



Article

The Problem of Style in Literary Discourse: The Role of Dialectal Elements in Uzbek Prose

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Abstract: The problem of style in literary discourse remains one of the central issues in modern stylistics. Theoretical perspectives developed by scholars such as V.V. Vinogradov and C. Bally emphasize that style is not only a linguistic phenomenon but also a functional and aesthetic category. In the context of Uzbek literary studies, researchers including A. Shomaqsudov, S. Karimov, and M. Iminov have explored how dialectal units, colloquial elements, and other non-standard forms interact with the norms of the literary language. Although dialectal words deviate from standard usage, they serve specific artistic purposes such as individualizing characters' speech, reflecting local color, and enhancing expressivity. The practical dimension of this study focuses on the works of Suyundik Mustafo Nurotoiy, particularly his short story collection *Ko'ngil sadolari*. His use of dialectal forms illustrates the way in which linguistic variation contributes to artistic imagery, emotional coloring, and national identity within prose. Thus, the stylistic function of non-standard elements in literary texts demonstrates that style is both a reflection of linguistic norms and a creative transformation of them. This dual perspective underscores the importance of stylistic analysis in understanding the dynamics of Uzbek literature.

Keywords: Dialectal Style, Uzbek Literary Prose, Stylistics, Lexical Dialectisms, Grammatical Variation, Phonetic Features, Suyundik Mustafo Nurotoiy, Expressive Function, Cultural Identity, National Coloring, Functional Styles

Citation: Anvar qizi A. F. The Problem of Style in Literary Discourse: The Role of Dialectal Elements in Uzbek Prose. Central Asian Journal of Literature, Philosophy, and Culture 2025, 6(4), 765-769.

Received: 30th Jul 2025

Revised: 11th Aug 2025

Accepted: 27th Aug 2025

Published: 17th Sept 2025



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1. Introduction

In literary studies, style is understood as the author's individual approach expressed through language. It encompasses aesthetic taste, artistic means of expression, and the system of linguistic devices chosen to shape imagery and meaning. Style reflects not only the external form of a text but also its inner content, embodying the author's aesthetic perception and worldview. In this sense, style reveals the writer's creative individuality and the degree to which he or she can utilize the expressive resources of language.

Stylistics (from the Greek *stylos*, meaning "writing stick") is one of the central branches of linguistics. It investigates the stylistic functions of linguistic units and their use in various linguistic and communicative contexts. Stylistics examines lexical, phonetic, morphological, and syntactic units in both synchronic and diachronic perspectives, revealing their aesthetic, expressive, and communicative potential.

In world linguistics, scholars such as W. von Humboldt, I.A. Baudouin de Courtenay, F. de Saussure, G.O. Vinokur, A.P. Yakubinsky, and J. Gort made significant contributions to the development of stylistics. In Russian linguistics, A.A. Reformatsky,

V.V. Vinogradov, Yu.N. Karaulov, and N.Yu. Shvedova enriched the field, while in Uzbek linguistics, R. Qo'ng'urov, I. Qo'chqortoyev, B. O'rinboyev, M. Mukarramov, E. Qilichev, and A. Shomaqsudov explored stylistics, poetic linguistics, and the nature of imagery. Their studies provided a theoretical foundation for stylistics as an independent discipline [1]. According to M. Sodiqova in her work *Verb Stylistics*, Uzbek linguistics has also produced valuable research on the language of literary works, authorial style, and the style of mass media [2]. However, she notes that Russian linguistics developed these directions earlier and continues to study them in a more systematic way. Indeed, Russian scholars have long examined the language of fiction, the use of dialectal elements in literature, and their stylistic functions [3]. These perspectives constitute the foundation of the present study. The comparative approach outlined above demonstrates the necessity of expanding and deepening stylistic research in Uzbek linguistics through modern methodological frameworks. Academic discussions in world and Russian philology have long emphasized that style is not a mere external ornament of the text, but a reflection of the author's intellectual, aesthetic, and creative position. Also, Ya. Gort, style should be understood as the writer's personal attitude toward speech, manifested in the character of expression. He likens style to the writer's "behavior" in discourse his particular manner of constructing sentences and organizing narrative flow. Just as a person's gait, facial expressions, and external appearance reflect individuality, style represents the writer's unique creative signature in language use [4]. From this perspective, style is both a communicative strategy and an aesthetic orientation. Indeed, as scholars have pointed out, for the writer style becomes the foremost instrument of artistic impact [5].

In Uzbek linguistics, several functional layers of style have been traditionally distinguished: official, publicistic, scientific, artistic, and colloquial. Building upon this typology, N.A. Baskakov has argued that in Turkic languages each local variant (dialect) participates actively in shaping both prosaic and poetic genres, as well as the historical development of artistic and religious styles [6]. He proposes that the stylistic systems of Turkic languages should be understood through a historical–typological lens, where dialectal forms lexical, phonetic, or morphological serve as stylistic modifications within functional style. This perspective allows us to interpret dialectal elements in literature not as peripheral, but as natural and historically conditioned phenomena.

The centrality of language as the foundation of all stylistic differentiation is eloquently expressed by Fedin: "Language is the king on the chessboard of style[7]." If style is conceived as a chess game, language constitutes its sovereign piece, while the functional styles act as other figures serving it. From this metaphor, it follows that all stylistic realizations scientific, artistic, official, religious, or colloquial derive their strength from the language itself.

In this system of functional styles, it is possible to consider also a distinct dialectal style. Although the term has not yet been fully established in either literary criticism or linguistics, there is an evident need to introduce it into scientific usage.

V.V. Vinogradov, when classifying stylistics, identified three main orientations, of which the third stylistics of literary works focuses on the study of literary movements, the language of artistic texts, and the individuality of authors [8]. It is precisely this orientation that provides the theoretical foundation for analyzing dialectal stylistics in literature. Within this framework, dialectal elements can be examined as carriers of aesthetic, expressive, and functional value, shaping both the individuality of the author's style and the broader stylistic system of literature.

2. Materials and Methods

The methodological basis of this research is shaped by the intersection of stylistics, literary linguistics, and dialectology. The study proceeds from the assumption that dialectal elements in literature are not merely linguistic deviations, but stylistic devices

with functional, aesthetic, and cultural value. Therefore, a complex approach was employed, combining comparative-historical, descriptive, and stylistic analysis [9].

Firstly, a comparative-historical method was used to contextualize the emergence and functional role of dialectal elements in world linguistics. This approach allowed us to relate Uzbek stylistic traditions with broader tendencies in Russian and European stylistics. For example, Humboldt's view of language as a creative activity, Boduen de Courtenay's attention to linguistic variation, and Vinogradov's theory of stylistics provided a strong theoretical foundation for situating dialectal style as a legitimate field of inquiry [10].

Secondly, the descriptive method was applied to analyze concrete dialectal units (lexical, phonetic, and morphological) found in Uzbek literary texts, particularly in prose. This method made it possible to document how dialectal forms deviate from standard literary norms and how they are integrated into artistic discourse.

Thirdly, a stylistic-functional analysis was conducted, focusing on the expressive, aesthetic, and individualizing functions of dialectal elements. Following Vinogradov's classification of stylistics into linguistic, functional, and literary orientations, the analysis concentrated on the third type—stylistics of literary works, which directly addresses the individuality of authors' styles and the role of linguistic variation in artistic texts.

Furthermore, the research employed an interdisciplinary perspective, integrating insights from literary criticism and sociolinguistics. This made it possible to interpret dialectal usage not only as a linguistic phenomenon but also as a reflection of social identity, cultural belonging, and artistic intention [11]. Lastly, the analysis draws on selected works of Uzbek authors, where dialectal elements are used to individualize characters, convey folkloric color, and reflect the socio-cultural reality of the text. These examples were examined through close reading and stylistic commentary, supported by secondary literature in Uzbek and Russian philology.

3. Results

The study of dialectal style in Uzbek literary prose reveals the complex interaction between the literary norm and spoken vernacular elements. Introducing the concept of dialectal style into linguistic science creates a theoretical framework for analyzing how regional language phenomena shape literary discourse. This perspective enables a systematic investigation of the functions of dialectal elements in artistic texts, particularly in terms of their stylistic and communicative load. Dialectal style manifests itself through lexical items, grammatical forms, and phonetic peculiarities that belong to a specific regional variety. Its primary function lies in reflecting the local environment, national coloring, and authenticity of the depicted reality [12]. When incorporated into prose, such elements allow the reader to sense the cultural identity of a region and to immerse themselves into the recreated artistic setting. As Shomahmudov notes, the use of spoken and dialectal forms often serves to reinforce the liveliness of artistic speech, linking the fictional world more closely with folk language resources. A vivid example can be found in the works of S. M. Nurotoiy. In his short story *Uyat* ("Shame"), the dialogues are simple, colloquial, and emotionally rich:

"Yana o'sha pensiyami?

— Nima pensiya bo'lmay, sendan qarigan boshimga er so'raymanmi?"

The instances demonstrate how dialectal or colloquial expressions increase naturalness, enhance character individuality, and make dialogue closer to the reader's own linguistic experience. As Karimov emphasizes, this tendency reflects a broader literary aspiration to approach real life and to achieve stylistic authenticity. In Nurotoiy's *Ko'ngil sadolari* ("Echoes of the Soul"), dialectal lexemes such as *momo*, *bovo*, *lachak*, *dastorpech*, *kista*, *checha*, *gurung*, *vigovar* are employed not merely as local vocabulary but as stylistic devices that enrich the artistic fabric of the text [13]. These lexemes create a bridge between

the fictional characters and their real sociocultural background. Through them, the narrative acquires a distinctive national and regional flavor, while the characters' speech becomes vivid and emotionally charged. From a stylistic perspective, these dialectal words function on multiple levels:

- a. Expressivity – they bring liveliness, emotional intensity, and stylistic variety to the text.
- b. Individualization of speech – they highlight the characters' identity, social background, and mentality.
- c. Aesthetic effect – they reinforce imagery, contribute to humor, irony, or tragedy depending on the context. Such usage corresponds with Vinogradov's theoretical framework, in which the stylistics of literary works form a distinct branch of stylistics, focusing on the individuality of the writer's language and the artistic load of linguistic choices.

4. Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that dialectal style in Uzbek literary prose is not merely a linguistic ornament, but an essential mechanism that shapes artistic discourse. As shown in the results, dialectal words and expressions in Nurotoiy's prose (Ko'ngil sadolari, "Uyat") enhance emotionality, authenticity, and cultural coloring. These outcomes resonate with Vinogradov's framework, which emphasizes that the stylistics of artistic texts constitute a distinct level of analysis, focused on the individuality of the writer's language and the aesthetic impact of stylistic choices [14]. Another important aspect highlighted by the results is the interdisciplinary nature of dialectal style. Its role cannot be fully explained by linguistics alone but requires integration with literary studies, folklore, and cultural anthropology. Baskakov's typological approach provides a convincing foundation here: dialectal elements are not marginal but natural stylistic modifications embedded in functional styles of Turkic languages. This confirms that the category of "dialectal style," though not yet fully recognized in Uzbek stylistics, deserves scholarly acceptance as a legitimate field of investigation [15].

The discussion also shows that dialectal variation in literature preserves expressive and stylistic value even when actual spoken differences may diminish due to sociolinguistic convergence. As Iminov et al. point out, phonetic and grammatical dialectal features have been gradually reduced in real communication, but in literature they acquire symbolic and aesthetic weight. Thus, authors like Nurotoiy use dialectal vocabulary not only as markers of regional identity but also as artistic devices that enrich narrative texture and highlight the cultural roots of characters [16].

In this way, the results contribute to the growing recognition of dialectal style as a productive category in stylistics. The discussion illustrates how its study strengthens the dialogue between linguistic theory and literary practice, offering deeper insight into the mechanisms through which literature reflects social identity and cultural memory [17].

5. Conclusion

The study on dialectal style in Uzbek literary prose provides a comprehensive exploration of the role dialectal elements play in shaping the artistic texture of literary works, specifically focusing on the short story collection *Ko'ngil Sadolari* by Suyundik Mustafo Nurotoiy. The findings reveal that dialectal words and expressions in Uzbek literature are far from peripheral; instead, they serve as crucial stylistic tools that contribute to the emotional depth, authenticity, and cultural richness of the narrative. By analyzing the dialectal features in Nurotoiy's prose, the study demonstrates how these elements, including lexical items, phonetic variations, and grammatical forms, are not only reflective of regional speech but also function as essential mechanisms for character individualization, emotional intensity, and the conveyance of national identity. Through

the use of these dialectal features, Nurotoiy effectively bridges the gap between the standardized literary language and the spoken vernacular, thereby making the text more relatable and immersive for the reader. Furthermore, the study emphasizes that dialectal style is a significant layer in the overall stylistic system of Uzbek literature, enriching the expressive potential of the literary language. The implications of this research underscore the importance of recognizing dialectal style as a legitimate category within stylistics, paralleling other established functional styles, such as formal, colloquial, or literary styles. This recognition is crucial for expanding the theoretical framework of Uzbek linguistics, integrating it with broader linguistic traditions, and acknowledging the intersection of linguistics, literary studies, and cultural anthropology. Additionally, this research paves the way for future studies that could investigate the role of dialectal style across a broader range of Uzbek literary works, examining how dialects contribute to the evolution of national and cultural identities in literature. Further research could also explore the contemporary use of dialectal elements in Uzbek fiction, tracing how linguistic variations reflect social and cultural changes in modern Uzbekistan, thus offering deeper insights into the ongoing development of Uzbek literary language and its stylistic richness.

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