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MORPHOLOGICAL STRUCTURE AND ETYMOLOGICAL STRATIFICATION OF SPANISH AND UZBEK TOPONYMS

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Abstract. This article examines the morphological structure and etymological stratification of Spanish and Uzbek toponyms from a comparative perspective. The study analyzes simple, derived, and compound place names and identifies the morphological mechanisms involved in their formation. It also explores the origin, historical development, and linguistic layers preserved in geographical names. Particular attention is paid to the influence of Iberian, Celtic, Latin, Arabic, and Germanic languages on Spanish toponymy, as well as Turkic, Sogdian, Persian-Tajik, Arabic, and Mongolian elements on Uzbek toponymy. The paper further discusses linguistic hybridity, phonetic changes, and semantic features reflected in place names. The findings demonstrate that historical, cultural, and linguistic contacts have played a significant role in shaping the toponymic systems of both languages.

Keywords: toponymy, toponym, morphological structure, etymological stratification, linguistic hybridity, historical linguistic strata, Spanish, Uzbek, comparative analysis.

Introduction. Toponyms are an important part of the linguistic and cultural heritage of every nation. As geographical names, they preserve information about historical events, ethnic processes, and linguistic contacts that have taken place over centuries. Therefore, the study of toponyms contributes not only to linguistics but also to a better understanding of the historical and cultural development of societies.

The toponymic systems of Spanish and Uzbek have been formed under the influence of different historical and cultural conditions. As a result, both languages contain place names that reflect various linguistic layers and historical periods. Spanish toponyms show the influence of Iberian, Celtic, Latin, Germanic, and Arabic languages, while Uzbek toponyms preserve traces of Turkic, Sogdian, Persian-Tajik, Arabic, and Mongolian elements. These linguistic layers have played an important role in shaping the morphological structure and etymological characteristics of geographical names.

Main part. The study of the morphological structure and etymological stratification of toponyms makes it possible to identify the main patterns of place-name formation and to reveal the historical processes reflected in them. In this regard, the present article examines the morphological features and etymological layers of Spanish and Uzbek toponyms from a comparative perspective.

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The study of the morphological structure of toponyms makes it possible to determine the components from which geographical names are formed, the word-formation methods through which they emerge, and the functional roles of the morphemes contained within them. Etymological analysis, in turn, helps to identify the historical roots of geographical names, their original meanings, and the linguistic layers involved in their formation. In linguistics, morphological analysis focuses on the structural organization of toponyms, including their roots, affixes, word-forming elements, and compositional patterns. Such analysis contributes to a better understanding of the mechanisms through which place names are formed and allows researchers to identify their semantic characteristics.

In linguistics, the morphological analysis of toponyms is aimed at determining their structural organization. This process involves the examination of the root, affixes, word-forming elements, and compositional structure of a toponym. Morphological analysis helps to understand the mechanisms through which geographical names are created and provides an opportunity to identify their semantic characteristics.

From a morphological perspective, toponyms are divided into three main types: simple, derived, and compound forms.

Simple Toponyms

Simple toponyms consist of a single root and do not contain affixes or a second component. Such names are usually among the oldest geographical names. They have often developed over long periods of historical evolution and have been preserved for centuries.

In Uzbek:

- Bukhara
- Khiva
- Termez
- Jizzakh

are considered simple toponyms.

In Spanish:

- Madrid
- Málaga
- Murcia
- Toledo

are examples of simple-structured toponyms.

Since simple toponyms are often inherited from ancient languages, their etymological analysis is usually complex and challenging.

Derived Toponyms

Derived toponyms are formed by adding word-forming affixes to a root.

In Uzbek:

- Olmaliq
- Guliston
- Paxtakor

are examples of derived toponyms.

For example, **Olmaliq = olma (apple) + -liq**. In this case, the suffix **-liq** indicates abundance or the presence of something.

Affixation also plays an important role in Spanish toponymy. Examples include:

- Robledo
- Moral
- Encinar

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These are derived toponyms associated with vegetation and plant life.

Compound Toponyms

Compound toponyms are formed through the combination of two or more independent lexical units.

In Uzbek:

- Toshkent
- Yangiyo‘l
- Qiziltepa
- Shahrisabz

are classified as compound toponyms.

For example, **Toshkent = tosh (stone) + kent**. The element **kent** means “city” and can be traced back to ancient Sogdian and Turkic sources.

In Spanish:

- Villanueva
- Puerto Real
- Santa Cruz
- Valladolid

are examples of compound toponyms.

For instance, **Villanueva = villa + nueva**, meaning **“new town”** or **“new settlement.”**

Affixation in Toponyms

Affixation plays a particularly important role in the morphological analysis of toponyms. This is especially evident in Uzbek, where the agglutinative nature of the language allows affixes to participate actively in the formation of place names.

Some of the most common components found in Uzbek toponyms include:

- **-kent**
- **-tepa**
- **-obod**
- **-qo‘rg‘on**
- **-qishloq**

Examples include:

- Yangikent
- Chortoq
- Dehqonobod
- Qo‘rg‘ontepa

In Spanish, commonly occurring toponymic elements include:

- **-al**
- **-edo**
- **-era**
- **-illo**
- **-ito**

Examples are:

- Robledo
- Moral
- Pueblito

These affixes and formative elements contribute to the creation of geographical names and often reflect natural, social, or historical characteristics of a place.

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Etymological Features of Toponyms

Etymological analysis aims to determine the historical origins of geographical names.

According to **V. A. Nikonov**, toponyms are linguistic monuments that preserve some of the oldest layers of a people's history. Therefore, their etymological study makes it possible to reconstruct historical processes and better understand the cultural and linguistic development of societies.

Several etymological layers can be identified in Spanish toponymy:

- Iberian
- Celtic
- Latin
- Germanic
- Arabic

For example:

- **Madrid** ← Mayrit (Arabic)
- **Guadalquivir** ← al-Wadi al-Kabir ("the great river", Arabic)
- **León** ← Legio (Latin)
- **Zaragoza** ← Caesaraugusta (Latin)

Uzbek toponymy, in turn, reflects the influence of several historical linguistic layers, including:

- Turkic
- Sogdian
- Persian-Tajik
- Arabic
- Mongolian

For example:

- **Samarqand** ← Sogdian origin
- **Bukhara** ← ancient Iranian linguistic layer
- **Tashkent** ← Turkic-Sogdian origin
- **Dehqonobod** ← Persian and Turkic elements combined

These examples demonstrate how geographical names preserve traces of different peoples, languages, and historical periods, making them valuable sources for linguistic and historical research.

The relationship between morphology and etymology is fundamental in the study of toponyms, as these two approaches are closely interconnected and cannot be separated from one another. While morphological analysis reveals the present-day structure of a geographical name, etymological analysis uncovers its historical roots and original meaning. For example, the toponym Tashkent can be morphologically analyzed as tosh + kent, whereas etymological analysis shows that the component kent originates from the ancient Sogdian language and means "city." Similarly, the Spanish toponym Guadalquivir can be divided morphologically into guadal + quivir, while its etymology can be traced to the Arabic expression al-Wadi al-Kabir, meaning "the great river." Therefore, contemporary toponymic research commonly combines both morphological and etymological approaches in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of geographical names.

The study of the morphological structure and etymology of toponyms is considered one of the most important branches of onomastics because it reveals both the internal linguistic structure of place names and their historical and cultural origins. Toponyms are not merely geographical labels; rather, they represent multilayered historical and linguistic systems. From a morphological perspective, toponyms can be classified into three major groups according to word-formation principles: simple, compound, and derived toponyms.

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Simple toponyms consist of a single root and are historically regarded as the oldest forms of place names. They usually remain unchanged or undergo only minor modifications over time. Examples include Madrid, Bukhara, and Samarkand. These names have often been inherited from ancient languages and have experienced various phonetic changes throughout their historical development.

Compound toponyms are formed through the combination of two or more lexical units and usually provide a direct description of a geographical feature. Examples include Sierra Nevada ("snow-covered mountain range"), Río Grande ("great river"), and Oqtosh ("an area characterized by white stones"). Such names typically reflect natural landscapes or social features associated with a particular location.

Derived toponyms are created through the addition of prefixes or suffixes to a lexical base, demonstrating the word-formation potential of a language. Examples include Villanueva (villa + nueva, meaning "new town"), Yangiyerobod (yangi + yer + -obod), and Shahrikalada (shahar + -kala, meaning "fortified city"). These examples illustrate how the morphological system of a language contributes to the creation of new place names and meanings.

According to E. A. Begmatov, many place names within the onomastic system have an anthroponymic origin and are derived from personal names or tribal names. His research highlights the socio-historical foundations of toponymy. Examples include Iskandar → Iskandariy as a model of place-name formation, as well as Qo'ng'irot, Nayman, and Mang'it, which originated from tribal names. Tashkent itself is often interpreted as "a city built of stone."

Etymology focuses on the historical origin of place names and seeks to identify the cultural, historical, and linguistic layers involved in their formation. Toponyms commonly originate from ancient languages such as Latin, Sogdian, Arabic, and Persian, as well as from geographical descriptions, personal and tribal names, religious and cultural concepts, and economic activities. Spanish toponyms possess particularly complex historical layers and have been shaped by the influence of Latin during the Roman period, Arabic between the eighth and fifteenth centuries, and Visigothic and Iberian languages. Examples include Toledo, derived from the Latin Toletum; Seville, originating from the Arabic Ishbiliya; and Granada, whose name is associated with the Arabic word for "pomegranate." These place names preserve linguistic traces of different historical periods and cultural stages.

Uzbek toponyms, in contrast, reflect the interaction of Turkic, Sogdian, Arabic, and Persian linguistic traditions. Bukhara is associated with Sogdian or Sanskrit roots, Samarkand is often interpreted as consisting of samar ("stone" or "trade") and kand ("city"), while Chirchiq derives from a Turkic root meaning "fast-flowing water." Such examples demonstrate the complex linguistic history of Central Asia and the cultural interactions that have shaped the region.

One of the most significant phenomena in toponymy is linguistic hybridity, which occurs when elements from different languages are combined within a single place name. Examples include Alcalá de Henares, which contains the Arabic element al-qal'a alongside a Spanish component, and Namangan, which combines Arabic and Turkic elements. Hybrid toponyms provide valuable evidence of historical language contact and cultural integration.

Over time, toponyms undergo phonetic changes in accordance with the internal laws of language development. Examples include Emerita Augusta becoming Mérida, Ishbiliya evolving into Sevilla, and al-Qal'a transforming into Alcalá. These changes are associated with the simplification of complex sound structures and their adaptation to local phonological systems.

Toponyms also experience semantic changes. While some preserve their original meanings, others lose or modify them through historical development. For example, Oltinsoy is associated

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metaphorically with wealth and fertility, whereas Ciudad Real carries political and legal connotations. According to Ahmad Hojiyev, every word, including a toponym, has a historical origin that can be revealed through etymological analysis. Consequently, the etymological study of place names remains an essential tool for understanding the historical and linguistic development of geographical nomenclature.

Conclusion. The comparative analysis of Spanish and Uzbek toponyms has demonstrated that geographical names preserve valuable evidence of historical, cultural, and linguistic processes. The study revealed that both toponymic systems are characterized by a multilayered etymological structure formed under the influence of different linguistic traditions. Spanish toponyms reflect Iberian, Celtic, Latin, Germanic, and Arabic influences, whereas Uzbek toponyms preserve Turkic, Sogdian, Persian-Tajik, Arabic, and Mongolian elements.

The analysis also showed that simple, derived, and compound toponyms constitute the main structural types in both languages. Despite differences in their historical development, Spanish and Uzbek place names display a number of common morphological patterns and demonstrate the important role of language contact in the formation of geographical nomenclature.

The findings confirm that the combined application of morphological and etymological approaches provides a more comprehensive understanding of the origin, development, and semantic evolution of toponyms. Therefore, the study of toponymic systems contributes not only to linguistic research but also to a deeper understanding of the historical and cultural heritage of different peoples.

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