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Expression of national mentality in toponym semantics

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Abstract: In this article, the linguistic properties of toponyms are analyzed in a complex way. It is scientifically substantiated that place names, as units of language, not only perform a nominative function, but also are a semantic system that reflects the historical memory, national mentality and cultural values of the people. The semantic, etymological, historical and cultural layers of toponyms are illuminated on the basis of examples. Their role as a cultural code is also revealed.

Key words: toponym, linguomanity, semantics, etymology, national mentality, historical memory, cultural code.

Language is an expression of the spirit of the nation. Each people keeps their history, worldview and values through language and communicate from generation to generation. One of the most ancient and stable layers of the language is toponyms. Place names have been formed over the centuries and embody social, political, cultural and economic processes in themselves.

From the point of view of linguistics, toponyms are important units that reflect the National thought, historical memory and cultural experience of the people. Through them, information can be obtained about the natural conditions of a particular area, occupation of the population, religious views and ancient beliefs.

The purpose of this article is to highlight the linguistic features of toponyms on a scientific basis and show their connection with National thinking. Toponyms are important linguistic units that reflect the historical progress, culture and linguistic wealth of each people. They not only constitute a system of geographical names, but are also expressions of folk thought, traditions and historical memory through language.

In today's linguistics, the study of language not only as a communicative tool, but as an important social phenomenon that reflects culture and conveys it from generation to generation is one of the priorities. In this respect, the science of linguistics studies the relationship of language and culture. Toponyms-place names-are one of the most ancient layers of the language, which embody the historical progress of the people, the environment of living, Customs and worldview. Each toponym acts as a cultural passport of a particular region. Therefore, the study of toponyms as a linguistic unit is one of the pressing scientific issues. Toponymy is a component of onomastics and studies the names of geographic objects. The term "toponym" is derived from the Greek words *topos* — place and *onyma* — name. While linguistically toponyms are considered lexical units, their content incorporates historical, ethnographic and cultural information.

Linguistics, on the other hand, studies the cultural information reflected in linguistic units. From this point of view, toponyms are linguistic unity, through





which the National thought, mentality and cultural experience of the people are manifested.

Toponyms are not limited to naming a geographical object. They have the following characteristics as cultural information carrier Language units:

- reflects historical realities and social processes;
- expresses the people's attitude towards nature;
- displays a national mentality and evaluative attitude.

For example, toponyms in which positive semantic units such as ser, obod, baraka participated show that the people perceived that territory as a prosperous and comfortable settlement.

Many city names embody ancient history in themselves. For example, the name Samarkand is interpreted differently in ancient sources, and the component “kand” in its composition means “City”. This suggests that the area was an ancient urban planning centre. Likewise, the origin of the name Bukhara is considered to be associated with a religious center. Through this name it is understood that the area was the center of ancient science and belief. Hence, historical-etymological analysis provides important information about the past through place names.

Also, many toponyms are the result of historical processes through which important information about the past can be obtained. The migration of residents, farm activities, important events are reflected in place names. Examples: Bukhara is a toponym formed as a center of ancient science and culture, in which long historical traditions of urban culture are embodied. Samarkand is named as a historical space associated with trade, crafts and culture. Toponyms such as these indicate the continuity of folk culture. The national mentality is evident in the semantics of toponyms. Natural objects that the people consider important often occupy a central place in place names.

Redtepa-through the color-denoting unit, the external sign of the territory and the perception of the people are expressed. A skyscraper is a toponym formed on the basis of the colors of nature and aesthetic imagery. The naming of the limestone — natural object on the basis of color and material indicates the observability of the people.

Milliy mentalitet – xalqning dunyoni idrok etish usuli va qadriyatlar tizimidir. Bu jarayon til orqali namoyon bo‘ladi. Toponimlar esa mentalitetning barqaror ko‘rinishlaridan biridir. Masalan, Qarshi atrofidagi ayrim joy nomlari qadimiy qal’a va mudofaa inshootlari bilan bog‘liq. Bu esa tarixiy davrlarda hududning strategik ahamiyatga ega bo‘lganini bildiradi. Joy nomlari ko‘pincha tarixiy shaxslar nomi bilan ataladi. Bu esa milliy xotirani mustahkamlash vositasidir. Masalan, Navoiy shahri buyuk mutafakkir Alisher Navoiy nomi bilan atalgan. Bu holat madaniy merosning davomiyligini va buyuk shaxsga bo‘lgan hurmatni anglatadi. Shunday qilib, toponimlar tarixiy shaxslar, voqealar va qadriyatlarni abadiylashtirish vositasi sifatida xizmat qiladi.





These examples confirm the evaluative and pictorial function of toponyms. As a result of linguistic analysis, it is determined that there are several cultural layers in toponyms:

1. Ethnomadanium layer. Toponyms associated with the names of seed and elat shed light on the ethnic history of the people. For example, place names such as cinnamon, cinnamon.
2. Religious-cultural layer. Toponyms associated with sacred concepts are a linguistic form of religious belief. For Example, His Majesty Imam, Shahimardan.
3. Socio-cultural layer. Toponyms for professional or economic activities reflect social life. For Example, The Peasant, The Poor.

By studying toponyms from a linguistic point of view, the mechanisms of expression of national culture through language are opened, historical memory is restored, cultural heritage preservation is served. This reinforces the integration of linguistics with cultural studies and history. Many historical names were restored in the post-independence period. This process is associated with the realization of the national self and the restoration of historical memory. Preserving toponyms and preserving their true meaning is an important area of protection of cultural heritage. Because each place name embodies the centuries-old experience of the people.

In conclusion, toponyms as a linguistic unit embody the historical experience, National thought and cultural values of the people. They are not simple names, but complex language units that carry cultural information. Toponyms are linguistic units that reflect the historical memory, national mentality and cultural values of the people. Through their semantic and etymological analysis, important scientific conclusions can be drawn about past events, social processes and cultural traditions. The linguistic approach serves to reveal a deeper understanding of toponyms, their importance as a cultural code. Therefore, the study of place names is relevant not only for linguistics, but also for history, cultural studies and sociology. Therefore, the deep and systematic study of toponyms is of fundamental scientific importance in the understanding of national culture.

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