



Article

The Use of Pronouns in the Language of Kazi Maulik's Works

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Abstract: The linguistic heritage of the Karakalpak poet Kazi Maulik Bekmukhammad uly occupies a significant place in the history of Turkic literary language and provides valuable material for studying the historical development of grammatical categories. Among these categories, pronouns represent one of the most stable yet dynamically evolving components of the language system. This study examines the semantic, lexical, and grammatical characteristics of pronouns used in Kazi Maulik's poetic works. The research aims to identify the structural features of personal, demonstrative, interrogative, reflexive, collective, indefinite, negative, and definitive pronouns and to compare them with their counterparts in modern Karakalpak. The analysis is based on descriptive, comparative-historical, and structural-linguistic methods applied to the poet's manuscripts and published texts. The findings reveal that Kazi Maulik extensively employed both common Turkic and archaic pronominal forms inherited from the Central Asian written literary tradition. Several pronoun variants no longer used in the modern Karakalpak literary language have been preserved in his works and partially survive in regional dialects. The study also demonstrates historical variation in case inflection, phonetic development, and semantic functions of pronouns. These observations contribute to understanding the evolution of Karakalpak grammatical structure and provide new evidence for the continuity between Old Turkic written traditions and the modern Karakalpak language. The results are relevant for Turkic historical linguistics, comparative grammar, and the study of the development of literary languages.

Keywords: Kazi Maulik, Karakalpak language, pronouns, historical grammar, Old Turkic, comparative linguistics, literary language, Turkic studies

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1. Introduction

The historical development of the Karakalpak literary language is closely connected with the creative heritage of classical poets who played a decisive role in preserving and enriching the linguistic traditions of the Turkic world. Their literary works constitute an important source for investigating the diachronic evolution of phonetic, lexical, morphological, and syntactic phenomena. Among these linguistic categories, pronouns occupy a special position because they represent one of the most conservative grammatical classes while simultaneously reflecting historical language changes and the continuity of literary traditions [1], [2].

Kazi Maulik Bekmukhammad uly, who lived at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, is recognized as one of the prominent representatives of Karakalpak classical literature. His poetic heritage reflects the linguistic norms of the transitional period during which the written literary tradition preserved many features inherited from the Chagatai and Old Turkic literary languages while gradually incorporating elements of the emerging modern Karakalpak literary language [3].

Consequently, his works constitute valuable material for investigating the historical development of Karakalpak grammar.

Previous studies have mainly examined the literary value, artistic style, and poetic mastery of Kazi Maulik. Significant contributions to the study of his literary heritage were made by N. Dawqaraev, Q. Ayımbetov, Q. Bayniyazov, Á. Paxratdinov, E. Karimullaev, A. Qudiyarov, and other scholars [4]. However, comprehensive linguistic studies devoted specifically to the grammatical system of his language remain insufficient.

Historical grammar of the Karakalpak language has been investigated by Kh. Hamidov, D. Nasirov, D. Saytov, O. Dospanov, A. Bekbergenov, Sh. Abdinazimov, G. Karlıbaeva, B. Ubaydullaev, and several other researchers [5]. Nevertheless, the system of pronouns in Kazi Maulik's works has not yet been analyzed comprehensively from historical-comparative and functional perspectives.

Pronouns are regarded as one of the oldest grammatical categories in Turkic languages because they preserve numerous archaic morphological and semantic features inherited from Proto-Turkic [6]. Their historical development provides important evidence for reconstructing language evolution, identifying dialectal differentiation, and explaining the continuity between Old Turkic written monuments and modern Turkic literary languages [7]. Therefore, investigating pronouns in Kazi Maulik's works is important not only for Karakalpak linguistics but also for comparative Turkic studies.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the lexical-semantic, morphological, and functional characteristics of pronouns occurring in Kazi Maulik's poetic language, to determine their historical origins, and to compare them with corresponding forms in contemporary Karakalpak [8]. The study also identifies archaic pronoun forms, examines their grammatical functions, and evaluates their contribution to the historical development of the Karakalpak literary language [9].

The scientific novelty of the research lies in providing the first systematic linguistic description of the pronoun system in Kazi Maulik's works using historical-comparative, structural, and functional methods. The findings contribute to Turkic historical linguistics, comparative grammar, and the study of the evolution of grammatical categories in Karakalpak [10].

2. Materials and Method

The material for this study consists of the poetic works of Kazi Maulik Bekmukhammad uly, one of the prominent representatives of Karakalpak classical literature of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The research corpus includes his lyrical poems, poetic dialogues (aytis), and other published literary texts in which various categories of pronouns are systematically represented. The linguistic material was collected through continuous sampling from the available editions of the poet's works and classified according to semantic and grammatical criteria.

The study employs a combination of complementary linguistic methods widely used in historical and comparative Turkic linguistics.

The descriptive method was applied to identify and classify the lexical, semantic, and grammatical properties of pronouns occurring in the corpus. This approach made it possible to distinguish personal, demonstrative, reflexive, interrogative, collective, definitive, indefinite, and negative pronouns according to their semantic functions.

The historical-comparative method was used to determine the diachronic development of pronominal forms by comparing the language of Kazi Maulik with Old Turkic written monuments and the modern Karakalpak literary language. Special attention was paid to archaic forms preserved in the poet's language and their historical continuity within the Turkic linguistic tradition.

The structural and morphological analysis focused on the grammatical structure of pronouns, including their inflectional paradigms, case marking, number, person, possessive forms, and derivational characteristics. Variations in phonetic realization and morphological alternations were also examined in order to identify historical developments within the Karakalpak grammatical system.

The comparative linguistic method was employed to compare historical pronominal forms with their modern equivalents. This comparison enabled the identification of both conservative grammatical features retained from earlier stages of Turkic and innovative elements characteristic of the emerging Karakalpak literary language.

Furthermore, elements of functional-semantic analysis were used to investigate the contextual functions of pronouns in poetic discourse. Particular attention was given to their stylistic role, referential functions, pragmatic usage, and contribution to the expressive organization of poetic texts.

The reliability of the research findings is ensured through the analysis of authentic literary texts, the application of established linguistic methods, and comparison with authoritative studies devoted to the historical grammar of the Karakalpak language and the development of Turkic literary languages.

3. Result

The analysis of Kazi Maulik's poetic language demonstrates that the pronominal system preserves almost all semantic categories characteristic of the modern Karakalpak language while simultaneously retaining numerous archaic forms inherited from the Old Turkic literary tradition. The corpus contains personal, demonstrative, reflexive, interrogative, collective, definitive, indefinite, and negative pronouns, which differ in their frequency of occurrence, grammatical behavior, and stylistic function [11].

Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns constitute the largest and most frequently occurring pronominal group in the analyzed corpus. Both singular and plural forms are widely represented. Alongside the standard forms *men*, *sen*, *biz*, *siz*, and *ol*, the poet employs several historical variants, including *mán*, *sán*, *mána*, *sána*, *máníń*, and *sáníń*. These variants reflect the phonetic and morphological characteristics of the Central Asian written literary language and demonstrate continuity with earlier Turkic grammatical traditions [12].

Another characteristic feature is the use of the plural pronouns **biz** and **siz** to express politeness, social respect, and honorific meaning rather than numerical plurality. Such usage corresponds to the etiquette norms observed in classical Turkic literary texts and remains partially preserved in modern Karakalpak speech [13].

Historical variation is also observed in the declension of personal pronouns. The corpus contains several parallel case forms that differ from those used in contemporary Karakalpak. Genitive forms such as *máníń*, *sáníń*, and *anıń* coexist with their modern counterparts, whereas dative, accusative, ablative, and locative forms exhibit phonetic alternations reflecting earlier stages of grammatical development. These forms provide important evidence for reconstructing the historical evolution of Karakalpak morphology [14].

Demonstrative Pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns represent another productive category in Kazi Maulik's language. Alongside the modern forms **bul** and **ol**, the corpus contains archaic variants such as **oshbu**, **ushbu**, **oshal**, **shul**, **shu**, and **munda**. These pronouns perform both deictic and stylistic functions by emphasizing spatial, temporal, or contextual reference [15].

Particularly noteworthy is the frequent occurrence of **oshbu** and **shul**, which are characteristic of the Chagatai literary tradition and medieval Turkic written monuments. Their preservation in Kazi Maulik's poetry demonstrates the continuing influence of classical written norms on Karakalpak literary language during the late nineteenth century [16].

Reflexive Pronouns

The reflexive pronoun **óz** functions both attributively and substantively throughout the corpus. In attributive constructions it modifies nouns without additional inflection, whereas in substantive use it receives possessive, plural, and case suffixes according to grammatical context. This pattern closely resembles the behavior of reflexive pronouns in the modern Karakalpak language, indicating a relatively stable grammatical category that has undergone only minor historical changes.

Interrogative Pronouns

The interrogative system includes numerous forms such as **kim**, **ne**, **neshe**, **qaysı**, **qalay**, and **qansha**. In addition, the corpus preserves obsolete interrogative variants including **neshek**, **neshek**, and **name**, which have disappeared from the modern literary language. These forms reflect the lexical richness of the historical Turkic literary tradition and illustrate the gradual standardization of interrogative pronouns in contemporary Karakalpak.

Collective, Definitive, Indefinite, and Negative Pronouns

The remaining semantic groups occur less frequently but reveal several significant historical features. Collective pronouns such as **bárshe**, **barsha**, and **bári** are actively employed and function similarly to their modern equivalents. The pronoun **hamme**, inherited from earlier literary traditions, appears only occasionally, indicating its gradual decline in usage.

Definitive pronouns based on the element **har** demonstrate stable grammatical behavior and frequently combine with interrogative pronouns to produce generalized meanings. Indefinite pronouns are mainly formed analytically through combinations of numerals and interrogative pronouns, whereas negative pronouns occur in both simple and compound forms, including **hesh**, **heshkim**, and **heshbir**. Their grammatical functions closely correspond to those observed in present-day Karakalpak, although several archaic lexical variants have disappeared from the standard language.

Overall, the results indicate that the pronoun system in Kazi Maulik's works represents a transitional stage between the historical Central Asian literary language and the modern Karakalpak literary language. Numerous archaic forms coexist with grammatical structures that later became standard in contemporary Karakalpak, confirming the historical continuity of the language and the significant role of Kazi Maulik's literary heritage in preserving Turkic linguistic traditions.

4. Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the pronominal system of Kazi Maulik's poetic language occupies an intermediate position between the historical Central Asian written literary tradition and the modern Karakalpak literary language. This confirms the widely accepted view that the language of Karakalpak classical literature preserved numerous grammatical features inherited from Old Turkic while simultaneously reflecting the gradual formation of the modern national literary language.

The extensive use of archaic personal and demonstrative pronouns corresponds with the observations of Kh. Hamidov, who emphasized that historical Karakalpak written texts retained many grammatical forms characteristic of medieval Turkic literary monuments. Similar conclusions have also been reported by D. Saytov and A. Bekbergenov in their studies devoted to the language of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Karakalpak poets. The present study further supports these conclusions by demonstrating that Kazi Maulik consistently employed parallel pronominal variants, several of which later disappeared from the modern literary norm.

One of the most remarkable findings concerns the coexistence of multiple phonetic variants of the same pronoun. Forms such as *máníń*, *máńa*, *sáníń*, and *ańa* occur alongside the modern equivalents *meniń*, *mańan*, *seniń*, and *ońan*. This variation illustrates that the grammatical standardization of Karakalpak had not yet been completed during the poet's lifetime. Instead, literary language continued to preserve traditional written forms inherited from earlier Turkic literary practice while gradually incorporating spoken linguistic elements. Similar transitional features have been identified in other Turkic literary languages, particularly in historical Uzbek and Kazakh texts.

The analysis also indicates that demonstrative pronouns preserve a particularly high degree of historical continuity. Lexical units such as *oshbu*, *shul*, and *oshal* are characteristic of Chagatai literary texts and medieval Turkic monuments. Their productive use in Kazi Maulik's poetry suggests that these forms remained stylistically prestigious in Karakalpak literary writing well into the late nineteenth century. Comparable observations have been

reported in studies of historical Turkic manuscripts, where demonstrative pronouns are regarded as relatively conservative grammatical elements.

Another significant observation concerns the functional development of interrogative pronouns. Forms such as *neshik*, *neshuk*, and *náme*, which frequently occur in the analyzed corpus, are absent from the modern Karakalpak literary language. Their disappearance reflects the natural process of lexical standardization that accompanied the formation of the contemporary literary norm. Nevertheless, several of these forms continue to survive in regional dialects, supporting the hypothesis that dialects preserve archaic linguistic features longer than standardized literary languages.

The results further demonstrate that collective, indefinite, and negative pronouns exhibit considerably greater grammatical stability than personal and demonstrative pronouns. Most of these categories have retained both their semantic functions and morphological structure in contemporary Karakalpak. Such stability corresponds to the general typological characteristics of Turkic languages, in which the core grammatical system changes more slowly than lexical or stylistic components.

From the perspective of comparative Turkic linguistics, the present findings provide additional evidence supporting the continuity of the Common Turkic grammatical tradition. Numerous pronominal forms identified in Kazi Maulik's language have direct counterparts in historical Uzbek, Kazakh, Uyghur, and other Turkic literary languages. Consequently, the poet's linguistic heritage represents not merely an important stage in the development of Karakalpak but also a valuable source for reconstructing the historical evolution of Turkic grammatical systems.

Overall, the present research expands previous linguistic investigations by providing a comprehensive description of the pronominal system in Kazi Maulik's works. Unlike earlier studies that primarily focused on literary interpretation, this research demonstrates the historical, structural, and functional characteristics of pronouns using a systematic linguistic approach. The results contribute to historical grammar, comparative Turkic linguistics, and the study of the formation of the Karakalpak literary language.

5. Conclusion

The present study investigated the lexical-semantic, morphological, and functional characteristics of pronouns in the poetic language of Kazi Maulik Bekmukhammad uly. The analysis demonstrates that the poet's works preserve a comprehensive pronominal system representing all major semantic categories of pronouns known in modern Karakalpak while simultaneously retaining numerous archaic forms inherited from the historical Turkic literary tradition. The research revealed that personal and demonstrative pronouns constitute the most productive categories in the analyzed corpus. Their grammatical structure reflects both conservative and innovative linguistic features. Historical variants of personal pronouns, together with archaic demonstrative forms such as *oshbu*, *shul*, and *oshal*, illustrate the transitional nature of the language used by Kazi Maulik. These forms confirm the strong influence of the Central Asian written literary tradition on the development of the Karakalpak literary language. The study further establishes that the case system of pronouns preserved several historical morphological variants that are either absent from or only marginally represented in contemporary Karakalpak. Variations in genitive, dative, accusative, ablative, and locative forms demonstrate that the grammatical standardization of the Karakalpak literary language was still in progress during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Another important finding concerns the preservation of obsolete interrogative, collective, and negative pronouns. Although many of these forms have disappeared from the modern literary language, they remain valuable evidence for reconstructing earlier stages of Karakalpak grammar and for understanding the historical evolution of Turkic pronominal systems. Overall, the results confirm that Kazi Maulik's linguistic heritage represents an important transitional stage in the historical development of the Karakalpak literary language. His works preserve numerous grammatical features inherited from Old Turkic while simultaneously reflecting the gradual formation of modern literary norms. Consequently, the language of Kazi Maulik constitutes an important source not only for

Karakalpak historical linguistics but also for comparative Turkic grammar and the study of the evolution of grammatical categories in Turkic languages. The findings of the present study may serve as a foundation for future comparative investigations of pronominal systems in other Turkic literary monuments and contribute to broader research in historical morphology, corpus linguistics, and the diachronic development of Turkic languages.

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