

PHYTONYMS AS LEXICAL UNITS: THEIR ROLE AND CHARACTERISTICS IN LINGUISTIC RESEARCH

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Abstract

This article examines the role of phytonyms, namely plant names, in linguistics and explores their lexical characteristics. As important lexical units, phytonyms occupy a significant place in the vocabulary of a language. The study analyzes their semantic, morphological, and phraseological features. Particular attention is paid to the position of phytonyms within lexical semantics, their interpretability, semantic scope, and cultural contexts. The findings demonstrate that phytonyms serve not only as linguistic signs denoting plants but also as carriers of cultural values and ethnolinguistic knowledge.

Keywords: Phytonyms, plant names, linguistics, lexicon, semantics, phraseology.

Introduction

Phytonyms, or plant names, constitute an important component of a language's lexical system. They not only designate natural objects but also reflect cultural values and aspects of people's everyday life through language (Kuznetsova, 2015). Serving as a bridge between language and culture, phytonyms occupy a prominent place in linguistic studies. Therefore, investigating their lexical, semantic, and phraseological features contributes to a deeper understanding of lexical richness and language development. Despite their significance, comprehensive studies devoted to the role of phytonyms and their lexical characteristics remain relatively limited.

This article investigates the place of phytonyms within the lexical system of language, their semantic structure, phraseological usage, and significance in cultural contexts. It also analyzes the representation of phytonyms in dictionaries and examines their lexicographic features.

In contemporary linguistics, phytonyms are viewed not only as lexical units but also as valuable sources for studying the interaction between language and culture. Linguistic analysis of plant names makes it possible to identify layers of meaning, dialectal variations, and terminological distinctions. Furthermore, phytonyms provide information about the cognitive foundations, etymology, and historical development of plant names across different languages. Consequently, the study of phytonyms is important not only for lexical analysis but also for cross-linguistic comparison and ethnolinguistic research. This necessitates a comprehensive and multidimensional investigation of phytonyms within linguistics.

Moreover, phytonyms are of particular interest to language learners because they not only form part of the lexical inventory of a language but also provide insights into its cultural and historical layers. Through the study of phytonyms, language learners, translators, and lexicographers gain a better understanding of the unique characteristics of plant names, their functions within language, and their relationship with culture. Therefore, an integrative approach to the study of phytonyms, recognizing them as a fundamental component of linguistic inquiry, contributes to more effective language learning and the development of intercultural literacy.

Research Methodology

The study employed qualitative and theoretical analysis methods. The primary sources included scientific literature, lexicographic materials, and phraseological dictionaries in Uzbek, Russian, and English (Hasanova, 2012; Kuznetsova, 2015; Salomov, 1995).

The research focused on the lexical, semantic, and phraseological aspects of phytonyms. Their significance within cultural contexts was also examined from the perspective of linguistic anthropology. In addition, interpretations of phytonyms in modern electronic dictionaries were analyzed through illustrative examples.

During the research process, various scientific approaches and theories related to phytonyms were carefully examined. Drawing upon theoretical studies in lexical semantics, phraseology, and ethnolinguistics, the study analyzed the formation of meanings and functions of phytonyms within language. Furthermore, the contextual usage of phytonyms and their regional and cultural variations were investigated. This approach enabled a broader and deeper understanding of the complex nature of phytonyms while integrating their lexical and cultural dimensions.

Results

The analysis yielded the following key findings:

Phytonyms possess a relatively stable semantic core within the lexical system, and their meanings are generally clear and resistant to change. For example, words such as *guldasta* (“bouquet”) and *bodomzor* (“almond grove”) clearly indicate their referents.

Morphologically, phytonyms may occur in simple or complex forms, such as *qamishzor* (“reed field”).

The frequent use of phytonyms in phraseological expressions broadens their semantic scope. For instance, the expression *terakdek mahkam* (“as firm as a poplar”) is used to describe something stable and solid.

In cultural and social contexts, phytonyms often acquire additional meanings and may reflect the customs, beliefs, and cultural traditions of the Uzbek people.

Lexicographic descriptions of phytonyms aim to provide complete and accurate information about them, while modern electronic dictionaries have expanded opportunities for their effective representation.

The findings indicate that the role of phytonyms in the lexical system extends beyond their lexical-semantic properties and encompasses their adaptation to cultural cognition and linguistic practices. Their uniqueness lies in their close connection with speakers’ knowledge of nature and the surrounding environment. Consequently, accurate definitions of phytonyms and precise descriptions of their phraseological usage are essential for understanding lexical richness, preserving national culture, and transmitting linguistic heritage to future generations. Furthermore, the adaptation of phytonyms to changing linguistic conditions and

their enrichment through new meanings constitute important factors in their lexical evolution.

For example, the word *guldasta* has a straightforward and stable meaning, referring simply to a collection of flowers. In contrast, complex formations such as *qamishzor* demonstrate morphological expansion by indicating a location characterized by a specific type of vegetation. From a phraseological perspective, the expression *terakdek mahkam* is commonly used to denote firmness and stability, clearly illustrating the phraseological potential of phytonyms. Similarly, the expression *bodomdek shirin* (“sweet as an almond”) may convey pleasant emotions or culturally significant associations. These examples demonstrate that phytonyms contribute not only to the precise expression of meaning but also to the creation of cultural imagery.

Discussion

The role of phytonyms in language and cultural life becomes more evident through their lexical and phraseological characteristics. Their semantic stability contributes significantly to language learning and the development of lexical competence. The use of phytonyms in phraseological units demonstrates the expansion of their meanings and the emergence of metaphorical dimensions.

Cultural context transforms phytonyms into not merely linguistic expressions but also cultural identifiers. This highlights the necessity of giving special attention to phytonyms in both linguistic and cultural studies.

Furthermore, modern electronic dictionaries and corpus resources serve as effective tools for studying phytonyms by facilitating interpretation, providing usage examples, and enhancing accessibility for users. As a result, they contribute to improvements in lexicography and language teaching.

Future research should focus on more extensive corpus-based studies of phytonyms, the development of interactive lexicographic resources, and the expansion of cultural-anthropological analyses.

Overall, phytonyms represent distinctive and culturally rich lexical units within language. Their semantic stability, phraseological potential, and cultural significance warrant in-depth investigation. Greater attention should be paid to phytonyms in modern lexicography and language teaching, ensuring their comprehensive and accessible representation in electronic resources.

Future research should also pursue broader and more integrative studies aimed at identifying the unique cultural features of phytonyms and facilitating their effective application through modern technologies. Phytonyms occupy a significant position within the lexical system of language, and their lexical, semantic, and phraseological characteristics play an important role in revealing both their linguistic functions and cultural significance. They should be viewed not only as lexical units enriching language but also as essential elements reflecting people's perceptions of nature, cultural values, and historical heritage. Consequently, phytonyms establish a strong connection between language and culture.

Their phraseological features enrich the expressive potential of language and expand semantic layers. Phraseological units containing phytonyms are widely used in folklore, proverbs, and colloquial speech, enhancing meaning, expressing subtle nuances, and making language more vivid. In addition, the cultural-semantic orientation of phytonyms is particularly important in language learning, as it enables learners to acquire not only lexical meanings but also culturally specific concepts and perceptions embedded in language.

Further studies should explore phytonyms more extensively by analyzing their phraseological interpretations, cultural contexts, and historical roots. Such research may introduce new conceptual approaches to linguistics, ethnolinguistics, and cultural studies.

The development of electronic lexicography also facilitates more effective and interactive processing of phytonyms. For example, electronic dictionaries and online platforms can provide extensive information about phytonyms, including audiovisual representations, contextual usage, and phraseological functions. This creates valuable opportunities not only for linguists but also for a broader audience of language users.

Conclusion

In conclusion, a comprehensive study of phytonyms contributes to a deeper understanding of their linguistic, cultural, and technological dimensions. Such research supports the advancement of modern linguistics and enhances the effectiveness of language learning processes.

Additionally, modern computational linguistics and artificial intelligence technologies may play a significant role in the automatic identification, analysis, and database development of phytonyms. Research in this area can contribute to the improvement of automated dictionaries, natural language processing systems, and translation software, thereby promoting further progress in linguistic studies and digital language resources

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