

DIRECTIONS OF THE FORMATION OF THE UZBEKISTAN LITERARY LANGUAGE AND THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF DIALECTS**Norova Gulsanam Maksutovna ,**

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Annotation

This article provides a comprehensive exploration of the study of the history of the Uzbek language and contemporary Uzbek dialects. The formation and stages of development of the Uzbek language, as well as its place within the Turkic language family, are analyzed based on historical sources. In particular, ancient Turkic monuments such as the Orkhon-Enisei inscriptions, Qutadghu Bilig, Divan-i Lughat al-Turk, and Muhokamat al-Lughatayn are highlighted as key sources for studying the history of the Uzbek language. The article also discusses the dialectal structure of Uzbek, examining the phonetic, morphological, and lexical features of its dialects, along with the scientific challenges encountered in their study and modern approaches to resolving them. Furthermore, attention is given to the role of digital linguistics, electronic corpora, and the collection and classification of audio and video materials of dialects, as well as the significance of dialectology in promoting the Uzbek language on a global scale. The research concludes that an in-depth study of the history of the Uzbek language and the systematic analysis of its dialects represent not only an important task in linguistics but also a crucial scholarly mission in preserving national cultural heritage.

Keywords

History of the Uzbek language, Turkic languages, ancient monuments, Uzbek dialects, dialectology, phonetic variations, morphological features, lexical stratum, digital linguistics, linguistic corpus, linguistic heritage.

The Uzbek language is one of the most ancient and rich languages in the world, occupying a distinctive place not only in Central Asia but also within the broader Turkic world. Its roots date back to pre-Christian eras, which testifies to its deep historical layers. Today, more than 50 million people use Uzbek as their native language. Therefore, a thorough study of the history of the Uzbek language and a linguistic analysis of its various dialects constitute an important scientific task not only for linguistics, but also for history, ethnology, and cultural studies.

In this regard, it should be emphasized that the issue of dialects is of particular importance as a key source directly reflecting the natural development and historical evolution of the Uzbek language. Dialects represent the living form of language used in the daily life of the people and embody national identity, ethnic memory, and cultural wealth. However, in today's era of globalization, under conditions of the increasing dominance of the literary language, some regional dialects are gradually disappearing.

This process gives rise to a number of scientific problems. In particular, the insufficient implementation of field research, the failure to record certain regional dialects, or the lack of systematic collection of dialectal materials pose the risk of losing valuable linguistic sources in the future. Therefore, the scientific study, collection, and preservation of Uzbek dialects through electronic databases remain among the urgent tasks of today.

A systematic analysis of dialects and the identification of their linguistic features make it possible to illuminate more deeply the historical stages of the development of the Uzbek language. This, in turn, opens new perspectives not only for linguistics but also for historical and ethnographic research.

It is well known that the study of the history of the Uzbek language is based on established scientific foundations. In particular, the formation of the Uzbek language is generally examined in three main stages:

The Ancient Turkic period (6th–10th centuries) – the period of the Orkhon-Enisei inscriptions and the Orkhon script.

The Old Middle Turkic period (11th–14th centuries) – works such as Mahmud Kashgari's *Devonu lug'otit turk* (11th century), Yusuf Khos Hajib's *Qutadg'u bilig* (11th century), and Ahmad Yugnakiy's *Hibbat ul-haqoyiq* (12th century).

The Old Uzbek language period (15th–17th centuries) – the works of Atoyi, Sakkokiy, Lutfiy, Alisher Navoi, and Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur.

It should be noted that the rich spiritual heritage created in each period contributed to the development of the language and the refinement of dialects. In particular, Alisher Navoi, in his famous work *Muhokamat ul-lug'atayn*, scientifically substantiated the rich potential of the Turkic (Uzbek) language within the framework of Turkic languages. In comparing it with Persian, he emphasized the extensive expressive means, semantic layers, and word-formation possibilities of Uzbek. This contributed not only to the development of the literary language but also to the linguistic analysis of dialects.

For example, in expressing certain concepts, Navoi appealed to the rich lexical resources of the Turkic language and considered the word *ko'ngil* superior to the Persian *dil*. The word *ko'ngil* conveys not only an anatomical meaning but also a person's spiritual state, inner experiences, and emotions. This example demonstrates the subtle semantic expressiveness of the Uzbek language.

Through comparative analyses in *Muhokamat ul-lug'atayn*, Navoi also noted the rich possibilities of Uzbek dialects and variants. He pointed out that Turkic languages often have several synonymous forms to express a single concept, demonstrating the vitality of the language and the contribution of oral folk creativity to the richness of the literary language.

Thus, Navoi paved the way not only for the scientific study of the literary language but also for dialects. His views continue to serve as a theoretical source for modern Uzbek dialectology, as many words and expressions found in dialects also appear in his works and are important for linguistic interpretation.

It is known that the issue of Uzbek dialects began to be systematically studied in the 19th century, first by Russian Orientalists and later by Uzbek linguists. In particular, V. V. Radlov's four-volume *Opyt slovarya tyurkskikh narechiy* ("An Attempt at a Dictionary of Turkic Dialects") provides invaluable materials on Turkic languages and dialects, including Uzbek.

In his research, Radlov recorded words used in various regional dialects of Uzbek and demonstrated differences in pronunciation. For example, the word *ayvon* used in the Fergana Valley dialects may be expressed as *hovli usti* in the Khorezm region, while in the Tashkent dialect the word *supra* may be used synonymously, illustrating regional diversity.

Similarly, the word *qo'rqoq* ("coward"), widespread in southern Uzbek dialects, appears as *cho'chqoq* in northern regions and as *hadikchi* in some areas. Such examples demonstrate the synonymic richness of Uzbek dialects and their historical connections with other Turkic languages.

Radlov's work also includes materials from many Turkic peoples such as Uzbek, Kyrgyz, Kazakh, Uyghur, Tatar, Bashkir, and Karakalpak. For instance:

Uzbek *qiz* – "female child" (a Common Turkic word also found in Kazakh and Uyghur).

Uzbek *qop* – "bag, sack."

Kyrgyz *ata* – "father" (corresponding to Uzbek *ota*).

Kyrgyz *töl* – "full, satisfied," corresponding to Uzbek *to'q*.

Kazakh *jigit* – "young man, rider," also used in Uzbek, especially in literary style.

Kazakh *köş* – "to migrate," sharing the same root as Uzbek *ko'chmoq*.

Tatar and Bashkir *ir* – "man" (corresponding to the ancient Uzbek form *er*).

Tatar söz – “word” (Common Turkic).

Uyghur yol – “road,” corresponding to Uzbek yo‘l.

Uyghur öy – “house,” corresponding to Uzbek uy.

Radlov’s work is particularly valuable because it presents parallel dialectal variants of the same word. For example, the word ko‘l (“lake”) appears as:

Uzbek – ko‘l

Kazakh – көл (köl)

Kyrgyz – көл (köl)

Tatar – күл (kül)

Uyghur – көл (köl)

This demonstrates the phonetic closeness and historical relationship among Turkic languages.

Thus, Radlov’s work served as the first fundamental source in the study of Uzbek dialects. His materials were later widely used in the research of A. K. Borovkov, A. K. Shcherbak, and Uzbek scholars such as G. Abdurahmonov, A. Madvaliyev, N. Jo‘raev, M. Mirtojiev, and Sh. Rahmatullayev.

In studying the history and dialects of the Uzbek language, it is important to identify existing problems, propose solutions, and introduce new methodological approaches. This involves the following tasks:

- analyzing the main sources in studying the history of the Uzbek language;
- scientifically examining the phonetic, morphological, and lexical features of dialects;
- identifying difficulties in the classification of Uzbek dialects;
- substantiating the necessity of applying digital linguistics and corpus technologies.

One of the primary sources for studying the ancient stage of Turkic languages is the Orkhon-Enisei inscriptions (6th–8th centuries). These monuments reflect not only the political, social, and cultural life of Turkic tribes but also the phonetic, morphological, and lexical features of the ancient Turkic language. For example, the phrase “teñri teg teñride bolmish türük bilge qayan” (“The Turkic wise khagan, created by Heaven”) includes ancient forms such as qayan (modern Uzbek xon), bilge (“wise”), and teñri (“Heaven”), showing continuity with modern Uzbek.

In the Middle Turkic period, major scientific and literary works were created. Mahmud Kashgari’s *Devonu lug‘otit turk* is the first encyclopedic dictionary of Turkic languages, containing more than 7,500 words and nearly 300 poems and proverbs. Many lexical items recorded there survive in modern Uzbek dialects with phonetic variations.

Similarly, Yusuf Khos Hajib’s *Qutadg‘u bilig* influenced the formation of literary norms. Words such as kün (“sun”) are now used as quyosh in literary Uzbek, though the ancient form kun is preserved in some dialects, such as in Surkhandarya and Kashkadarya.

During the Old Uzbek period, especially in the works of Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, the development of the language continued. Babur’s *Boburnama* is not only a historical memoir but also an invaluable linguistic source. Words such as bog‘ (garden), daryo (river), qishloq (village), and qo‘rg‘on (fortress) remain active in modern Uzbek, though their pronunciation varies regionally.

For example, bog‘ is pronounced as bag‘ in Khorezm and bo‘v in Kashkadarya dialects. The word daryo may appear as darë in Tashkent speech, while in Surkhandarya and Kashkadarya variants such as soy or jo‘y are common. The term qishloq may be pronounced as kishloq, qishlaq, or qishlo in various regions. The word qo‘rg‘on appears as qurğan in Karakalpak and qurghon in Andijan and Namangan dialects.

All these examples demonstrate that Uzbek dialects preserve ancient linguistic layers and reflect the historical continuity of the language.

Thus, the linguistic layers found in the *Baburnama* continue to exist in today’s Uzbek literary language, while the dialects preserve ancient phonetic and morphological features. This demonstrates that the work is an invaluable source from a linguistic perspective.

From the 17th to the 19th centuries, various regional literary schools emerged based on the old Uzbek language. For example, during the Khiva Khanate, Munis and Ogahi contributed significantly to the development of the literary language with their works, while in the Kokand Khanate, the poetry of Uvaysi and Nodira played an important role in the history of the language. During this period, although Arabic and Persian elements were widely used in literary language, the national specificity of the Uzbek language, the living speech of the people, and the influence of dialects were preserved. For instance, in Ogahi's works, words of Persian origin such as "oshno," "arif," and "dilrabo" appear, yet he also extensively employed pure Turkic words like "yurak" (heart), "ko'ngil" (soul), and "so'zlashmoq" (to speak). These words were used in the same form in the Khorezm dialects.

In the Kokand literary school, the poetry of Uvaysi and Nodira shows certain phonetic features of the Fergana Valley dialects. For example, although the word "qizil" (red) is sometimes written as "qizil," in the Fergana dialect it is pronounced shortly as "qizil/qizil." Similarly, in some songs, the word "ko'ngil" is written as "kungil," reflecting the integration of the valley's living dialect into literary language.

Furthermore, dialects around Bukhara and Samarkand exhibit a higher frequency of Arabic-Persian elements. For instance, the word "kitob" (book) is used the same in literary language and the Bukhara dialect, whereas in Khorezm it is pronounced more often as "kitop." The word "darvoza" (gate) aligns with literary norms in Samarkand and Bukhara, but in Fergana and Namangan it is pronounced "darboza."

At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, Jadid literature played a significant role in simplifying the Uzbek language and reinforcing the national spirit. In the works of writers such as Cho'lpon, Abdulla Qodiriy, and Fitrat, the influence of local dialects on the literary language is evident. This process was crucial in laying the foundation of modern Uzbek literary language.

Specifically, Cho'lpon used words and forms characteristic of the Andijan-Fergana dialects in his poetry. Abdulla Qodiriy incorporated elements of the Tashkent dialect in his novels, while Fitrat used lexical features from the Bukhara and Samarkand regions in his articles. Dialectal elements gave their works a folk spirit, vitality, and national character. Studies show that Cho'lpon's poetry and stories include forms typical of the Fergana dialect. In his poem *Sevgi va g'am*, "ko'ngil" is rendered as "kungil" – "Kungil nega beqaror, sevgidanmi yo g'amdan?"; in *Buloqlar*, "yene" replaces "yana" – "Yene seni ko'rsam, yene yuzim kulgay"; and in the novel *Kecha va Kunduz*, "usha" replaces "o'sha" – "Usha kecha yulduzlar boshimga qaragan."

Similarly, Qodiriy frequently employed elements of the Tashkent dialect in his novels. In *O'tkan kunlar*, "buzor" replaces "bozor" – "Buzorda odam ko'p edi," and "qandey" replaces "qandayin" – "Qandey qilib topdik bu baxtni?" In *Mehrobdan chayon*, "kelasizmi?" substitutes "kelasani?" – "Kelasizmi, o'g'lim?"; "qishlaq" replaces "qishloq" – "Qishlaq odamlari kelishdi," and "diydi" replaces "deydi," bringing the literary language closer to everyday speech.

Fitrat used lexical features from the Bukhara-Samarkand area in his articles and plays: "kitop" instead of "kitob" – "Kitop o'quvchi ko'paymog'i kerak," "darboza" for "darvoza" – "Darboza yonida kutar edim," "boridi" instead of "bor edi" – "O'sha paytda bir madrasa boridi," and "shunay" instead of "shunday" – "Shunay deb aytishgan."

The Uzbek language belongs to the Karluk branch of the Turkic language family and contains many dialects. According to linguistic research, Uzbek dialects are divided into three

main groups: Karluk-Chigil-Uyghur (Fergana, Tashkent, Samarkand-Bukhara, Qashqadaryo-Surxondaryo), Kipchak (Khorezm, Karakalpakstan, northern regions), and Oghuz (southern Khorezm, parts of Karakalpakstan, and areas bordering Turkmenistan). This classification is based mainly on phonetic, morphological, and lexical features. For instance, in the Tashkent dialect, “kelaypti” or “kevotti” is used, in Khorezm “kevotti,” and in Surxondaryo, Navoiy, Samarkand, and Bukhara, “kelyapti” is used.

In the Samarkand dialect, possessive suffixes are often shortened: “kitobm” instead of “kitobim,” “uymiz” instead of “uyimiz.” The Fergana dialect has unique verb forms: “boromman” instead of “boraman,” “kelomman” instead of “kelaman.”

Lexical differences are also evident. For instance, “arava” in Tashkent corresponds to “arba” in Khorezm; “tarozi” in Surxondaryo is “qozivoy”; “supurgi” in Samarkand is “jora”; “jo‘rob” in Navoiy; “qulupnay” (wild strawberry) in Fergana is “yer qulupnayi,” in Khorezm “chiyil,” in Navoiy “qulpinay.”

Dialectal syntactic features differ as well: in Tashkent “Borasanmi?”, Khorezm “Borasan-a?”, Fergana “Borasanmi yo‘q?” Phonetics also shows distinct differences: Tashkent child → bala, Khorezm borayapman → borovman, Qashqadaryo-Surxondaryo retains ancient q and y sounds in qazmoq, aylanmaq. Such phonetic variations pose challenges in standardizing literary language, making documentation in dictionaries essential.

Currently, there are several issues in studying Uzbek dialects:

- Regional dialects are insufficiently researched. For example, some ancient phonetic forms in the mountainous Boysun and Denov areas of Surxondaryo remain undocumented. In Boysun, the verb “ko‘rmoq” is “kōrik,” “borayapman” is “baromman.” Similarly, in Qashqadaryo mountains, “suv” → “sub,” “bordi” → “barodi,” showing the persistence of ancient Karluk elements.
- Digital technologies and electronic dictionaries are underdeveloped. While the Academy of Sciences and some universities in Uzbekistan have started electronic corpora, they are based mainly on literary language. Dialect-specific corpora are lacking. Forms like “opchiq” (Tashkent, Fergana) or “kevotti” (Khorezm) are not included.
- Migration and urbanization threaten dialect survival. Many young people move to cities, adopting literary speech, so their children often do not learn their native dialects. For example, children from Khorezm in Tashkent say “kelaypti” instead of “kevotti,” and Fergana families’ children say “borayapman” instead of “boromman,” threatening dialect preservation.

Each dialect embodies the historical memory, culture, and ethnolinguistic identity of its people. Dialects reflect not only linguistic thought but also lifestyle, values, and national spirit, enriched over centuries by historical-political events, migrations, and cultural interactions.

Therefore, developing dialectal lexicography is both scientifically and practically urgent: systematic field collection, comprehensive phonetic, morphological, and lexical documentation, creation of electronic corpora from audio-video materials, and development of interactive dictionaries and mobile apps are essential. Such efforts ensure Uzbek dialects are preserved as a rich heritage accessible to scholars and the general public alike.

Dialect dictionaries in Uzbek linguistics emerged in the mid-20th century. For instance, Sh. Rahmatullayev’s *Uzbek Dialectology* systematized phonetic and lexical material from Tashkent, Fergana, Khorezm, and Surxondaryo dialects. Words like “apchiq” (chiqar), “sovuqcha” (sovuqqina) in Tashkent, “aʃ” (food), “palvon” (strong man) in Fergana, “keloman”

(kelayapman), “boroman” (borayapman) in Surxondaryo, and “qattiv” (qattiq) in Khorezm were recorded.

Some regional dictionaries exist, e.g., *Khorezm Dialect Dictionary*, listing local words like “otav” (father), “qattiv” (hard), alongside lexical items “yo‘x” (no), “choptiv” (ran), “qandiv” (how). However, these dictionaries are mostly local and do not cover nationwide dialects. Words like “boriyapti,” “keliyapti” (Tashkent, Samarkand-Bukhara) or “xotincha,” “qizcha” (Qashqadaryo, Surxondaryo mountains), or Andijan “manga,” “sanga” remain unrecorded in general dialect dictionaries.

Consequently, many regional lexical items are absent from written sources. Dialects of Jizzakh and Sirdaryo, for instance, have no separate dictionaries, leaving words like “qarili” (elderly), “belcha” (waist), “o‘lkash” (field) known only through field research.

Although digital dictionary work has begun, it is mostly based on literary material. Dialectal dictionaries in digital form are largely non-existent. Examples: Tashkent “bervotti” (is giving), Qashqadaryo “baromman” (I am going), “kelomman” (I come), Surxondaryo “keloman,” “qiloman” (I do), Khorezm “yo‘x” (no), “bovotti” (is happening), Fergana “bichuv” (seamstress) are not recorded electronically.

Hence, creating an *Electronic Dictionary of Uzbek Dialects* is critical. Such a dictionary should document phonetic and lexical material and capture live speech through audio and video. For instance, in Tashkent “qaniydi, borib kelsak” may be pronounced “qaniydi, borib kelsak-ku,” while in Surxondaryo “baromizmi?” is said “baramizmi?” Recording these in sound and video would provide valuable resources for future linguistic research.

Digital dictionaries could also allow users to compare regional variants of words. For example, “non” appears as “non” (Tashkent), “yupqa” (Khorezm), “patir” (Surxondaryo); “kichkina” as “miyona” (Fergana), “pichaqdek” (Samarkand), with distribution maps displayed interactively. This would be invaluable not only to linguists but also to historians, cultural scholars, and students studying the richness of the Uzbek language.

Studying the history of the Uzbek language and its dialects is a major and urgent field of philology, relevant not only to linguistics but also to national cultural studies, history, ethnography, and oral literature. Language is a mirror of societal life, worldview, thought patterns, and spiritual identity. Studying the history of the Uzbek language allows us to trace linguistic development and understand ancient worldview, lifestyle, cultural heritage, and social life. Systematic study of historical stages of the language helps rediscover the national identity and rich linguistic layers inherited from ancestors.

From this perspective, researching Uzbek dialects is crucial. Dialects serve as a “living laboratory” of the language: ancient units, phonetic forms, and grammatical tools often invisible in written sources or lost from literary norms survive in dialects, providing unique material for language history.

Dialects also convey information about social and cultural life. Across regions, hundreds of terms related to animal husbandry, agriculture, handicrafts, and trade exist, many preserved only locally. Collecting and systematizing them is essential for ethnographic research.

However, globalization threatens the gradual disappearance of dialects. Migration, mass media influence, and the dominance of literary language cause many young people to move

away from their regional dialects. Hundreds of ancient words, phonetic forms, and grammatical tools risk being lost. Therefore, recording Uzbek dialects widely today, documenting them in audio and video, and integrating them into electronic dictionaries and linguistic corpora is crucial both scientifically and for preserving cultural heritage.

Studying the history of the Uzbek language and its dialects addresses several key tasks:

- **Scientific task:** determine stages of language development, distinguish ancient and new elements, establish Uzbek's place in the Turkic language family.
- **Cultural task:** restore oral creativity, customs, values, and worldview through linguistic material.
- **Practical task:** enrich literary language, use national language resources in education, engage youth with their mother tongue.
- **Technological task:** document linguistic resources via digital technologies, create electronic dictionaries and corpora, and preserve dialects on modern platforms.

In conclusion, researching the history of the Uzbek language and its dialects is not only a linguistic endeavor but also a foundation for the cultural memory and social development of the nation. Each stage of the language reflects life experience, culture, and thought. Uzbek dialects serve as a living, vibrant laboratory, preserving the richness, diversity, and historical layers of the language for future generations.

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