

ANALYSIS OF LEXEMES DENOTING HEADGEAR IN OLD TURKIC



Historical Linguistics

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Abstract

Among the rich cultural heritage, customs, and values of the Uzbek people, national clothing holds a special place. Traditional garments possess not only aesthetic value but also social and cultural significance. National attire reflects the history, lifestyle, climate, and worldview of the people. At the same time, the names of these garments deeply embody the people's language, way of thinking, and ethnic characteristics. Therefore, the linguistic study of Uzbek national clothing is considered one of the important directions in linguistics.

1. Introduction

National dress names belong to the ethnographic layer of the Uzbek language lexicon. Most of them are of Turkic origin, though due to historical contacts, loanwords from Arabic, Persian-Tajik, and Russian are also present.

2. Clothing as a Component of Material Culture

Clothing is one of the essential components of material culture, as it reflects the national characteristics and cultural values of a given people. The traditional occupations of each nation (agriculture, animal husbandry, hunting, etc.), seasonal and age-related changes, and even subtle aspects of a people's character are embodied in their garments. Clothing has developed alongside various historical periods and mirrors each epoch within its form.

2.1. Historical Evolution of Clothing

In the earliest stages of human history, clothing served mainly as protection against external influences. Over time, its functional scope expanded, acquiring additional features. Clothing, while safeguarding humans from external factors, also reflects a set of elements connected to social development; it covers, encircles, and adorns the human body to varying degrees.

As a social phenomenon, clothing evolves in parallel with societal development. As humanity has progressed over the years, garments have likewise been refined and perfected.

2.2. Social and Environmental Influences on Clothing

When discussing the emergence of clothing, it is necessary to consider the diverse social factors that gave rise to its various types. The natural conditions, climate, flora and fauna of the region inhabited by each community, as well as the coexistence of different peoples and the

growth of material and cultural contacts among them, led not only to the borrowing of garments and tailoring techniques but even to the borrowing of their names.

3. Lexical Evidence from *Dīwānu lughāt at-Turk*

Mahmud Kashgari's *Dīwānu lughāt at-Turk*, which contains more than seven thousand diverse lexical items, holds exceptional value as a unique source thoroughly reflecting the linguistic features of Early Old Turkic during the Qarakhanid era. Along with lexemes related to social, economic, political, and cultural life, the dictionary also includes lexical units reflecting aspects of everyday life. This indicates that numerous domestic lexemes were in use during the period. The domestic vocabulary found in the *Dīwān* requires thematic classification and analysis. In this article, we aim to examine lexemes denoting types of outer garments and consider their correspondences in Uzbek, Turkish, and Kazakh.

3.1. General Lexemes Denoting “Garment”

It should be emphasized that in general, the integral seme “garment/clothing” in the dictionary is expressed through the derivative **kēžgü**, formed from the verb **kéz** = “to wear” (I, 405). Notably, this lexeme appears for the first time in Old Turkic Turfan texts within the paired expression **kēdgü tonanǵu**, meaning “garment” (DTS, 293), and it is also attested in the language of *Qutadghu Bilig* (DTS, 294). The phonetic variants *kedim*, *kežim*, *keyim*, corresponding to the modern Uzbek *kiyim*, are found in the works of Yusuf Khass Hajib and Ahmad Yugnaki's *Hibat al-haqāyiq* (DTS, 293–295), though this lexeme is not recorded in the *Dīwān*. The generalizing seme under analysis in the *Dīwān* is also denoted by the lexeme **ton**: *opraq ton* “strained, worn-out clothing” (I, 140). There is also evidence that this word conveyed the meaning “coat, outer garment” (III, 151). This shows that by the 11th century, a distinguishing seme of the lexeme *ton* had begun to develop.

4. Specific Garment Lexemes in the *Dīwān*

Although the original generalizing seme remained dominant in later sources, the meaning “qalpoq, headgear” in the *Dīwān* is expressed by **börk**, derived from the verb **böri=**, **büri=** “to cover, close, wrap” (ESTY, II, 222): *tatsız türk bolmas, başsız börk bolmas* (I, 333). The emergence of this lexeme, which has a pan-Turkic character, dates back to the Early Old Turkic period of the 11th century. It is not attested in earlier Old Turkic inscriptions. We encounter it first in the *Dīwān*, as well as in *Qutadghu Bilig*, and later in *Hibat al-haqāyiq*.

4.1. Types of Börk

Mahmud Kashgari lists several types of **börk** (headgear) in his dictionary by name. For instance, the seme “long, soft white cap made from the wool of a white goat” is expressed through the phrase *qymach börk*. This phrase, denoting a specific type of cap, is characteristic of the Chigil language. The expressions *kötürmä börk* (I, 452) “a turned-up cap” and *süqarloch börk* (I,

454) “a long (pointed) cap” are used to denote other particular varieties. It is also appropriate to note that the maker of caps and their various colorful forms is referred to in the dictionary as *börkchi* (I, 62).

4.2. Modern Turkic Reflexes of Börk

The lexeme *börk* appears in modern Turkic languages in various phonetic forms and meanings. In Uzbek, *bo‘rk* denotes a “winter hat, telpak” (O‘TIL, I, 164). In Kazakh and its dialects, *börük* refers to a “cap made from fine wool”; in Turkish, *vörük* continues to express the meanings “headgear” and even “kerchief” (ESTY, II, 222).

5. Lexical Evidence from *Tarjumān turkiy va ajamiy va mo‘g‘uliy*

Another source included in the analysis is *Tarjumān turkiy va ajamiy va mo‘g‘uliy* (abbreviated as *Tarjumon*). Since the monument was compiled in a region inhabited by Kipchak, Oghuz, and Turkmen Turkic peoples, the work reflects their linguistic features. The author notes that he pays particular attention to the Kipchak language. In the dictionary section, lexical layers connected to Oghuz or Turkmen speech are occasionally explained. The author attempts to show phonetic differences among Kipchaks, Oghuz, and Turkmens; for example, the term for headgear is recorded as *kə bəš* – meaning *do‘ppi, qalpoq* (“skullcap, cap”).

In the Oghuz dialect of Uzbek, the word *bo‘rk* is also attested with the meaning “shawl, wrap.” Thus, the secondary meanings “kerchief” and “covering” developed from the primary sense of the lexeme, all united by the seme “covering for the head and body.”

6. Other Garment Lexemes and Semantic Developments

The wrap used by shepherds to protect themselves from rain and snow is denoted in the *Dīwān* by the derivative *yaptach*, formed from the verb *yap* = “to cover, to close” (III, 45). This lexeme does not appear in any other known source. A type of short-sleeved garment is expressed through the compound *quloq ton* (I, 365). The etymology of the lexeme *qulaq*, homonymous with the anatomical term “ear,” seems to be motivated by the resemblance of the short sleeves hanging on both sides to human ears.

7. Ethnolinguistic Significance of Uzbek National Garment Terminology

The linguistic characteristics of Uzbek national garments reveal the depth of their role and significance in the life of the people. The names of clothing items reflect the richness of the national language, its historical layers, and its cultural values. Their origins, word-formation patterns, semantic developments, and phraseological uses demonstrate the richness of the Uzbek language.

Through language, national clothing expresses a people’s worldview, aesthetic taste, and sense of national pride. For this reason, the linguistic, ethnolinguistic, and cultural study of

traditional garments represents an important academic direction in the development of Uzbek linguistics.

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