

## Artistic Language and Stylistic Features in the Novella Genre

KAMALOVA DILFUZA ENUAROVNA

*State Conservatory of Uzbekistan, Nukus Branch, Uzbekistan*

### ABSTRACT

*This study investigates the pivotal role of artistic language and stylistic features, particularly laconicism, in defining the aesthetic qualities of the novella genre. The novella, demanding brevity and clarity (as noted by Gorky and Chernyshevsky), relies heavily on figurative language to achieve expressive depth. The research analyzes novellas by leading Karakalpak writers, including M. Tawmuratov and K. Ernazarov, focusing on the function of tropes – especially epithets and similes – in character development, enhancing emotional impact, and maintaining the narrative's conciseness. The findings confirm that the skillful deployment of artistic tools is crucial for ensuring the impact and figurative richness required by the laconic nature of the novella.*

**Keywords:** Novella genre, artistic language, laconism, tropes, epithet, simile, Karakalpak literature, stylistic features

### INTRODUCTION

In an artistic work, language is considered the main performing element. The writer conveys the artistic content of a creation through the people's language. They enrich and develop the common language of the people artistically. M. Gorky said about the language of an artistic work, "The word in an artistic work must be sparse, but the idea must be broad," while N.G. Chernyshevsky expressed the opinion that "if there is no brevity, there is no artistry either" [2: 221].

The skill of conveying an idea briefly and clearly is called laconicism.

Laconism is a Greek word, associated with the name of the city of Laconia. Masters of speech who came from this city were skilled in expressing their thoughts briefly and clearly. One of the characteristic features of laconic speech is its brevity and proximity to proverbs in the clarity of expression. The emergence of proverbs and wise sayings in the language of the author and the characters is also the result of this laconicism. [10: 221]

“Laconism is a stylistic feature of language, that is, its brevity and clarity. As a result of laconism, an aphoristic language emerges” [7]. The explanatory dictionaries of literary terms mention the unique features of laconism, for example, “...clarity, in turn, does not negate figurativeness; on the contrary, it ensures the precise focus of the expression, the credibility of the description, and increases the reader's interest in the work” [12: 157-157], and “The term laconism is also used in the sense of a characteristic unique to the style of certain creators” [6: 150]. Therefore, in an artistic work, laconism is clearly noticeable in the writers' skillful use of language and in the specificity of their narrative style.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

Literary theorists emphasize that effective artistic language requires brevity and expansive thought; laconicism is key (Gorky, Chernyshevsky). This stylistic feature, rooted in ancient Greek speech, is defined as the concise and clear expression that leads to aphoristic language [7]. Scholars agree that laconism does not negate figurative quality but enhances credibility and reader interest [13]. It is also recognized as a distinguishing characteristic of certain authors' styles [6].

#### RESEARCH METHODS

This research employs a descriptive-analytical methodology, utilizing close reading and stylistic analysis of selected novellas

by prominent Karakalpak writers (e.g., M. Tawmuratov, K. Ernazarov, K. Allambergenov). The primary method involves identifying, classifying, and interpreting the artistic descriptive tools (tropes, similes, epithets, metaphors, personification) used. The study specifically evaluates how these stylistic devices contribute to the narrative's brevity (laconicism), psychological depth, and overall artistic-aesthetic function.

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Since the novella genre in literature is based on laconicism, that is, expressing an idea briefly and clearly, if events or incidents are recounted only through dry narration, the unique quality of the genre is lost. The skillful use of artistic descriptive tools in reflecting brevity and clarity in the novella demonstrates the individual distinctiveness of the writer.

The novellas of Karakalpak writers, including A. Sultanov, K. Smamutov, M. Tawmuratov, K. Allambergenov, H. Ótemuratova, along with K. Ernazarov, E. Ótepbergenli, P. Khojamuratova, A. Tájimuratova, and others, are noteworthy for their ideological, thematic, genre, and artistic aspects. For example, when we analyze the novellas of the writer M. Tawmuratov, we witness the frequent use of artistic descriptive tools such as epithets and similes. Similes and epithets serve an artistic function in revealing the characters' nature, enhancing the emotional impact of the events, and concretely describing the unfolding situation. The writer was able to skillfully portray the content and formal qualities of his novellas such as "This place is not a tavern!," "Cargo number Two Hundred and Two," "A Life Spent Yearning for Flowers," "Once at Night," etc., with the help of tropes. For instance, in the novella "Wait for me.." [11: 12], the author frequently uses epithets and similes to describe the characters' love feelings and their tragic fates. The story is narrated through the character's voice, and his pure love for Býybínaz and the moments of separation are revealed through artistic descriptive tools. For example, "– Býybínaz, – she introduced herself, extending her cold hand. I also gave my name, offering my hand, which had become frozen in the cool

April rain. In that very first acquaintance, I clearly saw in her pure, immaculate eyes the feelings of love, whose weight was several billion microns – she was so fragile, like baccarat (crystal) items that would instantly shatter if you made a small careless move!..” [11: 12]. Here, the author describes the girl's beauty through the epithet “pure, immaculate eyes” and shows the delicacy of the girl's soul through the simile, comparing her to “baccarat items,” i.e., crystal. The fruitless efforts of the boy and the girl (Bíybínaz), who are in love, and their separation deepen their psychological state. The author reflects the events unfolding in the novella through the inner feelings of the characters. “– I wonder, does it also thunder on the eighteenth of August?” I say to myself, seeing the vivid, bright yellow mirage of a powerful lightning flash deep in Bíybínaz's wet eyes as she leans her back against the damp concrete pole nearby! After that, without delay, the tremendous roar of the thunder passed completely over a continuous part of Nukus – the stone roof of the Chimbay tearoom – as if a cart were rattling over it, and cold drops of black rain poured disorderly from the dark, gloomy clouds.. [11: 15]. Thus, here the landscape details are described in parallel to the characters' psychological state. Artistic descriptive tools increased the emotional expressiveness in the work and ensured the speed of the idea's delivery. The author achieved an artistic poetic function by describing the internal struggles passing through the characters' inner experiences more deeply: not by comparing the conflicted feelings to a natural phenomenon, saying «it thundered and rained», but by saying, “...cold drops of black rain poured disorderly from the dark, gloomy clouds..”

In the majority of M. Tawmuratov's novellas, we observe that the epithets *suwiq* (cold) and *salqin* (cool/chilly) are frequently used to reflect the events and incidents in accordance with the character's internal state. In the novella “This place is not a tavern!” [11], a real-life incident involving Maqset and his father is narrated from the perspective of a third-person participating character. The sudden beginning of the events, the sharp conflict, and the unexpected ending in the novella demonstrate the characteristics of the genre. Maqset's friends,

whom he hadn't seen for a long time, gather at his house with the intention of «washing» his new job. An unexpected event occurs in the work, changing the direction of the plot. Here, the epithets used by the author play a significant role in concretizing the event and revealing the character's nature.

In the doorway appeared the master of the house – Maqset's father – a tall man wearing a skullcap and wrapped in a gold-embroidered chapan (robe). We all stood up and greeted this man, whose face bore signs of severity. He greeted us coolly (*salqin*) and shook our fluttering hearts with these words that none of us expected, and none of us had ever heard until now!

'Well, boys, this place is not a tavern! Go somewhere else and drink your vodka!'

He said this and turned back. Hearing this cold word (*suwıq sóz*), we couldn't figure out whether to sit back down or follow him out. [11: 53]

The epithet *salqin* (cool) preceding the word *kóristi* (greeted) in the initial lines shows what kind of person Maqset's father is. The unpleasant nature of the father's words to his son's friends, "This place is not a tavern!," is clarified by the epithet *suwıq sóz* (cold word). Furthermore, the author skillfully uses similes in the novella to create an image and increase the emotional impact of the events that take place. For example:

Father! – Maqset began, but his father's hand, wielded like a sword in the air, stopped him.

What did I tell you?! – Although he directed this command at Maqset, it was clearly aimed at us, who had started to move. [11: 52].

The simile *qılıştay sérmelgen qoli* (hand wielded like a sword) indicates Maqset's father's continued fierceness. "For similes, natural and everyday objects are often taken, and these objects turn into emotional poetic images" [1: 12]. To further deepen Maqset's psychological state, the following comparative simile is used:

The master of the house, who had returned to the doorway, now resembled a lung with its outer pleural layer stripped away, its surface rough and blackened. His gaze suggested that he harbored an unending anger and an unquenchable wrath toward the beauty of nature, in addition to the living creatures around him. [11: 53]

The author thus powerfully portrays the pitiful appearance of Maqset, who is over forty-two, in front of his friends. His childless wife and stern father show the nature of Maqset's fate. The conclusions given at the end of the work summarize the general idea of the novella:

How I missed my parents who, whenever we visited with friends, would cover the table with everything they had and be overjoyed, their heads practically reaching the sky, unable to find enough room to seat the guests! It is that generosity of spirit that has allowed you to sit here with your grandchildren and great-grandchildren! – I said to myself, admiring them. [11: 54]

The writer's skill is demonstrated by the efficient use of language norms without unnecessarily prolonging the narration of events.

In the writer's novella, *The Works of the World that Returns*, the mastery of language is also achieved through descriptive tools such as metaphor, metonymy, simile, epithet, litotes, and hyperbole, which are effectively used in creating the character's image and in the concise (compact) description of the event. For example, if we pay attention to the king's words to the poet:

A-ha! – the king clapped his hands and sat cross-legged, feeling comfortable – 'Seeing once is better than hearing a thousand times,' is this what they mean? I've listened to a bit about you, and I've heard much of what you've written. Just yesterday, I read the sonnet you wrote about me. – He lied, as always. (Kings do not lie!) Because he had been illiterate since birth; someone always read to him from outside.

I wonder why I am amazed when I read you. Where do you get the strength to write such tough, dense lines, like tendon? Where does the basis of your stubbornness come from? Now, I prefer to hear these things from you. Hey, poet, what have you brought us? What have you written? Surely you haven't come empty-handed? –

The king has long known that the young man, who had nothing but his threadbare clothing, had all his wealth inside his heart. [3: 36]

In these very lines, one can see the author's skillful use of metonymy, similitic epithet, and metaphorical description. The king's reference to the poet's works as «what you've written» and «reading you» through metonymic description shows the high level of the poet. Furthermore, the use of the similitic epithet «tough, dense lines, like tendon» about the lines of the poet's poems suggests that the poet's works are sharp and powerful. The fact that the poet is rich in inner beauty rather than external possessions is powerfully conveyed in the work through metaphorical description. The sharp conflict and tense plot in this novella lead to an unexpected resolution of the events. In this, the artistic descriptive tools used appropriately undoubtedly play a special role. The writer skillfully used words in their right place in the work, achieving a clear and concise delivery of the events to the reader.

Writers can effectively convey events and incidents that would typically be described through lengthy narration, using fewer words – with the help of artistic descriptive tools. Laconism is primarily taken as the guiding principle here. For example, when analyzing the novella *The Monologue of the Earth* [4: 90-64] by the writer K. Allambergenov, we encounter several similes marked by the suffixes –day, –dey, such as: “thumping like a camel on my head,” “the whiteness of the lamb like white snow», «the ravine slopes also went up bellowing like a horse's ear,” “it stands entirely like mother's milk,” “the green turning forest like coal», and «makes the dew drops glitter like silver.”

As the title of the novella suggests, the events are narrated from the perspective of the Earth, discussing the relationship between man and nature. “...It was spring then. The blazing sunlight also stroked my forehead and planted its white flowers on my lead-like stone head” (p. 90). The method of personification, or giving a voice to the Earth, is also skillfully used in Ch. Aitmatov's work *Mother Earth*. The author skillfully describes the Earth's overwhelming emotions when the boy and

the lamb, to whom the Earth is deeply attached, return to its embrace. The similes used to show the strong bond between them achieved the author's purpose. The writer reflected the dialectical relationship between nature and man within the scope of a small novella.

Similarly, the author's novella *The Puppy and the Boy* addresses the improper attitudes of humans toward living nature. It feels as if the author is telling humans, "Let's cherish nature," by portraying the degradation and suffering of nature through the image of a dog and describing the tragic situations it goes through. The boy's death is depicted as the consequence of the cruel actions of humans toward nature.

In the novellas of the writer K. Ernazarov, such as *The Clouds are Moving*, *Where Are You, My Star*, and *She Stayed...*, he achieves an impactful narration of events and a skillful revelation of human psychology through the tropes he uses. In the novella *The Clouds Are Moving*, we see that the epithets and similes used are appropriately chosen to reflect the character's nature alongside descriptions of nature. For example, the inner turmoil of the main character, who is leaving his birthplace and his father's grave due to his stepfather, is conveyed as follows:

The train is rattling along monotonously, rattling along... I look up at the sky: clustered white clouds, resembling the huge snow-capped peaks of majestic mountains propping up the sky, are moving in a line toward the east in the air... Clouds! Fickle, mischievous winds are chasing you to some unknown place, accusing you of rootlessness. But what about me? Whose sinner am I?! How can I leave my homeland – the motherland that first introduced me to this wide world – with a light heart, leaving my soft refuge – my home, and the spirit of my father who passed away full of dreams, and why am I setting off on a journey to strange destinations?! [5: 92]

The author skillfully used artistic descriptive tools to convey the character's inner psychological experiences and spiritual turmoil clearly and impactfully. One such work that embodies these features is H. Otumuratova's novella *My Star is High* [8: 27-33]. The novella discusses life events, the issue of affection and

kindness between parents and children, which culminates in a person's tragic death. Some parents provide their children with material wealth but damage their spiritual world. In such moments, the inattentiveness of the life partner also leads a person to take their own life. The author effectively utilizes the function of artistic tools to reveal such content in the work. For example: "Aysholpan, in her shimmering white dress, reflecting off the chandeliers, entered the hall, strolling like an angel among the girls" [8: 27]. This was Aysholpan, the girl Bekmurza fell in love with. In the lines, "...in a single day, he wrapped her in silk and luxury like a doll," it is visible that Bekmurza came from a wealthy family. However, he opposes his father's methods of accumulating wealth through dishonest means.

When Aysholpan returned from school, bitter voices (*ashshu dawıslar*) were coming from the living room.

Papa, you are not living honestly yourself; are you going to involve me in your illicit affairs too? I want to live honestly! [8: 28]

Here, the epithet *ashshu* (bitter) indicates the high tempo and negative nature of the voices. Bekmurza, caught between two fires, prematurely leaves this world.

Thus, the similes and epithets used in the novellas we have discussed are effectively employed in the artistic work to convey events clearly, impactfully, understandably, and figuratively. This, of course, ensures laconicism in the work. However, some writers succeed in creating characters and narrating events and incidents in their works by using artistic descriptive tools sparingly or not at all. The works of the writer A. Sultanov possess such a quality. In some of his novellas, real-life events are mainly revealed through the character's actions, dialogues, and monologues. For example, his novellas such as *The Food That Man Does Not Eat*, *Embracing the Mother's Grave*, and *Two Fates* depict human fate amid the complexities of modern life. In the novella *The Food That Man Does Not Eat*, the daughter-in-law's abuse of her mother-in-law, her act of putting *nasvay* (chewing tobacco) in her food with the intention to kill

her, and her son's discovery of this event and saving his mother's life are conveyed through authorial narrations. The author narrated everyday life events plainly in the work. Even without using artistic descriptive tools, he managed to reflect the characters' spiritual state regarding the events taking place. We consider this not a shortcoming of the writer, but his unique approach and style in narrating events.

In Karakalpak literature, although K. Smamutov's works are few in number, their qualitative content is high. Most of his stories and novellas embody artistic distinctiveness and impactful content. For example, the writer skillfully used the artistic descriptive tools of language in his novellas such as *The Sparrow Poshsha*, *Drops Sparkling Like Morning Dew*, *The Boy*, and *One Word*. His novella *Drops Sparkling Like Morning Dew* possesses a poetic quality. Similes and epithets are effectively used in it as artistic descriptive tools. Qidir's inner feelings for Aysara are conveyed as follows:

Somehow, the pitch-black eyes with curved eyelashes of this unfamiliar girl, held with a delicate grace like a sculpture, were pressed like a seal onto his chest. He had never experienced such shyness before. He was utterly surprised. For the first time, his heart flapped once, like a fish flopping out onto the shore. An amazing luminous ray passed quietly, stroking his whole body with velvet-like softness [9: 254]

The author describes Qidir's state upon seeing the girl by comparing his heart to a "fish flopping out onto the shore." The author frequently uses the epithet "pitch-black eyes with curved eyelashes" to describe the girl's beautiful appearance and face in the work. For example, "The next day, his head ached quite badly, so he didn't go to class. He was alone in the room. He indulged in various fantasies. He tried to think of things that were insignificant. But everything gathered like morning mist around the beautiful girl whose eyelashes curved like the blade of a hoe" (p. 256). Such artistic descriptions vividly reflect the beautiful appearance of the work's protagonist before our eyes. The author does not just describe the girl as beautiful; he further increases the impact of the image with the help of similes.

## CONCLUSION

Thus, based on the discussions of novellas in this section, we arrive at the following conclusions:

1. Since the novella genre is based on laconicism, meaning the concise and clear presentation of events, the artistic descriptive tools used in it occupy an important place. Therefore, artistic descriptive tools are effectively utilized in most works to enhance the artistry of the language and to convey thoughts and ideas figuratively.
2. The artistic descriptive tools used by each writer – such as simile, epithet, metaphor, metonymy, personification, and others – performed a distinct artistic and aesthetic function in revealing the characters' nature and their inner psychological experiences, and in ensuring compactness.
3. It has been demonstrated with examples that the frequently used epithets and similes are significant in increasing the artistic impact of the novellas, in ensuring the richness of the work's content, and in describing the unique characteristic features of the personages.

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**KAMALOVA DILFUZA ENUAROVNA**

PHD, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,

DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

NUKUS BRANCH OF THE STATE

CONSERVATORY OF UZBEKISTAN.

E-MAIL: <DILKAMALOVA@MAIL.RU>