

**COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVES ON MYSTICAL REALISM IN  
BRITISH AND UZBEK PROSE**

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**Abstract**

This paper investigates mystical realism in British and Uzbek prose through the lens of cognitive literary studies. It argues that mystical realism represents an intensified mode of consciousness, where narrative structures simulate spiritual perception and ethical insight. By analyzing selected texts, the study demonstrates how authors construct symbolic frameworks, blend mental spaces, and guide readers' cognitive engagement with transcendental experience. Drawing on cognitive poetics, conceptual metaphor theory, and mental space blending, the paper highlights shared mechanisms across cultural traditions, while revealing differences in ethical orientation and symbolic representation. The study underscores the value of cognitive approaches for understanding cross-cultural literary expressions of mysticism and consciousness.

**Keywords:** mystical realism, cognitive poetics, symbolic cognition, conceptual metaphor, mental space theory, British literature, Uzbek literature

**Introduction**

Mystical realism occupies a unique position in literary studies, often bridging the boundary between psychological introspection and spiritual perception. While British prose frequently explores mystical or transcendent experience through metaphysical ambiguity, Uzbek literature embeds mystical

cognition in ethical and communal contexts. Despite these differences, both traditions rely on complex cognitive mechanisms that simulate inner and transcendental experience for the reader. Cognitive literary studies provide tools to analyze these mechanisms systematically. By focusing on mental modeling, metaphorical structuring, and mental space blending, researchers can move beyond superficial thematic comparisons and examine how mystical realism activates readers' cognitive capacities (Stockwell, 2002; Fauconnier, 1994; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

This paper addresses the following questions: How does mystical realism simulate heightened perception and consciousness in narrative?; What cognitive mechanisms underlie symbolic and transcendental representation?; How do British and Uzbek texts differ in ethical and communal framing of mystical experience?

### **Theoretical Framework**

Cognitive Poetics views literature as a structured system that models mental processes (Stockwell, 2002). In mystical realism, textual cues guide readers to simulate heightened perception, ethical reflection, and symbolic understanding.

Conceptual Metaphor Theory explains how abstract concepts spirituality, transcendence, and mystical insight are represented through embodied metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Common metaphors include light/darkness, verticality/height, and journey/path, which structure readers' comprehension of mystical experience. Mental Spaces and Blending Theory posits that narratives create distinct but interconnected cognitive domains (Fauconnier, 1994). Mystical realism often involves the integration of an empirical "base space" with a transcendental or symbolic "projection space," producing a blended cognitive environment in which readers can negotiate metaphysical concepts within familiar narrative contexts.

## **Materials and Methods**

This study applies qualitative, comparative analysis to selected works of British literature such as Hilary Mantel, Virginia Woolf, representing interiority and metaphysical ambiguity and Uzbek writers Azamat Qorjovov, Abdulla Qodiriy, featuring symbolic and ethical mystical frameworks. Analytical procedures include, Identification of narrative strategies simulating transcendental cognition; Mapping of conceptual metaphors for mystical experience; Analysis of mental space blending and ontological shifts; Cross-cultural comparison of ethical and communal framing in mystical realism.

## **Results**

In both British and Uzbek texts, mystical realism relies on dense symbolic structures. British narratives frequently employ subtle, ambiguous imagery, requiring readers to infer metaphysical significance. Uzbek prose often uses culturally and ethically grounded symbols, such as Sufi motifs, to convey spiritual insight. In both cases, conceptual metaphors mediate the cognitive mapping of mystical experience (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Mystical realism integrates multiple ontological domains. Fauconnier's (1994) theory explains how readers simultaneously process empirical and transcendent mental spaces. British prose often emphasizes individual consciousness navigating ambiguity, while Uzbek prose emphasizes communal or ethical dimensions. The blended space enables cognitive simulation of mystical perception while maintaining narrative coherence.

Mystical realism requires readers to infer not only psychological states but also spiritual or ethical awareness. Zunshine (2006) notes that literature engages theory of mind mechanisms by presenting layered mental states. In both traditions, mystical events prompt readers to model complex mental and symbolic relationships, extending beyond ordinary psychological inference.

### **Discussion**

Mystical realism in British and Uzbek prose demonstrates convergent cognitive strategies: metaphorical structuring, mental space blending, and enhanced inferential reasoning. Divergence arises in cultural framing: British narratives often foreground epistemological uncertainty and individual introspection, while Uzbek narratives emphasize ethical guidance and communal spirituality. The cognitive approach clarifies how mystical realism functions as an intensified mode of consciousness, highlighting mechanisms that allow readers to experience transcendence through narrative simulation. Comparative study reveals that despite stylistic and cultural differences, the underlying cognitive processes are analogous, suggesting universal narrative strategies for representing mystical perception.

### **Conclusion**

This study demonstrates that mystical realism in British and Uzbek prose can be systematically analyzed using cognitive literary frameworks. Symbolic cognition, mental space blending, and theory of mind activation constitute the primary mechanisms through which mystical experience is represented. Cultural traditions shape ethical and communal orientation but do not alter the fundamental cognitive architecture of mystical realism. By applying cognitive approaches, this research contributes a methodological framework for cross-cultural analysis and provides insight into the cognitive underpinnings of literary representation of consciousness and transcendence. Future research could extend these findings through corpus analysis, reader-response studies, or interdisciplinary collaboration with cognitive psychology and neuroscience.

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