LEXICAL AND SEMANTIC FEATURES OF DISAPPEARING WORDS IN THE KHOREZM DIALECT

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Abstract. This thesis examines lexical units in the Khorezm dialect that are now used infrequently and are disappearing. It analyzes the equivalents in the standard language, semantic features, and spheres of use of twenty words and expressions recorded from local speech. According to preliminary observations, nearly 60 percent of the recorded units are hardly used in active speech, and some have survived mainly in the speech of people over 80 years old. The findings indicate the need to record, explain, and preserve dialect vocabulary in digital form.

Keywords: Khorezm dialect, dialectism, dialect vocabulary, words falling out of use, speech of the older generation, lexical and semantic analysis, linguistic heritage.

Introduction

Folk dialects are important sources that preserve the historical development and regional features of the national language, as well as people's everyday experience. The Khorezm dialect also differs from other regional varieties of Uzbek in its distinctive phonetic, grammatical, and lexical features. Many of its words and expressions reflect the family relationships, judgments about personal character, customs, and emotional attitudes of the people of the region.

Language changes continuously. The influence of the standard language, the expansion of education and mass media, the growing popularity of online communication, and differences between the speech of generations are narrowing the use of some local units. As a result, some words whose meanings are well known to the older generation are not used by young people or have become entirely unfamiliar to them. This situation calls for timely documentation and scholarly description of these words.

Review of the Literature

The theoretical and practical issues of Uzbek dialects are discussed in Uzbek Dialectology by V. V. Reshetov and Sh. Shoabdurahmonov, which sets out principles for studying dialects on the basis of regional and linguistic features [1]. F. Abdullayev's study The Khorezm Dialects of the Uzbek Language is considered one of the principal sources for studying the phonetic, grammatical, and lexical features of dialects in the Khorezm region [2].

In the Dictionary of Khorezm Dialects compiled by Sh. Norbayeva, N. Sa'dullayeva, and M. Atabayeva, units used in the speech of the region's Oghuz and Kipchak groups are explained by locality. The dictionary's authors note that contemporary social and cultural factors are increasing the risk that dialect words will fall out of use [3]. This thesis aims to supplement those scholarly views with new examples collected from local speech.

Research Aim and Methods

The aim of the study is to identify units used infrequently in the Khorezm dialect, explain their meanings in the standard language, and group their lexical and semantic features. The object of the study

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is dialectal units found in the spoken language of Khorezm residents; its subject is their meanings, functions, and level of use across generations.

Direct observation, oral interviews, explanation of word meanings, comparative descriptive analysis, and statistical analysis were used to collect and examine the material. To preserve local pronunciation, the units were recorded in forms close to those used by the speakers. Their meanings were compared with equivalents in the standard language. The proportion of the twenty collected units that are hardly used in active speech was calculated on the basis of preliminary observation.

Results and Discussion

The dialectal units recorded during the study are presented in the following table with explanations in the standard language. Some forms may have phonetic variants in different districts and villages of Khorezm. The spellings in the table should therefore be understood as representations of local spoken pronunciation.

No.	Dialect unit	Meaning in the standard language	Category
1	**xo‘shroy**	beautiful, attractive	quality
2	**gechir**	forgive me; used in an apology	speech formula
3	**achaman**	to deceive, to trick	action
4	**abojonime**	an exclamation uttered in fear or great astonishment	exclamation
5	**adyol**	quilt, coverlet	household item
6	**akkal**	bring it here	action
7	**alomon taka**	an agile, nimble person	description of a person
8	**opabiyi**	older sister	kinship
9	**apsiz**	inept, unable to do practical tasks	description of a person
10	**ong bosin**	may it turn out well; congratulations, best wishes	wish
11	**boldiz**	husband’s younger sister;	kinship

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No.	Dialect unit	Meaning in the standard language	Category
		younger sister	
12	**batmanin**	very large, huge	quality
13	**dandirab yurmoq**	to wander aimlessly	action
14	**dapa**	above, top	place
15	**divi**	clump, bush	name of an object
16	**timintin**	well, vigorous, healthy	condition
17	**o‘ngi yo‘q**	a simple person who is slow to understand	description of a person
18	**do‘saq**	an arrogant, unruly person	description of a person
19	**angsa**	a person who does not do what they are told or heed advice	description of a person
20	**andimoq**	to wait for, lie in wait for, or watch discreetly	action

The units in the table fall into several groups according to their meanings. Xo‘shroy, batmanin, and timintin express a quality or condition; akkal, achaman, dandirab yurmoq, and andimoq express an action. Opabiyi and boldiz denote kinship relations. Apsiz, alomon taka, o‘ngi yo‘q, do‘saq, and angsa convey assessments of a person’s abilities or character. Such units convey not only the name of an object or phenomenon but also the speaker’s attitude.

Units such as abojonime and ong bosin have particular pragmatic significance. Abojonime expresses fear, astonishment, or a strong emotional response to an unexpected situation. Ong bosin is used to congratulate someone and express goodwill or a kind wish. Thus, as disappearing dialect units fall out of use, the region’s traditional forms of communication and means of emotional expression may also disappear.

Frequency of Use

According to preliminary observation, approximately twelve of the twenty units collected, or 60 percent, are hardly used in everyday speech today. Some of them may be found in the speech of people

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over 80 years old. Members of the middle generation understand the meanings of some words but do not use them actively. Younger people often replace these units with their standard-language equivalents or do not know their meanings.

This figure is a preliminary result based on the collected material, not a final generalization. Future studies should record the number, age, place of residence, and educational level of respondents precisely and assess the frequency of these words through a broader survey. This approach would make it possible to determine reliably which units remain active, which are infrequently used, and which are on the verge of disappearing.

Reasons for the Disappearance of Words

Several factors contribute to the narrowing use of dialectal units. First, the priority given to standard-language norms in schools and higher education changes young people's choice of words. Second, units characteristic of the language used by the wider population occur more often on television, the internet, and social media. Third, a decline in direct communication between older and younger generations within families hinders the natural transmission of dialect words from one generation to the next. Changes in traditional household objects, occupations, and ceremonies also cause the names associated with them to fall out of use.

Practical Recommendations

To preserve disappearing units, it is advisable to record the speech of older people in audio and video form and to compile a digital card index giving each word's pronunciation, meaning, area of use, and an example sentence. Collecting material by district and village will help identify phonetic and semantic variants within the dialect. Organizing discussions, competitions, and small research projects on local linguistic richness in educational institutions will also increase young people's interest in this heritage.

Conclusion

The disappearing words of the Khorezm dialect constitute an important lexical layer reflecting the region's historical memory, everyday experience, and national worldview. The units analyzed include words expressing qualities, actions, kinship, personal character, wishes, and emotional states. The fact that nearly 60 percent are hardly used in active speech indicates the need to document this lexical layer systematically.

Preserving dialect words is not limited to compiling a dictionary. Their living pronunciation, functions in actual speech, and regional variants must also be recorded. An explanatory digital dictionary created on this basis would help pass the Khorezm dialect's distinctive units on to future generations, enrich dialectological research, and preserve the national linguistic heritage.

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