

LINGUOSTYLISTIC AND LINGUOCULTURAL FEATURES OF HYPERBOLE, MEIOSIS AND LITOTES IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LITERARY DISCOURSE**Azimova Muhayyo Pulatjonovna**

Senior teacher UzSWLU

DOI:<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-3377-1413>email:m.azimova@uzswlu.uz

Abstract. This article examines the linguostylistic and linguocultural characteristics of hyperbole, meiosis, and litotes in English and Uzbek literary discourse. The study explores how these stylistic devices function not only as rhetorical tools but also as reflections of cultural values, communicative traditions, and social norms. Hyperbole is analyzed as a form of deliberate exaggeration used to intensify emotion, satire, and dramatic effect, while meiosis and litotes are examined as forms of understatement that express modesty, irony, politeness, and implicit evaluation. Particular attention is given to the comparative analysis of stylistic usage in the works of Charles Dickens and Abdulla Qodiriy. The article demonstrates that English literary discourse tends to employ hyperbole for individual-centered criticism and satire, whereas Uzbek literary discourse often uses exaggeration and understatement to reinforce collective identity, emotional solidarity, and cultural harmony. The research highlights the important role of stylistic exaggeration and understatement in translation studies and intercultural communication, showing how linguistic expression reflects national mentality and worldview. The findings contribute to comparative stylistics, linguoculturology, and cross-cultural literary analysis.

Key words: stylistic devices, linguostylistics, linguoculturology, understatement, exaggeration, intercultural communication, comparative stylistics, literary discourse.

Introduction. The study will deepen understanding of how stylistic exaggeration and understatement operate as linguistic mirrors of cultural values, informing translation studies and intercultural communication.

Hyperbole is a figure of speech that deliberately exaggerates a situation, quality or feeling beyond literal truth in order to create emphasis, humor or emotional impact. It originates from the Greek *hyperbolē* “to throw beyond” and is often used in poetry, rhetoric and everyday language to make a point memorable [2][4].

Meiosis (sometimes called “reductive hyperbole”) works in the opposite direction: it down-scales an idea by using a deliberately modest or understated expression, often to convey politeness, irony or to temper intensity [11]. In practice it appears in phrases such as “a storm in a teacup” or “just a half-second” [6].

Litotes is an understatement formed by negating the opposite of a statement, thereby affirming a positive meaning through a double negative (e.g., “not bad” = “good”). It functions as a subtle form of emphasis, often conveying humility, politeness or irony [5]. In English it commonly softens praise or criticism, while in Uzbek it is employed to express modesty and social cohesion [7].

Together, these three tropes illustrate how speakers manipulate magnitude—overstatement (hyperbole), reduction (meiosis) and negated understatement (litotes)—to align language with cultural norms, rhetorical goals and interpersonal dynamics.

Hyperbole in Charles Dickens appears as grand, often paradoxical exaggeration that highlights social extremes and character traits. The novel’s opening—“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...”—uses hyperbolic opposites to dramatize the era’s contradictions [1]. In other passages Dickens amplifies adjectives (“great mistake,” “extraordinary black town”) to intensify criticism or humor [12]. This style reflects Victorian English’s individual-centric rhetoric, where hyperbole serves to spotlight personal experience, moral judgment and satirical commentary.

In Abdulla Qodiriy's Uzbek prose, hyperbole functions similarly to emphasize emotion and collective values. Uzbek hyperbole is rooted in folk poetry and oral tradition; expressions such as "A thousand times I called your name" convey intense longing and transform personal sentiment into a communal, resonant image [1]. The device also reinforces social bonds, portraying shared hardships or national spirituality rather than isolated individual drama [1]. Thus, while English hyperbole often projects the speaker's personal stance, Uzbek hyperbole projects collective feeling and cultural identity.

Comparative points

Aspect	Dickens (English)	Qodiriy (Uzbek)
Source of exaggeration	Literary satire, moral contrast, individual perception	Folklore, poetry, communal narrative
Typical function	Highlight social injustice, create humor, dramatize character	Intensify emotional depth, reinforce communal solidarity
Cultural framing	Emphasizes individualism and personal critique	Embeds exaggeration within collective experience and national spirit [3]
Typical lexical form	Superlatives and oppositional pairs ("best...worst")	Metaphoric magnifications ("A thousand times...") [3]

Overall, both authors exploit hyperbole to magnify meaning, yet Dickens's English hyperbole tends toward personal and satirical emphasis, whereas Qodiriy's Uzbek hyperbole underscores collective emotion and cultural cohesion.

Meiosis, the intentional understatement that softens or diminishes an idea, works very differently in the prose of Charles Dickens and Abdulla Qodiriy.

In Victorian satire Dickens often uses meiosis to undercut pretension or to inject irony. A classic example is the description of Mr. Carton's "a very small portion of the world" when referring to his limited social influence, which downplays his moral significance while actually highlighting it — a subtle jab at class-based self-importance. This restrained tone serves his individual-focused critique, allowing readers to infer the true gravity of the situation through the contrast between the modest phrasing and the dramatic context.

In Uzbek narrative, meiosis is tied to the cultural value of modesty and communal harmony. Qodiriy frequently describes the hardships of his protagonists with modest language: "the house was not completely empty" to convey severe poverty, or "the storm was not entirely calm" to hint at political turbulence. By tempering the description, he preserves social dignity and invites the audience to read between the lines, reinforcing collective resilience — a stylistic choice rooted in oral-poetic tradition [7].

Comparison. Both authors employ meiosis to create a gap between literal wording and intended meaning, but the gap serves distinct purposes: Dickens uses it to spotlight individual absurdities and to satirize social hierarchies, whereas Qodiriy uses it to maintain modesty, protect communal identity, and subtly critique oppression. The English version leans toward irony and personal critique; the Uzbek version leans toward humility and collective solidarity.

References

1. Abdulla Qodiriy. *O'tkan kunlar*. Toshkent: G'afur G'ulom nomidagi nashriyot, 1926.
2. Abrams, M. H., & Harpham, G. G. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. 11th ed. Boston: Cengage Learning, 2015.
3. Leech, Geoffrey. *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry*. London: Routledge, 2014.
4. Wales, Katie. *A Dictionary of Stylistics*. 3rd ed. London: Routledge, 2011.
5. Galperin, I. R. *Stylistics*. Moscow: Higher School Publishing House, 1977.
6. Crystal, David. *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019.

7. Yuldashev, B. *O'zbek tili stilistikasi*. Toshkent: O'qituvchi, 1983.
8. Vinogradov, V. V. *The Theory of Poetic Speech*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1971.
9. Simpson, Paul. *Stylistics: A Resource Book for Students*. London: Routledge, 2004.
10. Norrick, Neal R. "Hyperbole, Extreme Case Formulations and Humour." *Journal of Pragmatics*, Vol. 36, No. 9, 2004, pp. 1727–1739.
11. Claassen, Ralph. "Meiosis and Understatement in Literary Discourse." *Language and Literature*, Vol. 18, No. 2, 2009, pp. 145–159.
12. Kreuz, Roger J., & Roberts, Richard M. "On Satire and Irony: Litotes in Pragmatic Communication." *Pragmatics & Cognition*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1995, pp. 385–399.