The OSCAR PUBLISHING Services
International Journal Of Literature And Languages

VOLUME Vol.06 Issue06 2026
PAGE NO. 82-86
DOI 10.37547/ijll/Volume06Issue06-19

The Skill of Composing in Modern Karakalpak Novellas

Bekbergenova Ziyada Utepovna

Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor at the Karakalpak Humanities Research Institute, Karakalpakstan Branch, Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Received: 26 April 2026; **Accepted:** 24 May 2026; **Published:** 18 June 2026

Abstract: This article examines several of these compositional units – namely the title, epigraph, preface, and the arrangement of chapters and sections. The study is based on examples from contemporary Karakalpak literature, particularly historical, modern, and documentary novellas and essay-novellas by prominent writers such as G.Yesemuratova, Sh.Usnatdinov, M.Tawmuratov, Zh.Moyanov, and Zh.Kosheterov. The paper provides a scholarly analysis of these elements and draws relevant conclusions.

Keywords: Novella, composition, plot, title, epigraph, preface, authorial idea, structure, architectonics, character.

Introduction.

Introduction: An examination of Karakalpak novellas produced in recent years shows that their content and themes, plot and composition, system of characters, and modes of narration have evolved in ways that reflect contemporary realities. In particular, the selection of themes and the choice of titles by writers have become one of the most effective means of constructing composition and directing the reader's full attention to the overall content of the work, which in turn generates considerable scholarly interest.

Therefore, in examining the compositional structure of contemporary Karakalpak novellas, we will consider those elements that immediately attract attention – such as chapters, sections, titles, epigraphs, prologues (introductions), epilogues (conclusions), and others – based on examples from selected Karakalpak works.

In her research on 20th-Century Uzbek Short Prose: Poetic Explorations and Principles of Development, Umida Rasulova emphasizes that the structure of a literary work is an aesthetic component of the artistic text. She notes that the clarity of its semiological space indicates the depth of the work. According to her, the initial semiotic core of this structure is the title, in which the author's idea and conceptual vision are concentrated. The title functions as the first element of aesthetic impact and serves as the beginning of the spiritual interaction between the author and the reader. It is also from this point that the writer's mastery, talent, and creative intention are evaluated [4:168]. The researcher further observes that in recent Uzbek literature, the novellas of O'tkir Hoshimov, such as «Bahor qaytmaydi» – (Spring Never Returns), are associated with seasonal imagery of nature. Likewise, Khairiddin Sultanov's «Yozning yolg'iz yodgori» (The Only Memory of Summer) is also connected with the seasons of nature. The titles of Normurod Norqobilov's works, such as «Ovul oralagan bo'ri» – (The Wolf That Wandered the Village), «Ena bo'ri» – (Mother Wolf), and «Uvlayotgan it" (Howling Dog), as well as Togay Murod's «Ot kishnagan oqshom» - (The Evening When the Horse Neighed), are connected with animal imagery. Furthermore, Shukur Kholmirzaev's «Yur, tog'larga ketamiz» – (Let's Go to the Mountains), Normurod Norqobilov's «Qoyalar ham yig'laydi» – (Even Rocks Cry), and Khairiddin Sultanov's «Saodat sohili» – (The Shore of Happiness) are associated with geographical and spatial imagery. Meanwhile, Mirkarim Osim's «Jayhun ustida bulutlar» (Clouds over the Amu Darya) and Togay Murod's «Yulduzlar mangu

yonadi» (The Stars Always Shine) and «Oydinda yurgan odamlar» (People Walking on the Lake) vividly depict celestial and cosmic imagery in artistic representation, all of which are analyzed through the lens of their titles.

From the above-mentioned scientific and theoretical views, it can be concluded that the title of any prose work plays a decisive role in ensuring the integrity of the work, revealing its content, and conveying the author's intended purpose. We will analyze this through examples of recently created novellas. For instance, in Gulaysha Yesemuratova's documentary novella «Múrshiyda Bekpolatova kim?» (Who Is Murshiyda Bekpolatova?), the title itself naturally raises the question in the reader's mind: who is Murshiyda Bekpolatova? This title, first of all, is connected with a personal name, and secondly, it immediately directs the reader's attention toward the life events of this individual, encouraging a quicker and deeper engagement with the text. In other words, the personal name at the center of the novella becomes the focal point of the composition. The work vividly depicts Murshiyda Bekpolatova, a representative of the Tatar nation in the early decades of the 20th century, who came to our country to spread the light of knowledge and devotedly served in the field of education. The novella artistically portrays both the joyful and difficult moments of her life journey. The writer, aiming to introduce Murshiyda Bekpolatova more closely to today's readers who are not familiar with her, has convincingly depicted events from her life based on documents, as well as historical and literary sources. In this way, the author reconstructs her biography with a strong sense of authenticity. In Sharap Usnatdinov's documentary novella «Ibrayım Yusupov (Shayırdıń jaslıǵı)» (Ibrayim Yusupov: The Poet's Youth), the writer seeks to engage contemporary readers – who are well acquainted with the works of the renowned poet Ibrayim Yusupov – by drawing their attention to the writer's life, especially his childhood and youth, presenting these biographical stages in an engaging manner. In Ernazar Usenov's novella «Xanmaqsım» – (Khanmaksym), the severe consequences of the collectivization policy widely implemented across the country in the early twentieth century are revealed through the life of Ubaydulla Maksym – known among the people as Khanmaksym – who was a religiously educated figure, as well as through the destinies of those around him. Similarly, the use of personal names in titles can also be observed in works such as Gulaysha Yesemuratova's «Akademik Sabır Kamalov» – (Academician Sabir Kamalov), Sharap Usnatdinov's «Polat Madreymov» – (Polat Madreymov), Sarigul Bahadiranova's «Tomaris hám Kir» (Tomyris and Cyrus), Abdsayit Pakhratdinov's «Aydos biy haqqında ápsana» – (Legend about Aydos Biy), Kamal Mambetov's «Márziya» – (Marziya), and Muratbay Nizanov's «Aqshagúl» (Akshagul). In these works, writers attempt to integrate historical, legendary, and realistic events associated with the mentioned individuals into a unified artistic composition and coherent narrative structure of their works.

Thus, it can be clearly observed that the titles of these novellas serve to reveal the main theme and problems of the work. For example, in Sharap Usnatdinov's novella-essay «Polat Madreymov» – (Polat Madreimov), the life and creative activity of Polat Madreymov – an important figure in our national art and culture – are depicted in an engaging and artistic manner based on rich biographical and factual material. In contrast, in the same author's novella «Sońǵı ańshı» – (The Last Hunter), the dangers faced by religious figures in the past during the period of independence are conveyed through the character of Haymatdin and his difficult life journey, thereby transmitting an important message to the present generation.

The novella Muratbay Nizanov «Aqıret uyqısı» (The Sleep of the Afterlife) consists of 207 pages. Although its length is comparable to that of a novel, the sequence of events is centered around the character of Otemurat the old man. The writer compresses events spanning 70–80 years of the protagonist's life into a period of approximately fifteen days, presenting them in a psychological manner. Through the condensation of time and space, the work meets the formal requirements of the novella genre. At the beginning of the text, the writer uses as an epigraph two lines of verse heard by Otemurat in his childhood from elders: "Was I ever destined to live that long, or even to enjoy a simple, modest life?". Subsequently, the life events experienced by Otemurat the old man are artistically connected to this epigraph. The writer pays special attention to presenting the 27-part structure of the

plot not in chronological order, but through a psychological narrative approach. This is also considered one of the innovations in the compositional structure of contemporary Karakalpak novellas.

Literary scholar Hatam Umurov writes: “If we consider composition as the body (the whole essence) of a literary work, then all other elements of the work exist within it. In this sense, both the parts of the plot and the extraliterary components (such as the title, epigraph, lyrical, philosophical, and journalistic digressions; additional explanations, landscape and portrait descriptions, psychological analysis, etc.) function within composition and contribute to its structural integrity. Such a strong composition reflects the unity of content (spirit and idea), demonstrating their mutual interaction, transition, and aesthetic enrichment” [6:139]. In Karakalpak novellas, the author’s introduction or epigraph used before the main narrative plays an important role in generalizing the poetic content and clarifying the writer’s artistic intention. Writers often include poetic lines, wisdom sayings, proverbs, or hadiths as epigraphs in order to increase the ideological and emotional weight of the work.

For example, in Sharap Usnatdinov’s novella «Sońǵı ańshı» (The Last Hunter, 2012), alongside the subtitle in parentheses «Haymaddin maqsım táripi» (“From the Perspective of Haymaddin Maqsim”), the writer also uses a wise saying from Amir Temur’s teachings – «Ullılar sáwbetinde bol, haq niyetli kisilerge talpın» (“Be in the company of the great; strive toward honest and sincere people – as an epigraph”) [5:3]. Through this epigraph, the writer summarizes the ideological content of the work and hints at the identity of the main character. The epigraph also directs the reader toward the narrative, which depicts the Soviet administrative policy of the previous century, the repression against religion and religiously educated scholars, and the persecution of Islamic scholars. It further highlights the fate of the respected religious figure Haymaddin Maqsim, who was forced into isolation and spent the final years of his life in ascetic withdrawal. These events are conveyed to the present generation through the recollections of Murat Imamaddinov, who had personally known and lived in the same period as Haymaddin Maqsim. Of course, in portraying Haymaddin Maqsim and those close to him, the writer relies heavily on prototypical figures. The sequence of events related to the protagonist’s life is reliably narrated by Murat Imamaddinov, the son of his nephew and a contemporary witness to these events.

Regarding the role of epigraphs in revealing the author’s intention and the ideological essence of a literary work, literary scholar Erkin Khudayberdiev writes: “Some writers, before beginning a work or its sections, include short excerpts from other literary works, wise sayings, or examples of oral folk creativity. These inserted passages are called epigraphs. Similar to the title of a work, epigraphs also provide a certain degree of indication of its theme and ideological direction” [9:96]. In Gulaysha Yesemuratova’s novella «Úsh dáwirdiń gúwası “Tentek” hayal haqqında ápsana» (The Witness of Three Eras: A Legend about the “Rebellious” Woman, 2013), the writer uses, before the beginning of the narrative, a folk song: The poet is expressing deep respect and love for mothers. Even if they physically pass away, their importance never disappears. The lines highlight how children depend on their mothers for protection, love, and guidance – and without them, they feel lost, vulnerable, and alone. Alongside this, the author also uses a quotation from the Austrian writer Stefan Zweig: “History does not wish to be corrected; it does not need correction, nor does it demand it”. In addition, in the introduction (preface) of the novella, the author includes a personal commentary: “We know from history that in 1924–30–33, educated specialists and skilled professionals from major cities such as Russia, Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, and Kazakhstan came to our region to assist us. Some were doctors, some teachers, engineers, or builders. All of them did not come by chance: some were sent due to government policies, some came because of their living conditions, and others were guided by the powerful feeling of love. One of these specialists was a teacher who later received the honorary title ‘Distinguished Teacher of Karakalpakstan’. I recorded her story based on her own narration and, at her request, aimed to present it truthfully without concealment” [1:3].

The epigraphs and the authorial commentary in the prologue clearly indicate that the protagonist of the novella is a woman, and that the events connected to her life are presented in an unembellished, realistic, and artistically truthful manner for contemporary

readers. The epigraphs and authorial voice attract attention by concentrating the main meaning of the work, substantiating the character's situation, and reinforcing the overall ideological message. In reality, during the 1920–30s of the twentieth century, Ayse Bolekbaeva came from Kazakhstan to Karakalpakstan, our country, and devoted her life to educating thousands of boys and girls of our people. She lived, worked, and contributed to society to such an extent that she was eventually awarded the honorary title "Distinguished Teacher of the Republic of Karakalpakstan". Throughout her life, she had to pass through many difficult and challenging paths. From her early childhood, through adolescence, adulthood, and family life, Ayse Bolekbaeva experienced orphanhood, political repression, the harsh trials of the Second World War, and various forms of hardship. Nevertheless, through her intelligence, knowledge, and strength of character, she overcame all difficulties, raised her children without leaving them orphaned, and became both an honorable mother and an exemplary teacher. In the novella, the character and personality traits of Ayse Bolekbaeva are artistically depicted based on historical and documentary sources. At the beginning of the work, the inclusion of the author's introductory commentary and several syntactic structures is similar to what is observed in Jiyenbay Moyanov's historical novella «Palwanlar sárdarı» (The Leader of Wrestlers), where the author writes: "In Karakalpakstan, any thoughtful person interested in wrestling and poetry and who respects them would certainly know something noteworthy about Janabay Qaratay uli, both as a wrestler and a poet. Because it is well known that his works such as 'Aqsüngil' and 'Qazi Ishan' have already become part of folk songs") [3:12]. Through this reference, the author indicates that the entire plot and compositional structure of the novella is dedicated to the life of the famous wrestler Janabay Qaratay uli (1890–1926) from Kegeyli. The author portrays Janabay Qaratay uli not only as a historical figure but also as an artistic personality elevated to the level of a folk ideal. In the novella, Janabay and the people around him – his parents, contemporaries, and fellow wrestlers – are presented as real historical prototypes. At the same time, their images are deepened through the author's artistic concept, transforming them into heroic figures who carry the burden of their era and nation.

"The initial sentence in a literary work may be expressed in one word or in several sentences. This is connected with the writer's artistic method, and in most works there is a tendency to present the first sentence in a concise form" [8:133]. For example, Joldasbay Kosheterov's novella «Aytılmaǵan sóz» (The Unspoken Word) begins on its first page with both a folk saying chosen by the author and an opening narrative passage: "The eye sees, but the tongue cannot speak; the tongue can speak, but the eye does not see" and "He was like a hardened, unbroken wild horse. That time he deeply regretted not being able to kill Otarbay, who had been trapped in the thicket. In anger, he lashed his horse, saying: 'The son of an elder blocked my way.' Since escaping from captivity and breaking out of the iron cage, the horse had become fierce, carrying the scent of Izban in its nostrils. If it were not restrained, its neck would stretch like a goose, eager to run even more. A fine-bred horse! Yet without lineage, a solitary horse. And the rider on it was also alone – a ruthless man!" [2:42]. The epigraph and the opening sentences clearly hint at the tragic fate of Izban, who had long been labeled among the people as "Izban the bandit" and "enemy of the people." His life ends in a tragic death, similar to the fate of the wild horse Köklen and the solitary animal, yet the historical truth about him had long remained unspoken and unwritten.

In other words, the author does not simply present the life path of Izban from a one-sided or biased perspective, nor does he conceal or soften its negative aspects. Instead, he attempts to depict it truthfully and without distortion. Through the broad narrative structure of the novella, we feel that the author, taking advantage of the freedom provided by the independence period and relying on historical reality, is able to speak openly and courageously without fear or hesitation about what had long remained "unspoken."

Literary scholar Yuldosh Solijonov writes: "Many examples of Uzbek prose begin with the description of exposition, that is, the introduction of the place where events occur and the characters involved in them. … Every talented writer is required to pay special attention to the beginning of the work, to enrich it with figurative language, and to increase its expressive impact. The meaning presented in this introduction

gradually permeates the entire structure of the work" [7:22-24]. In Sharap Usnatdinov's novella «Ibrayım Yusupov (Shayırdıń jaslıǵı)» (Ibrayim Yusupov: The Poet's Youth, 2013), the title not only refers to the main theme "Ibrayim Yusupov" but also includes an additional clarifying and explanatory sub-theme. In terms of composition, the work consists of several chapters such as «Yusup axun» (Yusup Akhun), «Xanbiybi» elti (Aunt Khanbiybi), «Shımbay – shayırlıq mektebi» (Shimbay – School of Poetry), «Sıyqırlı atdorba» (The Magical Saddlebag), «Burqasınlı mánzilge sapar» (Journey to the Stormy Destination), as well as a number of sections marked with asterisks (***). As can be seen from these compositional elements, the author begins the narrative by introducing the family background of the future poet Ibrayim Yusupov – his father Yusup Akhun and his mother Khanbiybi. In the subsequent parts of the plot, the writer depicts the poet's childhood, adolescence, and youth during the Second World War period, as well as the moments when he became known as a talented poet in 1945 after entering the Karakalpak State Pedagogical Institute. These events are enriched through biographical and documentary materials, based on memories of Yusupov's contemporaries and his own poetic works, thereby combining historical facts with artistic narration.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the author's artistic intention is first revealed in the selection of the title (theme), as well as in the use of the preface, prologue, epigraph, and in the overall construction of composition – namely, in the arrangement of events into chapters and sections and their artistic narration.

The titles (themes) assigned to the Karakalpak writers' novellas discussed above are, first of all, the result of genre requirements, and secondly, they are artistic-compositional elements directly connected to the writer's skill, creative intention, and conceptual approach. As we have observed, the process of composing a novella and arranging its structural components is a creative phenomenon that is closely connected to the writer's artistic purpose and skill, as well as to the ideological-thematic, genre-based, and stylistic features of the work itself.

REFERENCES

1. Esemuratova G. Úsh dáwirdiń gúwası "Tentek" hayal haqqında ápsana. Jurnal "Ámiwdárya", №2, 2013.
2. Kosheterov J. Aytılmaǵan sóz. Jurnal "Ámiwdárya", №5, 2013.
3. Moyanov J. Palwanlar sardari. Jurnal "Ámiwdárya", №1, 2019.
4. Rasulova U. XX asr ózbek qissachiligi (poetik izlanishlar va taraqqiyot tamoyillari). Filologiya ilimleri doktorı (DSc) dissertaciyası. – Toshkent, 2020.
5. Usnatdinov Sh. Songı ańshı. – Nókis: Qaraqalpaqstan, 2014.
6. Umurov H. Adabiyot nazariyasi. – Toshkent: Sharq, 2002.
7. Solijonov Y. XX asrning 80-90 yillari ózbek nasrida badiiy nutq poetikasi: filol. fan. dokt. dissertaciyası. – Toshkent, 2002.
8. Hamroyev K. Hikoyada ilk jumla poetikasi // "Sharq yulduzi" jurnali. - Toshkent, No. 11, 2019.
9. Xudoyberdiev E. Adabiyotshunoslikka kirish. – Toshkent: ÓAJBNT markazi, 2003.