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CONTRAST AS A LINGUOPOETIC POTENTIAL

Yuldashev Doniyor Taxirovich
Professor at Urgench State University named after Abu Rayhan Biruni, Doctor of Science in Philology (DSc)
Email: doniyory696@gmail.com | Tel: +998907267329
Jumaniyazova Dildora Xudoyorovna
Independent Researcher at Urgench State University named after Abu Rayhan Biruni
Email: dildora030894@gmail.com | Tel: +998995764124

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Abstract: This article examines the linguopoetic potential of contrast in literary texts, using Quzi Davlat's divan titled " Ko'ngil chiroyi " ("Beauty of the Soul" in English) as a case study. Through linguopoetic and cognitive analysis methods, various types of contrast are identified, and their aesthetic-philosophical functions are analyzed. Furthermore, the semantic transformation and poetic valence characteristics of contextual antonyms within the text structure are scientifically substantiated.

Keywords: "Beauty of the Soul", linguopoetics, contrast, antithesis, lexical antonym, contextual antonym, linguopoetic valence, ontological contrast, Sufi concept.

Introduction

Opposition (contradiction) is considered one of the categories that has attracted the attention of a number of philosophers since ancient times. In particular, this category was interpreted differently in the scientific and theoretical views of philosophers such as Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, and Democritus [9]. Among these, Aristotle's views on opposition are of particular significance. Evaluating the philosophical views of this philosopher, T.F. Chursunova notes: *"The study of antonymy began with the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle [10, 10]."* Starting from the second half of the 20th century, attention to the phenomenon of antonymy increased even further, and dedicated scientific research within the framework of this topic began to emerge [2; 7; 12; 4; 3; 5].

M.N. Chupanovskaya very appropriately distinguishes two approaches in the interpretation of this phenomenon: 1) narrow – traditional approach; 2) broad approach [10, 19].

Proponents of the first approach include among antonyms contrastive and, at the same time, words of opposing meanings that express interrelated concepts. In contrast, the second approach, put forward by a relative minority, views antonymy on a broader scale, including under antonyms not only lexemes with opposite meanings, but also correlative words that can be juxtaposed with one another. Over time, the linguistic interpretation of antonymy expanded further. While initial works were primarily dedicated to defining the essence of this phenomenon, later a number of issues regarding antonymy emerged as objects of study. These include the relationship of antonymy with other phenomena at the lexical level—such as synonymy and polysemy—antonymic relationships in word-formation paradigms, the interpretation of antonymy within a specific part of speech, and the antonymy of grammatical units.

In Uzbek linguistics, the phenomenon of antonymy was initially interpreted in various aspects in certain articles, textbooks, and scientific works [6, 28-30; 8, 33-40; 13, 28-33]. In particular, S. Mutallibov's article *"Antonym Words"* is considered one of the earliest works dedicated to the study of antonyms in the Uzbek language. Later, this phenomenon was covered in a monographic framework in the PhD dissertations of R. Shukurov and B. Isabekov [12; 4].

Expressing objects, features, properties, and events in reality based on contrast principles and juxtaposition creates distinct cognitive conveniences in linguistic thought. Consequently, human perception tends to divide reality into specific poles: *"When we evaluate a particular event or phenomenon, we naturally pay attention to whether it is negative or positive, and ultimately we place it into one of these two opposing series [1, 12]."* In modern linguistic sources, the lexical units forming this contradiction relationship are studied under the term *antonyms*, and they are described as *"a phenomenon of mutual semantic opposition and contradiction between language units, being words that express opposite, conflicting meanings [14, 16]"*. It can be said that the principles of opposition have traditionally held a leading position in ensuring the emotionality and aesthetic impact of literary texts. The art of antithesis (tazod) in classical literary criticism and poetics is today deeply researched under the terms contrast or antithesis within modern linguistics and linguopoetics.

At the linguistic level, contrast often relies on the textual manifestation of lexical antonymy. Such concepts possessing opposite poles clearly embody the transformations of reality and the complex contradictions of life philosophy in the reader's imagination. In Uzbek linguistics, various systemic manifestations of antonymy (gradual, vector, and partial antonyms) and their stylistic potential have been explained in academic textbooks as the foundation of logical-lexical contrast. Professor N. Mahmudov, in his research, analyzed the most fundamental conceptual oppositions in national mindset, cultural, and philosophical worldviews in harmony with the background of the linguistic picture of the world.

Methodology

In this article, the methodological approach is defined as applying theoretical knowledge accumulated on contrast (antithesis) and antonyms, especially contextual antonyms, in literary texts into practice, and performing a linguopoetic analysis of rich empirical materials drawn from ghazals in Davlatyor's divan *"Beauty of the Soul"* (conditionally abbreviated as BS). The methodological foundation and source base of the article rely on classical and modern linguistic approaches. Through linguopoetic and cognitive-conceptual analysis methods, oppositions in the text are categorized into social, ontological, moral, and Sufi groups, and their linguistic pictures as well as aesthetic functions are systematically analyzed.

The practical process and analytical technique were carried out based on a three-stage comprehensive approach. In the preparatory and analytical stages, contrastive units and imagery extracted from the divan were examined using contextual and distributive analysis methods, highlighting the semantic transformation and collocational potential of traditional linguistic antonyms and textual (contextual) oppositions. In the final stage, relying on typological and synthesis methods, the valence characteristics of contextual antonyms—such as semantic expansion, syntactic parallelism, and subordination to a central symbol—and their role in shaping the ethos (pathos) of the literary work were summarized into scientific conclusions.

Discussion and Results

The linguopoetic aspect approaches contrast as a fundamental constructive element that builds the aesthetic, ideological, and semantic integrity of literary speech. Quzi Davlat – Davlatyor's divan *"Beauty of the Soul"* is distinguished by an extraordinary richness of linguistic and contextual contrasts. In expressing the tempests in the lyric hero's psyche, romantic agonies, and socio-philosophical views, the poet systematically utilized four fundamental forms of contrast: social contrast, ontological contrast, moral contrast, and Sufi contrast. Below, we attempt to briefly explain each of these:

1. Social Contrast – Social Stratification and Its Linguistic Reflection

In the poet's poetry, social contrast serves to display the material and social polarization of human life and its outlines in linguistic thought. This type of contrast is often actualized through lexical units denoting the hierarchical structure of society. For example:

Ask the kings and beggars who weep blood in her absence,
About the scar of the unfaithful beloved who stole away mind and sense. **(BS, 61)**

In this couplet, the two extreme poles of society—**king** (absolute power, wealth) and **beggar** (absolute poverty, destitution)—are lexically juxtaposed. Through this linguopoetic device, the poet advances the philosophical-humanistic idea that regardless of social status, all human beings are equal before the pain of love and the anguish of separation.

The linguistic reflection of social stratification is also clearly evident in the parallel use of themes of luxurious life and humiliation. For instance: *"How many kings renounced crown and throne, and put on dervish rags in your path, O beloved…"* (BS, 18). Here, the concepts of *crown and throne* versus *dervish rags* (janda—the torn, worthless garment of dervishes) demonstrate the transformation of material and social status. This linguistic contrast affects the reader within the context of rejecting the transient material values of the world.

2. Ontological Contrast – Existence, Life and Death, the Essence of Time

Such contrast serves as the main linguistic mechanism for illuminating the eternal laws of existence, the dialectical struggle between living and non-being, the transience of time, and its subjective perception. The poet systematically conveys the dynamic aspect of existence and the succession of seasons and life cycles through verb antonyms:

One is born, and another dies,
One weeps, while another smiles.
How wondrous, in the garden of diverse blooms,
One opens wide, while another fades. **(BS, 294)**

This quatrain is built entirely on the basis of ontological contrast. Within a single stanza, the parallel antonymic pairs *to be born – to die, to weep – to smile, to bloom – to fade* form a perfect linguistic framework reflecting the universal philosophy of existence, the ceaseless movement, and the equilibrium of life.

The connection of the concepts of life and death (living and dying) with subjective-spiritual states is also manifested in the following couplet:

Her glance bestows life, yet her knitted brows take my soul away,
For this reason I am now dead, now alive, crying out for the beloved. **(BS, 50)**

The units *bestow life – take soul* and *dead – alive* elevate the sharp turmoil in the lyric hero's spiritual world and his emotional reaction to every movement of the beloved onto an ontological plane.

3. Moral Contrast – The Relationship Between Good and Evil, Loyalty and Betrayal

Moral contrast reflects human morality, the inner spiritual world, and the confrontation between benevolent and malevolent forces in society at the linguistic level. Davlatyor effectively uses both traditional linguistic antonyms and contextual oppositions to shape moral criteria. In particular, the most painful point in human relations—the concepts of loyalty and its opposite, betrayal—is portrayed by the poet as follows:

Though you may truly be the possessor of loyalty,
It will still bring unseen betrayal upon your head. **(BS, 207)**

In this instance, the abstract nouns *loyalty* and *betrayal* in the poetic text reveal the sharply contradictory nature of interpersonal relations. Furthermore, the quantitative and qualitative juxtaposition of the concepts of friend and enemy stands as another distinctive example of moral contrast. For example:

If you have a thousand friends, it is few; if you have one enemy, it is too many,
For that enemy will bring reproach upon your pure name. **(BS, 207)**

Here, alongside the lexical antonyms *friend – enemy*, the gradual and quantitative antonyms *thousand – one* and *few – many* are presented in parallel. Such multi-layered contrast serves to multiply the expressive power of the couplet and the weight of vital wisdom embedded within it.

4. Sufi (Mystical) Contrast – Transience and Eternity, Divine Opposition in Lover-Beloved Relations

Such contrasts constitute the highest and most complex linguistic layer of the poet's work. Here, the relationship between the material world (the transient world) and divine existence (eternity), as well as between the lover (humble, wretched) and the beloved (Divine Beloved, supreme being), is illuminated through vertical contrast. The lyric hero's positioning of himself on the earth, in lowliness, and the beloved in high, divine realms serves as a classical example of Sufi contrast:

She wanders in the highest heavens, while I am amid the dust,
My foundation stone falls short to equal her... **(BS, 57)**

The conceptual units *highest heavens (Arsh)* and *amid the dust* in this couplet illustrate the metaphysical and ontological distance between the lover (I) and the beloved (She).

In a literary work, words with opposite meanings in the language lexicon are used to evoke sympathy or antipathy (hatred, rejection) in the reader toward a specific event, phenomenon, or image, and to enhance descriptive colorfulness. Antonyms are a leading stylistic factor in ensuring the vividness, emotionality, and expressiveness of speech. A literary text, on the other hand, is a unique linguacultural space where linguistic units undergo completely different aesthetic and semantic transformations compared to standard communication systems. Apart from traditional

lexical antonyms that are fixed in the linguistic system and strictly opposing in lexicography, contextual (or textual) antonyms hold a special place in literary speech. Contextual antonyms are units that are not opposing in the general vocabulary of a language, but within a specific text—guided by the poet's individual style and artistic intent—become juxtaposed due to the activation of figurative, metaphorical, or symbolic semes.

Davlatyor's divan *"Beauty of the Soul"* is distinguished by highly unique examples of contextual antonyms and their supreme aesthetic valence. Below, through the poet's couplets, we attempt to analyze the linguopoetic nature and contextual valence scope of this linguistic phenomenon:

- **Contextual opposition of "Heavenly garden" and "Thistle" (Yantoq):**

"If you do not come to my humble hut, my beloved, one day there will grow,
As if in place of this heavenly garden, a weed of thistles, let me be your sacrifice..." (BS, 106)
In the general language system, the words hell or ruin correspond as lexical antonyms to heavenly garden. However, in this couplet, relying on philosophical-metaphorical association, the poet places the word thistle (a symbol of drought, desert, humiliation, and worthlessness) as a contextual antonym to the symbol of a magnificent and beautiful space. The degree of valence here lies in the fact that the beloved's presence objectively transforms even a poor hut into the highest abode of bliss, whereas her absence turns existence into a desert and renders it worthless.

- **Opposition of "Simple broth" (Yovg'on osh) and "Royal feast" (Shoh toam):**

"My simple broth is a royal feast if the graceful cypress is at my side,
Davlatyor, if the beloved is absent, my meal of honey turns to poison..." (BS, 57)
In this couplet, two powerful contextual microsystems exist simultaneously. In the first line, the phrase simple broth (a meatless, poor, simple meal) is rendered equivalent to royal feast (the highest and most expensive delicacy) by text requirements. In the second line, traditional contrasts such as poison and honey enter into a valence relationship with the lexeme meal/food (life, living), depicting how a royal life spent without the beloved turns into bitter poison.

- **Dimensional opposition of "Vast world" and "Narrow as a hair":**

"My heart has been wounded in the grip of love, alas,

No wonder if this vast world appears narrow as a hair to my eyes..." (BS, 35)
From the perspective of physical and geographical space, the world inherently denotes infinity, and no physical body can be its direct antonym. Opposite the phrase vast world, the poet places the hyperbolized phraseological pattern narrow as a hair. This contextual opposition creates a valence wherein the inner constriction of the lyric hero's soul, trapped in grief and agony, entirely rejects objective reality.

- **Conceptual microsystem of "Purity" and "Forbidden/Impure" (Harom):**

"If you seek purity, beware of that which is forbidden,

For food attained without labor shall possess no taste at all..." (BS, 228)
Purity—as a spiritual, mental, and moral concept—belongs to abstract nouns. In simple language antonymy, its pair is impurity or dirt. However, here the poet places opposite it the concept of

harom (forbidden/impure), belonging to religious-sharia terminology. This new semantic valence formed within the text delivers a cognitive-didactic conclusion that human moral purity is directly connected to the principles of honest labor and sustenance.

- **Opposition of "House of sorrows" (Bayt-ul xazon) and "Palace of love":**

"Do not refrain from walking gracefully into my hut filled with this longing,
Do not turn the palace of love into a house of sorrows by failing to make it bloom..." (BS, 28)
The concepts house of sorrows (bayt-ul xazon—house of grief, symbol of Prophet Jacob's hut in classical poetry) and palace of love (mansion of happiness and union), characteristic of classical poetic traditions, serve as unique contextual antonyms expressing spatial relationships in the text. The linguopoetic valence of these combinations depends directly on the condition of whether the beloved walks gracefully or not, placing the spiritual essence of space above materiality.

- **Opposition of "Nightingale" and "Crow" (Zog') symbols:**

"Davlatyor, do not be heedless, for in the eyes of rivals,

The world turned to ruin, and the nightingale became a crow, became a crow." (BS, 89)
The bird names nightingale and crow (zog') as elements of the ornithological world are traditional symbols in Eastern poetry. In this text, however, their relationship is contextually juxtaposed in a purely transformational form—namely, the transformation of the nightingale into a crow against the backdrop of the world's ruin (ugliness and grief taking the place of beauty and grace). The contextual valence of these images provides a very convenient dynamic for emphasizing social and aesthetic crisis.

Conclusion

It is evident that the practical function of contextual antonyms in poetic texts relies on their capacity to combine with other words—that is, their valence potential. The valence scope of contextual antonyms is defined by the following characteristics:

a) Semantic expansion: the word moves away from its primary denotative meaning and adopts layers of connotative meaning required by the text;

b) Syntactic parallelism: in many cases, contextual antonyms appear in parallel symmetric lines performing the same syntactic function within the couplet structure;

c) Subordination to the central symbol: any contextual opposition in poetry is subordinated to the main concept considered central.

In linguopoetics, this phenomenon is studied as the chief constructive factor determining the cognitive, conceptual, and figurative system of a text, because contextual antonyms manifest the internal pathos and philosophical weight of a literary work through their linguopoetic valence—their capacity to enter into unexpected associative connections with other symbolic images and concepts.

Overall, the linguistic inquiries in Davlatyor's Divan demonstrate that the activity of contextual antonymy and the level of linguopoetic valence are exceptionally high in Uzbek poetry. The poet did not limit himself to ready-made antonymic templates in the language, but succeeded in establishing unexpected, unique poetic bridges between objects in existence, natural phenomena,

and spiritual concepts. The analysis of dozens of contextual antonymic pairs such as those above proves that textual antithesis serves as one of the most productive and effective linguistic-stylistic means for maximizing emotionality and expressiveness in text and expanding figurative thinking.

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