

Stylistic Use of Dialectal Similes in Literary Works

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the stylistic and linguo-cultural significance of dialectal similes in Karakalpak literature. Utilizing P. Najimov's semantic framework, the study categorizes regional comparisons into three lenses: human-related, ethnographic-domestic, and the natural environment. The analysis reveals that dialectal similes are vital tools for psychological portraiture, employing traditional objects (e.g., gebeje, shólmek) and regional flora to imbue narratives with national color. By identifying specific affixes used in these structures, the study demonstrates how dialectisms function as repositories of the ethno-cultural code. Ultimately, these similes enrich the literary language, offering a realistic depiction of Karakalpak life and heritage.

Keywords: Karakalpak literature, dialectal similes, ethno-linguoculturology, regional vocabulary, national identity.

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the distinctive features of literary language is the aesthetic function performed by linguistic units. A literary work captivates the mind of any reader through its artistry and evocativeness. To enhance its value, the writer breathes life into the language, adding emotional color and decorating it with the help of artistic means and stylistic figures. In any language, the role of artistic expressive means is significant, and each is distinguished by its own unique characteristics. A master of the written word utilizes

all elements of the common national language to depict real life, painting it with various stylistic shades. These elements ensure that the work is artistic, meaningful, and impactful. Through these descriptive methods, the artist achieves a unique meaning and places special emphasis on the ideas being conveyed [1: 38].

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The use of dialectisms for stylistic purposes within the framework of various tropes plays an important role in increasing the richness and artistic quality of a writer's language. In this regard, the use of regional vocabulary as a tool for artistic expression allows the writer to create valuable works that reflect our national identity. In literary works, words – especially dialectal units – are sometimes used in a figurative sense. When an author uses dialectisms as an artistic tool, they present a specific concept with local and national color, thereby increasing the expressiveness of the literary work. To ensure the work is vivid, artistic, and resonates with the reader, the master of words makes appropriate use of all types of tropes. In this research, we discuss the peculiarities of the use of dialectal similes found in the language of literary works.

Similes are closely linked to the people's way of life, world-view, and their perception of the natural and social environment. By comparing specific objects, phenomena, or people with other familiar entities, they provide a profound explanation of a nation's perspective on the world [2: 135]. Similes not only enhance the imagery of a work but also serve to convey the writer's thoughts more effectively; they increase the artistic quality of the composition by describing the hero's image, nature, or specific situations through terms familiar to the reader.

Dialectal similes play an important role in increasing the imagery and artistry of the language in literary works. When dialectisms appear within similes, they imbue the language of the work with national-cultural colors through words specific to a certain region, which is particularly effective in depicting national identity with unique artistic flair. In this context, when

words rich in ethnographic color are used, the image appears more authentic and artistic.

P. Najimov categorizes similes in the Karakalpak language into the following major semantic groups: 1) Similes related to humans; 2) Similes related to mythological and folklore characters; 3) Similes related to the surrounding environment. While P. Najimov categorized similes in the Karakalpak language based on their semantic scope, in our research, we have classified dialectal similes found in literary language – taking into account their regional and ethnographic character – in connection with local life and nature as follows: 1) Dialectal similes related to humans; 2) Ethnographic-domestic dialectal similes (related to household items and everyday objects); 3) Dialectal similes related to the surrounding natural environment.

In the language of literary works, dialectal similes formed through the affixes *-day/-dey*, *-tay/-tey*, *-iraq*, *-sip*, *-law*, as well as dialectal similes in implicit forms, are productively used. The affixes *-day/-dey*, *-tay/-tey*, *-iraq*, *-sip*, and *-law* are particularly attached to nouns, verbs, and adjectives, whereby an object or phenomenon is compared to another, forming dialectal similes.

2.1. Dialectal similes related to humans

The most frequently depicted object among similes is the human being. Through similes, a person's external appearance, body parts, actions, or state of inactivity are defined clearly, expressively, and from an axiological perspective. Furthermore, similes describe a person's emotional reactions and states.

"Similes related to humans in the Karakalpak language show that the number of similes reflecting a person's condition and actions is higher than those in other semantic groups. In second place are similes indicating human body parts. Thus, it can be concluded that Karakalpak speakers more frequently reflect human actions and conditions in an imaginative way." Among the dialectal similes related to humans in the Karakalpak language, those describing emotional actions occur more frequently than those in other semantic groups. Based on their use in literary language, we have categorized them into three types:

a. *Dialectal similes describing human appearance*

In this type, dialectal similes provide an imaginative description of a hero's face, behavior, or physique using words specific to a certain region. Such similes serve the author's stylistic purpose and are valued as a unique manifestation of the national worldview. Specifically, describing human appearance by likening it to household items should be viewed as a distinctive phenomenon in artistic language. Since household items are an inseparable part of daily life, describing a person's physical appearance or gait through them provides a vivid characterization. The main feature of such similes is to deeply impact the reader by comparing the hero's appearance to simple and everyday household objects. For example: *Qarnı gebedey, sıyqın qurısın!* (Your belly is like a *gebeje*, shame on your appearance!) (K. S. Akdarya, p. 9). A *gebeje* is made of wood and is used to store dishes or household items [6: 101]. Here, the hero's belly is compared to a household object (*gebeje*), and it is further embellished through this dialectism. This example contains the following structural elements of a simile:

1. The object being compared (*teneliwshi*) – the belly (*qarnı*).
2. The object used for comparison, i.e., the comparative image (*tenestiriwshi*) – the *gebeje*.
3. The simile affix (*tenew qosımtası*) – day. In this instance, the specific shared characteristics between the two objects are not explicitly stated, creating an incomplete type of simile.

b. *Dialectal similes describing human character*

Dialectisms in literary language also serve as a unique descriptive tool for portraying a person's behavior, character, and inner world. Character is the outward manifestation of a person's inner being, worldview, and outlook on life. In dialectal similes describing character, heroes' anger, naivety, or skillfulness are compared to various objects from people's lives or natural phenomena. For example:

- *Qaraqalpaqshılıq qılsañ albawsıp, / Bul bazar pánt berer bizge, jigitler.* (If you act Karakalpak-style by being gullible,

this market will deceive us, lads.) (I.Yu., On the Way to the Market, p. 187).

- *Seyitmurat ózi bir ańgallaw jigit edi.* (Seyitmurat himself was quite a naive young man.) (K.K., Agabiy, p. 90). The dialectisms *albawsıp* and *añgallaw* in these examples are similes formed from dialectal synonyms, meaning "clumsy," "gullible," or "naive." In the first example, an action is compared not to another object but to a character trait; specifically, the comparative subject (people/person) is not present, and it is conveyed through behavior. In the second example, there is no direct comparison of one object to another; rather, a character trait is compared using the affix -*law*.

c. *Dialectal similes describing human emotional actions*

Dialectal similes describing emotional actions enhance a writer's artistic skill and provide expressive power to the language of the work. To describe feelings such as anger, irritation, joy, sorrow, or surprise, authors use similes from the local spoken language alongside artistic means from the literary norm. This type of description not only defines the psychological portrait of the hero but also introduces the national worldview. For example: *Eki shekesi loqildap, jarılıp keteyin dep tur. Kóziniń aldı da elek kórgendey...* (His temples were throbbing as if about to burst. His vision was like looking through a sieve...) (A. S., Nightingale Without a Garden, p. 56). – *Shólmektey shurt ete qalasań-aw Gúlnaz.* (You snap just like a ceramic pot, Gulnaz.) (J. S., Jupargul, p. 90).

In the first example, a state is described where the hero has a headache and blurred vision. Here, the term *elek* (sieve) refers to a household tool used for sifting flour. Because a sieve has many small holes, the hero's blurred or "spotted" vision is compared to looking through one. The prominent linguist O. Dospanov provides the following information about *elek* in his specialized work: *Elák* – an object made for sifting and cleaning flour, millet, wheat, etc.; a sifter. In the Southern dialect, there is a type of *elák* called *usaqgóz* (fine-eyed), used for sifting millet or sesame. This

appears as *ushaqgóz* in the Khorezm dialects of the Uzbek language [7: 221]. Meanwhile, in the language of Kazakhs living in Mongolia, *elgezer* appears in the sense of a "wanderer" or "traveler" [8: 122]. In the literary work, this simile vividly conveys the hero's inner world and psychological state. Here, a simple physiological phenomenon is revealed through an image. Through this method, the master of words skillfully communicates the hero's health status to the reader. This technique strengthens the emotional-expressive nature of the work, allowing the reader to delve deeper into the narrative. Researching dialectal similes that describe emotional actions is of great importance in revealing the linguo-cultural function of dialectisms in literary language. This is because such similes reflect the life experience, specific customs, and ethno-cultural patterns of the people. Therefore, researching dialectal similes describing human emotions identifies linguistic-artistic features on one hand, while introducing the linguistic manifestation of national culture on the other.

In the next example, the character's temperament is compared to a *shólmek*. The *shólmek* is the name of a metal water-drinking vessel widely used in the daily life of our people. M. Kayıpnazarova indicates that: "a vessel for drinking water is called *sarqum* in the Khodzeli dialect, *baqrash* in the Kegeyli dialect, and *shólmek* in the Karaózek dialect" [9: 159-162]. The physical properties of the *shólmek* are its hardness and durability. The author describes the distinctiveness of Gulnaz's character by likening her to a *shólmek* (*shólmektey*). Two meanings can be observed through this dialectal simile: 1) the sudden sound a *shólmek* makes (when hitting something); 2) a person's inability to hide their emotions and their quickness to anger. Using the *shólmek* as an image is of great ethno-linguoculturological importance. This is because the *shólmek* is an element of traditional material culture, and its hardness can be viewed as a symbol of strength in the people's cognition. The artistic power of such a simile lies in its ability to imaginatively portray a hero's inner world through a simple household object of daily life.

2.2. *Ethnographic-domestic dialectal similes (Related to household items and daily objects)*

The lexical treasury of the Karakalpak language is closely linked to the people's way of life and livelihood. Household items, especially names of vessels, have been formed over centuries and preserved with their unique characteristics in the spoken language of various regions. The appearance of vessel names in dialectal similes stems from the people's daily life experience; these are units used to artistically describe the type, size, or quality of a specific object. Such types of dialectal similes often depict ethnographic scenes vividly and rich in national color. For instance, we can observe the use of the term *dúgildik kese* (meaning a small bowl) as a dialectal simile in the imaginative description of an animal's tail: "Fat lambs, startled by this, their tails overturned like a *dúgildik kese*, came jumping with their tails flapping, while the kids, having absorbed the alertness of the saiga, leaped up and down" (A. S., *The Unextinguishable Star*, p. 55). The dialectal simile *dúgildik kesedey* compares the appearance of a lamb's overturned tail to a *dúgildik* bowl, creating a litotes-based simile (*litotalıq teńew*). In litotes-based similes, the quality of the image is diminished or made smaller, and that characteristic is transferred to the subject of the simile, resulting in litotes. With the help of these similes, the structure of the comparison acquires maximum imagery, emotionality, and impact. By using this dialectal simile, the writer has created a "zoological portrait," thereby increasing the value of the work.

In literary works, dialectisms related to the people's livelihood possess special meaning. Through them, the hero's living environment is depicted imaginatively. For example: "The melons, especially, were abundant. A single person could hardly lift one of the melons grown in the gray furrows. Even the smallest one was as large as a 'sadaka qazan' (charity cauldron) in Duysen Molla's house" (T. K., *Thanks to the Teacher*, p. 5). In the people's culture, the cauldron (*qazan*) is viewed as a symbol of abundance and prosperity. The term *sadaka qazan* corresponds to a "large cauldron" in the literary language. However, when we say *sadaka qazan*, its meaning is deepened further, and its immense size is conveyed with a dialectal nuance. This refers to

a very large cauldron used during public feedings or sacrifices, typically found in mosques or places where village elders gather. Thus, through the phrase *sadaka qazan*, we can observe national traditions in the life of our people. In this example, the writer has taken the name *sadaka qazan*, widely used in people's lives, as a basis to effectively convey the enormous size of the melon. Here, the author describes the melon not just as a simple product, but connects it with the depiction of village customs and traditions.

2.3. Dialectal similes related to the surrounding natural environment.

The vocabulary of any language is closely connected to the living environment, livelihood, and worldview of the people who speak it. Specifically, the surrounding natural environment – animals, plants, and natural phenomena – serves as the primary source of the people's artistic thoughts. The beauty of the natural environment leaves a certain mark on the linguistic wealth of any nation. Dialectal similes, in particular, are considered one of the most artistic and vivid means of description, showing how close the people are to nature. In literary works, dialectal similes are considered closely linked to the people's livelihood and natural phenomena. Similes formed in connection with plant names are of great importance in describing features characteristic of real life. For example: "Sparse as 'gewirek' (shrub), a house here and there,/The village inside is as silent as a graveyard" (T. Jumamuratov, *Makarya the Beautiful*, p. 178).

In this example, the dialectal simile *gewirek* compares the sparseness of the houses in the village to a plant that grows far apart and sparsely on the sand. By likening the fact that the houses are not close to one another to the sparse *gewirek* shrubs in the desert, and combining this with the second line's simile "silent as a graveyard," the author strengthens the sense of the village's depopulation. The writer has revealed the concept of "sparseness" through a clear, concrete image using the term *gewirek*. This dialectal simile produces an emotional impact on the listener, providing a realistic depiction by using a familiar image from village life.

In the language of literary works, the method of comparison to fish strengthens the imagery of the piece. Dialectal similes used in connection with fish names are a linguistic reflection of the people's life experience. Such similes are usually formed based on the appearance, movement, or type of fish and are used to describe the unique characteristics of animals or natural phenomena. The dialectal nature of these similes is evident in their absence from the literary language, appearing instead in the spoken language of specific geographical regions. For example: "You knew, didn't you, that in my youth I swam across the Amu Darya many times, swimming in the water like a 'kók jon' fish" (K. S., Akdarya, p. 12). Here, *kók jón bahıqtay* is a dialectal simile, comparing a person who swims nimbly, freely, and easily in the water to a "blue-backed" fish (*kók jón*). The author skillfully used this dialectal simile to show the hero's physical movement, namely their agility. The *kók jón* fish is similar to a bleak (*shabaq*) but larger, with a bluish back; its name is likely derived from its appearance. In our people's beliefs, this type of fish is a symbol of agility and skill within the water.

Thus, dialectal similes used in the language of literary works demonstrate the linguistic skill of the master of words and are considered important stylistic tools that describe the national worldview and ethno-cultural code. They occupy a special place in depicting a hero's behavior, appearance, emotions, or the connections between nature and daily life.

3. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, dialectal similes not only enrich the language of a literary work but also deeply reveal the people's existence and ethno-cultural distinctiveness. Therefore, their study serves as a valuable source in introducing the history of the national literary language alongside the culture of the people.

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