

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Toponyms Based on The Color Component in The Uzbek Language

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Abstract

The article analyzes the semantic and functional features of color-denoting components in the toponymic system of the Uzbek language. It scientifically elucidates that color lexemes such as oq (white), qora (black), ko'k (blue), qizil (red), and sariq (yellow) in the structure of toponyms express not only color meaning, but also historical-ethnic, geographical, and linguocultural content. It also identifies their place and nominative possibilities in the structure of hydronyms, oronyms, oikonyms, and ethnotoponyms.

KEY WORDS

Toponymy, color component, semantics, linguoculturology, hydronym, oronym, oikonym, ethnotoponym, nomination, syntactic method.

INTRODUCTION

In the Uzbek toponymic system, in the formation of place names by the syntactic method, parts of speech such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and numerals are active, while parts of speech such as adverbs and pronouns are used relatively less. Lexical units such as qora (black), oq (white), ko'k (blue), qizil (red), and sariq (yellow), used in the structure of toponyms formed by the syntactic method, in ancient times also denoted mythological, religious, totemic, philosophical, and artistic concepts in the life of the Turkic peoples.

In ancient times, the Turkic tribes living in Altai and Southern Siberia referred to the north, south, east, and west by the names of colors. The color black denoted the north, red denoted the south, blue denoted the east, and white denoted the west and the center. It became customary for people belonging to a certain tribal union to settle according to directions, and over time the names of the directions became ethnonyms. In this sense, qizil o'g'uzlar meant "southern Oghuz." Today, it is understood that when color-denoting words occur together with ethnonyms, they served to identify the cardinal directions. It is not appropriate to say that such

ethnonyms are formed only from words denoting color shades, because some of them arise on the basis of words denoting characteristics. Researchers have determined that the word ko'k in the ethnonym ko'k turk means "forest," that is, "Turks living in the forest." Z. Do'simov wrote that the word qora in the Khorezm dialects expresses the meaning of plurality in the structure of ethnonyms and toponyms. Thus, it becomes clear that words such as oq, qora, ko'k, sariq, and qizil, apart from expressing color, when used in the structure of toponyms, also convey lexical meanings such as big, high, wide, many, pure, and clean.

The first studies on the semantics of colors in Turkic languages were the work of Academician A. Kononov, "On the Semantics of the Words 'White' and 'Black' in Turkic Geographical Terminology." In this work, the author studies colors in the culture of Turkic peoples and the ways of forming their meanings.

In his studies on color theory, A. Kononov presents the following meanings of the words kök – gök: 1) "blue," "light blue," "azure," "light green," "gray," "the color of the sky,"

"the color of young greenery," "gray"; 2) "sky," "young," "grass," "greenery," "meadow." As synonyms, he cites the words *yashil* (green) and *havorang* (sky blue); from the onomastic point of view, the units *Köktosh* and *Kökbo'ri*; from the ethnonymic point of view, its connection with *kökturk*; and from the geographical point of view, such hydronyms and oronyms as *Köksuv* and *Kökchatov*. In addition, he notes that it is also used as the name of plants, birds, and animals.

He also analyzes the occurrence of *kök* in the forms *Oltin O'rda*, *Oq O'rda*, and *Kök O'rda*, and draws attention to the fact that at the end of the 14th century and the beginning of the 15th century, the left wing of the *Jochi ulus* was called *Kök O'rda*, while the right wing was called *Oq O'rda*. From this, views emerge that, according to geographical location, the Mongols referred to the west as white and the east as *kök*. In some ancient sources, the lexeme *kök* also expresses the meanings "east" and "eastern." The Turks living in the east of the *Ötüken* land were also called *Kök Turks*. In the ancient Turkic Manichaean views, there is also the toponym *Kökmendag'*, that is, *Kökmentog'*, and the reason given for this is that the sun rises precisely from the east, from behind that mountain. It is also mentioned that Chinggis Khan, according to the tradition of the ancient Turks, called his left wing *Kökmo'g'ul*.

In the formation of toponyms by the syntactic method, words denoting features, that is, adjectives, play an important role. In the structure of Uzbek toponyms, such feature-denoting words are found that occur not in one but in several names and serve for the full formation of these names. Usually, such words indicate an important geographical feature of the toponyms. For example, *Yangiqo'rg'on* (Namangan region), *Kattaqo'rg'on* (Samarkand region), *Oqyer* (Fergana region). In such place names formed with feature-denoting words, the first part contains the feature-denoting word, while the second part contains the toponymic determinant. In the structure of such compound toponyms, appellative toponymic indicators such as *qishloq* (village), *ovul* (aul), *mahalla* (neighborhood), and *tapa* (hill) are actively used. These are the parts that determine the type of the toponyms.

Place names formed with the participation of color-denoting components are considered one of the important research directions in the field of toponymy. In the geographical naming systems of various peoples, color-denoting lexemes are widely used, and they perform an important semantic function not only in expressing the color of the object, but also in reflecting

the natural, social, and historical characteristics of the area. In particular, toponyms formed on the basis of such color-denoting units as *oq* (white), *qora* (black), *sariq* (yellow), *ko'k* (blue), and *qizil* (red) can be divided into several groups according to their semantic and structural features:

1. This group includes color-component toponyms combined with lexemes such as *qo'rg'on* (fortress), *qishloq* (village), *ovul* (aul), and *guzar* (quarter), which denote the type of settlement. In such units, color-denoting words often do not express color meaning directly. On the contrary, they may indicate the external appearance, relief, structure, size or quantitative features of the area, as well as who founded the place or with which representatives of a social group it is connected. For example, in such toponyms as *Sariqishloq*, *Sariqo'rg'on*, *Ko'kdala*, *Qoraguzar*, and *Qoraqishloq*, the color components do not denote the color of the object, but appear as a semantic means expressing its external appearance and historical or social features.

2. This group consists of toponyms formed with indicators denoting water objects. In such toponyms, hydronymic units such as *daryo* (river), *suv* (water), *ariq* (canal), and *buloq* (spring) combine with color-denoting lexemes and express specific semantic features: *Oqbuloq*, *Oqdaryo*, *Oqko'l*, *Oqqo'rg'on arig'i*, *Oqsoy*, *Oqsuv*, *Qorabuloq*, *Qorako'rpasoy*, *Qorako'l*, *Qorasoy buloq*, *Qorasuv*, *Ko'kbuloq*, *Ko'ksuv*, *Sariqsuv*, *Ko'ksaraksoy*, *Qizilbuloq*. Color components may indicate the physical and natural characteristics of the water, including the degree to which the water is fed by snowmelt, the speed of the current, the color of the water, its turbidity, or the fact that it originates from the mountain slopes. For example, in such hydronyms as *Oqdaryo* and *Qoradaryo*, the color components often express semantic meanings related to the quantity of water, the characteristics of the current, or natural conditions.

3. This group consists of toponyms formed with lexemes denoting the structure of the earth's surface. In this case, units expressing relief, such as *tapa* (hill), *jar* (ravine), *qum* (sand), *tosh* (stone), and *bayir* (slope), are combined with color-denoting components. Such toponyms are formed in order to reflect the natural-geographical characteristics of the area, its geological structure, or the appearance of the landscape. For example, such place names as *Oqboshtov*, *Oqko'tal*, *Oqtapa*, *Oqtog'*, *Oqtosh*, *Qorabel*, *Qoraqir*, *Qoraqum*, and *Qizilqum* are toponymic units expressing the color of the stones in the area, the structure of the land, or

the specific features of the relief form.

4. This group includes ethnotoponyms that arose as a result of the combination of color-denoting lexemes with ethnonyms. Professor A. Turobov distinguishes two main cases in the formation of this type of toponym. In the first case, names of clothing such as qalpoq (hat), to'n (robe), and chakmon (cloak) participate in the structure of the ethnonym. In such a naming process, one of the external features of the ethnic group — their clothing characteristics — serves as the main naming factor. For example, ethnonyms such as Qoraqalpoq, Qorato'nli, and Qorachakmon initially denoted the name of a particular ethnic unit, but later passed to the name of the territory inhabited by that ethnic group and began to be used as toponymic units.

In the second case, color-denoting lexemes were combined with the names of Uzbek tribes and clans, forming new ethnonyms. Although such names initially expressed certain ethnic units, over time they passed to the names of the territories where they lived and were formed as toponymic units. In particular, such names as Oqmang'it, Ko'kqarg'a, Qorakesak, Qoraunas, and Qoraman belong to the group of ethnotoponyms that arose as a result of such a process.

In general, toponyms involving color-denoting components are an important linguistic phenomenon reflecting the inseparable connection between language and culture. They embody not only the natural-geographical characteristics of the area, but also historical-ethnic processes, social structure, as well as the worldview and cultural experience of the people.

Feature-denoting words such as oq and qora used in the structure of toponyms express, in addition to color meaning, various other meanings as well. This is reflected in the scientific works of toponymic scholars A. N. Kononov, E. M. Murzayev, N. G. Malliskiy, V. L. Vyatkin, H. Hasanov, and S. Qorayev. In particular, A. N. Kononov explains the origin of the word oq by relating it to the verb oqmoq ("to flow"). Another researcher, R. Musin, emphasizes in his scholarly views that there are very many minerals and rocks in nature that have a white color. According to the scholar, if a certain area is called Oqtosh or Aktasi, there is a high probability that quartz deposits exist in those places. At the same time, such naming may indicate not only quartz, but also the presence of ores containing lead, gold, and other metals, that is, rich deposits of industrial significance. S. Qorayev says that in the combination Oqbuloq, the lexeme oq does not have a color meaning, but rather the meaning of the continuity and

duration of the action oqmoq ("to flow"), the abundance of its water, and the greater quantity of water compared to other springs.

Thus, in some cases, the word oq not only expresses color meaning, but also denotes names that have arisen on the basis of the general features of various natural objects. In such a situation, this lexeme partially loses its original color semantics and is used within a broader semantic range.

Even today, Turkic ethnotoponyms containing color-denoting components in their structure have been preserved. It is recorded in explanatory dictionaries that the word oq is used in several meanings, namely: 1) it denotes a color similar to the color of snow, milk, or cotton (for example: oq doka, oq qog'oz, oq non); 2) a color tending toward white, a clear complexion (oq badan, oq tanli); 3) a generalized name used in the meaning of dairy products; 4) in colloquial speech, in the meaning of vodka; 5) in the meaning of belonging to or being a supporter of the tsar of Tsarist Russia; 6) in the meaning of a clean or final copy (oqqa ko'chirmoq); 7) in expressing a sinless, pure, truth-loving person; 8) whitened hair or fur; 9) the clear part of the eye surrounding the pupil; 10) a whitish membrane or spot that appears on the pupil as a result of certain diseases; 11) the protein part of an egg.

As can be seen, this lexeme is used in a wide semantic range not only in expressing colors in nature, but also in relation to a person, an object, and various phenomena. At the same time, the component oq is also actively used in the structure of various toponyms. This fact is also noted in the studies of the onomastic scholar E. Begmatov, where the place and semantic features of color-denoting components in the toponymic system are analyzed separately.

The lexeme qora, which is widely used in the Uzbek language, is semantically multifaceted, and more than ten of its meanings are recorded in the Explanatory Dictionary of the Uzbek Language. However, in this dictionary, the semantic features of this word as manifested in the structure of toponymic units are not explained separately. Yet, the component qora used in the toponymic system often carries a distinctive onomastic-semantic load differing from the primary lexical meaning.

In the structure of toponyms, the lexeme qora can perform various semantic functions. In particular, in some cases it is observed to express the meaning of a relatively elevated part of a plain, a low hill, or a mound. In other situations, this

component is used as a semantic marker denoting abundance, density, or thickness. For example, when combined with the names of gardens or trees, it may indicate the abundance and dense distribution of vegetation in the area. Also, in the structure of certain hydronyms, the component qora appears as a semantic indicator expressing the abundance or plentifulness of water (for example, Qorabuloq). In addition, in some toponyms the lexeme qora may also express the meanings of height, largeness, or width. For example, in the name Qorako'l, it is not unlikely that this component carries a semantic load connected with the size or importance of the body of water. In some cases, the component qora indicates the vertical difference between relief elements or the distinction of a certain geographical object from other nearby relief forms in terms of height or size. At the same time, some studies note that this lexeme is also used in expressing the characteristics of natural objects connected with land, groundwater, springs, or rivers.

It should be especially emphasized that, on the basis of the general explanations given in dictionaries, it is not possible to fully interpret all the semantic layers of toponyms with the component qora. This is because toponymic units are often formed under the influence of historical, ethnic, geographical, and cultural factors, and their semantic interpretation is also inseparably connected with these factors. Another important point is that a significant part of the toponyms involving the component qora belongs to the local, that is, native Turkic layer. This can be explained, first of all, by the fact that the lexeme qora exists in the lexical system of Turkic languages as an ancient and active unit. This component also attracts attention through its wide use in various onomastic fields. In particular, its active use is observed in hydronyms (for example, Qoradaryo, Qoraariq, Qorasuv), oikonoms (for example, Qorabog', Qorako'l), necronyms (for example, Qoraota, Qorako'lcha), as well as in ethnotoponyms (for example, Qoraqalpoq, Qoraqulonchi). This shows that the lexeme qora has broad functional possibilities in the onomastic system of the Uzbek language.

Thus, the component qora appears not only as a simple adjective denoting color, but also as an important nominative element expressing various semantic, historical, and cultural meanings in the process of toponymic naming. This situation confirms that the lexical-semantic system of the Uzbek language is extremely rich and multilayered, and also that the onomastic units within it are an important linguocultural

source reflecting the historical memory and geographical perceptions of the people.

Color-denoting words in the structure of toponyms do not always express their original denotative meaning. In the formation of toponymic units, color components are directly connected with the territorial and geographical landscape. The component qora is the most active in forming ethnotoponyms. The component oq, in turn, is considered the most productive in forming hydronyms. The components qizil and sariq are predominant in names formed in desert areas. The component ko'k, however, is active in the formation of names of mountainous areas and historical-ancient cities.

The formation of color-denoting lexical units in Uzbek toponymy, as well as their role in naming and their functional features, was analyzed. Color components such as oq, qora, ko'k, qizil, and sariq are actively used not only to express color, but also as semantic means reflecting the natural-geographical, historical-ethnic, and cultural characteristics of the area.

In toponyms, color components usually function as adjectives or feature-denoting words and combine with appellative toponymic indicators such as qo'rg'on (fortress), qishloq (village), daryo (river), and tepa (hill). In addition to the denotative meaning of color, these combinations make it possible to express the external appearance of the area, the size of the object, or its social-historical characteristics. For example, the component qora in relief names and hydronyms denotes the meanings of height, abundance, or density; the component oq in hydronyms reflects the flow and quantity of water; and ko'k is actively used in the names of mountainous areas and ancient cities.

In conclusion, color-denoting lexical units are the main means of formation and naming in Uzbek toponyms, and they express the inseparable connection between language and culture, linguistically reflecting the natural-geographical and social-historical characteristics of the area. In this respect, they are an important element demonstrating the lexical-semantic and onomastic richness of Uzbek toponymy.

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