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## MIRRORED FATES: LINGUO-STYLISTIC CONSTRUCTION OF TANABAI'S IDENTITY THROUGH GUL'SARY IN "FAREWELL, GUL'SARY!"

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## ЗЕРКАЛЬНЫЕ СУДЬБЫ: ЛИНГВОСТИЛИСТИЧЕСКОЕ КОНСТРУИРОВАНИЕ ИДЕНТИЧНОСТИ ТАНАБАЯ ЧЕРЕЗ ГУЛЬСАРЫ В ПОВЕСТИ «ПРОЩАЙ, ГУЛЬСАРЫ!»

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*Abstract.* Present article examines the linguo-stylistic expression of the protagonist Tanabai's personal identity in Chingiz Aitmatov's \*Farewell, Gul'sary!\* based on its English translation by John French. The object of the study is the literary text of the translation, and the subject is the linguistic representation of Tanabai's personal identity through the parallelism of his fate with that of his horse, Gul'sary. The aim of the study is to identify and analyze the lexical and figurative-metaphorical means by which the protagonist's personal identity is expressed indirectly through the image of the horse. The methodological basis of the study is a linguistic and stylistic analysis, mainly at the lexical and stylistic levels, incorporating elements of interpretive and contextual analysis. Particular attention is paid to such techniques as symbolic metaphorization. The study found that the image of Gul'sary functions as a linguistically shaped alter ego of Tanabai: changes in the description of the horse's movement, strength, submission, and aging simultaneously reflect the transformation of the hero's personal identity. Gul'sary's death is interpreted as a symbolic death of Tanabai's true identity. The obtained results confirm that linguo-stylistic analysis of literary translation allows us to identify the underlying mechanisms of identity representation.

*Аннотация.* Исследуется лингвостилистическое выражение личности главного героя Танабая в романе Чингиза Айтматова «Прощай, Гутьсары!» на основе его английского перевода, выполненного Джоном Френчем. Объектом исследования является литературный текст перевода, а предметом – лингвистическое представление личности Танабая через параллелизм его судьбы с судьбой его коня Гутьсары. Целью исследования является выявление и анализ лексических и образно-метафорических средств, посредством которых личность главного героя выражается косвенно, через образ коня. Методологической основой исследования является лингвистический и стилистический анализ на лексическом и стилистическом уровнях, включающий элементы интерпретативного и контекстуального анализа. Особое внимание уделяется таким приемам, как символическая метафоризация. Исследование показало, что образ Гутьсары функционирует как лингвистически сформированное альтер эго Танабая: изменения в описании движений лошади, её силы, покорности и старения одновременно отражают трансформацию личной идентичности героя. Смерть Гутьсары интерпретируется как символическая смерть истинной идентичности Танабая. Полученные результаты подтверждают, что лингвостилистический анализ

литературного перевода позволяет выявить лежащие в основе механизмы репрезентации идентичности.

*Keywords:* identity, linguo-stylistics, Chingiz Aitmatov.

*Ключевые слова:* идентичность, лингвостилистика, Чингиз Айтматов.

Chingiz Aitmatov (1928–2008) is one of the prominent writers of Kyrgyz and Soviet prose, whose works perfectly represent both universal problems as well as culturally specific ones. His fiction is marked by psychological and moral concerns. Akmatalliev notes that Chingiz Aitmatov's writing is characterized by a high concentration of social and philosophical meaning. Although his characters are presented as concrete individuals and the plots often focus on their personal lives within specific historical moments, Aitmatov's heroes are frequently interpreted as images that embody universal human values and philosophical concerns. Akmatalliev states that through his writing, Aitmatov navigates ideological limitations, revealing to readers the essence of universal human consciousness. As a result, his works remain timeless and engage readers with questions of global significance [1].

Chingiz Aitmatov's *Farewell, Gul'sary!* [2] is one of his most prominent works. It blends human and natural elements to explore themes of identity, freedom, and the struggles of existence. The novel tells the story of Tanabai, a man whose life is deeply intertwined with that of his horse, Gul'sary, creating a parallel between human and animal experiences. This study focuses on the English translation of the novel [3], which allows for the examination of Aitmatov's linguistic and stylistic choices as they are rendered in another language.

A distinctive feature of Aitmatov's narrative in *Farewell, Gul'sary!* [2] is Tanabai and Gul'sary's parallel trajectory of lives which serves as a central mechanism for expressing identity. The horse's physical confinement and eventual decline mirrors Tanabai's own experiences of restriction, loss of agency, and aging. Aim of this paper is to analyze it through linguo-stylistic approach in order to examine how lexical and metaphorical choices reflect and construct Tanabai's personal identity mirrored relationship with Gul'sary. Linguistically, it is articulated through recurring semantic fields such as freedom, entrapment, labor, and mortality and through stylistic devices such as metaphor, personification, and juxtaposition. The mirrored experiences of human and animal characters allow the narrative to externalize internal states, creating a symbolic framework in which Tanabai's identity is continuously reflected.

#### *Materials and research methods*

The methodology adopted in this study combines linguo-stylistic analysis with literary interpretation, drawing on approaches outlined by Leech and Short [4] and Simpson [5], who emphasize the role of lexical, syntactic, and figurative choices in constructing meaning and character identity in literary texts. The analysis focuses on passages in which the parallelism between Tanabai and Gul'sary is most pronounced [6].

By investigating lexical fields, metaphorical and figurative language in the translated text, we can identify how meaning and identity are linguistically constructed. Following Halliday's [6] perspective on the interaction of language and social context, the study examines how linguistic patterns reflect both personal agency and constraint.

The study demonstrates that Tanabai's personal identity is not only conveyed through his own words and actions but also linguistically mirrored in Gul'sary's fate, revealing stylistic strategies [4, 5].

### *Results and discussion*

In Farewell, Gul'sary!, Chingiz Aitmatov constructs Tanabai's personal identity through the recurring symbolic alignment between the protagonist and his horse, Gul'sary. From a linguo-stylistic perspective, this relationship is realized primarily through lexical choice and metaphorical projection, which allows Gul'sary to function as a stylistic extension of Tanabai's character. At the early stages of the narrative, both figures are associated with strength, vitality, and forward movement. Lexical choices describing Gul'sary's speed and endurance and Tanabai's physical energy and moral determination operate with comparable expressive force. Passages such as "In his younger days he had to make the journey to the regional town fairly often, and on the way back he would force the horse to gallop up the hill" [3] and "The brown stallion was powerful as a lion, and that lad was strong too" [3] demonstrate how linguistic structures align human and animal trajectories. This early portrayal relies on a shared lexical field of movement and power, which linguistically binds Tanabai's emerging identity to the physical vitality of the horse. The dominant verb galloped foregrounds speed and urgency, while would introduces habitual intensity, reinforcing the idea of dynamic action. Furthermore, the verb force intensifies the action by introducing an element of control and directed force. Through this pattern of verbal dynamics, the narrative creates a stylistic effect of purposeful motion, allowing Tanabai's identity to emerge as grounded in energy, agency, and dominance. Explicit symbolic alignment between animal and human strength becomes particularly visible in the statement "The brown stallion was powerful as a lion, and that lad was strong too" [3]. It draws upon a culturally recognizable metaphor of raw physical power. Notably, the absence of further elaboration in the second sentence strengthens this effect: Tanabai's strength no longer requires direct metaphorical expansion, as it is already implied through the preceding animal image. Linguistically, the horse's physical power thus functions as a metaphorical projection of Tanabai's own identity.

A similar stylistic pattern emerges in the description: "He walked at a furious pace, as he was leading an attack..." [3].

Here, the lexical choice of the verb walked with pace foregrounds bodily strength and confidence. Meanwhile, the adjective furious intensifies it. The use of the clause as he was leading an attack further reorients the description toward confrontation, resistance, and active struggle. Stylistically, this framing transforms movement into a marker of agency and determination. As a result, the construction of identity suggests that Tanabai's early self is defined by a capacity to confront obstacles. Taken together, these passages construct a coherent stylistic network in which movement, strength, and force are primary markers of identity. The horse's physical capabilities and Tanabai's moral and emotional energy are expressed through lexical and metaphorical patterns. This alignment frames Tanabai's early identity as inseparable from freedom of movement and bodily agency, which are qualities that later become subject to restriction and loss.

As the narrative progresses, the increasing regulation of Gul'sary's movement parallels the transformation of Tanabai's identity from an active agent into a controlled and subordinated subject. The imperative sentence "Order. To Herdsman Bakasov, Send the pacer Gul'sary to the stables for riding purposes" [3] is marked by a cold and authorial command. The imperative verb replaces earlier dynamic descriptions of speed and vitality with institutionalized language. Stylistically, this lexical shift introduces a tone of regulation and objectification, suggesting that movement is no longer self-directed.

The imagery of restraint is further intensified in the description: "The pacer prancing, held by double hobbles, iron fetters, the fetters were clanging; he was shying, groaning, neighing" [3].

Although the verb prancing conventionally denotes lightness of movement, in this context it is immediately undermined by the participial construction held by double hobbles, which foregrounds physical restriction. The juxtaposition of energetic motion with lexical markers of constraint creates

a stylistic tension between natural vitality and imposed control. The repetition of the noun phrase iron fetters and the auditory detail were clanging reinforce the material heaviness of captivity and introduce a harsh acoustic image that amplifies the sense of suffering. Furthermore, the accumulation of present participles shying, groaning, neighing forms a rhythmic sequence that conveys continuous distress. Lexically, these verbs belong to a semantic field of fear and physical strain, emphasizing the animal's loss of autonomy.

This episode is echoed by Tanabai's confrontation with bureaucratic authority following his expulsion from the Party, where institutional language similarly restricts personal agency. In the passage "There was nothing in the report which Tanabai could deny, but its tone and the form in which charges were made against him drove him to despair. He was covered in a sweat from the realization of his complete powerlessness against this monstrous paper" [3], lexical choices such as helplessness, despair, and monstrous foreground psychological vulnerability and loss of agency. The report is personified as monstrous, attributing to it an almost predatory quality and reinforcing the image of Tanabai as a victim of institutional pressure. At this stage of the narrative, Gul'sary's physical chains function as a symbolic projection of Tanabai's metaphorical constraints. While the horse's suffering is conveyed through vivid sensory imagery, Tanabai's oppression is articulated through abstract psychological and emotional vocabulary.

In the final stages of the narrative, Gul'sary operates as Tanabai's alter ego, linguistically through alignment of evaluative language applied to both figures. The sentence "An old man was riding along on an old cart. And Gul'sary, the pacer who drew it was old, a very old" exemplifies this strategy through syntactic symmetry and repetition. The adjective old is distributed evenly between human, animal, and object (man, cart, horse), creating a unified semantic field. The clipped sentence "Very old" intensifies this evaluation. Aitmatov employs constant repetition of parallel constructions to linguistically mirror the intertwined fates of Tanabai and his horse. Sentences such as "The old horse and the old man stood alone on the empty deserted road", "And they walked slowly, an old man and an old horse", and "Old horse and old man", foreground both syntactic and lexical parallelism. The repeated pairing of old man and old horse emphasizes the shared experience of aging, decline, and loss of vitality. Lexically, the adjective old signals physical and existential decline. Through these syntactic and lexical strategies, Aitmatov constructs Tanabai's late identity as inseparable from the horse's condition: his autonomy, energy. In this way, the linguistic parallelism between man and animal functions as a subtle stylistic vehicle for expressing his identity. This grammatical equality erases hierarchical distinction, stylistically presenting human and animal with parallel trajectories. Lexical choices such as alone and deserted are contrasted with earlier movement-oriented vocabulary, producing narrative stillness. Motions are minimal and effortless [3].

Tanabai's direct speech «We've had both our run, Gul'sary,» he mused. We've both grown old and who needs us now? I cannot stand the pace either, all we have left now is to live out our span» [3], functions as a linguo-stylistic marker of identity constructed through parallelism between the rider and the horse. The inclusive pronoun we is repeatedly employed, syntactically merging Tanabai's self with Gul'sary and erasing the boundary between human subject and animal companion. The lexical unit run, which belongs to the semantic field of movement and speed, metaphorically evokes both Gul'sary's former racing career and Tanabai's own active, socially meaningful past, thereby linking physical riding with biographical trajectory. Overall, this passage linguistically constructs Tanabai's identity as that of a rider whose sense of self is inseparable from motion, labor, and companionship with Gul'sary.

In the utterance «You have been a great horse, Gul'sary. You have been my friend. You are taking away the best years of my life, Gul'sary. I shall always remember you, Gul'sary» [3], the possessive structure "the best years of my life" linguistically binds Tanabai's personal history to the

horse's existence. The stylistic effect of this formulation is one of irreversible extraction: Gul'sary does not simply die, he carries away Tanabai's agency, and meaningful past. This erosion of purpose is reinforced through temporal metaphor in the sentence "These were Tanabai's thoughts and he was sad because time was passing by like the running of the pacer" [3].

The simile equating time with a running of the pacer fuses abstract temporality with the horse's embodied movement, maintaining the linguistic parallelism between Tanabai and Gul'sary. Stylistically, the metaphor collapses distance between lived experience and animal motion, suggesting that Tanabai's life has been measured, accelerated, and depleted by the same rhythm that once defined Gul'sary's strength.

### Conclusion

A linguo-stylistic analysis has shown that in Chingiz Aitmatov's novel *Farewell, Gul'sary* Tanabai's personal identity is constructed not only through a direct psychological characterization of the hero, but through a persistent linguistic and figurative parallelism with the fate of his horse, Gul'sary. In the English translation, this parallelism is preserved at the lexical and figurative-metaphorical levels, allowing us to consider the horse's image as an external, artistically shaped projection of the hero's inner world. It has been established that in the early stages of the narrative, the dynamic vocabulary of movement, strength, and speed shapes Tanabai's identity as an active, purposeful subject, closely connected to natural space and the idea of freedom. As the plot unfolds, a stylistic shift is observed toward a vocabulary of constraint, submission, and physical effort, reflecting the hero's loss of autonomy and internal compromise. The process of Gul'sary's domestication and exploitation is linguistically represented as a gradual narrowing of the space of freedom, which simultaneously marks the transformation of Tanabai's personal identity under social and ideological pressure. This parallelism culminates in Gul'sary's death, which is interpreted as a symbolic disintegration of the protagonist's true identity. The shift from images of movement to motifs of silence, stillness, and solitude signifies the end of a life deprived of its former meaning and integrity. Thus, this study confirms that linguo-stylistic analysis of literary translation is a productive tool for identifying the mechanisms of identity representation meanings. The findings can be used in further studies of literary translation, identity in literature, and comparative linguo-stylistics.

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