate their readers. By evoking strong, enduring images in the audience's imagination, these literary techniques improve the story.

In this article, we will observe the use of similes and metaphors in both English and Uzbek fairytales. A simile is a figure of speech that makes

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comparisons between two different things, usually using "like" or "as" to make the comparison comprehensive. For example, “as busy as a bee” or “as cold as icy.” A metaphor, on the other hand, directly compares one thing to another without using "like" or "as," such as calling someone “night owl” to imply people work at night.

These figurative expressions help create a clear connection between the story and the audience, emphasizing characteristic of hero, themes, and the moral underpinnings of the tale. Although similes and metaphors serve similar functions across cultures, they also carry the distinct perspectives and traditions of the societies that create them. In this article, we'll take a closer look at how these literary devices are used in both English and Uzbek fairytales, revealing the values, beliefs, and artistic sensibilities that shape each culture.

Similes are widely used in fairytales because they make comparisons in a way that is both vivid and easy to understand. By likening characters or situations to animals, nature, or familiar objects, they help bring abstract ideas to life for the audience. In fairytales, similes are often used to describe a character’s personality, emotions, or actions. For instance, a hero might be described as "as swift as a deer" to highlight their speed and agility. In English, similes typically use words like “like” or “as,” while in Uzbek, they use expressions such as “dek, kabi, singari.” These comparisons not only make descriptions more engaging but also help readers connect with the characters on a deeper level [1].

In English fairytales, similes play a key role in creating strong imagery and defining a character’s traits. They frequently highlight qualities like strength, beauty, or kindness, making characters more relatable. For example, in “Cinderella”, the heroine is often described as “as sweet as a flower,” emphasizing her gentle and pure nature. This imagery sets her apart from her unkind stepmother and stepsisters. Similarly, in “The Three Little Pigs”, the Big Bad Wolf is said to be “as strong as an ox,” reinforcing his threatening

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presence and foreshadowing the destruction he brings. These similes not only enrich the storytelling but also make the characters more memorable.

Uzbek fairytales also make frequent use of similes, often to convey moral lessons, cultural wisdom, and values. Patience and perseverance, for example, are illustrated in "Alpomish" with the saying: "Uzun yo'l – uzun umr kabi sabr talab qiladi" ("A long road requires patience, just like a long life"). This simile reflects the Uzbek cultural emphasis on endurance and determination. Beauty is another common theme, as seen in "Tohir va Zuhra", where the heroine's face is compared to the moon: "Uning yuzi oydek porlar edi" ("Her face shone like the moon"). In Uzbek culture, the moon is often associated with purity and grace, reinforcing the fairytale's romantic tone [2].

Both English and Uzbek fairytales use similes to bring their characters and settings to life, though the points of comparison differ slightly. English fairytales tend to focus on qualities like bravery, strength, and beauty, while Uzbek fairytales frequently draw inspiration from nature, comparing characters to mountains, rivers, and other natural elements. This contrast reflects the cultural backgrounds of each storytelling tradition. In Uzbek culture, nature plays an integral role in daily life and serves as a powerful metaphor for human emotions and experiences.

Metaphors, unlike similes, make direct comparisons without using "like" or "as." Instead of saying something is "like" something else, a metaphor states that it is that thing, creating a stronger and often more symbolic connection. In fairytales, metaphors help represent abstract ideas, emotions, or moral lessons in a way that is easier to understand [3].

In English fairytales, metaphors are commonly used to highlight deeper themes such as personal growth, the struggle between good and evil, or the power of hope. For example, in "Beauty and the Beas", the Beast is described as "a prisoner in his own skin." This metaphor reflects not only his physical appearance but also his emotional state—he feels trapped by his curse and

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unable to show his true self. In “Jack and the Beanstalk”, the beanstalk is called “a ladder to the heavens,” symbolizing Jack’s journey from poverty to opportunity. It represents ambition, growth, and transformation.

Similarly, Uzbek fairytales use metaphors to express life lessons and cultural values, often focusing on wisdom and the connection between humans and nature. In “The Clever Princess”, a wise elder is described as “the sun at noon.” This metaphor highlights the elder’s role as a guiding light, offering knowledge and direction. The sun symbolizes wisdom, showing that the elder helps others find their way. In “The Golden Apple”, the hero’s quest is called “a journey through a garden of thorns,” representing the struggles and hardships he must overcome to achieve his goal. The thorns symbolize obstacles that make success more meaningful.

Both English and Uzbek fairytales use metaphors to add depth to their stories, but they reflect different cultural perspectives. English fairytales often focus on personal transformation and inner struggles, while Uzbek fairytales emphasize the relationship between humans and nature, teaching lessons about wisdom, perseverance, and harmony with the world.

The way similes and metaphors are used in fairytales is shaped by the culture in which the stories originate. In English fairytales, these comparisons often focus on personal qualities like strength, beauty, or intelligence, reflecting the Western emphasis on individual success and self-discovery. On the other hand, Uzbek fairytales frequently use nature-based imagery to highlight values like wisdom, community, and respect for the natural world. These literary devices not only make stories more engaging but also help reinforce important cultural beliefs and moral lessons.

By studying similes and metaphors in fairytales, we gain insight into the values of different cultures and how language influences the way we see the world. Both English and Uzbek fairytales use these techniques to bring their stories to life, making characters and lessons more memorable. However, while

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English fairytales often focus on individual growth and transformation, Uzbek fairytales tend to emphasize the connection between people and nature. Ultimately, similes and metaphors play a key role in shaping fairytales and ensuring their messages continue to resonate with new generations.

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