



Linguistic Devices Used to Convey Meaning in Ghazals

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Abstract: This article explores the linguistic and stylistic devices employed in ghazals to convey deep emotional, spiritual, and philosophical meanings. The study focuses on how poets use metaphor (isti'ora), simile (tashbih), antithesis (tazod), gradation (tadrij), repetition, and rhetorical questions to express the complex relationship between the lover and the beloved. Through these linguistic tools, the ghazal becomes not only a lyrical expression of love and longing but also a reflection of moral and mystical concepts. By analyzing selected examples from classical poets such as Sakkokiy, the paper demonstrates how language functions as both an artistic and communicative medium, revealing the poet's worldview and emotional depth.

Keywords: ghazal; linguistic devices; metaphor; simile; antithesis; repetition; symbolism; rhetorical question; classical poetry; Sakkokiy, Infiāl, kāmāl, nazzara, hilāl, Masīh, al, tar, majal, vabal, tobuğ , tobuğda, nārgis, kalāla, qabāl, pur.

Introduction: When speaking about the creative legacy of Mavlono Sakkokiy, it must be emphasized that his contribution to Turkic literature represents a remarkable act of courage. He wrote in Turkic at a time when the rights of Turkic languages had not yet been restored, when rulers like Husayn Bayqara had not yet issued decrees encouraging poetry in the Turkic tongue, and when most poets were composing in Persian-Tajik. Sakkokiy's choice to write in Turkic, and his ability to demonstrate the beauty and elegance of the language in his poetic works, therefore, deserves special recognition.

In Alisher Navoi's Majolis un-nafois, information is given about 459 poets, yet only sixteen of them are Turkic poets — and among these, Sakkokiy stands as the foremost. This fact alone provides scholarly evidence of

his pioneering role in the development of Turkic poetry.

Our observations lead us to the conclusion that, as a prominent figure in Uzbek classical literature, Mavlono Sakkokiy enriched and advanced the lyrical genres of Uzbek classical poetry — particularly the amorous ghazals composed in the ramal meter of the “Turkic” aruz. His creativity contributed to expanding the symbolic and figurative imagery of the ghazal and raising it to a higher level of artistic and moral refinement. He skillfully used Turkic words, and the language of his ghazals is described as exceptionally sweet and expressive.

Analysis of the Ghazal

**Kün tušta körsä husn-u jamalīn kāmālini,
Uyğānīb ixtiyār etār öz zavalīnī.**

(Kāmāl — perfection, maturity, completeness; zaval — decline, disappearance.) The ghazal that begins with this matla belongs to the genre of love poetry. The lyrical hero says that if the sun, in its dream, sees the perfection of the beloved’s beauty, upon awakening it becomes ashamed and hides itself. In other words, the beloved’s beauty is so dazzling that even the sun feels embarrassed in her presence. The contrasting meanings of kamal (perfection) and zaval (decline) create the device of antithesis, while the sun’s attempt to hide symbolizes personification.

**Bostanda gül yüzüñni körüb köp uftanīb,
Yüzi qızardī kördüm anīñ infīālīni.**

(Infīāl — emotion, embarrassment, blushing.)

The poet continues: “In the garden, the rose saw your face and, overwhelmed with shame, blushed — I saw it myself.” The beloved’s beauty is incomparable; even the rose, upon beholding her face, blushes with embarrassment. The use of causal beauty (husn-i ta’lil) enriches the meaning and aesthetic charm of the couplet.

**Iyd axšāmī nazzarada kördi qaşīñ magar,
Gardun etāgi asra yaşurdī hilālīni.**

(Nazzara — gaze, glance; hilāl — crescent moon.) The lover continues: “On the eve of the festival, the sky caught sight of your arched brows and hid its crescent moon within the folds of its robe.” The beloved’s eyebrows are so beautiful that even the crescent moon becomes shy. The depiction of the sky hiding the moon is an example of personification, while the comparison between the brows and the crescent illustrates hyperbole and metaphor.

**Kördi közüñni köñülü bemār boldī zar,
Erñiñ masīhī sormadī bu hasta halīnī.**

(Masīh — Messiah, Jesus Christ, believed to have the power to heal the sick and revive the dead.)

The lover says: “Upon seeing your eyes, my heart became ill and weak, yet your healing lips did not even inquire about my condition.” The beloved’s indifference deepens the emotional despair of the lyrical hero.

**Al birlä saldī alma yanaqīñ köñülgä tar,
Bir buqa al köräyin anīñ nāzūk alīnī.**

(Al — red; tar — moist, fresh.)

“Your crimson cheeks have bound my heart like a red apple; now let me behold your delicate hands, tinted with the same hue.” The lover falls captive to the beloved’s beauty at a single glance. The simile comparing cheeks to apples enhances the visual expressiveness of the verse.

**Bizni raqīblar olturadur yoq, saña xabar,
Ey vay neçä tartalī itlär majalīnī.**

(Majal — strength, energy.) The jealous rivals never tire of watching us; the lover laments that they even surpass dogs in persistence and shamelessness. The line expresses irony and exaggeration, showing the lover’s frustration.

**Qanīm halal töksä qılıçīñğa suw bikin,
Aldīm çu boynuma özüm anīñ vabalīnī.**

(Vabal — sin, misdeed, harm.) The lover declares: “If you spill my blood lawfully, let me dissolve into your sword like water — I willingly take all the blame upon myself.” The verse conveys the sacrificial devotion of the lover, using hyperbole to emphasize his submission.

**Köz yaşı yığlayu tuşayīn der ayağīña,
Bilmän nedür tobuğda bu sayıl savalīnī.**

(Tobuğda — before, in the presence of.) “My tears beg you to let them fall at your feet — I cannot understand what compels them to ask such a favor.” Here, the personification of tears deepens the emotional tone and highlights the intensity of the lover’s longing.

**Har lahza käftekelür alīmğa qayğū, ah,
Säkkäkinīñ ne körmädi bu qattīğ alīnī.**

The poet finally concludes: “Each moment, grief comes to my hands like the palm itself — oh, what has this hard fate not made Sakkokiy endure?” The use of palm, hand, and fate establishes word harmony (tanosub) and brings the poem to a complete and poignant ending.

Though the sorrows are countless and painful, the lover believes he will overcome them and continues to speak once again to his beloved:

**Ey qamatī sarv-u közi nārgis, eñi lāla,
Zulfuñ erür ul lāla üzä müşki kalāla.**

(Nargis — narcissus flower; kalāla — weariness, fatigue; müški kalāla — a dark, fragrant tangle.) “O you with a cypress-like figure, narcissus eyes, and tulip-red cheeks! Your dark curls are like fragrant threads surrounding that tulip.” The poet uses simile and causal beauty (husn-i ta’lil) to heighten the image of the beloved’s elegance.

Alīnda meni čap, daği sal itgä tanīmni,

Hijran oqini jānima qilganča havāla.

(Havāla — to deliver, to hand over.) The lover pleads: “Rather than piercing my soul with the arrow of separation, strike me down before you and give my body to the dogs.” The hyperbole intensifies the tragic sincerity of the emotion.

Tišlär qapıña barsam eşiğingä gadā teb,

Itlikni magar qildī ul özinä qabāla.

(Qabāla — acceptance, submission.) “If I come to your door, they bite me, thinking I am a beggar. Perhaps they have accepted servitude as their duty.” This line mixes satire and lament, reflecting the lover’s humiliation.

Näyteky boyunuz arzusī tuşğalı köñülgä,

Uşşaq ara saldī nafasīm zari-yu nāla.

The beloved’s slender form is compared to the reed (nay), and the poet declares that his sighs and laments resound among the lovers — a sign of tashbih (simile) and symbolism of longing.

Jānlar ne qilur zulfunī tağitsa pärişān,

Bağlar bu köñüllärni agar töksä nağāla.

The poet imagines: “If she lets loose her hair, what will the souls do? Surely her tresses will bind all hearts together.” The image of the beloved’s hair evokes mystical unity, a common motif in classical ghazals.

Iş qayğuşa tuşsa qilur ul ’āşiqī sadīq,

Bu ikki jahan qayğusini pur navāla.

(Pur — full, abundant.)

“When sorrow strikes, it makes the true lover faithful, filling his heart with melodies of both worlds.” Through hyperbole, the poet conveys the transformative power of love and suffering.

Säkkäkini öltürsä, yoq ul qılča jānindin,

Qayğusī, vāle qayğum ul ay kirgä vabāla.

In the maqta, Sakkokiy concludes: “Even if she were to kill me, she would feel no sorrow — yet I grieve that such an act would be a sin for her.” This exaggerated expression highlights the depth of the lover’s devotion, where his only concern is the beloved’s purity, not his own life.

Conclusion

Despite all the torment, the lover’s faith and sincerity remain unshaken. He accepts his pain as a form of devotion. Sakkokiy’s ghazal thus combines emotional depth, linguistic beauty, and spiritual symbolism. The poet skillfully employs literary devices such as tashbih (simile), tazod (antithesis), mubolag’a (hyperbole), tashxis (personification), and husn-i ta’lil (causal beauty), creating a vivid and harmonious poetic world where love becomes both suffering and salvation.

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