

THE STYLISTIC FEATURES OF THE LANGUAGE IN YUSUF XOS HOJIB'S "QUTADG'U BILIG" EPIC

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Abstract:

This article investigates the stylistic features of Yusuf Xos Hojib's *Qutadg'u bilig*, a foundational monument of 11th-century Turkic literature that merges political philosophy, ethical instruction, and poetic artistry. While previous research has extensively analyzed its linguistic and historical dimensions, there remains a notable gap regarding how contemporary readers and scholars perceive its layered stylistic strategies. To address this, the study adopts a qualitative, survey-based approach, gathering insights from linguistic experts, philology scholars, and advanced students familiar with the text. Through systematic coding and thematic analysis of survey responses, the research identifies three dominant stylistic categories: didactic symbolism, phonetic ornamentation, and lexical-cultural hybridity. The findings reveal that these stylistic devices not only enhance the aesthetic and rhetorical dimensions of the text but also serve critical pedagogical and ideological functions, transmitting cultural values and ethical norms across generations. The results suggest that integrating such classical stylistic models into modern language education could strengthen cultural literacy and foster a deeper appreciation of Turkic literary heritage. Furthermore, the study highlights the need for expanded interdisciplinary research — including computational stylistic analysis and cross-cultural comparisons — to deepen our theoretical understanding and broaden the practical applications of medieval Turkic literary studies. Ultimately, this research contributes to filling the knowledge gap on stylistic reception and reinforces the enduring significance of *Qutadg'u bilig* within the broader context of world literature.

Keywords: Yusuf Xos Hojib, Qutadg'u Bilig, Turkic literature, Stylistic features, Didactic symbolism, Lexical hybridity, Medieval linguistics, Poetic devices.

Introduction

Yusuf Xos Hojib's *Qutadg'u bilig* stands as one of the most significant monuments of 11th-century Turkic literature, reflecting the political, moral, and cultural views of its time. Composed in the mutaḳārib meter of aruz and structured as a masnavi, the work presents key concepts such as governance, justice, wisdom, and prosperity through symbolic characters. Although numerous scholars have studied the linguistic and literary features of this masterpiece, its stylistic dimensions still warrant deeper analysis. The linguistic characteristics of *Qutadg'u bilig* have been widely examined by prominent scholars. Qayum Karimov prepared the scientific transcription of the Namangan manuscript version and adapted it into modern Uzbek, analyzing the morphological and syntactic features of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and other parts of speech within the text. Furthermore, Karimov explored the role of Arabic and Persian loanwords in enriching the work's language and cultural nuance. Another notable scholar, Dr. Shahid Tasleem, investigated the lexical-semantic features of the text, examining the functions of synonyms, antonyms, polysemous words, and phraseological units within its stylistic framework. The extensive

use of proverbs, aphorisms, and folk expressions in the text intensifies its didactic character, serving as a crucial vehicle for communicating the author's moral philosophy. Research shows that these stylistic elements allowed the author to engage with and illuminate the socio-political concerns of his time. Central characters such as Kuntug'di (Justice), Oytoldi (Fortune), O'gdulmish (Wisdom), and O'zg'urmish (Contentment) are crafted as symbolic figures, embodying an idealized model of society and human conduct. Studies reveal that these symbolic representations align with the traditions of Eastern didactic literature, through which the author conveys ethical and political ideas. From a syntactic perspective, the work employs complex sentence structures, parallelism, repetition, and alliteration, stylistic devices that heighten its poetic nature and direct the reader's attention to key thematic elements. Morphologically, the text showcases archaic Turkic forms, including old verb and noun constructions, affixes, and word formation techniques. The incorporation of Arabic and Persian terms further reflects the linguistic interactions of the period, enriching the religious, intellectual, and cultural content of the work. Scholars agree that these lexical borrowings enhance the stylistic richness of the text and situate it within the broader scientific and literary environment of its time. Overall, the stylistic features of Yusuf Xos Hojib's *Qutadg'u bilig* play a pivotal role in fulfilling the author's didactic objectives. Through symbolic figures, phraseological richness, loanwords, complex syntax, and poetic techniques, the text amplifies both its artistic and moral value, addressing the social and political realities of its era and offering an enduring vision of ideal governance and human virtue.

Methodology

Methodologically, the study was conducted in three stages: the first stage involved a systematic review of existing literary and linguistic sources (literature review); the second stage entailed designing and administering specialized surveys among participants, including experts (philologists, linguists) and students; the third stage focused on conducting contextual and content analysis based on the collected survey data. The surveys were carried out among participants who had read the primary sources and possessed knowledge about the linguistic features of *Qutadg'u Bilig*. The survey questions included both open-ended and closed-ended formats and covered the following aspects:

- which stylistic devices are most frequently used in the text;
- how poetic forms (repetition, alliteration, parallelism) influence the overall style of the work;
- what aesthetic and semantic effects Arabic and Persian loanwords have on the reader;
- the meaning layers of the symbolic characters and their contribution to conveying the text's central ideas;
- how the didactic function of phraseological units manifests in the text.

The collected data were processed using qualitative content analysis methods, comparing participants' responses with the linguistic units found in the text. Through content analysis, the study classified the main stylistic devices in the work, identifying their frequency and functional load. Additionally, intertextual analysis was applied by comparing the stylistic devices in *Qutadg'u Bilig* with those found in Eastern didactic literature and other Turkic texts of the period, enabling the identification of common stylistic trends. Furthermore, modern stylistic analysis methods — such as semantic and pragmatic analysis — were used to determine the author's individual stylistic markers. To strengthen the research outcomes, interviews were conducted with linguistic experts, and their insights were used to enrich the survey data. All participants involved in the study were engaged following strict confidentiality and

ethical guidelines. The results allowed for a reanalysis of *Qutadg'u Bilig's* stylistic features through contemporary linguistic approaches, providing a fresh foundation for reassessing its place in current philological research. Additionally, the study offered insights into how the work is aesthetically received by readers and experts, enabling an evaluation of the communicative effectiveness of its stylistic devices.

Results and Discussion

The results of the qualitative survey-based analysis revealed several prominent stylistic features in Yusuf Xos Hojib's "Qutadg'u bilig," affirming the theoretical assumptions outlined in the literature review. Respondents, including linguistic experts and advanced philology students, consistently emphasized the intricate blend of symbolic imagery, syntactic parallelism, and the strategic incorporation of Arabic and Persian loanwords, all of which enhance the poetic and didactic resonance of the text. Through systematic coding of survey responses, we identified three dominant stylistic categories: (1) didactic symbolism, (2) phonetic ornamentation, and (3) lexical-cultural hybridity. The didactic symbolism, evident in characters like Kuntug'di (Justice) and O'gdulmish (Wisdom), was perceived as a sophisticated narrative device that transcends mere allegory, shaping moral and political instruction. Survey participants highlighted that this symbolism not only reflects Turkic cultural ideals but also aligns with broader Islamic ethical paradigms, suggesting a deliberate synthesis by the author. Phonetic ornamentation, particularly the use of parallelism, repetition, and alliteration, was widely regarded as central to the text's oral-performative quality, enhancing mnemonic retention and rhetorical force. Lexical-cultural hybridity, marked by Arabic and Persian elements, was seen as both a reflection of the multilingual intellectual milieu of the Karakhanid era and a deliberate strategy to elevate the text's prestige and universality. Theoretically, these findings enrich the understanding of medieval Turkic stylistics by offering empirical insights into how native speakers and scholars interpret the layered stylistic architecture of "Qutadg'u bilig." While prior research predominantly focused on textual analysis, this study introduces a reader-response perspective, addressing a notable gap in stylistic reception studies. Practically, the results suggest avenues for enhancing contemporary Turkic language pedagogy by integrating historical stylistic models to deepen students' awareness of cultural and literary continuity. However, several limitations remain. The survey sample, although carefully selected, was relatively small and geographically limited, primarily involving respondents from Uzbek academic institutions. Further research should expand the demographic scope to include a broader Turkic-speaking audience, potentially incorporating comparative studies across different Turkic literatures. Additionally, while this study foregrounded stylistic analysis, the intersection of stylistic and thematic dimensions — particularly in the political philosophy embedded in "Qutadg'u bilig" — warrants deeper theoretical exploration. A cross-disciplinary approach integrating literary theory, historical linguistics, and political thought analysis could yield richer insights. Another promising avenue lies in digital humanities applications: corpus-based analyses and computational stylistics could quantitatively map stylistic patterns across the entire text, complementing the qualitative insights presented here. Such research would not only validate survey findings but also offer scalable models for studying other medieval Turkic texts. Finally, translating these theoretical insights into educational materials and public cultural discourse could bridge the gap between academic scholarship and broader cultural appreciation, fostering renewed engagement with Yusuf Xos Hojib's enduring legacy.

Conclusion

This study has illuminated the rich stylistic landscape of Yusuf Xos Hojib's "Qutadg'u bilig," demonstrating that its didactic symbolism, phonetic ornamentation, and lexical hybridity are not only central to its aesthetic power but also function as deliberate tools for conveying political and moral guidance in medieval Turkic society. The survey-based findings reveal that readers and scholars perceive the text as a dynamic fusion of Turkic oral traditions and Islamic intellectual currents, underscoring its role in shaping cultural identity and ethical frameworks. The implications of these findings extend to both theoretical and practical domains: theoretically, they offer a nuanced understanding of how stylistic devices operate within a historical literary canon; practically, they suggest strategies for integrating classical texts into modern language and literature curricula to enhance cultural literacy. Nonetheless, the study's limitations highlight the need for further research, particularly cross-cultural comparative studies, computational stylistic analysis, and interdisciplinary inquiries that connect literary form with sociopolitical context, thereby advancing the academic discourse on medieval Turkic literature and its enduring significance.

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