

The Linguistic Study of Ornithonyms in Uzbek and English Languages

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Abstract: This article presents a linguistic analysis of ornithonyms in Uzbek and English, examining the different approaches to their study through a comparative perspective.

Keywords: ornithonym, zoonym, lexeme, bird names, zoological nomenclature.

Currently, the rapid development of socio-economic processes in our country necessitates increased attention to every field, including linguistics. As a result of such modernization, the number of international terms and neologisms entering the lexical layer of the language is increasing. This process requires specialists to have a clear understanding of the concepts and terms specific to their field, and a comprehensive knowledge of their meanings and essence. Simultaneously, large-scale studies are being conducted to explore the formation, development, and unique characteristics of certain lexemes and phraseological units in different systematic languages. Despite this, the study of ornithonyms as phraseological units or sememes in language, and their functional significance, remains relevant and unresolved.

Scholars have interpreted the term *zoonym*—referring to names of animals in language—in various ways. In this context, the theoretical and scientific studies concerning ornithonyms attract not only linguists but also specialists from other fields, highlighting their interdisciplinary relevance.

Ornithology (from the Greek *ornithos* – bird, and *logia* – study) is a branch of vertebrate zoology concerned with the study of birds and everything related to them. Ornithology differs from other sciences through its aesthetic appeal and the visual allure of birds. Ornithologists have used birds as models to test hypotheses and scientific predictions.

The structure and lexicon of a language change in accordance with the development of society. All expressions related to birds are stylistically studied in this process. Various language units are used based on birds' external features, lifestyles, and singing behaviors. This study analyzes texts and phraseological units containing bird names as the basis for research.

In studying zoonyms, researchers apply various approaches and methodologies. They observe the general trend of anthropocentrism in the semantics of phraseological zoonyms in modern languages and analyze the widespread use of animal names in phraseological units—often reflecting universal patterns across many world languages. These expressions are actively used as metaphorical reflections of human characteristics, due to their high connotative potential, thus drawing linguistic interest. In recent years, phraseological zoonyms have been explored from the perspective of cognitive linguistics. Some researchers have compared the processes of metaphorization and cognitive models for transferring knowledge across languages, identifying key differences between lexemes and phraseological expressions in various languages.

According to J.G. Simpson, zoological nomenclature refers to “the application of unique names to each defined group of organisms within zoological classification.” Most of zoological nomenclature is based on the Linnaean hierarchy, which was almost fully developed by Linnaeus in his 1758 work *Systema Naturae*. This classification—considered universal for zoological taxonomy—follows the order:

kingdom, phylum, class, order, family, genus, species. Modern bird taxonomy is based on this system. According to Linnaeus's classification, bird taxa can be further divided into smaller units such as subspecies, with species forming genera, genera forming families (which may include subfamilies), families forming orders, and orders forming classes. Birds belong to a specific class, and their study has contributed significantly to foundational biological concepts such as evolution, behavior, ecology, species definition, speciation, instinct, learning, ecological niches, guilds, island biogeography, phylogeography, and conservation.

Simpson also states that zoological nomenclature serves to label taxa during classification. It develops a zoological vocabulary for describing and studying animals, although it does not inherently provoke scientific curiosity. Therefore, researchers aim to integrate animal names into scientific discourse and investigate the linguistic phenomena associated with them. The purpose of nomenclature is to fulfill nominative, classificatory, informational, and communicative functions.

The semantic group comprising bird names has historically possessed an open structure, allowing terms to disappear or be replaced over time. Early literature on birds tended to describe them from an artistic, rather than scientific, perspective. However, the main goal of ornithology is the scientific study of birds. Many authors have explored bird terminology, analyzing their distinctive names across different languages. Research also exists on the semantic, etymological, linguistic-geographical, and other aspects of bird naming.

Bird names are often found in literary imagery, especially in poetic works, where they appear in metaphors, metonymies, and synecdoches. Metonymy typically relies on the relationship between the named and naming objects.

Birds have appeared in literature since ancient times. In fables like *The Wolf and the Crane* or *The Fox and the Stork*, ornithonyms are used to convey moral lessons about human behavior.

Bird imagery also appears in famous artworks. For instance, *A History of British Birds* (1797–1804) by wood engraver Thomas Bewick was the first illustrated ornithological guide made available to the public. John James Audubon's *Birds of America* (1827) contains monumental bird illustrations and remains one of the most valued art books among collectors. John Gould's ornithological illustrations in works such as *The Birds of Asia* and *The Birds of Australia* (1840–1848), consisting of hundreds of plates, are considered both beautiful and scientifically significant.

Birds frequently appear as characters in children's literature and are often beautifully illustrated. English author Beatrix Potter's 1908 tale about *Jemima Puddle-Duck* introduced a popular duck character. Many other authors followed her lead, incorporating bird characters into children's stories across age groups.

In adult literature, birds often serve symbolic or psychological roles. For example, American author Paul Gallico's *The Snow Goose* (1940), translated by O. Dunkerque, portrays the symbolic power of friendship during wartime. The goose (ornithonym) represents both the protagonist and a war-ravaged world in metaphorical terms. Researcher D.Tosheva, in analyzing poetic texts, explores the mythological foundations of animals such as horses, camels, dogs, and wolves used in folk epics, as well as beliefs and perceptions linked to animals in proverbs. She emphasizes how these images vary according to cultural context. D.Yo'ldosheva studied ornithonyms in works like *Lison ut-Tayr*, *Boburnoma*, and *Zarbulmasal*, particularly in the poetic devices used by Alisher Navoi. Her research showed the role of ornithonyms in creating poetic artistry, forming titles, and their specific use in proverbs and idioms. Her results include the compilation of the *Explanatory Dictionary of Ornithonyms in the Uzbek Language*, which contains over 1,000 ornithonym definitions.

Due to their transparent semantics, the motivational factors behind some ornithonyms are evident. The semantics and structure of lexical units are key elements in species classification. While a portion of bird names in Uzbek are native and simple, most have developed through compounding and

amalgamation. For example, two or more syllable ornithonyms like *ukki*, *to'rg'ay*, *kakku*, *burgut*, *chumchuq*, *shunqor*, *o'rdak*, and *qirg'iy* are common.

In V. Dal's Russian dictionary based on bird names, the semantic and structural descriptions of ornithonyms are provided. This dictionary indicates that there are no monosyllabic bird names in Russian; all are two or more syllables. Such data form a basis for comparative study across different language systems.

In English, the study of bird names is also referred to as *ornithonymy*. The term *ornithonym* is derived from the Greek *ὄρνιθ*- (*órniθ*-, meaning "bird") and *ὄνομα* (*ónuma*, meaning "name"), collectively meaning "bird name."

Although the linguistic study of such names may not be a central issue in contemporary linguistics, it becomes a crucial topic in comparative linguistic analysis.

The following definition is significant for the linguistic study of bird names:

English: A bird is an animal covered in feathers, with two wings for flying and a hard, pointed mouth called a beak. Birds build nests in which female birds lay eggs. "Birds are an essential part of nature; some birds fly, some don't; some have long beaks, others do not."

Uzbek: Qush – patlar bilan qoplangan hayvon bo'lib, uchish uchun ikkita qanoti va qattiq uchli og'iz tumshug'li jonzotdir. Qushlar uya quradilar, ularda urg'ochi qushlar tuxum qo'yadilar. Qushlar tabiatning ajralmas qismidir; ba'zi qushlar uchadi, ba'zilar uchmaydi; ba'zilarining tumshuqlari uzun, boshqalari esa yo'q.

This definition supports the idea that even the form of bird names plays a role in their study.

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