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Stylistic Devices and Imagery in the English Translation of “Old School” by Sadriddin Ayni

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Abstract: This article examines stylistic devices and imagery in Sadriddin Ayni’s story “Old School”. The study focuses on the author’s use of expressive language and literary techniques that contribute to the artistic and semantic structure of the work. Particular attention is given to stylistic devices such as metaphor, simile, epithets, and descriptive elements that shape the narrative and reveal social realities reflected in the text. The article also analyzes imagery as a means of creating vivid representations of characters, settings, and cultural contexts. Through textual analysis, the study aims to identify the role of stylistic elements in conveying the author’s ideas and enhancing readers’ understanding of the literary work. The findings contribute to a broader understanding of Ayni’s literary style and artistic expression.

Keywords: *stylistic devices, imagery, Sadriddin Ayni, Old School, literary analysis, metaphor, narrative style, artistic expression.*

1. Introduction

The study of stylistic devices and imagery plays an important role in literary analysis because these elements help reveal an author’s artistic vision and deepen readers’ understanding of a text. Writers use various stylistic techniques to create emotional impact, shape characters, and convey social and cultural meanings. Sadriddin Ayni’s Old School is a significant literary work that reflects the realities of traditional education and society while presenting them through rich language and expressive narration. The work contains various stylistic devices and vivid imagery that contribute to its literary value and thematic depth. Therefore, analyzing these elements provides a better understanding of Ayni’s narrative style and the ways linguistic and artistic features function within the text. This article aims to examine the stylistic devices and imagery used in Old School and explore their role in conveying the author’s ideas and creating artistic expression.

2. Methodology.

This research was conducted at Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages with the participation of university students. The study employed qualitative and descriptive research methods to examine stylistic devices and imagery in Sadriddin Ayni’s Old School.

[1] During the research process, selected passages from the literary work were analyzed and translated by students in order to identify and interpret stylistic elements within the text. The participants focused on analyzing various stylistic devices, including metaphors, similes, epithets, and other expressive means, as well as different types of imagery used by the author.[2]

The research was conducted at Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages with the participation of university students. The study included the following stages:[3]

- Textual analysis – selected passages from Old School were examined to identify stylistic devices and imagery.
- Written analysis – students analyzed metaphors, similes, epithets, and other expressive means used in the text.[4]
- Translation analysis – selected parts of the work were translated and compared to examine the transfer of stylistic features.
- Cultural analysis – social and cultural aspects reflected in the literary work were studied.[5]
- Sociological survey – students shared their opinions and interpretations about the impact of stylistic devices and imagery.
- Data interpretation – the collected findings were summarized and analyzed to identify the role of stylistic devices in the work.[6]

3. Results and Discussion.

The research involved students of Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages who participated in textual analysis, translation activities, and sociological discussions. The participants examined selected passages from Sadriiddin Ayni's Old School and analyzed stylistic devices and imagery used in the literary text.[5] Students translated fragments of the work from Uzbek into English and compared the original and translated versions to identify translation strategies and stylistic changes. The findings showed that several stylistic devices were frequently identified in the work, including metaphors, similes, epithets, imagery, and descriptive expressions. [6] During translation, students noticed that preserving stylistic meaning was often more difficult than translating literal meanings because many expressions carried cultural and emotional connotations.[7] One of the commonly observed stylistic devices was a simile, used to create vivid comparisons. For example:

Uzbek: U qo'rqqan qushdek jim bo'lib qoldi. (Eski maktab b,10)

English: He became silent like a frightened bird.[8]

In this example, the comparison structure was preserved through direct translation because the image remained understandable in both languages. Another stylistic device identified was metaphor:

Uzbek: Maktab jaholat zulmatida qolgan joy edi. (Eski maktab b.16)

English: The school was a place buried in the darkness of ignorance.

The metaphorical image was translated through semantic adaptation to preserve both meaning and expressive effect. Students observed that literal translation alone could weaken the artistic impact of the original text.[9] The Table 1. analysis also revealed the use of epithets, which helped create expressive descriptions. In this case, descriptive meaning was expanded to convey the emotional tone more clearly in English. Furthermore, imagery played an important role in representing the atmosphere of traditional schools and social conditions. [10] Descriptive passages related to classrooms, teachers, and daily life created visual images that reflected the historical context of the work. Students noted that cultural elements sometimes required adaptation because direct translation could reduce contextual meaning. [11] The sociological survey results showed that most participants considered metaphor and imagery the most challenging stylistic elements to translate. They emphasized that understanding cultural context and artistic intention was necessary to achieve equivalent translation. The findings demonstrate that translation of literary texts requires not only linguistic knowledge but also awareness of stylistic and cultural aspects.[12]

Table 1. The usage of stylistic devices and their translation in Sadriddin Ayni's "Old school"

Stylistic devices	Phrase	Definition
Enumeration	<p>I went to school. Although it was said to be as spacious as our home, spacious, four-doored, bright, it was in reality not quiet, consisting of a single small room (a small hujra). It had two doors, one of them single-leaf, and this door was usually kept shut.(Old school p.4)</p> <p>Key phrase: spacious, four-doored, bright,</p>	<p>Importantly, this positive accumulation makes the later contrast more striking. Sadriddin Ayni's style was to explain through complete enumeration. To convey the full situation to the reader.</p>
Allusion	<p>The teacher made me sit directly opposite him, placed a wooden tablet on the sinchi that functioned as the boundary of the small okhur, and instructed me to say "A'udhu billahi, Bismillah." (Old school p.4)</p> <p>Key phrase: "A'udhu billahi, Bismillah."</p>	<p>Adds cultural depth and authenticity</p> <p>Reflects traditional teaching methods</p> <p>Signals the religious context of old-school education</p>
Repetition	<p>Standing straight with a long stick in his hand, the caliph announced: "Children, it is time for Kamonboziy!" "Kamonboziy!" "Kamonboziy!" "Kamonboziy!" (Old school p.8)</p> <p>Key phrase: Kamonboziy! Kamonboziy! Kamonboziy!</p>	<p>This is a clear case of lexical repetition, where the same word is repeated three times consecutively</p> <p>This repetition also reflects group psychology, where individual voices merge into a collective sound.</p>
Imagery	<p>: While crying, I kept watching the goat. As it lay dying and moved its jaws, the trembling of its upper and lower beard looked just like the shaking beard of the teacher when he was speaking.(Old school p.24)</p> <p>Key phrase: "while crying" → emotional imagery "watching the goat" → visual focus "moving its jaws" → kinetic imagery</p>	<p>The passage creates a multi-layered sensory picture: emotional (crying narrator), visual (goat's body), physical movement (jaws, beard). This makes the scene highly vivid and cinematic.</p>

Stylistic devices	Phrase	Definition
	"shaking beard" → detailed motion imagery	

Sadriddin Ayni's "Old School" provides a vivid and realistic depiction of traditional education, revealing both its external environment and internal pedagogical practices. Through the narrator's childhood experiences, the work exposes a system based on memorization, fear, and physical punishment rather than understanding and critical thinking.[13]

Ayni masterfully employs a wide range of stylistic devices – such as irony, metaphor, simile, hyperbole, contrast, repetition, climax, and symbolism – to strengthen the emotional and artistic impact of the narrative. Irony is used to highlight the contradiction between "education" and oppression, while metaphors and symbols such as the "parrot" image represent rote learning and lack of comprehension. [14] Similes and hyperboles intensify the emotional atmosphere, especially fear and excitement, among children. Meanwhile, contrast and repetition emphasize the gap between genuine learning and mechanical memorization. The climax of events, particularly in scenes of discipline and chaos, builds tension and reveals the oppressive nature of the school environment. These stylistic choices not only enrich the literary quality of the text but also help the reader critically reflect on the educational realities of that historical period.[15]

4. Conclusion.

The analysis of stylistic devices and imagery in Sadriddin Ayni's Old School demonstrated the significant role of expressive language in shaping the artistic and semantic value of the literary work. The research conducted at Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages with the participation of university students showed that stylistic elements such as metaphors, similes, epithets, and imagery contribute to creating emotional impact and reflecting social realities within the text. The findings revealed that the translation of stylistic devices from Uzbek into English requires not only linguistic competence but also cultural and literary understanding. Certain stylistic expressions could be translated directly, while others required adaptation to preserve their artistic meaning and emotional effect. The study also showed that imagery and metaphorical expressions were among the most challenging elements during translation. Overall, the research confirmed that stylistic analysis and translation studies are closely connected in literary research. The investigation contributes to a deeper understanding of Sadriddin Ayni's narrative style and highlights the importance of preserving stylistic and cultural features in literary translation. Future studies may further explore comparative stylistic analysis and translation strategies in Central Asian literary works.

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