

THE POLYSEMANTIC NATURE OF DIALECTAL WORDS AND REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

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Abstract: This article examines the polysemantic nature of words found in regional dialects of the Uzbek language and analyzes the formation of semantic variations influenced by geographical factors. It explores the multiple meanings of dialectal units, semantic extension processes, and the divergent interpretations of the same lexeme across different dialects. The study also discusses the impact of dialectal polysemy on the development of the literary language.

Keywords: dialectism, polysemy, regional variation, semantics, Uzbek language.

ПОЛИСЕМАНТИЧЕСКАЯ ПРИРОДА ДИАЛЕКТНЫХ СЛОВ И РЕГИОНАЛЬНЫЕ РАЗЛИЧИЯ

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada o'zbek tili hududiy dialektlarida uchraydigan so'zlarning polisemantik xususiyatlari, ularning shakllanishi va ma'no tafovutlarining hududiy omillar bilan bog'liqligi tahlil qilinadi. Dialektal birliklarning bir necha ma'noga egaligi, semantik kengayish jarayoni hamda turli lahjalarda bir so'zning turlicha talqin qilinishi ilmiy asoslangan holda yoritiladi. Tadqiqot dialektal polisemiyaning adabiy til taraqqiyotiga ko'rsatgan ta'sirini ham o'rganadi.

Kalit so'zlar: dialektizm, polisemantika, hududiy farq, semantika, o'zbek tili, sheva.

DIALEKTAL SO'ZLARNING POLISEMANTIK TABIATI VA HUDUDIIY TAFOVUTLAR

Аннотация: В данной статье анализируются полисемантические свойства слов, встречающихся в территориальных диалектах узбекского языка, их формирование и связь смысловых различий с региональными факторами. Обосновывается многозначность диалектных единиц, процессы семантического расширения и различия в употреблении одной и той же лексики в разных говорах. Исследуются также влияние диалектной полисемии на развитие литературного языка.

Ключевые слова: диалектизм, полисемия, региональные различия, семантика, узбекский язык.

INTRODUCTION

The regional dialects of the Uzbek language represent a complex linguistic system that developed over a long historical period, preserving traces of ancient Turkic language layers, ethnolinguistic processes, and regional cultural interactions up to the present day¹. Because the phonetic, morphological, and lexical systems of each region have evolved independently, dialectal units possess diverse semantic structures; the fact that a single lexeme can have different meanings forms the basis for dialectal polysemy². Polysemy, as one of the most active semantic processes in dialectal vocabulary, reflects the lifestyle, geographical conditions,

¹ Qayumov M. *O'zbek tili lahjalari va shevalari*. – Toshkent: O'zbekiston, 1996. – 119–121-b.

² Зарубин И. А. *Материалы по диалектологии узбекского языка*. — Москва, 1959.

professional activities, and regional linguistic worldview of the people³. Therefore, the study of dialectal polysemy is of great scientific importance for elucidating the historical development stages of the Uzbek language, identifying the semantic factors of regional differentiation, and explaining the creation of national color and natural character depiction in literary works⁴.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

The study of dialectal vocabulary and its semantic features in the Uzbek language is based on scholarly research that began to take shape in the first half of the 20th century. The earliest systematic linguistic observations on Uzbek dialects were carried out by I. A. Zarubin, who was the first to scientifically classify the phonetic and lexical characteristics of regional dialects in his works⁵. The research of E. D. Polivanov is significant for introducing the issue of semantic differentiation into Uzbek dialectology, relating the semantic shifts occurring in dialects to the historical development of the language⁶. K. K. Yudakhin, in his explanatory dictionary, provided interpretations of numerous dialectal units, showing that many of them possess polysemous features⁷.

In recent years, scientific studies within Uzbek dialectology have made it possible to investigate dialectal polysemy through new perspectives — including linguocultural, cognitive-semantic, and areal-linguistic approaches. Notably, V. V. Reshetov's field studies conducted across various regions of Uzbekistan demonstrate that the semantic differentiation of dialects is often determined by the historical and ethnographic peculiarities of each region⁸. A. Ishayev interprets the semantic development of dialectal units in connection with the internal laws of the Uzbek language's evolution and emphasizes that polysemy emerges in dialects as a natural linguistic process⁹. S. Otamirzayeva provides a detailed explanation of the main mechanisms behind semantic change in dialectal vocabulary — such as metaphorical and metonymic shifts, semantic expansion, and narrowing¹⁰.

In this study, several linguistic methods were used in combination to identify the specific characteristics of dialectal polysemy. First, comparative-semasiological analysis was employed to compare the usage features of the same lexeme in different regions. The areal-linguistic approach served as an important tool for identifying the geographical distribution of semantic differences. Historical-comparative methods were also applied to determine the relationship of certain dialectal units with ancient Turkic language materials¹¹. The linguistic analysis of literary texts made it possible to reveal the stylistic functions of dialectal polysemous units in fiction, with the works of Hoshimov, Xolmirzayev, and Tog'ay Murod serving as primary materials in this process¹².

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

In the regional dialects of the Uzbek language, the polysemic features of dialectal words are a natural result of semantic development, formed in close connection with the historical layers of

³ Otamirzayeva S. "Shevalarda leksik-semantik jarayonlar". // *Filologiya masalalari*, 2015, №2.

⁴ Hoshimov O'. *Dunyoning ishlari*. – Toshkent: Sharq, 2001.

⁵ Зарубин И. А. *Материалы по диалектологии узбекского языка*. — Москва, 1959.

⁶ Поливанов Е. Д. *Очерки узбекской диалектологии*. — Ташкент, 1933.

⁷ Юдахин К. К. *Узбекско-русский словарь*. — Москва: Госиздат, 1980.

⁸ Решетов В. В. *Узбекские диалекты и их лингвистическая характеристика*. — Ташкент: Фан, 1973

⁹ Ishayev A. *O'zbek tili dialektologiyasi*. Toshkent: TDPU, 2007.

¹⁰ Otamirzayeva S. "Shevalarda leksik-semantik jarayonlar", 2015.

¹¹ Qayumov M. *O'zbek tili lahjalari va shevalari*. Toshkent, 1996.

¹² Hoshimov O'.; Xolmirzayev Sh.; Tog'ay Murod — asarlarida dialektal leksika.

the language, regional lifestyles, and linguocultural factors. Analysis of field materials and existing scholarly sources shows that the use of the same lexeme with different meanings in different regions indicates the active operation of semantic differentiation processes within the dialectal system. For example, the word *balchiq* means “mud” in the Tashkent dialect, “raw brick mixture” in Khorezm, and “boggy land” in Surxondaryo; such differences are explained as the outcome of historical-semantic developments shaped by regional economic activities and geographical conditions¹³. These cases confirm that polysemy in dialects is not accidental but a lawful phenomenon of linguistic evolution.

Metaphorical transfer, metonymic expansion, semantic narrowing, and semantic generalization play leading roles in the formation of dialectal polysemy. Otamirzayeva, in her research, emphasizes that these processes constitute the most active semantic mechanisms in dialectal vocabulary¹⁴. Through metaphorical transfer, the attribute or feature of one object is transferred to another, yielding a new meaning. For instance, in the Qashqadaryo dialect, the word *qalpoq* refers not only to “headgear” but also to “hill” or “upper part”, a meaning that has emerged through semantic metaphor and represents semantic expansion¹⁵. Such examples demonstrate the active functioning of cognitively based semantic processes within the dialectal system.

According to the areal-linguistic approach, dialectal polysemy is closely tied to geographical separation, natural-climatic conditions, professional activities of the community, and ethnocultural interactions. Reshetov’s field observations likewise confirm that regional differences directly influence the formation of polysemous meanings¹⁶. For example, the semantic expansion of certain words in mountainous areas is directly linked to the natural landscape and lifestyle, whereas in valley regions this process is more often related to economic practices.

The use of dialectal polysemous units in literary works enhances their linguopoetic value. In particular, the polysemous use of dialectisms in the works of Shukur Xolmirzayev, Tog‘ay Murod, and Hoshimov naturalizes the speech of characters, enlivens the local environment, and brings national color into the text¹⁷. From a literary perspective, polysemous dialectisms serve as important stylistic devices that deepen character portrayal and define the cultural background of the depicted setting. Moreover, the active use of such units in artistic language contributes to the incorporation of certain dialectal meanings into the common language, thereby enriching the semantic shades of the literary language. This phenomenon is considered lexical-semantic integration and is recognized as one of the natural mechanisms of the development of the Uzbek language¹⁸.

Overall, the research demonstrates that dialectal polysemy represents a broad, multifaceted, and dynamic layer of the Uzbek lexical system. It serves as an invaluable source for illuminating the regional evolution of the language, understanding the internal mechanisms of semantic processes, identifying regional linguocultural characteristics, and analyzing the language of literary texts.

CONCLUSION

¹³Зарубин И. А. *Материалы по диалектологии узбекского языка*. — Москва, 1959

¹⁴Qayumov M. *O‘zbek tili lahjalari va shevalari*. Toshkent, 1996.

¹⁵Otamirzayeva S. “Shevalarda leksik-semantik jarayonlar”, *Filologiya masalalari*, 2015.

¹⁶Поливанов Е. Д. *Очерки узбекской диалектологии*. — Ташкент, 1933.

¹⁷Решетов В. В. *Узбекские диалекты и их лингвистическая характеристика*. — Ташкент: Фан, 1973.

¹⁸Xolmirzayev Sh.; Tog‘ay Murod; Hoshimov O‘. — *badiiy matnlarda dialektal leksika tahlili*.

The analyses conducted show that the formation of dialectal polysemy in Uzbek dialects is a complex semantic process shaped by historical, linguocultural, and areal factors. The research revealed that the acquisition of different meanings by the same lexeme across various regions is one of the natural laws of dialectal system development; this phenomenon is explained by the internal semantic capacities of the language, regional lifestyles, and historical patterns of interaction¹⁹. The frequent occurrence of metaphorical and metonymic shifts, semantic widening, and narrowing in polysemous units confirms that the semantic structure of dialectal vocabulary is in constant motion²⁰.

The study also demonstrates that dialectal polysemous units are significant not only as linguistic phenomena but also as essential tools in artistic literature for ensuring the naturalness of character speech, creating national color, and enhancing stylistic expressiveness. The active use of polysemous dialectisms in the works of Xolmirzayev, Hoshimov, and Tog'ay Murod indicates their high linguopoetic potential²¹. Furthermore, the incorporation of certain dialectal meanings into the literary language contributes to the enrichment of the lexical-semantic system and the historical development of the language²². All these observations confirm that the study of dialectal polysemy is one of the urgent and important directions in Uzbek linguistics that requires thorough scientific investigation.

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¹⁹ Зарубин И. А. Материалы по диалектологии узбекского языка. — Москва, 1959.

²⁰ Otamirzayeva S. "Shevalarda leksik-semantik jarayonlar", *Filologiya masalalari*, 2015

²¹ Xolmirzayev Sh.; Tog'ay Murod; Hoshimov O'. — badiiy matn tahlillari.

²² Юдахин К. К. Узбекско-русский словарь. — Москва: Госиздат, 1980.