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STRUCTURE OF EPISTOLARY WORKS AND THE INTERPRETATION OF THE RETROSPECTIVE PLOT

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Abstract:

This article explores the structure of a literary work and its components (character, plot, narrative technique, etc.). The role of the retrospective plot in a literary work is demonstrated, with examples from the works of writers such as Chingiz Aitmatov and Reşat Nuri Güntekin. It is also emphasized that the works of O‘tki Hoshimov and Olmas Umarbekov play an important role in the renewed portrayal of the theme of love in Uzbek prose.

Keywords: Literary work, structure, composition, retrospective plot, O‘tki Hoshimov, theme of love, literary criticism.

Introduction

The structure of a literary work holds significant importance in literary studies. Analyzing the structure of a literary work is one of the main objectives and tasks of literary criticism. Regardless of the genre, it is difficult to grasp the artistic idea and the author's creative concept without understanding the compositional structure. According to the theory of Izzat Sulton, composition is an ideological-aesthetic category reflecting the writer's perspective. The epistolary work is a unique form of writing that uses letters, notes, and dialogues to express emotions and thoughts. Important elements of this structure include characters and the sequence of events. Typically, epistolary works are narrated through letters and other written forms, with several key elements:

1. Letter: Unlike other genres, epistolary works primarily consist of letters, journals, or notes. Through these forms, the author expresses thoughts and emotions freely.



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2. Authorship: Epistolary works may include one or more authors, with each contributing unique experiences and perspectives.

3. Plot: The plot often develops through changes in time and space, offering a comfortable context for the reader.

The structure of epistolary works presents personal experiences in a unique way, bringing the reader closer to the story. The genre is attractive for its sincerity and freedom of expression. Letters in different formats reflect the author's personality and psychology. Often, thoughts and feelings are expressed openly, adding depth and meaning to the story.

Over time, retrospective plots are used to reflect the passage of time. Presenting past events through letters helps reveal character development and internal struggles, enhancing the emotional impact on the reader and encouraging reflection on past and present. According to renowned theorist Izzat Sulton, the structure of a literary work begins with the author's attitude toward the material, and composition is primarily an ideological-aesthetic concept. As L. Tolstoy emphasized, composition starts with defining the center — the writer's main perspective. Composition includes components such as character, plot, narrative technique, portrait, and landscape. Numerous studies in world and Uzbek literary criticism are dedicated to the analysis of composition. For example, Russian scholar Vyacheslav Urvilov's dissertation on the poetics of revolutionary novels in the 1920s examines the compositional structure of M. Prishvin's *The Cup of Peace* and V. Veresaeva's *In a Dead-End Street*. Sanobar Karimova's dissertation explores character systems and conflict in 1970s Uzbek novels.

In the works of Reşat Nuri Güntekin, the retrospective plot holds special importance, connecting character development with past events. His analysis of characters' inner worlds allows readers to understand their decisions and motivations. For instance, in *Çalığışu* (*The Wren*), past events help readers better understand the protagonist's present-day challenges.

Retrospective plots are widely used to express the artistic idea of a work, show cause-and-effect relationships, and justify psychological changes in characters. Neglecting characters' pasts can distort narrative logic. Many masterpieces in world and Uzbek literature utilize this technique effectively. Examples include Chingiz



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Aitmatov's *The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years*, Farewell, Gulsary!, Reşat Nuri Güntekin's *Çalikuşu*, M. Y. Lermontov's *A Hero of Our Time*, Asqad Muxtor's *The Plane Tree*, Murod Muhammad Do'st's *Lolazor*, and Ilhom G'aniyev's *The Dervish of Our Time*. These works reflect on the present through the lens of the past. In Olmas Umarbekov's novella *My Love, My Beloved*, themes of hospitality are vividly portrayed. Villagers warmly welcome guests, share what they have, and cherish gatherings. Their love for music and nature enhances this atmosphere. The plane tree symbolizes eternal love and loyalty. The protagonist's journey begins after finishing university, but instead of continuing his studies, he is sent to work in a village, which disappoints him. His mother's early death and complicated relationship with his father influence his inner conflict. Upon arriving in the village, he faces unexpected challenges, prompting personal growth and introspection.

O'tki Hoshimov's *Desert Air* was written during a time when artistic creativity was gaining more freedom and authors could portray individual characters. Alongside other novellas like Odil Yoqubov's *Sacred* and Olmas Umarbekov's *My Love, My Beloved*, *Desert Air* played a key role in introducing the theme of love into Uzbek prose. Hoshimov did not initially intend to write this novella — it evolved from his earlier story *Four Letters*. The narrative connects the theme of love with pressing social issues of the time, subtly incorporating the ideals of socialist labor. The author's humanistic perspective is evident in his portrayal of a protagonist inspired by love, aware of his surroundings, and compassionate.

Conclusion

The epistolary genre, based on storytelling through letters and written forms, stands out for its unique structure, including form, authorship, and plot. The form defines the writing style and allows the author to convey thoughts and emotions freely. Authorship adds richness through personal experiences, while the plot, shaped by time and space, engages the reader. This sincerity and uniqueness leave a lasting impression, making epistolary works a distinct genre in literature. Studying the structure and components of literary works — their characters, plot, narrative voice, and descriptions — contributes to the advancement of literary scholarship.



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