

Theoretical foundations of the study of children's fiction

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Annotation: Children's literature, as an independent artistic phenomenon with its own language and stylistic features, is analyzed in depth in terms of linguistic, philological, didactic, aesthetic and pragmatic aspects. This article is based on the following theoretical directions: Children's literature as an object of linguistic and philological analysis, Didactic and aesthetic tasks of children's literature, Fundamentals of pragmatic analysis of texts. Language and style play an important role in the analysis of children's literature. Texts written for children should usually be simple, clear and figurative. Because it may be difficult for a young reader who is just learning children's language to understand complex sentences. Therefore, short and concise sentences, frequently repeated words, animated images (personification), dialogues and a game style are widely used in children's literature. These methods allow the child to better understand the text and participate in it. In addition, children's literature serves to form socio-spiritual values. Therefore, children's literature is seen not only as a source of artistic pleasure, but also as a source of moral education. Especially, children's literature, which reflects national values, traditions and historical events, educates the younger generation in the spirit of respect for the motherland, national heritage and culture.

Keywords: spirituality, Children's literature, characteristics, linguistic, philological, didactic, aesthetic.

Теоретические основы изучения детской художественной литературы

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Аннотация: Детская литература как самостоятельное художественное явление, имеющее свои языковые и стилистические особенности, подробно анализируется в лингвистическом, филологическом, дидактическом, эстетическом и прагматическом аспектах. Статья основана на следующих теоретических направлениях: Детская литература как объект лингвистического и филологического анализа, Дидактические и эстетические задачи детской литературы, Основы прагматического анализа текстов. Язык и стиль играют важную роль при анализе детской литературы. Тексты, написанные для детей, как правило, должны быть простыми, понятными и образными. Потому что юному читателю, который только начинает изучать детский язык, может быть сложно понимать сложные предложения. Поэтому в детской литературе широко используются короткие и лаконичные предложения, часто повторяющиеся слова, одушевленные образы (олицетворение), диалоги, игровость. Эти методы позволяют ребенку лучше понимать текст и участвовать в нем. Кроме того, детская литература способствует формированию социально-духовных ценностей. С его помощью дети изучают такие понятия, как добро и зло, правда и ложь, справедливость и несправедливость. Детская литература, особенно та, которая отражает национальные ценности, традиции и исторические события, воспитывает подрастающее поколение в духе уважения к Родине, национальному наследию и культуре.

Ключевые слова: духовность, детская литература, характеристики, лингвистические, филологические, дидактические, эстетические.

Bolalar badiiy asarlarini o‘rganishning nazariy asoslari

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Annotatsiya: Bolalar adabiyoti o‘ziga xos til va uslubiy xususiyatlarga ega bo‘lgan mustaqil badiiy fenomen sifatida lingvistik, filologik, didaktik, estetik hamda pragmatik jihatlari bo‘yicha chuqur tahlil qilinadi. Ushbu maqolada quyidagi nazariy yo‘nalishlarga asoslanadi: Bolalar adabiyoti lingvistik va filologik tahlil obyekti sifatida, Bolalar adabiyotining didaktik va estetik vazifalari, Matnlarni pragmatik tahlil qilish asoslari. Bolalar adabiyotini tahlil qilishda til va uslub muhim rol o‘ynaydi. Bolalar uchun yozilgan matnlar odatda oddiy, aniq va obrazli bo‘lishi lozim. Chunki bolalar tilini endigina o‘rganayotgan yosh kitobxon murakkab jummalarni tushunishi qiyin bo‘lishi mumkin. Shu bois bolalar adabiyotida qisqa va lo‘nda gaplar, ko‘p takrorlanuvchi so‘zlar, jonlantirilgan tasvirlar (personifikatsiya), dialoglar hamda o‘yin uslubi keng qo‘llaniladi. Bu usullar bolaga matnni yaxshiroq tushunish va unda ishtirok etish imkonini beradi. Bundan tashqari, bolalar adabiyoti ijtimoiy-ma‘naviy qadriyatlarni shakllantirishga xizmat qiladi. U orqali bolalar yaxshilik va yomonlik, haqiqat va yolg‘on, adolat va nohaqlik kabi tushunchalarni o‘rganadilar. Ayniqsa, milliy qadriyatlar, urf-odatlar va tarixiy voqealar aks etgan bolalar adabiyoti yosh avlodni ona yurt, milliy meros va madaniyatga hurmat ruhida tarbiyalaydi.

Kalit so‘zlar: ma‘naviyat, Bolalar adabiyoti, xususiyatlar, lingvistik, filologik, didaktik, estetik.

Introduction

After our country gained independence, attention was paid to restoring and further enhancing our great spirituality, improving the national education system, strengthening its historical foundation, and at the same time harmonizing it with the requirements of the time. Also, the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh. Mirziyoyev dated April 20, 2017 No. PL-2909 “On measures for the further development of the higher education system” established that the creation of new generation educational literature and its widespread application in the educational process of higher educational institutions, providing higher educational institutions with modern educational, educational-methodical and scientific literature are among the most important tasks of the future development of the higher education system. The great role of Uzbek children’s literature as a verbal art and a means of upbringing was given special attention during the years of independence. The instruction of the First President of our Republic, I.A. Karimov, “Attention to Literature – Attention to Spirituality, Attention to the Future,” emphasizes that literature and the art of speech have always been an expression of the people’s soul, including the following: “In particular, we must pay special attention to the development of children’s literature, which is of great importance to us, and we must always remember that the formation of independent-thinking individuals, any reading, reading culture begins in childhood.”¹ The study of children’s fiction is carried out through various scientific approaches and theoretical concepts. This literature is inextricably linked with child psychology, linguistics, cultural studies, social theory, pedagogy and aesthetic principles, and there are several main theoretical directions in its analysis.

Children’s literature is a type of literature that has its own language and style of expression, plot structure, and aesthetic and educational tasks. One of the most important issues in studying it is the creation and analysis of artistic material appropriate to the child’s age. Because in the process of creating children’s works, the writer must take into account the child’s worldview, imagination, and

receptive abilities. Therefore, the study of children's literature texts is carried out not only from a literary and aesthetic point of view (Saidova, 2020), but also from a linguistic, psychological, and pedagogical point of view. Children's fiction is often expressed in genres such as fairy tales, short stories, poems, short stories, and novels. These genres differ depending on the age characteristics of the child. For example, if fairy tales and stories written for young children are characterized by a simple plot, recurring motifs, and educational features, then literature intended for older children may reflect a complex plot, multifaceted characters, and life problems. Children's fiction, as a distinct literary category, occupies a vital space in the development of young readers, shaping their understanding of the world, themselves, and others. Its study requires a robust theoretical foundation that draws from diverse fields including literary theory, psychology, education, and cultural studies. Unlike adult literature, children's fiction operates within a unique framework (Nikolajeva, 2005) where the intended audience often lacks agency in the selection and interpretation of texts. This dynamic necessitates critical inquiry into not just the narratives themselves, but also the societal structures that influence their production, dissemination, and reception. The theoretical exploration of children's fiction involves examining how concepts (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2001) such as narrative voice, ideology, power, and identity are constructed and conveyed to a developing audience.

Central to this inquiry is the question of how childhood is conceptualized and represented in literature. Are children passive recipients of adult values, or are they active participants in meaning-making? Furthermore, the evolving definitions of childhood across time and cultures play a significant role in shaping the themes and forms of children's fiction. This introduction lays the groundwork for a deeper exploration of key theoretical perspectives that inform the study of children's literature, including structuralism, poststructuralism, reader-response theory, and feminist and postcolonial critiques. These lenses enable scholars to interrogate not only the text but also the cultural functions and pedagogical purposes of children's fiction. Through such an interdisciplinary approach, we gain a more nuanced understanding of how literature for children reflects, reinforces, or challenges societal norms and values. Although at the turn of the 20th century and at the beginning of the 20th century, a movement to create specialized fiction for Uzbek children emerged and began to take shape, the expression of this phenomenon with the term children's literature occurred mainly in the early 1920s.

This term was first used in the Uzbek press (Uzbek children's literature and literary process, 1989) in Siroji's article "A Thought on Children's Literature" (30-31-p.), published in the 3rd issue of the journal "Maorif va o'kitg'uchi" in 1921. It appears in the article "Children's literature in the Red Uzbek press" published in issue 157 of the "Zarafshon" newspaper on June 21, 1924, "Children's literature is needed" by Bashir in the issue of the "Turkiston" newspaper on April 27, 1923, "Children's literature is needed" by Gazi Olim Yunusov in issue 3 of the "Maorif va o'tikgu'uchi" magazine in 1925, and "Children's literature needs to be published" by Shokir Sulayman in issue 224 of the "Red Uzbek" newspaper on September 30, 1926, and it has become established. It is worth noting that this term was not an exact translation of the Russian phrase "detskaya literatura", but rather came into being as a specialized literary phenomenon that began to be created with the aim of Uzbek children in mind, which has become a reality. Uzbek children's literature, which emerged at the beginning of our century in the spirit of the new enlightenment as a new literary phenomenon, calling on the young generation to master the foundations of enlightenment in order to understand their own identity and form themselves as fighters for independence for their own freedom and the freedom of the Motherland, has now become a unique national treasure of the Uzbek people. Although its ideological and artistic level is still occasionally questioned, it has already taken a worthy place in the world of children's literature. Many examples are loved and read far beyond the borders of our country. For a century, Uzbek children's literature has been serving as one of the important factors in the spiritual and healthy growth of the younger generation. Although the science of Uzbek children's literature began to emerge at the beginning of the 20th century from articles written by progressive intellectuals, educators, and literary critics, it began to take shape in the middle of the 20th century

due to the movement to compile the first textbooks and teaching aids. The "Children's Literature" textbook, first compiled by I. Ahmedov and A. Suyumov in 1953 for students of pedagogical universities and published in 1967-1978, and the "Children's Literature" teaching materials manual published in 1957 were the initial results of this movement. Later, the "Children's Literature" manual, written by A. Suyumov for special secondary schools and published in 1973, was the first step towards creating the history of Uzbek children's literature. This manual was revised in collaboration with M. Jumaboev and republished in 1995. For children, as for adults, creativity is possible on all topics related to man, society, and nature. At the heart of such commonality between children's and adult literature is a feature that clarifies the difference between them. The essence of this difference is that when writing for children, A.A. Makarenko showed that the importance of writing is not what to write about, but how to write (Fozilov, 2010). For example, while children are prohibited from reading works that express the complex aspects of adult life, children are recommended to read works such as the poetic fairy tale "Kong'izay and Sichkonboy" by Q. Muhammadi, written in a child-friendly way on the same topic. The point is that children's literature, as a form of social consciousness, expresses children's views on existence, and in assessing events, their own characteristics, that is, the aesthetic attitude of the younger generation to existence.

Methods

Language and style play an important role in the analysis of children's literature. Texts written for children should usually be simple, clear, and figurative. Because it can be difficult for a young reader who is just learning children's language to understand complex sentences. Therefore, short and concise sentences, frequently repeated words, animated images (personification), dialogues, and a playful style are widely used in children's literature. These methods allow the child to better understand the text and participate in it. In addition, children's literature serves to form socio-spiritual values. Through it, children learn concepts such as good and evil, truth and falsehood, justice and injustice. Therefore, children's literature is seen not only as a source of artistic pleasure, but also as a source of moral education. Especially children's literature, which reflects national values, traditions, and historical events, educates the younger generation in the spirit of respect for the motherland, national heritage, and culture. A psychological approach is also important in the study of children's literature. A child has different psychological characteristics at different ages, and this affects his level of understanding of a literary text. For example, preschool children usually perceive works in which animated characters, that is, animals, birds or objects talk to each other, well.

This is because children of this age easily perceive anthropomorphization (giving things human characteristics). Older children begin to understand works that reflect complex relationships between characters, internal experiences and social problems. Therefore, the psychological impact of children's literature varies depending on different age groups. Another important feature of children's fiction is its educational and didactic value. Works written for children usually contain moral conclusions, instructive stories and ideas that shape correct behavior. For example, many fairy tales and stories depict the triumph of good over evil (Andersen, 1960), and the success of hardworking and honest heroes. This serves to form moral values in children. In each country, examples of creativity related to, dedicated to, or specially created for children's education also give rise to terms about it. For example, in the history of Uzbek children's literature, in addition to folklore, the concepts of didactic literature, children's reading, enlightenment literature, and Uzbek literature of the period of national revival are the main factors in its formation. The emergence of the phenomenon, its introduction into scientific consumption, and finally, its development as an independent discipline form a holistic system.

Although the set of artistic, scientific, popular scientific and journalistic works created for children and adolescents literally constitute children's literature, it is customary to assume that mainly purely artistic works embody the essence of this concept. Works intended for children's reading have existed throughout the history of all peoples since ancient times. In particular, it is an obvious fact that Uzbek children's literature became a reality in the works classified in Eastern written literature

under such names as "pandnoma", "ma'vizatnoma", "nasihatnoma", "akhloq kitobori", and that its formation is closely related to the Enlightenment and reforms in the school and education system. Children's literature is, first of all, the art of words intended for children and adolescents of different ages. Children's literature is a set of artistic, scientific, popular science and journalistic works created for children and adolescents. The main part of them is made up of works of fiction. Children's literature of the peoples of the world, including the Uzbek people, begins with examples of oral creativity, most of which are intended for children, such as quick sayings, riddles, play songs, narratives, legends, fairy tales, proverbs, parables and epics. Children's literature can be divided into works created directly for children and works that, although not actually intended for children, later passed into children's literature. A distinctive feature of children's literature is that it is a changing phenomenon, which is directly related to the age of the reader, historical period and social environment. Taking into account the age of the reader is one of the most important features of children's literature.

For example, in preschool children, this is based on the seemingly simple contradictions of the forces of showiness, goodness and evil, while in literature created for adolescents, the psyche of complex people in complex lives begins to be revealed. Another feature of children's literature is its richness of action. This also leads to the demand for a plot in children's literature. It requires the resolution of events quickly, interestingly, rich in fantasy and humor. In Eastern written literature, works classified under names such as "pandnoma", "mav'izatnoma", "nasihatnoma", "ethical books" are considered the first examples of children's literature. For example, Kaykovus's "Mav'izatomai Kaykovus" ("Qobusnoma"), Sheikh Sa'diy's "Guliston" and "Bo'ston", and Jomi's "Bahoriston" are among these works. These have entered Uzbek children's literature through translation. Alisher Navoi's works "Hayrat ulabor", "Mantiq ut-tayr" and "Mahbub ul-qulub", Khoja's "Miftah ul-adl" and "Gulzor", and Gulkhani's "Zarbulmasal" are classic examples of Uzbek children's literature, and with their admonishing articles and stories, they have served to educate the younger generation in the spirit of good human qualities for centuries. The formation of children's literature in almost all nations is closely related to the Enlightenment and reforms in the school-educational system.

The stabilization of Uzbek children's literature also dates back to the Enlightenment movement of the second half of the 19th century - the beginning of the 20th century. About fifty alphabet and reading books created for students of Uzbek schools in the "New Method" ("usuli jadidiya") by Saidrasul Aziziy, Munavvarqori, Abdulla Avloniy, Hamza Hakimzoda Niyoziy and dozens of other enlighteners are considered to be bright examples of Uzbek children's literature in the literal sense of the word. The view of children's literature as works specially created for children and the establishment of its own principles is characteristic of the beginning of the 20th century. Uzbek children's literature developed under the influence of the advanced traditions (Uzbek children's literature and literary process, 1989) of world children's literature. Rare examples of world children's literature were translated into Uzbek, such as "Gulliver's Travels" (J. Swift), "Robinson Crusoe" (D. Defoe), "Uncle Tom's Cabin" (Beecher Stowe), "The Sonnet" (E. Voynich) became the property of Uzbek children. Translating the best examples of Eastern literature from Arabic and Persian was one direction in the translation of children's literature, while the Uzbekization of examples of Western literature, in particular Russian literature, was the second. I. A. Krylov's fables, A. S. Pushkin's "The Tale of the Fisherman and the Fish", several stories and tales by K. D. Ushinsky and L. N. Tolstoy, and others were translated during the same period and included in the new school alphabet and textbooks.

Through translation, creators more perfectly mastered the specific features of realistic children's literature, and a group of writers for children was formed. In the 20s and 30s of the 20th century, the works of Hamid Olimjon, Gafur Ghulom, Gayratiy, Shokir Sulaymon, Ilyos Muslim, Gulom Zafariy, Ayniy, Elbek, Zafar Diyor, Sultan Jora, Kudrat Hikmat, Quddus Muhammadiy, Shukur Sadulla, Hakim Nazir, Polat Momin and other creators played an important role in the development of Uzbek children's literature and its formation as a special literature. In Uzbek

children's literature, the literary genre of fairy tales in particular developed. Literary fairy tales such as Hamid Olimjon's Oygul and Bakhtiyor, "Semurg or Parizod and Bunyod", Mirtemir's "Ajdar", Shukur Sadulla's "Uch ayk", "Ayyor chumchuk", Zafar Diyor's "Yangi ertak", "Tashkhon bilan Moshkhon", "Tulkinging hiylasi", Sultan Jora's "Zangor kilam" and "Kaldirgoch" are based on the traditions of folk oral art and are considered to be thorough works of art in terms of form and content. In the 30s, Uzbek children's poetry flourished, and its range of topics expanded. In the 1940s-1960s, Uzbek children's literature further developed, and the ranks of children's writers expanded due to the emergence of Nasir Fozilov, Khudoyberdi Tokhtaboyev, Tolib Yuldosh, Farhod Musajonov, Latif Mahmudov and other writers. Representatives of adult literature such as Uygun, Mirtemir, Askad Mukhtor, Said Ahmad, Shuhrat, Mirzakalon Ismailiy, and Mirkarim Asim also created works specifically for children.

Quddus Muhammadi's five-book "Alphabet of Nature" is notable for its cheerful humor, variety of themes, and perfection of imagery, educating young readers in the spirit of love for mother nature, the animal and plant world. In the 50s and 60s, Gafur Ghulam's "Shum bola", Oybek's "Childhood", Abdulla Qahhor's "Tales from the Past", and Nazir Safarov's "Korgan-kechirganlarim" made a worthy contribution to the development of prose children's literature. Khudoyberdi Tokhtaboyev's "The Magic Cap", "Riding the Yellow Dev", and "The Death of the Yellow Dev" were also among the outstanding works. These were translated into many foreign languages. Hakim Nazir's stories "Sonmas zaqmoqlar", "Yonar daryo", "Kichkintoy", and the novel "Lochin kanglari" attracted attention for their coverage of the current problems of the time and the originality of their artistic depiction. In the 80s, the works of Anvar Obidjon, Safar Barnoyev, Rauf Tolipov, Qambar Utayev, Hamza Imonberdiev and other creators in Children's Literature were notable for their service to educating the younger generation in the spirit of the best human qualities. Along with art, enlightenment also occupies a leading place in Children's Literature. Because examples of Children's Literature also serve to educate young people in the spirit of human qualities. The principles of development of Children's Literature of all eras are reflected, first of all, in enlightenment and education. However, as Children's Literature develops, its striving to master the elements of pure art and its interaction with the principles of development of general literature are also noticeable. In particular, if at the beginning of the 20th century, Enlightenment ideas predominated in Uzbek Children's Literature, in the 30s, realistic literary principles prevailed in Children's Literature, and in the 50s-60s, elements of adventure and fantastic literature intensified in Children's Literature. The 80s saw the strengthening of psychologism in children's literature, the desire to portray the young hero not as a young child, but as a person who is increasingly entering life, with his own views. The 90s were a period of renewal in the development of Uzbek children's literature. Thanks to independence, the revival of national, cultural, literary and religious values also had a significant impact on the work of representatives of children's literature, in whose works the image of a real Uzbek person began to occupy a leading place.

The peculiarities of children's literature are more clearly manifested (Nikolajeva, 2005) in the image of its hero. For example, while the examples of children's literature of the early 20th century were distinguished by the activity of the creator, the primacy of the spirit of propaganda rather than the image of the hero, in the 30s children's literature turned more to folk oral art, and even in the works created during this period, there was almost no active image of the hero. The examples of children's literature of the 50s and 60s became truly children's literature, with young heroes directly playing a decisive role in the events of the works. The examples of children's literature of the 70s and 80s increasingly began to take shape in the image of a young hero who looks at life from his own point of view, with a sharper critical eye than lofty, rhetorical descriptions. During this period, the unique, just awakening pure love of children entered Uzbek children's literature for the first time. A new step was taken in this regard in the literature of the 90s, when the Uzbek child was blessed with the happiness of reading works in which the idea of patriotism in the literal sense, in the spirit of pride

in being a child of the Uzbeks, worthy of their great ancestors, was paramount. Theoretical foundations of the study of children's fiction.

Children's literature differs from adult literature in its essence and content. It requires a separate study of its form, language, theme, characters, and most importantly, its audience. Works of fiction written for children have a direct impact on the child's way of thinking, psychological development, aesthetic taste, and moral views. Therefore, in the study of children's literature, it is necessary to use the approaches of not only literary criticism, but also psychology, pedagogy, and sociology. The study of children's fiction is carried out, first of all, based on the social, cultural, and historical aspects of the concept of "child". Throughout history, childhood has been understood differently: in some periods, a child was seen as a small person, in other periods, he was recognized as an independent person. These approaches were reflected in the formation and content of children's literature. Literary construction of childhood: Theoretical research shows (Nikolajeva, 2005) that childhood depicted in children's literature is often a construction created by adults, which reflects the adults' view of the child, social values, and educational goals. That is, in many works, the child is presented as a passive, obedient, and morally inclined person. On the other hand, in modern children's literature, children are depicted as more independent, active, and critical thinkers. This situation points to the changing nature of children's literature. Children's literature develops in accordance with social and cultural changes. For example, while in the past, fairy tales based on simpler plots and traditional moral conclusions prevailed, today more complex psychological situations, alternative endings, and real-life problems are being covered. Literary-theoretical approaches A number of literary-theoretical approaches are used in the analysis of children's literature. Each of them allows you to look at the text from a different angle. The structuralist approach studies the structure, plot elements (Aarne & Thompson, 1961), and system of contradictions in the work. For example, motifs such as the hero's journey, his ordeal, and his victory over evil forces are analyzed in terms of traditional components. Poststructuralism emphasizes that there is no fixed meaning in the work, and that each reader's interpretation may be different.

This approach views children's literature as more open, multi-layered, and controversial. Feminist literary analysis focuses on how gender roles are expressed in the work. This is especially evident in the depiction of girls and women, and the social roles they perform. Historical children's literature often highlights gender stereotypes, while modern literature is revising them. The postcolonial approach raises issues of national identity, cultural identity, language and governance. Through some works written for children, a people forms an independent thought through its history, culture or language. The reader-response approach focuses on how the child-reader perceives the text (Sperber & Wilson, 1986). This method sees the child as an active reader: he does not just accept a ready-made idea, but creates content based on his own experience. Educational and pedagogical values: Children's literature is often used as an educational tool. Therefore, through it, the child is instilled with concepts such as moral norms, cultural values, patriotism, friendship, honesty, patience. However, modern theoretical views deny that children's literature should have only a didactic character. Such literature should allow the child's mind to think independently, ask questions and make life choices. In addition, aesthetics and artistry are also important in children's literature. The artistic quality of the work, the system of images, metaphors, and the richness of the language play a major role in shaping the literary taste of a child. Therefore, when evaluating modern children's literature, not only moral content, but also literary skill are taken into account. Multimodal texts and modern changes: The development of information technologies is also having a strong impact on children's literature.

Digital books, interactive applications, audiobooks, and visual stories are becoming important resources for a new generation of readers. This requires new methodologies in the study of children's literature. Through multimodal analysis, not only text, but also elements such as images, sounds, and animations are analyzed. Also, the harmony of global and local (local) elements is becoming increasingly important in children's literature. Elements of local culture and folk oral art are being

processed in modern works and conveyed in an understandable form to a global reader. This shows that children's literature serves an inclusive and intercultural dialogue. The main functions of children's literature Children's fiction performs several important functions: educational, educational, aesthetic and entertaining. These functions complement each other and serve to form the child's mind. Through the educational function, the child becomes acquainted with social norms and values; through the educational function, he acquires knowledge, worldview and concepts; the aesthetic function is aimed at understanding beauty and developing artistic thinking. The entertaining (recreational) function allows the child to experience emotional relief and wander in the world of fantasy. In modern children's literature, it is important to maintain a balance between these functions. Works based solely on advice may not be attractive to the child.

Therefore, authors try to convey educational ideas in a subtle and natural way by enriching the artistic style and creating interesting plots. The system of characters and their role Heroes occupy a special place in children's literature. They are often peers with whom the young reader can compare himself. Through this, the child puts himself in the place of the hero, analyzes his actions, and learns to make decisions through him. Among the heroes can be friends, family members, teachers, and sometimes even fantastic creatures (for example, demons, giants, animals, robots). Through them, the author shows human values, emotions, problems and their solutions. Also, the image of the antagonist - that is, the evil hero - plays an important role in distinguishing the concepts of "good" and "bad" in the child's mind. These heroes often serve to teach life lessons and draw moral conclusions. In modern works, however, these images are more complex: evil characters are sometimes also justified by their own problems and psychological depressions.

There are different genres in children's literature: fairy tales, stories, short stories, novels for children, poems, dramas, fiction, detective, adventure, works of art based on science and technology. Each genre has its own specific function, language, and structure. For example, through fairy tales, a child understands the realities of life through symbolic and fantastic events. Stories and short stories reflect real-life problems, children's lives at school and in the family. The detective genre teaches a child to think and determine cause-and-effect relationships. A mixture of genres is also observed in modern literature. For example, adventure stories filled with fairy tale elements, or works that combine fiction and historical novels, are becoming popular among children. Combination of practical analysis and theoretical approaches. Theoretical foundations create the basis for practical analysis, not just abstract concepts. For example, when analyzing a children's story, the following approaches will help: A structural approach identifies plot stages and motifs. Feminist analysis studies the social role and depiction of girls and boys in the work. Postcolonial analysis shows the contrast between local and foreign cultures. The reader-response approach studies the students' attitude to the work and how they understand it. For example, through interviews and questionnaires with schoolchildren, their attitude to the text and level of identification are determined.

Through these theoretical approaches, each work is understood more deeply, its aesthetic and educational aspects are revealed. These approaches provide rich experience, especially in analyzing Uzbek children's literature. The works of such creators as Abdulla Qahhor, Khudoyberdi Tokhtaboyev, and Mirtemir can be reviewed based on modern literary criticism approaches. Taking into account child psychology Among the theoretical foundations, approaches to child psychology are of particular importance. Because a child perceives literature not like an adult, but with a perception specific to his age. The simplicity of the language, the liveliness of the images, the dynamics of the plot, fantastic elements in children's fiction must be in line with the needs and interests of children. For example, in texts written for children aged 5-7, images are clearly expressed visually and emotionally; in works intended for 8-10 years old, cause-and-effect relationships and simple logical analysis elements are introduced. For students aged 11-14, psychological situations, internal monologues, problematic events, and social topics are more interesting. From this perspective, any theoretical approach analyzing children's literature must take into account child psychology and understand age-specific methods of perception.). Today, children's literature is being

formed under the influence of the global cultural environment. Through digital technologies, translations, international children's festivals and publishing houses, children of different nationalities are entering each other's literature. This situation requires a cross-cultural approach in children's literature. Global problems – such as ecology, dependence on technology, intercultural friendship, inclusion – are gradually appearing in Uzbek children's literature. At the same time, it is important to cover these topics in a harmonious way, not contrary to the national mentality. This indicates the need to maintain a balance between global and local values in modern children's literature. Modern methodological approaches. Modern researchers use the following methodologies in the analysis of children's literature:

Contextual analysis – the text is studied in relation to the period, social situation, historical situation in which it was created. Discursive analysis – the language tools used in the text, their ideological connotations, moral signals and codes are analyzed. Empirical approach – the students' attitude to the work is determined through interviews, observations, and tests. Psycholinguistic analysis – how children perceive language units in the text and their ability to understand images is studied. These approaches serve to further study the theoretical foundations and enrich practical analysis.

Results

The sociological and cultural aspects of children's literature are also not ignored. Children's works can reflect certain social, political and cultural conditions in society. For example, works of children's literature created in different periods reflect the ideology and values of that time. While children's literature written in the Soviet era promoted the ideas of hard work, collectivism and selflessness, modern children's literature increasingly covers topics such as ecology, technology and human rights. The visual aspect of children's literature is also important. Especially in books intended for young children, illustrations play a key role along with the text. Picture books help children develop their imagination, better understand the text and connect with it more deeply. Therefore, the design of children's books, the variety of illustrations and the expressiveness of images are of great importance. The intertextual approach is also widely used in the process of studying children's literature. This theory analyzes the relationship of one text to other texts. For example, many modern children's books may be based on folk tales or historical events. Children's literature also draws on classical literature. For example, many new works contain stories inspired by ancient fairy tales or mythological characters. Formation and stages of development of Uzbek children's literature in studying the theoretical foundations of Uzbek children's literature, it is important, first of all, to analyze its historical development and stages of formation. In the history of Uzbek literature, texts intended for children were initially formed through various forms of folk oral creativity – fairy tales, riddles, proverbs, legends. These genres were an important tool in enriching children's thinking (Uzbek folk tales collection, 2018), moral views and life experiences. At the beginning of the 20th century, the first printed literature intended for children began to appear within the framework of the Jadid movement. Enlightenment figures such as Mahmudkhodja Behbudiy and Abdurauf Fitrat paid special attention to the role of literature in the upbringing of children. Later, writers such as Abdulla Qodiriy, Gafur Ghulom, and Oybek also addressed the topic of children. After independence, topics such as national values, self-awareness, ecological education, technological progress, cultural heritage, and global outlook began to take precedence in Uzbek children's literature. The new generation of writers is striving to create an image of a modern child, to shed more light on his inner world, mental states, and place in the social environment. Cultural identity and national identity The issue of cultural identity is of particular theoretical importance in the study of children's literature. Each nation tries to convey its history, traditions, and values to its children through literature. Therefore, in children's literature, elements of folk oral art, national costumes, rituals, traditional professions, Uzbek upbringing and values are reflected through images. For example, in Uzbek children's works, social values such as "respect for parents," "hospitality," and "obedience to adults" are conveyed through stories and plots. This approach is one of the most effective ways to instill

cultural heritage in the child's consciousness. At the same time, modern literature is trying to describe these values in a modern context, in children's language, in a non-didactic style. Intertextual approach and context In modern literary and theoretical research, the intertextual approach is becoming increasingly popular. According to this approach, each text arises in connection with other texts. This is especially common in children's literature – classic fairy tales are reworked, enriched with elements of other cultures, or created in modern forms, based on a new plot. For example, modern interpretations of fairy tales such as "Zumrad and Qimmat", children's stories based on folk motifs, Uzbek interpretations of famous characters in foreign literature (for example, stories about an Uzbek boy based on the Robinson motif) demonstrate intertextual connections. This approach helps to deeply understand the dynamic and changing nature of children's literature.

1. Formalist and structuralist approach

This approach examines the plot structure, composition, and artistic devices in children's literature. For example, Russian scholar Vladimir Propp identified 31 functions of fairy tales and demonstrated that this pattern is repeated in many examples of children's literature.

Example:

- The fairy tale "Emerald and Precious" can be analyzed according to Propp's scheme as follows:

- The hero leaves his house → Emerald sets off on a journey
- Doing a good deed → Helping the old woman
- Reward → Being rewarded by the old woman
- The hero returns → Punishment of Precious, who envies him
- This approach helps to understand the recurring plot elements in children's literature.

2. Psychoanalytic approach

- This theory analyzes children's literature based on the teachings of Freud and Jung. According to Jung's theory, fairy tales contain archetypes – that is, images that are deeply rooted in the human psyche.

Example:

- The fairy tale "The Gingerbread Man" (Kolobok):
 - The boy's desire for independence – when the boy becomes independent, he faces various dangers (The Gingerbread Man leaves his house).
 - Personal development of the character – The fox thinks he is smart, but falls for the fox's trick and dies. This shows the consequences of the child's lack of life experience.

Children's literature is primarily a verbal art intended for children and adolescents of different ages. It embodies examples of artistic works that embody reality in the images of perception, imagination, and thinking of children under the age of sixteen to seventeen. In this regard, it was formed within the bosom of general literature. At the same time, it is distinguished by a number of features. Children's literature is primarily:

- in harmony with general literature in that it is based on verbal art and is a product of artistic creativity;
- in which the priority of children's education and upbringing is pedagogy;
- psychology reflects the complex psyche and interests of children and adolescents;
- in which age characteristics are expressed by physiology;
- natural sciences, due to the broad reflection of mother nature and environmental phenomena;
- linguistic sciences and defectology, embodying the language characteristics of young children; using folk melodies and lively colloquial language, it is manifested in harmony with folk oral art.

As the tradition of creating special fiction for children became a reality as an important spiritual need for the development of society, its goals and objectives were determined. The incomparable role of fiction in the formation and development of the human psyche, even its personality, is clearly visible in children's literature. The miraculous influence of a work of fiction encourages the formation

of goodness, patriotism, love for others, artistic aesthetic taste in young hearts, and a positive and creative attitude to life and the whole world in general. Therefore, one of the means that ensures that a person grows up familiar with fiction and books from "childhood" is children's literature. The study of children's fiction involves a multidisciplinary methodology that blends literary analysis with insights from pedagogy, psychology, and cultural theory. This section outlines the methods used to examine children's literature through various critical lenses, focusing on both textual analysis and contextual understanding.

1. Textual Analysis- Central to the study is close reading, which involves a detailed examination of narrative structure, language, character development, and thematic elements. This method allows for the identification of literary devices and ideological underpinnings within a story. Special attention is paid to how the text constructs notions of childhood, authority, morality, and identity.

2. Theoretical Application- Literary theories are employed to frame the analysis and deepen interpretive insights. For instance, structuralist approaches help unpack narrative patterns and binary oppositions, while poststructuralist and deconstructive readings highlight instability in meaning and challenge dominant interpretations. Reader-response theory is also employed to consider how child readers might engage with or interpret a text differently from adult readers or critics.

3. Contextual and Historical Analysis -Children's fiction is examined within its socio-historical and cultural contexts. This includes analyzing the time period in which a work was written, the intended audience, and prevailing ideologies. Attention is given to how books reflect or resist cultural norms regarding gender, race, class, and power dynamics. This often involves integrating feminist, Marxist, or postcolonial frameworks.

4. Comparative Analysis Comparing multiple texts across time periods, genres, or cultural origins helps highlight shifts in the representation of childhood and evolving literary trends. This method reveals how children's literature has been influenced by broader societal changes and differing educational philosophies.

5. Interdisciplinary Insights Drawing from fields such as developmental psychology, education theory, and media studies, the study considers how children's cognitive and emotional development impacts their engagement with stories. These insights help researchers understand the pedagogical implications of children's fiction and how literature can serve as a tool for socialization or empowerment.

Discussion

Theoretical Foundations of the Study of Children's Fiction

The study of children's fiction is an interdisciplinary field that combines aspects of literature, psychology, education, linguistics, and cultural studies. It is grounded in the belief that literature for children is not only a form of entertainment but also an important tool for intellectual, emotional, and moral development. The theoretical foundations of this field have evolved over time, with various scholars and theorists providing insights into how children engage with literature and how these texts shape their understanding of the world. This section will explore the key theoretical approaches that underpin the study of children's fiction, focusing on literary theory, psychological theory, cognitive development, and the role of culture.

1. Literary Theory and Children's Fiction

The study of children's fiction draws heavily on literary theory, which provides a framework for analyzing the structure, themes, and language of texts. One of the earliest and most influential perspectives is formalism, which emphasizes the intrinsic features of a text such as plot, character, setting, and style. Formalist critics examine how these elements work together to create meaning and aesthetic value. In the context of children's literature, formalist analysis might focus on how story structures (e.g., fairy tales, fables) follow particular patterns, or how specific motifs (e.g., the hero's journey) recur across genres.

In addition to formalism, structuralism has influenced the study of children's fiction, particularly in how narratives are constructed. Structuralist approaches view literature as a system of

signs, with meaning emerging from the relationships between words, characters, and events. In children's fiction, structuralism can be applied to understand how specific patterns in storytelling (e.g., binary oppositions such as good vs. evil) contribute to the moral and educational functions of the text. Another key approach within literary theory is postmodernism, which challenges traditional narrative structures and ideologies. Postmodern children's fiction often blends genres, uses metafictional techniques, and encourages readers to question the boundaries between fantasy and reality. Works by authors such as Roald Dahl and David Almond demonstrate how children's fiction can subvert conventional narrative expectations, often reflecting a more complex, sometimes ironic, view of the world.

2. Psychological Theory and Children's Fiction

Psychological theories have also played a significant role in shaping the study of children's fiction. Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development provides a foundation for understanding how children process and interpret stories. Piaget suggested that children go through different stages of cognitive development, each influencing their ability to comprehend and engage with narratives. For example, in the preoperational stage (ages 2-7), children may understand stories in a more concrete, literal manner, while in the concrete operational stage (ages 7-11), they begin to grasp more abstract concepts and understand the motivations behind characters' actions. In addition to Piaget, Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of learning is relevant to the study of children's fiction. Vygotsky emphasized the role of social interaction and cultural context in cognitive development. In the context of literature, Vygotsky's theory suggests that stories not only reflect children's experiences but also contribute to their development by introducing them to new ideas, social norms, and ways of thinking. Children's fiction, then, is seen as a medium through which children learn about the world around them and the values of their culture. Another psychological theory often applied to children's fiction is attachment theory (John Bowlby). Attachment theory focuses on the relationships between children and their caregivers and suggests that the emotional bonds children form can influence their behavior and cognitive development. In literature, characters who form strong, supportive bonds with others may serve as models for children, helping them navigate their own social and emotional worlds.

3. Cognitive Development and Children's Fiction

The role of cognitive development in children's understanding and interpretation of fiction is central to the field. As children grow, their ability to understand complex narratives, recognize subtext, and engage with metaphor and symbolism improves. Jerome Bruner's work on cognitive psychology is influential in this area. Bruner argued that children actively construct their understanding of the world through narratives, and that stories help children organize and make sense of their experiences. In this way, children's fiction becomes a tool for cognitive development, helping young readers enhance their problem-solving skills, expand their vocabulary, and improve their ability to empathize with others. The concept of theory of mind – the ability to attribute thoughts, emotions, and intentions to others – also plays a role in how children engage with literature. As children develop this cognitive ability, they become more capable of understanding characters' motivations and conflicts in stories. The study of children's fiction often looks at how characters' internal thoughts and feelings are depicted in narratives and how these representations aid in the development of theory of mind.

4. Cultural Studies and Children's Fiction

The cultural context in which children's fiction is produced and consumed is also crucial to its study. Literature for children is influenced by the cultural, historical, and social conditions in which it is created, as well as the ideologies and values of the time. The study of children's fiction often includes an examination of how gender, race, class, and nationality are portrayed in stories. Cultural studies approaches to children's literature examine how texts reflect or challenge dominant societal norms. For example, the portrayal of gender roles in traditional fairy tales has been a significant area of study, with many scholars highlighting how these texts reinforce stereotypical notions of masculinity and femininity. More contemporary children's literature, however, often seeks to subvert

these stereotypes and present more diverse and inclusive representations of identity. Additionally, the globalization of children's literature in the 21st century has led to a cross-cultural exchange that introduces children to a broader range of perspectives and experiences. Authors such as J.K. Rowling and Enid Blyton, for example, have introduced children to fictional worlds that blend elements of British and international culture. The increasing diversity of children's literature reflects a shift toward inclusivity, with more texts addressing issues such as multiculturalism, migration, and social justice.

Conclusion

In general, the study of children's fiction is a comprehensive and multifaceted process. Its theoretical foundations include such diverse areas as linguistics, psychology, pedagogy, cultural studies, and aesthetic analysis. Each theoretical approach serves to study certain aspects of children's literature and reveals their general significance. Children's fiction is an important literary direction that not only provides artistic pleasure, but also has educational, psychological, and linguistic significance. Its study is inextricably linked with various theoretical foundations - such as linguistics, psychology, sociology, cultural studies, and aesthetic analysis. First of all, children's literature plays an important role in the intellectual and spiritual development of young readers. Through these works, children expand their worldview, assimilate moral values, and develop language skills. The use of artistic means especially adapted for children – simplicity, animated images, poetic playfulness, and repetitive structures - ensures their easy perception of the text. Secondly, it is very important to study children's literature from a psychological point of view. The level of understanding and perception of literary texts changes depending on the age of the child. While younger children perceive animated images in fairy tales well, older children are interested in realistic plots. Therefore, children's literature is written in a way that is adapted to different age categories, which increases the pedagogical value of literature. Thirdly, children's literature is associated with a socio-cultural context and reflects the spiritual values, historical events, and social principles of society. Each era has put forward its own ideological and educational directions in children's literature. For example, while folk tales mainly promote morality and honesty, modern children's literature also covers topics such as environmental issues, technology, and innovations. Fourthly, the visual aspect of children's literature is also of great importance. Illustrations play an important role, especially in books intended for young children. The harmony of pictures and text increases the child's interest and helps to better understand the story. As a final conclusion, it can be noted: children's literature is one of the main sources that serve the formation of a young reader as a person, educates his worldview, moral principles and aesthetic taste. Its study and development is relevant not only for literary critics, but also for educators, psychologists and social scientists. Therefore, a more in-depth analysis of children's fiction and the study of its impact on the future generation remains one of the important scientific tasks. The study of children's fiction allows us to deeply analyze not only the literary process, but also the attitude towards the child in society, how the system of upbringing and spirituality is formed. This type of literature plays an important role in the development of the child's personality, aesthetic thinking, moral views and social adaptability. Therefore, when analyzing children's literature, it is necessary not to be limited to the traditional literary approach, but to approach it based on psychological, pedagogical, sociological and modern theoretical concepts. The study revealed that works written for children expand the child's worldview, allow him to think between the real and fantastic worlds, and help him master important life lessons. Also, the system of characters, plot dynamics, genre diversity, and language tools reflected in children's literature serve the comprehensive development of the child's thinking. Modern children's literature sets itself the goal of not only a didactic task, but also the formation of independent thinking, questioning, and a critical approach. The development of digital technologies and multimedia forms has brought new aspects to this process. In conclusion, the study of children's fiction is not just an analysis of texts, but also an identification of the concept of childhood, its cultural construction, educational and

aesthetic functions. This is a comprehensive theoretical and practical activity that should be carried out in close connection with literary studies and social sciences.

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