

The Authorial Image and Stylization in Contemporary (2012-2023) Kazakh Short Stories: A Linguostylistic Analysis

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Abstract—In linguistic analysis, literary discourse is regarded as a domain that reveals the developmental potential and trajectory of a national language. An author's style is not merely a reflection of the use of established linguistic norms; rather, it functions as an influential model that revitalizes, consolidates, or transforms those norms. Through lexical choice, syntagmatic construction, the conventionalization of figurative units, and the formation of new semantic nuances, a literary text actively affects the normative character of the national language. The article examines the construction of the authorial image and the mechanisms of stylization in contemporary Kazakh short stories, drawing on the linguostylistic analysis model developed by Rabiga Syzdyk. In accordance with the theoretical framework of the study, the authorial image is not equal with the writer's biographical persona; instead, it is conceptualized as a category reconstructed from the internal organization of the text, narrative perspectives, evaluative and modal nuances, and the dominant use of expressive means. The empirical corpus of this research consists of Kazakh short stories published between 2012 and 2023. The texts were selected from *Qazaq adabietі* and other literary portals and were analyzed regarding their intrageneric differentiation (psychological, philosophical, allegorical, mystical, socio-domestic, etc.). The article contributes to the development of studies on the authorial image, stylization, and the transformation of stylistic norms by introducing materials from the Turkic languages into international scholarly discourse.

Index Terms—authorial image, stylization, linguostylistics, Rabiga Syzdyk, norms of the national literary language

I. INTRODUCTION

In contemporary humanities, the analysis of literary texts is no longer limited to describing their aesthetic value; it is increasingly aimed at understanding complex phenomena at the intersection of language, culture, and cognition. This is stated in the work of Issakova et al. (2026). At the global level, in linguostylistics, narratology, and discourse analysis, the authorial image in a literary work is characterized through specific linguistic data. From this perspective, contemporary Kazakh short stories represent a significant body of material that integrates the aesthetics of the short form, widely recognized in prose, with the national worldview, while concisely reflecting the sociocultural context of the modern era. The short story genre centers on the authorial style in compact form and facilitates the manifestation of the authorial image in the text's 'strong positions' (title, opening, conclusion, and figurative expressions).

There are many reasons why this article is significant based on the global scholarly landscape. First, although the issue of the 'authorial subject in short texts' is widely addressed in contemporary linguistics, the stylistic system of literary prose in the Turkic languages – particularly in Kazakh – remains relatively underrepresented in international academic discourse. This situation limits the expansion of empirical data in global linguostylistics and hinders the identification of typological similarities and differences.

Second, in literary texts of the Turkic languages, the national cultural code, traditional figurative patterns, the folkloric-symbolic layer, and norms of speech culture are regarded as stable foundations in the formation of an authorial style. Figurative devices in the Kazakh language – such as simile, metaphor, epithet, set expressions, and descriptive imagery – function not merely as aesthetic ornamentation, but more often as pragmatic markers that convey the author's evaluative stance and worldview. The language of any nation is considered a means of reflecting its way of life, culture, traditions, mentality, consciousness, life position and worldview, behavior, and psychology (Khassangaliyeva et al., 2025).

Consequently, the authorial image is not only a literary category but also a scientific object that can be identified, measured, and automated at the linguistic level. An analysis of this issue based on materials from the Turkic languages makes it possible to specify both the universal and the nationally specific features of the concept of the author image/authorial persona within the global scholarly discourse.

Third, within the contemporary academic landscape, an effective way to integrate national literatures into the global scholarly space is to correlate national material with general theoretical issues. Examining the authorial image and stylization based on Kazakh short stories addresses several internationally relevant research themes simultaneously: 1) authorial voice and narrative perspective; 2) the transformation of stylistic norms; 3) evaluative meanings in literary texts; 4) the influence of national aesthetic models on contemporary prose; and 5) the textual manifestation of cultural and linguistic identity.

Materials

A short story is a small-scale genre that reflects a writer's initial experience in creating literary texts and serves as the first step toward producing a complex work of art. This process is typically based on a specific plot and often narrates the fate of the main character. The Kazakh short stories selected as the research material serve as the primary empirical basis for this study. Accordingly, the research compiled contemporary Kazakh short stories published between 2012 and 2023. Initially, texts published in the newspaper *Қазақ әдебиеті* (*Kazakh Literature*) and other literary platforms were selected. In particular, the study drew on works such as Aidabosyn's *Соңғы намаз* (*The Last Prayer*) (2023), Aimaganbet's *Жүлдегер* (*The Prizewinner*) (2023), Altai's *Стресс* (*Stress*) (2023), Қайықтағы екеу (*Two in the Boat*) (2022), Oraz's *Айқай* (*The Cry*) (2023), and Amantay's *Қарқаралы басында* (*At the Head of Karkaraly*) (2014), which served as key reference points for analysis.

In addition to the works mentioned above, the analysis also included the following short stories: Nartay's *Той көйлек* (*The Wedding Dress*) (2021), Kaday's *Қосбармақ қыз* (*The Two-Thumbed Girl*) (2018), Danabayev's *Философ* (*The Philosopher*) (2022), Tumenbay's *Химчистка* (*Dry Cleaning*) (2019), Bakash's *Вирус* (*Virus*) (2020), Esenbay's *Лотерея* (*Lottery*) (2021), Ikhsan's *Дүңгіршек* (*The Stall*) (2020), Samatuly's *Шайтан болған* (*Became a Devil*) (2017), Sagintay's *Гитлерюгенд* (*Hitlerjugend*) (2016), Zhumanova's *Тобынан адасқан жалғыз тырна* (*The Lone Crane that Strayed from its Flock*) (2017), Mameseyit's *Терезеден қараған қыз* (*The Girl Looking Through the Window*) (2019), Muratbek's *Қыл көпір* (*The Rope Bridge*) (2020), Mubarak's *Ақ көйлекті қыз* (*The Girl in the White Dress*) (2018), and Kasymzhan's *Сотанақ* (*Bully*) (2022). The study was conducted following a qualitative analytical framework based on Syzdyk's (2009) linguostylistic model. Within this framework, the authorial image was regarded as a category identifiable from the internal organization of the text, while stylization was considered one of the primary mechanisms for revealing it. In the analysis, patterns of stylization such as folklorization, intimization, and intellectualization were employed as guiding principles, and the linguistic data in each text were interpreted according to the logic of "tool $\Rightarrow$ function $\Rightarrow$ influence on the authorial position" (Booth, 1961; Genette, 1980). Where necessary, a comparative approach was applied to identify each author's idiolect and the relationship between national literary language norms and stylistic norms.

II. DISCUSSIONS

In contemporary global linguostylistics, a common understanding of the concept of style is that it constitutes a system of linguistic means that produces the text's *effectiveness* or *impact*. This is because the goal of linguostylistic analysis is not merely to enumerate ornamental devices but to reveal their function in ensuring the integrity of the text. The concept of the author image in literary texts is currently approached in stylistics not as equivalent to the author's biographical persona, but as the subject who creates the text. This perspective originates in the classical traditions of narratology and text stylistics of the previous century. In particular, in literary communication, the relationship among *author* – *text* – *reader* is not unidirectional; the authorial position is realized in a "hidden" manner through the narrative structure and linguistic means of the text (Booth, 1961; Genette, 1980). Accordingly, the author image is a complex category reconstructed not only through the narrator's "I", but also through perspective, focalization, evaluative-modal systems, and stylistic dominants. In traditional Russian philology, this issue has long been developed as a distinct concept at the level of the author image.

Contemporary methodological studies have further clarified the structure of the author image and systematized the linguistic indicators through which it can be identified. For example, Degtyareva (2023) provided a review of the history of research on the author image category, examining ways to define the concept at the linguistic level and its conveyance through implicit meanings. In this context, it is important to distinguish between the concepts of *author image* and *authorial initiative*. Kopytov (2010) demonstrated that the authorial initiative in a text is realized not only through explicit authorial remarks but also through multilayered mechanisms such as the organization of composition, the selection of narrative material, and the structuring of a character's speech. Works that describe the author image from a structural perspective note that it manifests either as a unified or a multi-narrative model (Balzhinova, 2009). These principles can serve as a theoretical foundation for identifying the author image in contemporary Kazakh short stories. In this approach, the object of analysis is not external information about the author but the internal discursive organization of the text.

The second focal concept is stylization. In literary studies and linguostylistics, stylization is commonly understood as a strategy of consciously imitating or reconstructing a particular style, discourse, or genre in order to generate a new aesthetic effect. In this regard, the classical theoretical foundation is provided by Bakhtin's (1981) ideas of polyphony

and heteroglossia. According to Bakhtin (1981), the interaction and collision of styles in prose, along with the incorporation of another's word, complicate the authorial position and create a multilayered vocal structure within the text. Such polyphony elevates stylization beyond a mere decorative device to the level of an authorial strategy. The image of the author is not revealed directly; rather, it is constructed indirectly through the organization and interaction of linguistic and cultural layers within the text.

A central pillar of Kazakh linguistics is the linguostylistic school established by Syzdyk, whose work on the analysis of literary texts is regarded as a foundational methodological framework for interpreting the linguistic distinctiveness of Kazakh prose. Within Kazakh linguistics, Syzdyk's research paradigm systematically interrelates such categories as stylization, folklorization, speech culture, authorial style, and the aesthetics of language (Aldash et al., 2025). The value of this model lies in its capacity to conceptualize the authorial image not merely at the level of identifying the narrator, but through the organization of artistic discourse itself – namely, through expression, evaluation, national-cultural codes, and traditional verbal patterns. Accordingly, analyzing stylization in contemporary Kazakh short stories through Syzdyk's model provides an integrative framework that first, elucidates the author's linguistic and aesthetic strategy; second, situates the framework within the continuum of traditional verbal art; third, accounts for polyphony and layered discourse structures; and fourth, systematizes the ways in which the authorial position becomes manifest within the text. Thus, the authorial image may be understood as the integrative result of narrative organization and linguistic choice within the text, while stylization functions as one of the principal mechanisms for constructing and identifying the authorial position.

A. The Titles of Contemporary Kazakh Short Stories

Every linguistic unit in a literary work carries aesthetic significance. First and foremost, the title signals the central idea and thematic focus of the text. The title of a literary work functions as a principal compositional element and represents a structure occupying a strong textual position, as it generates associations and attracts the reader's attention. When figurative linguistic devices are employed in the title, it may be regarded as a microtext in its own right. The titles of Musirepov's short stories – “Ананың анасы” (“*The Mother of a Mother*”), “Ер ана” (“*The Heroic Mother*”), and “Ашынған ана” (“*The Indignant Mother*”) – serve as illustrative examples of this phenomenon (Musirepov, 1965). The titles of a number of works by the Kazakh writer Isabekov are formulated in such a way as to establish the setting, event, or character. Some examples include: “Кішкентай ауыл” (“*The Small Village*”), “Ескі үйдегі екі кездесу” (“*Two Meetings in the Old House*”), and “Тыныштық күзетуісі” (“*The Guardian of Silence*”) (Isabekov, 2014). In addition, several of the writer's other works bear titles that function as an authorial refrain grounded in national cognition and cultural symbolism – for instance, “Дермене” (“*Dermene*”), “Аққу-Жібек” (“*Akku-Zhibek*”), and “Гайһап тас” (“*Gauhar tas*”). Such titles expand the reader's intellectual and interpretation by activating culturally embedded associations.

Similar patterns are also observed in the titles of contemporary works. At the same time, one frequently encounters titles that implicitly convey the text's content while subtly concealing the author's underlying idea. While identifying the principal factual elements, it appears necessary to conduct a separate linguostylistic analysis of the aesthetic load of contemporary short story titles, particularly their capacity to convey a positive or negative evaluative background. As a basis for such focused examination, it is important to analyze the titles of contemporary Kazakh short stories. Syzdyk consistently maintained, within the linguostylistic framework of analysis, the position that it is essential to identify underlying causes and to approach the material from an evaluative perspective. In this regard, several influencing factors may be observed:

1. The model of classical authors and the continuity of literary tradition in the works of contemporary young writers.
2. The titles of short stories such as Nartay's “Той көйлек” (“*The Wedding Dress*”) (2021); Kospagarova's “Жұмбақ жигіт” (“*The Mysterious Young Man*”), “Әнші бала” (“*The Singing Boy*”), and “Бәтү апай” (“*Aunt Bati*”) (2012); Kaday's “Қос бармақ қыз” (“*The Two-Thumbed Girl*”) (2018); Altay's “Қайықтағы екеу” (“*Two in the Boat*”) (2022); Mubarak's “Ақ көйлекті қыз” (“*The Girl in the White Dress*”) (2018); Baibulatov's “Бәйбіше” (“*The Senior Wife*”) (2014); and Kasymzhan's “Сотанақ” (“*Bully*”) (2022), since they directly signal the narrative concerns and are marked by a pronounced ethnocultural dimension.
3. The linguistic units in titles that carry relevant content within the communicative space of current readership. Such examples include Altay's “Стресс” (“*Stress*”) (2023); Tumenbay's “Химчистка” (“*Dry Cleaning*”) (2019); Almenbet's “Профессор” (“*Professor*”) (2016); Danabayev's “Философ” (“*Philosopher*”) (2022); Bakash's “Вирус” (“*Virus*”) (2020); Ramazanuly's “Барсук” (“*Barsik*”) (2023); Esenbay's “Лотерея” (“*Lottery*”) (2021); Ikhsan's “Дүңгіршек” (“*The Stall*”) (2020); and Aimagambet's “Жүлдегер” (“*The Prizewinner*”) (2023).
4. The esteemed field of literary creativity from emerging young prose writers, such as Nurzhanuly's “A-Z. №15 планета” (“*A-Z. No. 15 Planet*”) (2021); Mukashev's “Келесей” (“*Silly*”) (2012); Asylbek's “Лай-ДЕВАЙС” (“*Lai-DEVICE*”) (2021); Samatuly's “Шайтан болған” (“*Became a Devil*”) (2017); and Sagintay's “Гитлерюгенд” (“*Hitlerjugend*”) (2016).

A notable element of innovation may also be observed in the personal names of characters in contemporary Kazakh short stories. Alongside more conventional names such as Bolatbek, Sonarbay, Mengsulu, Targyn, Kadirakyn, and Smaiyl, there are distinctive and unconventional names including Doyman (Altay, 2023), Torgauyt (Samituly, 2023), Kulboldy, Maitalman, Zhabay, Buldi, Aldi (Dautaiuly, 2018a, 2018b); and Zharym and Synyk (Esimbay, 2020). These names

constitute part of the anthroponomic landscape of contemporary Kazakh prose and reflect emerging tendencies in literary nomination and characterization.

B. Figurative Devices in Contemporary Kazakh Short Stories: Simile and Artistic Description

In both macrophilological and microphilological analyses of literary texts, the decisive role of expressive devices – namely tropes and stylistic figures – is beyond dispute. Both tropes and stylistic figures constitute a collective designation for figurative means that aim to align the qualities and attributes of one object or phenomenon, as perceived in the consciousness of a representative of a given nation, with the characteristics of another object or phenomenon, thereby producing an aesthetic and persuasive effect on the reader. However, these devices are differentiated according to the degree and nature of comparison between linguistic units. Tropes include such categories as *simile*, *epithet*, *metaphor*, *metonymy*, *synecdoche*, *allegory*, *hyperbole*, and *periphrasis*. Stylistic figures, by contrast, encompass *anaphora*, *epiphora*, *parallelism*, and *oxymoron*.

We intend to examine the patterns of simile in contemporary Kazakh short stories for several reasons. In essence, the category of simile underlies the fundamental characteristics of all tropes and stylistic figures. As noted above, when a speaker seeks to convey thought in an expressive and figurative manner, the primary cognitive mechanism used is comparison based on similarity. As the most elementary level, such comparison takes the form of simile, which constitutes one type of trope. As simile becomes structurally and semantically more complex – moving beyond the mere juxtaposition of shared features between objects and phenomena – it gives rise to metaphorical constructions. For example, in the poetic line “жүзің бар он төртінші айдай көркем” (“*your face is as beautiful as the fourteenth-day moon*”), beauty is explicitly compared to the moon, thereby forming a simile. By contrast, the poetic image “ине мұрт” (“*needle-like moustache*”) represents a metaphor. While the simile “иненің жасуындай” (“*as fine as the eye of a needle*”) preserves the direct lexical meaning of the word *needle*, the metaphor derives from stable associative similarities, such as the sharpness and slenderness of a sewing needle, which extend to expressions like “кірпінің инесі” (“*porcupine needles*”) or “шыршаның инесі” (“*pine needles*”).

A further distinguishing feature between these tropes lies in semantic status: in simile, the direct meaning of the word is retained, whereas in metaphor, the transferred meaning becomes the semantic foundation for comparison and gradually acquires stability. As the comparative intersection of form and content among several concepts becomes conventionalized, periphrastic nominations may emerge, resulting in new lexical designations. Thus, in the poetic lines by Dosymov (2013) – “тау баласы тауға қарап өседі, қыр баласы қол созады аспанға” (“*a child of the mountains grows up looking at the mountains, a child of the steppe stretches a hand toward the sky*”) – the expressions “тау баласы” (“*child of the mountains*”) and “қыр баласы” (“*child of the steppe*”) originate in simile and evolve toward metaphorical nomination. In this way, new figurative designations are formed, enriching the expressive resources of Kazakh literary discourse.

From our perspective and considering that neither individual figurative devices in Kazakh literary discourse nor their interrelated and integrative characteristics have been comprehensively examined from the standpoint of national cognition and national linguistics (including linguostylistics and language culture), we have confined our analysis to such devices as simile and artistic description within the selected genre samples. This focus is justified by the fact that the principal parameters of linguostylistic analysis identified by Syzdyk – namely lexical selection, semantic transformation of words, and adherence to national norms of artistic language – are most distinctively manifested in similes and descriptive passages.

Free similes are particularly prominent in works of fiction. Naturally, this approach is a process that unfolds differently within each individual, as cognitive and perceptual capacities vary. This process depends on the writer’s overall sensibility, the ability to articulate that perception, and mastery in lexical selection and semantic transformation. Another important consideration is that the subjects and objects brought into comparison differ across historical periods. This variation ultimately relates to external sociocultural factors that influence language use within the epoch in which the writer lives (or lived). For this reason, many scholars regard simile as a complex national-cultural category situated at the intersection of linguophilosophy, cognition, and thought. For example, expressions found in contemporary short stories – but absent from earlier literary periods – such as: “Isn’t a jeep just like a bellowing ox?” (Altay, 2022) and “The jeep, bulging like a black beetle, reached the lakeside toward evening” (Altay, 2022) introduce a modern subject – the jeep – while the objects of comparison are traditional images such as the ox and the beetle. Similarly, in the short story “Жүлдегер” (“*The Prizewinner*”) by Aimagambet (2023), some of the similes include “glasses enlarged like a magnifying lens”, “his wife’s words darting like a rocket”, and “stuffed into an envelope as large as a truck.” These examples demonstrate the contemporary writer’s capacity to identify similarities between disparate objects and concepts. The primary reason for this approach lies in the individual’s reinterpretation of analogous phenomena through the prism of present-day worldview, thereby generating new associative models within literary language.

One of the distinguishing features is the use of conventional, formulaic similes. However, these features occur only sporadically in the works of younger writers. The scarcity of fixed similes in the short stories of the emerging generation may be associated with the dominant thematic and narrative strategies characteristic of contemporary short fiction, such as the emphasis on the psychological depth of characters, at times accompanied by philosophical reflection, the tendency of authors to leave the interpretation of the story’s underlying message to the reader, reliance, in terms of language and style, on the lexical and grammatical structures of colloquial speech, and the inclination among several younger writers

toward stylistic simplification (as noted above). Each of these factors, in our view, account for the only occasional presence of traditional models of Kazakh verbal artistry in present-day short prose.

In prose fiction, similes are discernible in the works of writers who possess a profound command of expressive language. For instance, in Oraz's short story "Aïŋaï" ("The Cry"), the following description is offered: *Zhylandy toward which they headed is portrayed as a solitary hill in the open steppe – its lower slopes sufficiently expansive for settlement; one flank lined, up to its midsection, with gravel stones arranged in serried rows like the edge of a knife; above the ridge it sharpens like an eagle's beak; while its opposite side stretches broad and even like the hide of a calf, providing shelter for livestock during rain and winter* (Oraz, 2023). This passage constitutes a depiction of the landscape within the narrative. The stones encircling the hill are compared to the edge of a knife (thus conveying sharpness and thinness); the upper part of the hill is likened to an eagle's beak (emphasizing its pointed form); and the far side is compared to a calf's hide (suggesting smoothness and flatness). From the works of Amantay, there are a number of expressions following this approach: *"In the distance, small auls darken, clustering in fragments like the Pleiades. The outer houses lie scattered, dispersed like millet, timidly withdrawn; perhaps glistening like silver, even shining like a mirror, as they flow in a forceful current, breaking through whirlpools and ponds, surging onward"* (Amantay, 2014). Such constructions exemplify the norms of the national artistic language and reflect the continuity of established figurative traditions within contemporary prose.

In the genre samples selected for analysis, there is a group of freely associative similes, which include the following: *"as if his cheeks were stuffed with dried curds"* (Altay, 2022); *"falling apart like the fatty membrane of a sheep's stomach"* (Altay, 2022); *"the stars huddled like sheep gathered around thick grass; coiled like a snake struck by a whip"* (Aidabosyn, 2023); *"the large airplane, limpid like a rattle fastened to a cradle, like a bead"* (Ramazanuly, 2023); *"hailstones darted off like peas"* (Olzhabay, 2022); *"awaiting the only son's path as though a star were waiting"* (Danabayev, 2022); *"its slender rays trembling like twin wax candles set in the wind"* (Zhumanova, 2017); *"living on a street as short as the handle of a whip"* (Akim, 2017); *"to the dagger-like fangs of the cruel world"* (Ikhsan, 2020); *"falling heavily from the blue heights like a falcon with clipped wings"* (Samatuly, 2017); *"boots on his feet as large as a wooden trough"* (Dabey, 2020); *"a belly rounded like an upturned cauldron"* (Shamuratova, 2022); *"sliding swiftly like mercury"* (Rakhat, 2020); and *"eyes – two lifeless dots like a residual drop at the bottom of a deep well"* (Abdiraiym, 2020). Such examples illustrate a distinctive cluster of freely associative similes that are characteristic of contemporary writers' linguistic creativity. There is imagery present, and the figurative device produces an aesthetic effect. Through such use, several observations may be made:

1. As Syzdyk noted, there is a discernible tendency toward the search for expressive linguistic patterning can be observed among contemporary writers.
2. Within the repertoire of figurative devices, explicitly marked, emotionally charged fixed similes are actively employed in the creation of imagery. Expressions such as *"as sharp as the edge of a knife," "as if cut by a knife," "to fall silent as though sliced," "to be stretched taut like a wire," "beautiful as the moon," "like the moon," "bright as milk," "to gleam like silver," "to shine like a mirror," "to flare up like fire," "to dart like a pike," "as short as a whip handle,"* and *"to scatter like millet"* not only function as stable phraseological units but also serve as evidence of continuity within the Kazakh tradition of artistic verbal expression.
3. The subject selected for comparison (that is, the object or phenomenon against which another is measured) is drawn from linguistic units embedded within the space of national cognition. In this way, the character remains silent, *as if his mouth were stuffed with dried curds*; the clouds in the sky resemble *the fatty membrane of a sheep's stomach*; the stars across the blue expanse are *like sheep gathered around thick grass*; the roar and movement of the airplane are *like a rattle fastened to a cradle*; the narrowness of the space is described as *no longer than a whip handle*; the character's condition is *like a snake struck by a whip*; the image of life is likened to *the fangs of a dagger*; and the largeness of the footwear is compared to *the size of a wooden trough*. Such comparisons demonstrate that the figurative subjects are consistently derived from culturally marked elements of the Kazakh conceptual and linguistic worldview.
4. The image-forming potential of linguistic units shaped by the national worldview have become firmly embedded in the linguistic consciousness of the contemporary writer. Such culturally marked lexemes as *qurt* (dried curds), *fatty membrane*, *sheep*, *whip*, *dagger*, *knife*, *cradle*, *rattle*, *wooden trough*, *abyss*, *star*, *well*, *drop*, *cauldron*, *fang*, *bead* and others function as productive sources of imagery.
5. Each writer selects and interprets linguistic units that represent a world familiar to and internalized by his or her consciousness.
6. Linguistic units that constitute the basis of fixed similes serve as structural supports for the creation of new images.

In her conceptual works on linguostylistics, Syzdyk consistently emphasized that, regardless of the historical period under consideration, the analysis of literary texts should involve a careful examination of which tendencies predominate and how processes within the Kazakh tradition of verbal expression evolve. By identifying the underlying causes and motivating factors of these processes, she repeatedly maintained a firmly grounded positive evaluative stance. Taking Syzdyk's position as a methodological foundation, we will evaluate the use of similes in the corpus of short stories under consideration.

In Syzdyk's linguostylistic analysis, the concepts of national norms of the artistic language and the national character of verbal art are treated as closely related in content. The national character of literary expression is revealed through the national substance and form of the word – what it denotes, what it describes, and what its salient feature are. Another significant attribute of the national artistic language norms identified in the scholar's works is the highly figurative nature of expression and the marked productivity of similes. Imagery and combinatory flexibility enable lexemes within conventional, universal-level fixed similes to undergo reinterpretation through the prism of national cognition, thereby serving as the basis for freely associative similes. In the Kazakh language, for instance, the meaning of “excessively large” or “disproportionately large” with reference to a part of the human or animal body is conveyed through fixed expressions formed with the lexeme *shelek* (“bucket”), such as “a nose (nostrils) as large as a bucket” or “nostrils flared wide.” Another example is, “The piebald tiger, its back as broad as a wooden trough, did not even break onto a sweat” (Zhansugurov, 2007). The use of the semantically related lexeme *astau* (“wooden trough”) in the simile “as large as a trough” is explicit and stylistically transparent in its function: “Berik lifted his head and sat upright. Striking together the toes of his trough-sized high leather boots, he cast his gaze downward” (Dabey, 2020).

The associative potential of the cradle and the rattle attached to it is evident in the following example. However, the object in question is an airplane, while the compared subject – the target of comparison – is the movement and sound (roar) of a large aircraft ascending into the sky: “The giant airplane, splitting the morning silence, loomed over the village like a rattle fastened to a cradle, heading toward the airport” (Ramazanuly, 2023). Although the association is striking, a clear semantic and semantic-stylistic correspondence between the object (the airplane) and the descriptive image (the rattle) is not readily discernable. The stylistic function that would yield a distinct cognitive or imagery-based effect remains insufficiently defined.

Within the system of fixed similes, several stable expressions are formed with the lexeme *қанжар* (“dagger”). Among them, the most semantically vivid and frequently employed is the expression “қанжардай қадалу” (“to pierce like a dagger”). This established phrase is aptly used in a number of contemporary works. If we consider Altay's use of the expression “қанжардай мілу” (“to cut like a dagger”), two observations related to the category of simile may be made: a) the image is clear and perceptually distinct; b) the simile's module (that is, the specific descriptive predicate through which the comparison is realized) is appropriately selected. In other words, in the works of Akhtanov and Nurpeisov, the descriptive verbs employed in the expression “қанжардай жауы” (“to split like a dagger”) – namely *жауы* (to split) and *мілу* (to cut, to slice) – are semantically related. Although “to cut like a dagger” may be regarded as a single contextual usage, its explicit imagery, rooted in national cognition, remains powerful and transparent. It can be compared to “Since yesterday, the blue short train has been splitting the dense black forest like a dagger...” (Nurpeisov, 1991). “The white-beaked prow of the wooden boat cut through the dark blue expanse like a dagger” (Altay, 2022). Artistic depiction, in this context, may be understood as a method of animating every word, phrase, or expression employed in the course of narrative exposition.

It is worth noting that Baitursynuly proposed the term “*әлiптeмe*” (*alipteme*) for this method. The definition he provided for this designation is as follows: “*Alipteme* consists in arranging the form of something and describing its alphabet, or its essence, in order. Everything in the world – different objects, different people, and their various states – can be subjected to *alipteme*” (Baitursynov, 1991, p. 400). One of the stylistic features most characteristic of the short story genre clustered in the period under study is artistic depiction. The term appears in the research of Syzdyk. Although not always employed with strict precision, it is used frequently, especially in analyses of the works of Auezov and Musirepov. In some of her discussions, when addressing issues such as the authorial image, word-symbols, or entering the stylistic nucleus of a text, the scholar integrates these concepts with the notion of artistic depiction. Overall, the concepts of artistic depiction and verbal art are closely related, and the techniques of depiction employed within a work serve to expand both the flexibility and expressive potential of Kazakh literary language.

From this perspective, the diverse harmonies of words in short stories reflect the writers' creative explorations and the movements of national consciousness within linguistic cognition. For instance, expressions such as “a girl is a red tulip who perches on a distant hill spreading across the far-off slopes,” “the narrow path of fate in the perilous way of life,” “the sail lowered, the wind overcame life before it had matured,” “a life sliding like quicksilver,” “a dragon-like majesty,” “a heart like a fist beating like an alarm,” “eyes flashing like rubies,” “like a lion untouched by the wind,” “whose navel was cut in the city,” and “standing on the balcony like a young woman” exemplify, as Syzdyk notes, recurring rhythmic and phonetic patterns such as *taqta-taqta* and *bunaq-bunaq*. Moreover, comparative constructions and the valency of linguistic units are employed, along with the use of culturally and cognitively salient lexical items, such as *tulip*, *wind*, *life*, *fist*, *quicksilver*, *navel*, and others). In general, the stylistic function and aesthetic power of expressions combining such lexemes are indisputable. This assumption is likely, as noted in several studies of literature and linguistics, due to linguistic facts that are often evaluated in terms of individual stylistic measurement. Nevertheless, for linguostylistic analysis and the study of verbal culture, especially to understand linguistic dynamics in processes of language development, it is important to consider the semantic properties of harmonized and co-occurring lexemes (semantic valency) or the capacity of particularly image-rich words in the national consciousness to form collocations. At the same time, this capacity is inherently limited, manifesting as occasional or facultative valency, which must be taken into account in both stylistic and verbal-culture analyses. This can be seen in the following expressions from Zh. Muratbek's first short story, “The Rope Bridge”:

Aisha took after her mother as if she had fallen from her mouth. Even her finely trimmed eyebrows and curled hair corresponded precisely to Kadisha's appearance as a girl like a tulip; after all, a girl is a red tulip who perches on a distant hill spreading across the far-off slopes, which is why Kadisha drew her close to her bosom. A deceitful heart encountered the narrow path of fate in the perilous way of life. In a life sliding like quicksilver, the delicate, thread-like bonds between people were intertwined with eagle-like vigilance of character. If one wins, the eyes witness the victory. In barely two days, the sail lowered, the wind overcame life before it had matured, to be repeatedly overcome, to be repeatedly defeated. (Muratbek, 2020)

In the sentences presented, the consonance of syllables functions as a tool of imagery and operates within the norms of the national literary language. From the perspective of linguostylistics and verbal culture, several observations can be made. The linguistic facts employed for artistic depiction testify to the creative experimentation of the young writer: 1) an imagistic fragment is formed through the consonance of initial syllables (syllable harmony) in culturally salient terms such as *tulip* and *hill*, or *girl* and *tulip*; 2) similes such as *sliding like quicksilver* and *eagle-like* resonate deeply with national conceptualizations; 3) since the author's idea is embodied in the life of the character, the use of semantically related lexemes, such as *life*, *existence*, *time*, *fate*, represents one avenue of creative endeavor; 4) the image components, distinguished by semantic coherence, further reinforce these terms, e.g., *fate – merciless*, *life – perilous*, *existence – narrow path*, *hence the sail of life overturned by the wind*. The organization of such linguistic units in the text serves to elaborate and deepen the thematic and conceptual content of the work.

In her linguostylistic analyses, Syzdyk examined each linguistic fact in close connection with verbal culture. Indeed, considering a writer's lexical usage independently of verbal culture at any given period results in a one-sided understanding. "... Scientific inquiries into the language of literary fiction, conducted not only from a purely linguistic perspective but also from the standpoint of enhancing verbal culture, compel scholars to clarify the norms of the national literary language of Kazakh, to reveal the underlying causes of deviations from literary standards and norms, and to present the distinctions between correct and incorrect usage, thereby offering novel theoretical and scholarly contributions" (Syzdyk, 2009, p. 47). In this regard, our approach is not to classify these instances according to stylistic figures, but rather to examine them in light of the principles articulated by the Teacher – namely, semantic transformation, lexical variation, and lexical selection. The aim is to demonstrate models of stylistic refinement, that is, instances in which language harmonizes with the author's idea and the content of the narrative. Viewed through a synchronous lens, such analysis reveals the presence of complex phenomena in contemporary prose that call for investigation through the combined methodologies of linguostylistics and verbal culture. Considering these two domains in their interrelation makes it possible to identify the distinctive features characteristic of the norms of the national literary language.

III. CONCLUSION

In contemporary Kazakh short stories, the authorial image is not equated with the biographical persona of the writer; rather, it is identified as a category discernible through the internal organization of the text, the logic of narration, and its evaluative tonality. The concise structure of the short story genre tends to concentrate the authorial position within the primary points of the text, such as the title, the opening, the conclusion, and symbolic details, thereby enabling the ideological orientation to be perceived immediately. Within this genre, stylization is not treated as an external ornamentation, but as a mechanism that regulates the communicative relationship between author, text, and reader. It functions as a means of integrating national worldview with the contemporary socio-cultural context into a unified artistic framework.

At the core of the stylistic system, a layering of tradition and innovation is clearly observable. While phraseological units, proverbial expressions, conventional images, and cultural codes preserve the foundational features of the national literary language, contemporary processes such as urbanization, media culture, and the expansion of new thematic domains intensify modern modes of verbal expression. Within the system of imagery, simile and descriptive representation perform central functions: conventional (usual) similes reinforce nationally established figurative standards, whereas occasional similes foreground linguistic creativity. In particular, patterns constructed through the harmony of sounds, syllables, and lexical units are evaluated as expressive devices that impart rhythm and emotional resonance to the text. However, when such harmony fails to align with the national worldview and relies solely on phonetic similarity, the aesthetic impact is noticeably weakened.

In the evaluation of a literary text, the dominant principle is the integration of linguostylistic discernment with the criteria of speech culture. Only when semantic precision is maintained, when there is congruence between image and referent, harmony with the character's nature, and preservation of stylistic motivation, can the norms of the national literary language be fully realized. Usages that are semantically obscure, collocationally incongruous, or incompatible with the national worldview are recognized as deviations from stylistic norms, thereby demonstrating the necessity of examining linguostylistics and speech culture in conjunction in the analysis of contemporary prose. Consequently, clarifying the relevance of the principle of stylization in literary prose enables the establishment of principled criteria for assessing the authorial image and stylization in contemporary Kazakh short stories within the framework of national literary language norms.

Another significant conclusion of the study is the necessity of maintaining the criterion of speech culture alongside linguostylistic discernment. When expressions are constructed through the harmony of sounds, syllables, and words,

together with the national worldview, the rhythmic and emotive power of the text is enhanced. Conversely, when excessive reliance is placed on phonetic similarity at the expense of semantic congruence, the stylistic rationale becomes weakened. In delineating this boundary, the principle of stylization proposed by Syzdyk serves as a reference: where the title, genre, aesthetic purpose, and linguistic expression are mutually coherent, the authorial image appears as an integrated whole. Conversely, when precision and harmony are disrupted, the aesthetic impact is threatened. These observations underscore a key methodological principle for the linguostylistic analysis of the authorial image and stylization in contemporary short stories.

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