

THE EVOLUTION OF BAKHTIN'S THEORY FROM DOSTOEVSKY TO CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE

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Abstract

This study involves applying the theory of polyphony from Mikhail Bakhtin to the contemporary modern and postmodern narrative. Polyphony, a concept derived from Bakhtin's analysis of Dostoevsky's novels, is the state in literature where a piece of text is not mainly under its creator's domination but that multiple equally higher orders or diegesis drive it. The collection charts the emergence of this concept in different literary traditions and instates its dialogic, ethical, and cultural implications. Through a qualitative analysis, the paper accompanied the process of polyphony's transformation in modern English and Uzbek prose where it continues to be a necessary means for literary democracy, ethical understanding and cultural heterogeneity.

Keywords

Bakhtin, polyphony, dialogism, Dostoevsky, postmodernism, Uzbek literature, reader engagement.

Introduction

The concept of polyphony, as proposed by the Russian philosopher and literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin, was a revolution in the analysis of the modern novel. In his landmark work on Dostoevsky, Bakhtin noted the extent to which the novelist gave his characters a voice and consciousness of their own. Unlike "monologic" novels – in which the author prevails and all views point towards one moral or ideological truth – Dostoevsky's stories can tolerate multiple, unresolved perspectives that generate a multitude of voices (Bakhtin 1984). This new form of storytelling reflects the dialogic nature of living, in which truth is not something handed down from on high, but something that arises out of being in relationship.

For Bakhtin, polyphony is not just a matter of artistic technique. It embodies a moral and philosophical allegiance to human pluralism, conversation, and

freedom. By giving each of his characters the same right to voice, Dostoevsky had turned the novel into an arena for ethical conversation. The current research is interested in the development of Bakhtin's idea in various literary contexts, especially moving from nineteenth-century Russia to modern English, postmodern, and contemporary Uzbek literature, and it looks at how it is relevant for a theoretical approach toward narrative and cultural processes.

Methodology

We conduct a discourse autopsy and use a qualitative theoretical analysis drawing on Bakhtin's theory of dialogism and polyphony. The approach is based on parallel textual analysis, which attempts to map the evolution of a multi-voiced model in multiple literary traditions. Without dependence on empirical evidence, the investigation involves speculation between Bakhtin's thought and literary reception history.

The analysis holds in three steps:

Textual-Philosophic Analysis – interpreting Bakhtin's original theory which it as presented in Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics (1984) and other relevant works concerned with the aspects of dialogism and authorship.

Comparative Literary Study – representations of the polyphonic structure in modern and postmodern fiction (Joyce, Woolf, Faulkner; Atwood, Eco) and Uzbek literature (Murod, Urganchiy Sulton, Dustmuhammad).

Cultural and Ethical Reflection – on polyphony as an ethical and communicative paradigm other than literature, significant for multiculturalism and democracy.

Allowing for this kind of interpretation, the study is able to use polyphony as a literary form and also, through it, a tool for observing human interaction and cultural discourse.

Results

Dostoevsky's Polyphony and Dialogism. Bakhtin's originality consists in his recognition that the novels of Dostoevsky, for example, *The Brothers Karamazov* and *Crime and Punishment*, have a dialogical structure where characters act not as tools of an authorial ideology but speak as compe54 tent subjects. Instead, each voice represents a distinctive way of seeing the world, opening up a conversation that aims for no final say. In works like this, truth is not the property of one speaker; it is a product of their interaction.

This dialogic arrangement mirrors the ethical and psychological nuance of an actual life lived in meaning rather than established once and for all.

Polyphonic Tendencies in Modern and Postmodern Prose. The polyphonic principle flourished in the soil of 20th-century modernism. Authors who have used

Bakhtin's ideas in their work are James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and William Faulkner, who employed experimental narrative techniques such as stream of consciousness and shifting points of view. For example, Joyce's *Ulysses* is a mosaic of voices and interior monologue inspired by the urban cacophony.

In postmodern literature, writers such as Umberto Eco, Salman Rushdie, and Margaret Atwood continued to develop polyphony by challenging the veracity of narrative and undermining the existence of objective truth. In *The Name of the Rose* (Eco, 1980), the interweaving of historical, theological, and exegetical voices challenges readers to create sense through doubt and conversation. Likewise, Atwood's *The Blind Assassin* (2000) offers different voices and genres, illustrating how identity and truth are relative to the point of view.

Such developments suggest that polyphony has developed into a significant characteristic of postmodern storytelling, mirroring the multiplicity and ambivalence of life today.

Polyphony in Uzbek Contemporary and English Literature. The impact of Bakhtin's theory is not limited to the Western canon. In contemporary Uzbek prose, authors such as Togay Murod, Izzatjon Sulton, and Khurshid Dost Salim use a complex narrative technique in a verisimilar representation of the social change and moral dilemma of the country. In Murod's *Otamdan Qolgan Dalalar* ("The Fields Left by My Father"), collective memory and personal reflection interweave, providing equal consideration to an array of emotional and generational perspectives.

Similarly, writers of English novels today teach elsewhere and have taken on a polyphonic mode to delineate multicultural landscapes and various strains of ethical belief, a multivocal text. Smith's *White Teeth* (2000) proposes the city of London as a dialogue between living ethnic, religious, and generational identities in which diversity itself is a mode of narrative truth.

These examples suggest that the use of polyphony has turned into a kind of worldwide narrative technique, capable of adapting itself to local traditions but keeping at the same time its ethical and dialogical potential.

Discussion

Polyphony's Ethical and Philosophical Aspects. Bakhtin's theory of polyphony has serious ethical implications. By supporting the validity of multiple voices it encourages respect for personal integrity and moral autonomy. In Dostoevsky's novels, even the most despicable characters have the right to speak, an ethic not of judgment, but of comprehension. Dialogue is a moral act, then, the more sacred because mutual recognition of our shared humanity resists domination.

Theoretically, the polyphonic approach is consonant with existentialist and humanist strains that understand identity as relational and dynamic. Human beings are “in dialogue” both with others and their own past and society. From that perspective, isolation represents a silence, and dialogue is the climate of growth and rebirth.

Cultural Adaptation in the Uzbek Context. In its transmission into the Uzbek cultural landscape, Bakhtin’s theory is blended with local traditions of oral storytelling and moralist discourse. There are already dialogic traits in classical works of Alisher Navoi and Abdulla Qodiriy who depict characters absorbed in moralistic or philosophical discussions." The inheritance of this tradition for contemporary Uzbek writers is adjusted, carrying political undertones of the struggle between modernity and tradition, individual consciousness and social responsibility.

Polyphonic harmony has strong affinities with Uzbek oral genres, for example, maqol (proverbs), doston (epic story), and suhbat (dialogue). These forms in themselves, of course, encourage plurality of voice and shared meaning, with the emphasis here falling on Bakhtin’s understanding of dialogue as constitutive of what is true.

As a result, Uzbek polyphony offers an example of how global theories can come to fruition within the soil of local cultures and give it new interpretive depth.

Challenges and Future Directions. Polyphonic analysis endures constant struggles, irrespective of its impact. Researchers also need to continue developing ways to identify and quantify dialogic interaction in texts that don’t flatten them into over-simplified categories. The concept too has been transplanted into global and digital environs, calling for new tools of analysis. Dialogic dynamics similar to those identified by Bakhtin carry over into online storytelling, interactive fiction, and social media in ways that illustrate the continuing relevance of his work for twenty-first-century communication.

Future work might think about how polyphony intersects with postcolonial theory, feminist approaches, digital humanities, etc., paired with the ways that multivocality challenges systems of power and creates meaning in the new media environment.

Conclusion

Bakhtin’s model of polyphony is still one of the great achievements of literary and cultural theory. By viewing the novel as a conversation among discrepant voices, Bakhtin had reimagined authorship, reader involvement, and truth in art. From Dostoevsky’s dialogic realism to post-modern narrative play and

contemporary Uzbek storytelling, polyphony serves as a model for writers and critics who wish to address the complexity of human experience.

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