

Pashto oral traditions, seen in comparison with literate works, are normally looked down upon, especially by the Pashtun literate society. The research hypothesizes that the contempt is due to misconception caused by the change of medium from oral to literate, and rises up to explore it inside Pashto literature, in a sequence. First, the researcher examined the change of medium from primary orality to literacy in general Pashto literature, with close reference to English literature and its crucial role in the switch over from primary orality to literacy, then narrowed down the study to those forms of oral and written Pashto literature that involved the narrative form, and then, for detailed analyses narrowed it down further to the study of a specific Pashto oral narrative, 'Yousuf Khan Sherbano', in its various oral and literate versions.

The thesis examined and interpreted the art of narrativization from a perspective of oral-literacy contrast, through a sequence, namely, primary orality, literacy and secondary orality. Use of intensive textual analysis of various communication theorists, linguists and psychologists is made on the subject. The inferences and insights generated by the analyses have been organized together into a fresh argument about transition in the mode of expression and its corollaries. By applying research about contrast between orality and literacy, the thesis lets the reader appreciate the true worth of Pashto oral traditions. On one hand, it revealed that oral products are not inferior to the modern literate products, but are rather different, for being the product of a different medium. When examined, the products of mediums of primary orality and literacy come out to be different, and the impact of the medium is borne by its respective literary product to such a considerable degree that it will not be justified to pass value judgment on the products of primary orality, by applying standards of literacy.

On the other hand, it showed the correct mutual relationship of the mediums of primary orality and literacy. Products of primary orality and literacy can share same characteristics, in varying degrees, and they exist along a continuum. Features of one medium are not exclusively its own, but can be represented by another medium to such an extent, that it will be wrong to exaggerate the difference between the mediums of primary orality and literacy so much, as to consider them opposite poles or mutually exclusive.