THE LINGUISTIC AND STYLISTIC UNIVERSE OF MURAT ISAKU'S PROSE

Migena ARLLATI

marllati@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper examines the stylistic, linguistic, and phraseological characteristics of Murat Isaku's prose, highlighting the distinctive features of his narrative construction, expressive richness, and artistic merits. Particular attention is devoted to his unique approach to narrative organization, the interplay of temporal dimensions and narrative perspectives, as well as the functional deployment of stylistic and figurative deviaces in shaping textual structures. Special emphasis is placed on the author's lexical richness, phraseological expressions, idiomatic constructions, and elements of vernacular speech, which endow his prose with linguistic authenticity and a distinctive artistic identity. Through an analysis of recurring thematic motifs, including the homeland, family, tradition, suffering, historical memory, the preservation of national identity, and the confrontation with social injustices, the study explores the cultural, ethnolinguistic, and sociolinguistic dimensions of his literary oeuvre. Furthermore, it investigates the interplay between traditional and modern literary elements, which attests to Isaku's creative individuality and his significance in the development of contemporary Albanian prose. Ultimately, this study seeks to elucidate the role of language and style as fundamental components of the author's literary identity, while underscoring his contribution to the enrichment and preservation of Albanian literary and linguistic heritage.

***

As a prose writer, Murat Isaku distinguishes himself through a highly individualised approach to narrative construction, characterised by the continual interplay of temporal dimensions and shifting narrative perspectives, a feature discernible throughout almost his entire literary oeuvre. With remarkable artistic craftsmanship, he skilfully interweaves different temporal planes and a multiplicity of narrative situations, creating a complex and cohesive narrative architecture. A consummate master of literature and the written word, Isaku demonstrates a sophisticated command of compositional structure, ensuring that every constituent element of his prose serves a distinct artistic and aesthetic purpose. Consequently, his literary production attains a remarkable level of artistic refinement and aesthetic accomplishment, securing a significant position within Albanian prose.

The present study, entitled "The Linguistic and Stylistic Universe of Murat Isaku's Prose," seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of the linguistic dimensions of Isaku's prose. Although he embarked upon his literary career as a poet, he ultimately devoted himself to Albanian prose, remaining faithful to this literary form throughout his life. The study is particularly significant for its interdisciplinary approach, encompassing linguistic, ethnolinguistic, lexical, and sociolinguistic perspectives.

Albanian literary criticism regards Murat Isaku as a multifaceted literary personality, distinguished by his exceptional artistic qualities and invaluable contribution to Albanian letters. Prose writing, as a literary undertaking, demands considerable intellectual effort, an extensive command of linguistic culture, and a heightened degree of artistic maturity. It was only after establishing a substantial poetic corpus, characterised by lengthy and elaborately structured verses, that Isaku turned his attention more decisively towards prose[1]. His transition from poetry to prose marked an important stage in the evolution of his literary expression. In terms of form, the defining aspiration of Isaku's literary system lies in the refinement and advancement of textual devices, the incorporation of multilayered narrative complexities, and

[1] Farizi, Arlind. *The Second Being of Murat Isaku*. State University of Tetova (SUT), Tetovo, 2018.

https://doi.org/10.62792/ut.icfra.y2026.i2.pp113

the exploration of implicit and psychological dimensions, all intricately interwoven with narrative plots and storytelling structures.

The expressive form and textual architecture of Isaku's works reveal considerable diversity, while, in certain instances, they demonstrate an extraordinary degree of meticulous artistic craftsmanship. Literary critics have consistently regarded his style as particularly distinctive, attributing its originality to the depth of his inner world and to the refined aesthetic sensibility cultivated through his engagement with works of outstanding literary merit. The thematic layers and underlying ideas explored throughout his texts converge into a distinctive artistic universe, in which different semantic and conceptual dimensions establish a continuous dialogue. Through the accumulation of diverse semantic realities and the elaboration of a distinctive stylistic procedure, Murat Isaku's prose emerges as one of the most accomplished manifestations of the early modernist tendency in Albanian literature. Its author, in turn, stands out as an accomplished stylist and a master of artistic narration.

The author's multifaceted and prolific literary output is best understood through the complexity of its figurative and expressive structures, encompassing a broad spectrum of linguistic resources, from the word as a lexical unit and expression to syntactic organisation and the articulation of profound, intellectually independent ideas. These qualities have earned considerable recognition from both literary critics and readers, establishing his work as a significant contribution to the development of Albanian literary expression.

Isaku's prose explores a wide range of thematic concerns, particularly the social structures within which the tragic experiences of individuals unfold, as well as their confrontation with the burdens of the past. His literary universe also encompasses the themes of war, territorial belonging and the defence of ancestral land, the preservation of national identity, family relations, and numerous other dimensions of individual and collective existence. These thematic concerns are not merely represented as isolated narrative subjects; rather, they are integrated into a broader artistic vision that reflects the historical, social, and existential realities of the Albanian people.

Beyond the quantitative dimension of his literary production, Murat Isaku bequeathed a remarkable body of novels distinguished by their undeniable ideological and aesthetic significance. As literary scholar Fatmir Sulejmani observes, these are "novels with moving stories about violence, which revealed the shocking truth of our circumstances." This assessment underscores the profound social and historical relevance of Isaku's prose, whose thematic diversity and artistic depth render his literary legacy particularly significant. His narratives transcend the boundaries of individual experience, transforming personal suffering into a broader reflection on collective memory, historical injustice, and the human condition.[2]

Literary scholar Zeqir Kadriu, in his examination of Murat Isaku's literary oeuvre, concludes that the motif of the homeland in the author's works embodies an existential bond, not only between the writer himself and his place of origin, but also between the broader Sharr community and its ancestral land. As Kadriu observes: "At their very core, they are profoundly connected to the land, tradition, family, and nature—elements that, on the one hand, bring delight to the reader, yet, on the other, evoke a profound sense of pain. Above all, the homeland is conceived as the space in which the identity codes of the local population are preserved, inherited, and continually developed." In this context, the writer engages in an introspective monologue, constructing evocative metaphors that convey a profound message about the existential significance of the land: "May God grant that this field be harvested, and tomorrow, with a good beginning, we must set about cultivating the next one. Thank God for the land He has bestowed upon us, for, as the old saying goes: 'The land is wealth; the land is our herald!'"

[2] *International Conference, Alb-Shkenca Institute II, 29–31 August 2012, p. 65.*

Isaku's prose works, literary writings, short stories, essays, and articles are distinguished by their intellectual richness, the diversity of their ideas and arguments, the breadth of their cultural knowledge and aesthetic insight, as well as their perceptive engagement with literary and artistic poetics.[3] Within his prose, the narrator, as a fundamental compositional element, assumes a variety of functions. Through a sophisticated narrative approach, the narrator harmoniously integrates storytelling with descriptive passages, thereby bringing into sharper focus the essential characteristics of both the literary characters and the environments in which their experiences unfold.

It is worth emphasising that Murat Isaku occupies a significant position among the most prominent representatives of contemporary Albanian literature. His literary achievement demonstrates an artistic vision that transcends established normative conventions, pursuing instead the inexhaustible aesthetic pleasure and expressive possibilities inherent in the written word and literary art. One of the most distinctive features of Isaku's prose lies in his conception and construction of narrative discourse. Beyond the conventional mode of storytelling, through which characters are gradually revealed in the unfolding of events, the writer employs a symbolic mode of narration that establishes a dual interpretative dimension: simultaneously realistic and symbolic. In this way, he constructs an overarching symbolic framework within which the narrative itself becomes an integral component of a broader network of meanings.[4]

Through his exceptional talent and sustained creative endeavour, Isaku established himself as a significant literary figure, demonstrating a profound sensitivity towards the emotional experience of the reader, which he approaches as something almost sacred. The language of his writings may be interpreted as possessing an almost transcendental quality, particularly in the nuanced interpretation of each individual poetic expression. By skilfully employing a wide range of stylistic devices, the author produces literary texts enriched with motifs drawn from his native landscape, developing a distinctive artistic approach to the representation of reality and the poetic imagination of the homeland. Such characteristics permeate much of his literary production, particularly those works devoted to suffering, melancholy, separation, the dialectical opposition between light and darkness, and, above all, the sublime experience of love.[5] Through these thematic and stylistic dimensions, Isaku succeeds in transforming individual emotions and local experiences into universal human concerns, thereby reinforcing the enduring artistic and cultural significance of his literary oeuvre.

A remarkable linguistic richness permeates Murat Isaku's creative oeuvre, manifested in his extensive command of the Albanian lexicon, his refined vocabulary, and his sustained commitment to an exceptionally rich and polished mode of expression. This linguistic sophistication constitutes a continuous creative process through which the author articulates and conveys human emotions and experiences across the entirety of his literary production. The prose of Isaku, the poet and novelist of Gajre, is predominantly characterised by traditional narrative forms, through which he recounts the story of his life and his experiences in his native environment. By contrast, the prose of Isaku, the poet and novelist of the city, exhibits distinctly modernist undertones. His traditional prose works, novels, and literary sketches are rooted in an artistic sensibility imbued with symbolic connotations and an open-ended orientation towards faith and identity. At the same time, they acquire a modern dimension through their affinities with the characteristics of the symbolist novel and their pronounced urban consciousness, a feature discernible in virtually every narrative composed during the period of his residence in the city. This refers to a series of novels that collectively constitute the literary universe of his homeland, a thematic and imaginative world also reflected throughout his poetic collections, which represent an indisputable contribution to Albanian literature in Macedonia.

[3] Salihu, Salajdin. *Digressions*. Milenium, Tetovo, 2001, p. 121.
[4] Eco, Umberto. *On Literature*. Tirana, 2006, p. 98.
[5] *32nd International Seminar on Albanian Language, Literature and Culture, Prishtina, 19–30 August 2013.*

The modernist dimension of Murat Isaku's prose warrants examination through several complementary interpretative approaches, particularly thematic and formal analysis, with the aim of identifying the underlying foundations of his distinctive and recognisable creative vision. The poetics of his prose may be understood as a poetics of space, a poetics of place and belonging, and a poetics of absence. The language and discourse of his characters are distinguished by their purity, refinement, and meticulous lexical selection. It is a form of Albanian expression that is repeatedly revisited, reworked, revised, and artistically refined, ultimately attaining an exceptional degree of linguistic and stylistic sophistication.

The presence of ethnolinguistic elements in murat isaku's prose

The ethnolinguistic system, in its various forms of linguistic expression, is shaped through a rich and carefully selected vocabulary that establishes relationships between thought, language, and literary genre.[6] Murat Isaku demonstrates a remarkable ability to incorporate and exploit these elements throughout his literary oeuvre, continuously presenting and reintroducing to the reader a rich spiritual and material world through expressions that recur frequently in his language.

The linguistic richness of the author's prose appears to be articulated around three principal objectives:

a) The author seeks to demonstrate the lexical wealth embedded in his short prose works, which naturally provide abundant material for examination and research from various linguistic perspectives.

b) He also seeks to present this lexical richness from a regional and dialectological perspective, particularly by documenting lexical items that have gradually fallen into disuse over time. In doing so, he contributes to the enrichment of standard Albanian through the incorporation of vocabulary and expressions drawn from dialectal speech, which he frequently employs in his literary works.

c) Furthermore, the author seeks to introduce into his literary production a number of neologisms that appear to be his own original lexical creations.

The richness of a people's oral literature constitutes an enduring source of knowledge about its culture, way of life, and collective spirit. As one critical perspective maintains: "Oral folk literature has served as a source of inspiration for the most renowned talents of our national artistic literature. In the broader context of folk artistic culture, and particularly in narrative traditions, folk mythology occupies an exceptionally important position: as evidence of the antiquity of our people; as a comparable counterpart to Pelasgian mythology; and as a foundation for ideas and evidence concerning the autochthonous presence of Albanians in the Balkans."[7]

A close examination of Isaku's literary oeuvre reveals numerous instances of words that acquire new or figurative meanings within the context of his prose. Through the use of dialectal vocabulary and expressions, the author seeks to expand the lexical resources of standard Albanian. Moreover, he demonstrates considerable artistic skill in incorporating words with alternative phonetic forms, which simultaneously reveal his interest in dialectal variation and its expressive potential. Such linguistic choices contribute to the authenticity of his narrative discourse while preserving distinctive features of regional speech.

At this point, one may also recall Stéphane Mallarmé, who famously maintained that the world exists in order to culminate in a book. Novalis, in turn, suggests that "every human being has their own language, since language itself is an expression of the soul." Roland Barthes[8]

[6] Shkurtaj, Gjovalin. *Albanian Sociolinguistics*. Tirana, 2009, p. 142.
[7] Krasniqi, M. (1997). *Mythological aspects* (p. 18). Rilindja.
[8] Barthes, R. (1987). *The semiological adventure* (R. Ismaili, Trans.). Prishtina. (Original work published posthumously in France.)

advances this reflection further by asserting: “Every individual is a prisoner of their own language. Language is like skin: I rub my language against the language of another. It is as though I possessed words instead of fingers, or had my fingers at the tips of my words. My language trembles with desire.”

We are gradually approaching the question of identity as a linguistic paradigm, in which language emerges as the recurring spiritual expression of a distinctive and almost mystical cultural entity. The cult of language, historical antiquity, unifying national figures, culture, and intellectual emancipation profoundly transformed Albanian national life, awakening lyrical reminiscences that transcended the boundaries of historical time. These developments had already opened the broader paradigm of Albanian Romanticism and the National Renaissance, spiritually establishing the foundations of national identity.

By this stage, Murat Isaku's creative consciousness had also been deeply influenced by modernist sensibilities, as the intellectual and aesthetic impulses of European modernity found their way into his literary imagination.[9] Ultimately, language and poetry undergo a process of serene artistic reincarnation within what may be described as Murat Isaku's “lyrical mathematics,” where linguistic expression, poetic sensibility, and artistic imagination converge into a distinctive creative synthesis.[10]

An analytical perspective on narrative discourse

Murat Isaku emerged on the Albanian literary scene in the first half of the 1950s as one of the pioneering figures in the development of modern Albanian literature. His novels articulate a multifaceted literary world through diverse modes of discourse, which are organically interwoven within the very structure of his works, where numerous narrative elements are deliberately employed to achieve distinctive artistic and aesthetic effects.

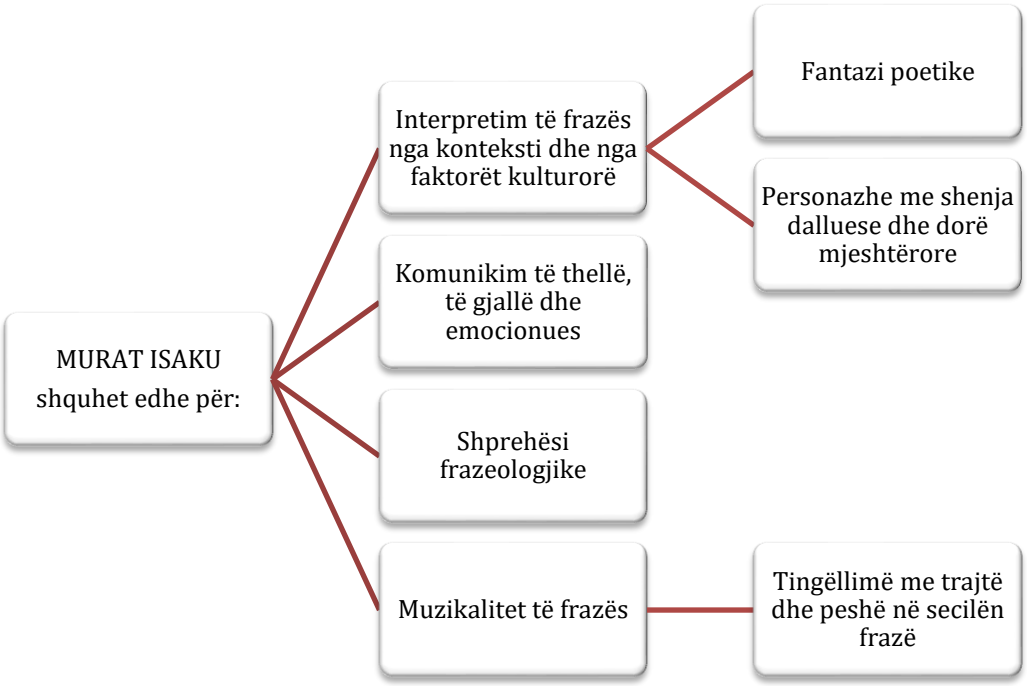
As a literary figure, Isaku’s creative activity has been recognised as a product of his historical period and the prevailing social circumstances, as well as of the political and cultural environment in which he lived and worked. His profound affection for his people and homeland is reflected throughout his literary production. It is therefore by no means coincidental that his works explore both the social and indigenous dimensions of the homeland, constructing images of human existence, cultural codes, and symbolic representations of a world characterised by distinctive features. These encompass language, customs, social norms, ways of life, and the particular psychological characteristics of the community he portrays.[11]

In Isaku’s short stories, the creative power of pure imagination predominates, while subtle narrative tendencies can also be discerned through vivid accounts of images interwoven into richly developed figurative structures. Reading these stories confronts the reader with a variety of literary settings that evoke details associated with dreams, imagination, and the reader’s own sense of wonder. The poetics of space and the stylistic techniques employed are self-evident throughout many of his writings. Nevertheless, not every aspect of his literary universe is imbued with darkness, dramatic intensity, or hopelessness, since the poet’s voice represents, above all, an expression of his inner spiritual calling and an appeal to the historical moment. Throughout his literary production, Isaku persistently draws attention to, and provides vivid testimony of, the transformations and realities unfolding in his native environment.[12]

By harmonising the dimensions of time and space, Isaku constructs a distinctive literary and artistic universe, one that remains open to dialogue with the broader world of art, Albanian

[9] Zaimi, B. (2009). *The spiritual Ithaca of the word*. Koha.
[10] Farizi, A. (2013). *The universe of the homeland in Murat Isaku's poetry*. Tringa, Tetovo, p. 29.
[11] Muhadri, B. (2020). *The essences of literary thought: Papers and studies*. New York, p. 45.
[12] *Jeta e Re – Literary Journal*, No. 2, Year XLI. (2010). Prishtina, p. 48.

cultural experience, and external influences, all of which are integrated through the power of his rich and expansive imagination.



Theoretical and critical perspectives on the literary work of murat isaku

The eminent semiotician and writer Umberto Eco, in addressing a wide range of issues concerning the relationship between authors and their interpreters, advances a line of thought that develops into a broader theoretical reflection when he emphasises "the dialectic between the rights of texts and the rights of their interpreters." This perspective draws attention to the complex relationship between the meaning encoded within a literary text and the interpretative possibilities available to its readers.[13]

According to linguist George Lakoff (1971), "Language uses us just as much as we use it. Just as our choices of expression are guided by the thoughts we wish to communicate, so too, in the same way, our experience of the world around us shapes and determines how we express ourselves in relation to it."

V. Gjata maintains that metaphor and semantic abstraction acquire new dimensions when language fully unfolds its expressive potential and undergoes a process of intellectual refinement at the level of phraseological units, particularly those originating directly from popular speech. This phenomenon is especially evident in Murat Isaku's literary production, where expressions rooted in the vernacular constitute an important source of linguistic and artistic enrichment.[14]

In analysing Isaku's literary oeuvre, we have taken into consideration the historical period in which his works were created, their comparative relationship with the literary production of his contemporaries, and a range of other relevant analytical dimensions. These include thematic concerns, recurring motifs, characterisation, narrative techniques, compositional organisation, the representation of space and time within narrative structures, modes of expression, stylistic features, linguistic characteristics, and the reception of his literary works.

[13] Eco, U. (2006). *On literature*. Tirana, p. 98.
[14] Gjata, A. V. (2015, October). *Literary paper*. Proceedings of the 9th International Scientific Conference, South East European University, Tetovo.

According to Salajdin Salihi, a prominent scholar of Murat Isaku's prose, particular attention should also be devoted to the central ideas underlying the author's works, the narrative models and structural patterns developed throughout his literary career, and the distinctive features of his style. Equally significant are his rich artistic language and its extensive use of dialectal forms, archaisms, neologisms, and popular aphorisms, as well as his construction of literary imagery, representation of landscapes, portrayal of the native environment, and incorporation of the traditions and rituals of the communities in which his narratives are situated. We consider Murat Isaku's literary oeuvre to be substantial and multidimensional, with human existence occupying a central position in its relationship with society, history, tradition, family, and other fundamental aspects of collective and individual life.[15]

Through his talent and intellectual depth, Murat Isaku succeeded in constructing a distinctive literary edifice founded upon a multilayered literary configuration:

- ✓ **The manifest layer:** This is the immediately perceptible dimension of the literary work, accessible to contemporary readers, who establish connections and comparisons between the artistic reality represented in the text and objective reality.
- ✓ **The deeper interpretative layers:** These are dimensions of meaning that may be fully apprehended by future generations of readers, whose interpretative horizons, in accordance with literary tradition, tend to be oriented more towards the universal significance and intrinsic literariness of a literary work than towards its local particularities and immediate historical relevance.

This approach brings to mind the reflections of Jan Parandowski, according to whom a novelist gathers material in much the same way as a scientist, guided by the subject matter he has chosen to explore. In this process, the writer investigates history, archaeology, medicine, and agriculture; familiarises himself with the geographical and topographical settings of the events he intends to portray; and seeks information concerning particular episodes and individual characters.[16]

A similar understanding is expressed by Umberto Eco, who argues that creating a novel entails inventing and constructing a world, the most coherent and accurate world possible. As the writer gradually constructs this world, it becomes increasingly his own, a world that he subsequently narrates to another person, or to a reader of the future. This act of narration is accomplished through a distinctive literary style, one that emerges organically from the particular world the author has created and is uniquely suited to its internal logic and artistic requirements.[17]

With regard to style, Murat Isaku may be regarded as a highly distinctive and exceptionally original writer. When reading one of his works, there is scarcely any need to consult the author's name, since his unmistakable stylistic signature is itself sufficient to identify its creator. His narrative voice and individual mode of expression function as recognisable markers of his literary identity.

From the very first stages of our research into Murat Isaku's prose, his literary production aroused considerable intellectual curiosity and attracted our attention through its distinctive artistic characteristics. Perhaps the principal motivation for returning to this body of work and undertaking a comprehensive scholarly investigation stemmed from the obstacles and limitations encountered during our academic studies, particularly the scarcity of specialised research devoted to his literary oeuvre. In this regard, the discussions held with our academic mentor, Professor Zeqir Kadriu, as well as with the author's friends and several literary scholars, proved invaluable. Among those whose insights and contributions were particularly helpful were Salajdin Salihi, Fatmir Sulejmani, Arlind Farizi, Ali Aliu, Alush Kamberi, Ahmet

[15] Salihi, S. (2012). *The poetics of Murat Isaku's prose*. Tetovo, p. 26.
[16] Jan Parandovski, *Alhemija reci*, Kultura, Beograd, 1964, f. 176.
[17] Umberto Eko: *Për letërsinë*, Dituria, Tiranë, 2007, f. 316.

Selmani, and others. Their perspectives provided important guidance and contributed significantly to the development and deepening of this research.

Style and types of narration and description

The style and narrative techniques employed by Murat Isaku clearly reveal a distinctive mode of literary expression, articulated through an extensive and carefully constructed system of imagery. This demonstrates the author's ability to develop interpretations that remain closely aligned with the underlying message conveyed by each of his literary works. His writings are generally characterised by a heightened emotional intensity, while, within his creative process, the author seeks to recreate and imitate nature through the expressive power of language, which occupies a dominant position in his literary universe.

His literary work continues to exert a significant influence on contemporary life, despite the fact that the author passed away several years ago. One particularly distinctive feature of his writing is his portrayal of the inhabitants of his native village, whom he aptly describes as proud and self-assured, but not cunning. He never fails to evoke the beautiful surroundings of the Sharr Mountains, the traditional guesthouses of the village's prominent families, and numerous other details that reflect the diverse perspectives, values, and emotional attachments of the Albanian people.

Murat Isaku's literary oeuvre constitutes a hymn against cruelty, violence, injustice, hatred, evil, and human envy. At the same time, it is an affirmation of humanism, freedom, goodness, and love. The fictional world constructed by this writer extends far beyond these thematic concerns, encompassing a broader range of philosophical questions, including those relating to life and death, love and hatred, illusions and disillusionment. His literary production initially unfolds through optimistic undertones, gradually becoming enveloped in an atmosphere of disappointment and disenchantment. Tragedy ultimately emerges as the predominant aesthetic category throughout his literary oeuvre, encompassing both his poetry and prose.

With exceptional dedication, Murat Isaku cultivated three major literary genres: poetry, the short story, and the novel. His multilayered literary production has become an integral component of the history of Albanian national literature. Drawing upon the essential qualities of oral folk literature its beauty, expressive power, radiance, and profound cultural significance, he incorporated these elements into his own literary universe, transforming them and endowing them with entirely new artistic meanings. His prose works constitute an integral part of the poetics of the traditional Albanian novel, both in terms of narrative technique and compositional structure. Their artistic organisation reflects a close relationship between traditional narrative conventions and the author's individual creative sensibility.

The Erotic discourse in *Plagët* (*The Wounds*)

An illustrative example of Isaku's use of erotic discourse can be found in the dialogue among the female characters Gjeraqina, Kanjusha, and Gjata. Gjata listens attentively to the song performed by her two companions:

“From behind the edge of the grove, my beloved appeared; he asked me for a little water. He was handsome as could be; I scarcely knew what to say.”[18]

“May the river carry you away...” Gjata exclaimed as she wandered among the juniper trees.

“This daughter of Kelmend Gajri seems rather difficult to impress,” Kanjusha remarked, whereupon a gentle wave of laughter swept over the three shepherdesses.[19]

[18] Isaku, M. (1997). *The wounds*. BKSH, Tetovo, p. 33.
[19] Ibid., p. 33.

Gjata was proud and virginal, like the hope embodied in a tower.[20]
Engu, recalling the moment when he had seen Gjata bathing naked in the lake, expressed his wish:
"May you, Gjata of Kelmend Gajria, give birth to twenty-nine sons who will become tribal chieftains, and one daughter."[21]
Engu offered a heartfelt prayer for Gjata:
"To the first wound, the wound suffered by Leka, and the wound of the soul, there was now added the wound of the flesh, the wound in her breast. O God, protect Gjata from words and from flames."[22]
Through this passage, Isaku reveals his ability to combine erotic undertones, folk expression, traditional cultural values, and symbolic imagery. The dialogue among the female characters reflects the spontaneity of rural life, while the references to beauty, femininity, honour, and social expectations reveal the cultural codes governing interpersonal relationships within the traditional Albanian community. The characters' speech, enriched by dialectal expressions and oral narrative elements, contributes to the authenticity of the literary setting and reinforces the ethnolinguistic dimension of the author's prose.

Linguistic expressive devices

The sentences employed by Murat Isaku constitute a clear manifestation of literary and cultural response. Rather than attempting to establish precisely what the author intended to communicate, it is important to recognise that the literary text itself emerges as an act of response and explicit resistance—a voice raised against political pressure and state repression, in defence of literary authenticity and artistic freedom.
The author's recurring monologues and descriptive passages are closely connected to his own experiences, actions, and emotional world. Through an original and distinctive narrative discourse, Isaku succeeds in reaching exceptional artistic heights and establishing a profound connection with both readers and literary critics.
His life and creative journey bring to mind the dialogue of Santiago, the protagonist of Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*: "The old man says that the most important thing for you is that you have set out to fulfil your personal destiny."[23]
For Isaku, every literary creation represented a form of bittersweet suffering, one that stirred every living cell and gave rise to a symphony of harmony. Tragedy occupies a central position in his literary oeuvre. Indeed, the writer himself maintained: "Tragedy is far more powerful than happiness, just as suffering is stronger than joy."
In his analysis, literary scholar Zeqir Kadriu observes that the language of this writer is exceptionally rich, yet highly distinctive. From the very first paragraphs, Isaku's writing captivates the reader, drawing them further into the text and immersing them in the authentic drama of Albanian reality.
As Isaku writes:
"The Sharr man will not spare even the mountain lizard of his own land, let alone the blood of another man, of a fellow Sharr man!"[24]
Kadriu further observes that the Sharr Mountains know neither how to conceal the clouds nor how to hide those responsible for bloodshed. Hence the powerful expression: "The earth has a wide mouth and an extraordinary capacity for patience."

[20] Ibid., p. 90.
[21] Ibid., p. 100.
[22] Ibid., p. 159.
[23] Salihu, S. (2012). *The poetics of Murat Isaku*. Tetovo, p. 75.
[24] Farizi, A. (2018). *The second being of Murat Isaku*. State University of Tetova, Tetovo, p. 16.

The language of Murat Isaku's literary works functions simultaneously as an expressive instrument and a powerful metaphor. Through its remarkable artistic richness, it gives vitality and symbolic meaning to ancestry, blood ties, and national identity. At the same time, this language becomes a theatre of suffering, love, and human destiny, portraying individuals who, in one way or another, manage to survive and emerge as living heroes within the fictional world created by the author.[25]

Employing a highly individual literary style, Isaku persistently sought out archaic and forgotten words, using an authentically indigenous Albanian lexicon to construct his own distinctive artistic edifice.

In order to communicate his emotions, spiritual experiences, convictions, observations about the world, dreams, and ideals in an artistically compelling manner, Murat Isaku draws upon an extensive repertoire of linguistic expressive devices. It should first be emphasised that he possesses an exceptionally profound command of these resources and, secondly, that he employs them with remarkable precision and artistic discernment. The selection of appropriate words and expressions, together with the construction of linguistically effective forms of expression, is by no means an effortless undertaking. Rather, it requires sustained effort, substantial cultural preparation, extensive life experience, and continuous investigation into the richness and expressive resources of language.

In this respect, folk vocabulary appears to have been one of Isaku's most valuable linguistic resources. He draws upon archaic and traditional words, sometimes adapting them to serve his individual stylistic purposes and, at other times, preserving them as a means of safeguarding an invaluable linguistic heritage. The history of major world literatures offers numerous examples of writers who, through their deliberate pursuit of distinctive and rare vocabulary, have enriched their literary language with archaisms and neologisms. Such practices undoubtedly constitute an important dimension of systematic and creative engagement with language, which remains the fundamental instrument of literary construction.

Murat Isaku's literary production is distinguished by its highly individual linguistic character, evident both in the narrative discourse and in the language and speech patterns of his characters. From the perspective of lexical richness, the author revitalises archaic vocabulary drawn from the dormant or less frequently used layers of the Albanian lexicon. These lexical items often belong to particular historical periods associated with specific stages in the development of the Albanian nation. Some also represent borrowings from languages that once exerted considerable influence over Albanian culture and society.

Beyond these linguistic resources, Isaku also creates metaphorical compounds of his own, which may be regarded as expressions of exceptional creative ingenuity. His vocabulary thus incorporates original lexical formations and regional words originating in particular geographical areas, many of which have not been incorporated into standard Albanian dictionaries.

Beginning with his first novel, *Dielli e din rrugën e vet* (*The Sun Knows Its Own Way*), and continuing throughout his literary career, Isaku's works contain numerous traditional proverbs familiar to readers, alongside original aphoristic expressions and sentences creatively adapted to particular situations and relationships between individuals and their surrounding environment. This demonstrates how deeply the author nourished his literary art from the living sources of the Albanian language and its popular linguistic heritage.

His literary oeuvre contains an extensive range of phraseological expressions, dialectalisms, regionalisms, archaisms, historicisms, neologisms, compound formations, lexical onomatopoeia, and numerous other linguistic constructions created or creatively adapted by the author himself. These features occur throughout most of his novels, including *Plagët* (*The*

[25] Kadriu, Z. (2015). *The literary journey of Murat Isaku: From "The Sun Knows Its Own Way" to "The Wounds"*. Scientific Conference, South East European University, Tetovo.

Wounds), *Rreckajt*, *Shtjella*, *Banesa në katin e tretë* (*The Apartment on the Third Floor*), *Etje* (*Thirst*), *Damkat* (*The Stigmas*), and *Fatprerët*.

As is often the case in literary works dealing with the historical period commonly associated with Ottoman rule, Isaku employs numerous words that once enjoyed widespread use among the population but have gradually fallen into disuse. Through these lexical elements, he reconstructs a particular historical period by reproducing the linguistic characteristics associated with it. Many of these words are of Turkish origin, including: *kaur, sofrabez, musaf, sheherli, jazi, hezber, imza, dakik, dynja, zeher, qitab, imansëz, gjaur, qafir, vervele, defter, kasaba, vazife, vakëf, xhenaze, tyrbe, jemek, dexhall, halabak, Rumeli, mide, sireta, krishteni, dinsëz, alltën, dylber, surrat, siktër, evlat, insan,* and *qufar*.

Equally noteworthy is the presence of numerous words that were once commonly used but have since become largely obsolete. Examples include: *gërk* (full), *linga* (small bell), *sohë* (a local term), *dokrrim* (to pass by), *tërcallë* (a component of the plough), *ferrafej* (to become covered with rust), *pihatem* (to become exhausted), *imshtë* (a wooded area with young trees), *mashën* (a hut), *rremim* (an inundation or flood), and *langosh* (a vagabond or street wanderer). These examples illustrate the remarkable lexical diversity preserved in the author's literary language.

The extraordinary care with which Isaku preserved and cultivated linguistic expressive resources throughout more than half a century of literary activity is perhaps most eloquently demonstrated by one of the verses he dedicated to the Albanian language:

"With every verse, I have entrusted the language of my ancestors."

This statement clearly demonstrates that the writer drew extensively upon words collected from everyday speech, including both frequently used and relatively rare expressions characteristic of the communities in which his characters live and interact. To a considerable extent, this linguistic environment corresponds to the author's native region, whose speech, traditions, and cultural heritage constitute an essential source of his literary inspiration. By reviving forgotten words, Isaku simultaneously revives an entire historical period, particularly the periods in which the events of his novels are situated. Alongside its artistic and aesthetic achievements, his literary oeuvre is distinguished by a highly individual language, remarkable for its expressive richness, evocative power, and numerous semantic nuances.

Through his literary production, Murat Isaku seeks to illuminate semantic shifts and transformations arising from processes of reflection and interpretation. He achieves this by developing increasingly complex metaphorical structures and establishing a network of conceptual meanings that takes into account the subtle distinctions and distances between meanings shaped by linguistic particularities. The stylistic devices employed throughout his works may generally be examined along a continuum beginning with their conventional and direct usage and extending towards their more active and creatively transformed forms.

The element of recognition emerges as an interpretative act that expresses a claim to intellectual understanding and mastery within the domain of the meanings conveyed by the written word. The manner in which Isaku constructs his literary works enables readers to engage in repeated readings, reinterpretations, and continuous creative dialogue with the text, while maintaining the chronological progression of narrative events in accordance with the thematic principles underlying the author's artistic intentions.

In his writing, the author employs spoken language as a concise and carefully structured expressive sequence that requires no unnecessary elaboration. He deliberately selects brief words and expressions endowed with precise and substantial meaning.

Through the artistic power of the written word, Murat Isaku preserved collective memory and demonstrated that the thematic concerns, ideas, poetics, rhetoric, and linguistic richness of his

literary heritage establish him as an accomplished communicator within the world of artistic expression.[26]

He will be remembered as a writer who regarded literature as a religion; as an intellectual who rejoiced in the achievements of his people and grieved over their failures; and, above all, as a person who encouraged and inspired other writers, particularly at moments when they most needed the support and guidance of someone who had already established a distinguished reputation in Albanian letters.

References

[1]. Arllati, M. (2020). *Literary and aesthetic vision in the creative work of Murat Isaku*. Ars Albanica, No. 8, Tetovo.
[2]. Arllati, M. (2025). *The narrative voice of Murat Isaku*. Prishtina: LShK. Printed by LENA.
[3]. Barthes, R. (1987). *The semiological adventure*. Translated by Rexhep Ismaili. Prishtina.
[4]. Eco, U. (2006). *On literature*. Tirana: Dituria.
[5]. Farizi, A. (2013). *The universe of homeland in the lyric poetry of Murat Isaku*. Tetovo: Tringa.
[6]. Farizi, A. (2018). *The second being of Murat Isaku*. Tetovo: State University of Tetovo.
[7]. Gjata, V. A. (2015, October). *Literary paper*. Proceedings of the 9th International Scientific Conference, South East European University, Tetovo.
[8]. Isaku, M. (1997). *The wounds*. Tetovo: BKSH.
[9]. Kadriu, Z. (2015). *The literary journey of Murat Isaku from "The Sun Knows Its Own Way" to "The Wounds"*. Scientific Conference, South East European University, Tetovo.
[10]. Krasniqi, M. (1997). *Mythological aspects*. Prishtina: Rilindja.
[11]. Muhadri, B. (2020). *The essentials of literary thought: Conference papers and studies*. New York.
[12]. Parandowski, J. (1964). *The alchemy of words*. Belgrade: Kultura.
[13]. Salihi, S. (2001). *Digressions*. Tetovo: Milenium.
[14]. Salihi, S. (2012). *The poetics of Murat Isaku's prose*. Tetovo.
[15]. Shkurtaj, G. (2009). *Albanian sociolinguistics*. Tirana.
[16]. Zaimi, B. (2009). *The spiritual Ithaca of the word*. Koha.
[17]. *Jeta e Re* [New Life]. (2010). Literary journal, No. 2, Year XLI, Prishtina.
[18]. *The 32nd International Seminar on Albanian Language, Literature and Culture*. (2013, August 19–30). Prishtina.
[19]. *The Second International Conference of the Alb-Shkenca Institute*. (2012, August 29–31).

[26] *The 32nd International Seminar on Albanian Language, Literature and Culture*. Prishtina, August 19–30, 2013.