

MODERNIST APPROACH IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LITERATURE

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Abstract. This study explores the elements of modernism in English and Uzbek literature, focusing on how writers transformed traditional literary forms, themes, and methods of expression during periods of social and cultural change. Modernism, as a literary movement, challenged conventional realism and encouraged writers to represent human consciousness, individual experience, and the complexity of modern life in new ways. In English literature, modernist writers experimented with fragmented structure, symbolism, stream of consciousness, and non-linear narration. In Uzbek literature, similar tendencies appeared through the renewal of prose forms, deeper psychological description, and greater attention to individual identity and social change. The study highlights several important features shared by both traditions, including experimentation with language, symbolism, subjective experience, and the rejection of fixed literary conventions. It also shows that Uzbek modernism developed through the interaction of national cultural traditions, historical memory, and broader modernist influences.

Keywords. modernism, modernist principles, fragmented structure, symbolism, stream of consciousness, non-linear narration

Introduction. Modernism represents an important stage in the development of twentieth-century literature, because it introduced new ways of expressing individual experience, social change, psychological conflict, and cultural transformation. In English literature, modernism developed particularly strongly during the early twentieth century, when writers began to reject many conventions of nineteenth-century realism and experimented with fragmented structure, symbolism, interior monologue, stream of consciousness, and non-linear narration. Literary scholars such as Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane describe modernism as a response to major cultural and intellectual changes, while Michael Levenson examines its development through different literary movements and changing aesthetic principles. Peter Childs also emphasizes experimentation, complexity, subjectivity, and freedom from traditional literary forms as central characteristics of modernist writing.

In Uzbek literature, modernist tendencies developed within a different historical and cultural environment, where literary innovation was closely connected with national awakening, social reform, individual identity, and the renewal of artistic expression. Several writers introduced new approaches to character, psychology, narrative form, and social experience, which later researchers have associated with the modernization of Uzbek literature. Uzbek literary scholars, including Ozod Sharafiddinov, Naim Karimov, and Dilmurod Quronov, have studied Cho'lon's literary world, prose poetics, artistic individuality, and contribution to twentieth-

century Uzbek literature. Therefore, a comparative study of English and Uzbek modernism reveals both shared principles of literary experimentation and distinctive developments shaped by different historical, national, and cultural conditions.

Literary review. Modernism can be regarded as one of the most significant phases in the development of twentieth-century literature, since it transformed traditional approaches to literary form, language, and the representation of human experience. Emerging during a period of rapid social, political, technological, and cultural change, modernist literature attempted to reflect the growing complexity of modern life and the changing position of the individual within society. Rather than depending entirely on the conventions of nineteenth-century realism, modernist writers searched for new artistic methods that could express psychological tension, uncertainty, personal identity, and the effects of social transformation in a more flexible and experimental manner.

In both English and Uzbek literature, modernist tendencies became particularly noticeable during the early decades of the twentieth century, although their historical and cultural conditions were not identical. Writers increasingly moved away from straightforward narration, fixed structures, and purely realistic descriptions of external events. Instead, they paid greater attention to inner experience, memory, emotion, and the subjective perception of reality. This shift encouraged the development of innovative literary techniques through which writers could represent the complexity of human thought and the instability of the modern world.

Among the most important features associated with modernist prose are fragmented structure, symbolism, interior monologue, stream of consciousness, and non-linear narration. These techniques allowed authors to move beyond chronological storytelling and to present events through memories, impressions, psychological associations, and multiple perspectives. As a result, literary works often became more complex in both structure and meaning. Although English and Uzbek modernism developed under different historical circumstances, both traditions demonstrate a common desire to renew literary expression, reconsider established artistic conventions, and explore the relationship between the individual, society, culture, and changing historical reality.

Fragmented Structure. This structure is one of the important narrative features associated with modernist prose, because modernist writers often rejected the idea that human experience could be represented through a completely ordered, chronological, and unified story. Instead of presenting events in a simple sequence, they divided narrative experience into memories, impressions, inner thoughts, changes of perspective, and separate moments of time. Fragmentation therefore concerns not only the external organization of a literary work but also the representation of consciousness. The reader may move suddenly from present reality to memory, from one character's mind to another, or from external description to internal reflection. In this way, structural fragmentation reflects the uncertainty, psychological complexity, and instability of modern existence. Studies of modernist narrative particularly connect such techniques with stream of consciousness, non-linear time, and changing narrative

perspectives. In Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, events occurring during a single day are repeatedly interrupted by memories and private thoughts, while the narrative moves between the consciousness of Clarissa Dalloway, Septimus Smith, and other characters.

In English modernist prose, fragmentation became especially visible in the works of Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, and William Faulkner. Rather than constructing stories around a single continuous plot, these writers often organized their novels through psychological associations and shifts in time. Woolf combines external events with memories and thoughts, while Joyce creates a highly complex narrative from changing voices, styles, internal monologues, and cultural references. Such fragmentation requires readers to connect separate pieces of information and construct meaning for themselves. Consequently, the structure of the novel resembles the movement of consciousness, in which thoughts do not necessarily appear according to chronological order. Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* is particularly associated with nonlinear narration and shifting perspectives, while Joyce's *Ulysses* demonstrates how apparently disconnected experiences can be connected through underlying patterns and associations. In James Joyce's *Ulysses*, the experiences of Leopold Bloom, Stephen Dedalus, and Molly Bloom are presented through changing narrative styles and interior thought. In William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, the same family history is reconstructed through different narrators, broken chronology, memory, and subjective perception.

Fragmented narrative tendencies can also be observed in Uzbek prose, although Uzbek modernism developed under different historical and cultural conditions. In Cho'lpon's *Kecha va kunduz* (*Night and Day*), the narrative does not depend only on external social events; it also employs internal and external monologue, memory, psychological suffering, dialogue, and lyrical digression. These techniques interrupt straightforward narration and allow social reality to be viewed through different psychological and personal experiences. Scholars consequently describe Cho'lpon's prose as more dynamic and psychologically oriented than purely traditional narrative forms. In Cho'lpon's *Kecha va kunduz*, the experiences of Zebi, Miryoqub, Akbarali and other characters create several interconnected narrative lines, while memories, inner reflections, social observations, and personal conflicts broaden the structure beyond a single linear storyline.

Fragmentation became even more explicit in later Uzbek experimental prose, particularly in the works of Nazar Eshonqul. His writing combines psychological modernism, symbolism, disrupted chronology, fragmented syntax, memory, dream, and uncertain boundaries between reality and imagination. Research on Xayol tuzog'i notes that time does not operate as a simple linear movement; instead, reality, memory, and dream overlap, allowing events from different periods to exist within the same psychological space. Scholars also identify repetition, inversion, ellipsis, and fragmented syntax as important elements of Eshonqul's modernist experimentation. In Nazar Eshonqul's *Xayol tuzog'i*, events develop through memories, dreams, and uncertain perceptions rather than through a strictly chronological sequence. In *Qora kitob*, psychological experience and historical memory intersect, producing a broken and multilayered perception of time.

Thus, fragmented structure performs a similar artistic function in both English and Uzbek prose: it replaces complete chronological certainty with subjective and psychologically complex narration. However, while English modernist fragmentation was strongly connected with early twentieth-century experimentation, Uzbek fragmentation developed through the interaction of national literary traditions, historical experience, psychological prose, and later global modernist influences.

Symbolism. It is an important artistic feature of modernist prose because it allows writers to express psychological, philosophical, and social meanings indirectly through objects, places, colours, natural phenomena, and repeated images. Modernist writers often avoided giving one clear explanation of experience, since they considered human consciousness and modern life too complex to be represented through direct description alone. Consequently, an ordinary object may acquire several meanings depending on the character, situation, and reader's interpretation. Symbols therefore connect the visible world with inner experience, allowing writers to represent memory, loneliness, identity, death, hope, social crisis, and spiritual uncertainty. Unlike traditional symbols with relatively stable meanings, modernist symbols frequently remain open and ambiguous, which encourages readers to participate actively in constructing the meaning of a literary work. In Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, the lighthouse functions as more than a physical destination. It becomes associated with desire, personal identity, emotional security, distance, and the changing relationship between reality and individual perception. Scholarly interpretations emphasize that the lighthouse carries several interconnected meanings rather than representing only one fixed idea.

In English modernist prose, symbolism is closely connected with psychological narration and subjective experience. Writers such as Virginia Woolf and James Joyce transform ordinary objects and natural images into devices through which internal states can be represented. Woolf frequently connects physical landscapes with consciousness, while Joyce gives ordinary details wider emotional, religious, cultural, and philosophical significance. The symbol therefore does not simply decorate the narrative; it becomes part of its structure and meaning. In Joyce's writing especially, symbolic images can remain uncertain and produce several possible interpretations, reflecting the modernist rejection of complete certainty. Studies of *Dubliners* show that symbolism, epiphany, ambiguity, and visual metaphor are closely connected in Joyce's narrative method. In James Joyce's "The Dead," from *Dubliners*, the snow becomes a central symbolic image. As it falls across Ireland and over both living people and graves, it connects memory, mortality, emotional isolation, and the relationship between the living and the dead.

Symbolic expression is also significant in Uzbek prose, although Uzbek modernist tendencies developed within different historical, political, and cultural conditions. In early twentieth-century Uzbek literature, Cho'lpon combined psychological representation, national concerns, and symbolic imagery. In *Kecha va kunduz* (*Night and Day*), the opposition between night and day can be interpreted beyond its literal meaning, since it is connected with social darkness, restriction, awakening, freedom, and cultural renewal. Research on the novel has specifically

examined the symbolic-semantic meanings of the metaphors of “night” and “day” and their relationship with personal tragedy and national awakening. In Cho‘lpon’s *Kecha va kunduz*, “night” can symbolize oppression, ignorance, and restricted social life, whereas “day” suggests enlightenment, freedom, awakening, and the possibility of social transformation.

Symbolism became especially complex in later Uzbek experimental prose, including the works of Nazar Eshonqul. His stories frequently employ symbolic objects, paintings, darkness, space, and unusual characters to represent ideological crisis, memory, alienation, and moral uncertainty. Such symbols are rarely limited to one meaning; instead, they connect individual experience with wider historical and philosophical problems. This openness brings Eshonqul’s prose close to modernist and later experimental traditions in which symbolism becomes a means of questioning stable interpretations. Recent scholarship particularly identifies symbolic imagery and allegory as central to his narrative world. In Nazar Eshonqul’s *Maymun yetaklagan odam* (The Man Led by a Monkey), two contrasting paintings—a young man leading a monkey from a dark forest and an old man being led back toward darkness by the monkey—symbolize the movement from confidence and ideological hope toward disappointment, moral exhaustion, and historical disillusionment.

Thus, symbolism performs a similar function in English and Uzbek modernist prose by transforming concrete images into deeper psychological and cultural meanings, although the specific symbols reflect the distinctive historical experiences of each literary tradition.

Stream of Consciousness. It is one of the most significant narrative techniques associated with modernist prose because it attempts to represent the continuous and often irregular movement of a character’s thoughts, emotions, memories, and sensory impressions. Instead of presenting experience through an objective narrator and a clearly organized sequence of events, modernist writers frequently enter the character’s inner world and follow ideas as they naturally appear in the mind. Thoughts may move suddenly from the present to the past, from an external object to a private memory, or from one emotional state to another. Consequently, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, and chronological order may become less regular. The technique is closely connected with interior monologue, although the two terms are not always completely identical. Stream of consciousness became particularly important in early twentieth-century modernism because writers wanted to represent psychological experience rather than merely describe external actions. In Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), Clarissa Dalloway’s ordinary experiences in London continually lead to memories of her youth, relationships, personal choices, and feelings about ageing. Her present observations and past experiences therefore become connected through the natural movement of consciousness.

In English-language modernist prose, Virginia Woolf and James Joyce developed particularly influential forms of consciousness-centred narration. Woolf often moves smoothly between external narration and the private thoughts of different characters, allowing the reader to experience reality through several subjective perspectives. Joyce develops the technique even more radically by reducing the distance between narrator and character and reproducing the apparently uncontrolled movement of thought. Logical transitions may disappear as memories,

physical sensations, associations, desires, and observations follow one another rapidly. As a result, plot becomes less dominant, while psychological experience becomes the central organizing principle of the narrative. Such writing reflects the modernist belief that reality is not simply external and objective but is also constructed through individual consciousness. In James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), particularly in the section centred on Molly Bloom, thoughts move freely between memories, relationships, physical sensations, wishes, and immediate impressions, with very limited conventional punctuation. The narrative therefore resembles the spontaneous movement of the human mind.

In Uzbek prose, the representation of consciousness developed within different cultural and historical conditions. In the work of Cho'lpon, especially *Kecha va kunduz* (Night and Day), psychological description, memory, internal monologue, emotional reflection, and changes between inner and external experience deepen the characterization. It is more accurate to describe many of these passages as psychological introspection and interior monologue with stream-of-consciousness tendencies, rather than claiming that Cho'lpon consistently uses the radical form found in Joyce. Nevertheless, his attention to the inner "self," emotional suffering, memory, and subjective perception represents an important movement away from purely external realist description toward modern psychological prose. Researchers have specifically identified internal and external monologue, memory, psychological suffering, and introspection as important elements of the novel's narrative method. In Cho'lpon's *Kecha va kunduz*, the experiences of Zebi and Miryoqub are frequently developed through their fears, emotional conflicts, memories, and personal reflections, allowing social events to be understood through individual consciousness rather than external description alone.

Stream-of-consciousness techniques become more explicit in later experimental Uzbek prose, particularly in the works of Nazar Eshonqul. His prose often gives greater importance to psychological conflict, memory, unstable perception, and the complicated relationship between reality and the inner world. Recent studies of Eshonqul's *Giryon* specifically identify inner monologue and stream of consciousness as techniques through which the protagonist's spiritual and psychological conflicts are represented. His broader prose has also been connected with modernist psychological experimentation and philosophical reflection. In Nazar Eshonqul's *Giryon*, the protagonist's psychological experience is developed through inner speech, changing thoughts, memories, emotional associations, and symbolic impressions, so that the reader follows not only what happens to the character but also how reality is experienced within the character's consciousness.

Thus, stream of consciousness in both English and Uzbek prose shifts literary attention from external events toward the complex inner life of the individual. English modernists such as Woolf and Joyce developed highly experimental forms of the technique, whereas Uzbek writers adapted psychological narration and consciousness-centred methods to national history, cultural experience, identity, and social transformation.

Non-Linear Narration. It is an important structural feature of modernist prose because it breaks the traditional chronological order of storytelling. Instead of presenting events clearly

from beginning to end, modernist writers often move between the present, the past, memory, imagination, and psychological reflection. This technique reflects the idea that human experience is not always remembered or understood in a simple chronological sequence. A character may observe something in the present that suddenly produces a memory from many years earlier, while another thought may return the narrative to the present. As a result, narrative time becomes flexible and subjective. Non-linear narration also allows writers to emphasize psychological experience rather than external action, because the order of events can follow the movements of memory and consciousness rather than conventional chronology. In Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), the main external action takes place within a single day, yet Clarissa Dalloway continually returns mentally to her youth at Bourton, her relationship with Peter Walsh, and her feelings about Sally Seton. Past and present therefore exist together within her consciousness.

In English modernist prose, non-linear narration became especially important in the works of Virginia Woolf and William Faulkner. Woolf reorganizes chronological time through memory, interior reflection, and changes of perspective, so that a short moment in the present can contain extensive memories of the past. Faulkner develops an even more complicated form of temporal disruption. In *The Sound and the Fury*, different sections present the history of the Compson family from different perspectives, while memories repeatedly interrupt the present. Critics have regarded the arrangement of its four sections and the use of stream of consciousness in the first three as central to the novel's formal structure. In William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), Benjy's section moves unexpectedly between different periods of his life. A sound, place, or object can immediately carry his consciousness from the present into an earlier memory, without a conventional transition explaining the change in time.

Non-linear tendencies can also be identified in Uzbek prose, although they often develop differently from the radical experiments of English modernism. In Cho'lpon's *Kecha va kunduz*, the general plot retains a recognizable historical and narrative sequence, but this sequence is frequently expanded through memory, internal and external monologue, psychological suffering, lyrical digression, and reflection. Research on the novel notes Cho'lpon's use of memory and different forms of monologue to broaden the treatment of time and psychological experience. Another study emphasizes the relationship between past and present in the novel and the way historical time is connected with the characters' spiritual world. Therefore, it is more accurate to describe Cho'lpon's narrative as containing non-linear tendencies rather than being completely non-linear. In Cho'lpon's *Kecha va kunduz*, the experiences of Zebi and Miryoqub are not explained only through immediate events. Memories, internal reflections, previous experiences, and social observations enter the narrative and connect personal time with the broader historical situation of Turkestan.

Non-linear narration became more noticeable in later Uzbek experimental prose, particularly in works associated with writers such as Nazar Eshonqul. In this type of prose, memory, dream, imagination, and present reality may overlap, weakening the boundaries between different levels of time. Such techniques place greater responsibility on readers, who must reconstruct

connections between separate experiences. This approach resembles international modernist experimentation while also responding to Uzbek historical memory, identity, and cultural transformation. In Nazar Eshonqul's Xayol tuzog'i, psychological experience, memory, imagination, and present reality interact rather than developing through a completely straightforward chronological sequence.

Thus, non-linear narration in English and Uzbek modernist prose changes time from a simple chronological framework into a psychological and artistic device. English writers often employed more radical temporal fragmentation, while Uzbek writers combined disrupted time with psychological representation, historical experience, and national cultural concerns.

Results and analysis. The results of the study demonstrate that modernism in English and Uzbek literature developed through a common tendency to move away from traditional realist narration and to explore more complex forms of human experience. In both literary traditions, writers used fragmented structure, symbolism, stream of consciousness, and non-linear narration to represent psychological conflict, memory, identity, and social change. English modernist authors such as Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, and William Faulkner applied these techniques more radically, often breaking chronological order, shifting between different perspectives, and presenting the direct movement of consciousness. Their works show that modernist prose gives greater importance to subjective experience than to conventional plot development.

The findings also indicate that Uzbek writers such as Cho'lpon and Nazar Eshonqul employed similar modernist tendencies within different historical and cultural conditions. Cho'lpon's Kecha va kunduz combines psychological reflection, symbolism, memory, and flexible narrative time, while Eshonqul's prose develops more experimental forms involving fragmented perception, symbolic imagery, inner monologue, and uncertain boundaries between reality and imagination. Therefore, although English and Uzbek modernism differ in historical development and degree of experimentation, both traditions use innovative narrative techniques to express the complexity of individual consciousness, cultural transformation, and changing social realities.

Conclusion. The comparative analysis of modernism in English and Uzbek literature shows that both literary traditions experienced an important transformation in narrative form, artistic expression, and the representation of human experience. Modernist writers moved beyond the limits of traditional realist storytelling and introduced new techniques that could reflect the complexity of consciousness, memory, identity, and social change. Among the most significant features examined in this study are fragmented structure, symbolism, stream of consciousness, and non-linear narration. These devices enabled writers to present reality not as a fixed and completely ordered system, but as a subjective and often unstable experience shaped by individual perception.

Overall, the findings confirm that English and Uzbek modernism share several important artistic principles, although they differ in historical development and degree of

experimentation. Their comparison demonstrates that modernism is not limited to one national tradition, but represents a broader literary movement in which writers search for new forms to express the changing relationship between the individual, society, memory, and reality.

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