QO‘QON DAVLAT PEDAGOGIKA INSTITUTI ILMIY XABARLARI
(2026-yil 10-son)
FILOLOGIYA
PHILOLOGY
https://doi.org/10.70728/b.series.fil.v08.i10.112

LINGUODIDACTIC POTENTIAL OF USING UZBEK AND ENGLISH HYDRONYMS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Qurbonova Gulnoza Abduholiq qizi
Lecturer, Department of Applied English, Termez State Pedagogical Institute
Phone.: +998 90 748 47 44
E-mail: gulnozabduholiqovna@gmail.com

Abstract. Hydronyms, or names of rivers, lakes, seas, and other water bodies, provide a useful point of contact between language, geography, history, and cultural memory. This conceptual article examines how Uzbek and English hydronyms may be compared through structural form, semantic motivation, historical layering, and cultural interpretation. Rather than claiming to present a statistical corpus study, the paper develops a qualitative framework using published scholarship and selected, publicly documented examples, including Amu Darya, Sir Darya, the Thames, the Severn, the Mississippi River, and the Black Sea. The analysis distinguishes the linguistic form of a name from the generic geographical term accompanying it, and separates transparent contemporary meanings from historically reconstructed etymologies. The comparison suggests that both naming traditions preserve environmental information and historical contact, while their visible structures reflect different naming conventions and language histories. Uzbek hydronyms frequently appear with the Persian-derived element daryo (“river”) in names such as Amudaryo and Sirdaryo, whereas English geographical usage commonly places a generic after a specific name, as in Thames River, River Thames, and Mississippi River.

Keywords: hydronymy; Uzbek; English; toponymy; semantic motivation.

O‘ZBEK VA INGLIZ GIDRONIMLARIDAN INGLIZ TILI TA’LIMIDA FOYDALANISHNING LINGVODIDAKTIK IMKONIYATLARI

Annotatsiya. Gidronimlar yoki daryolar, ko‘llar, dengizlar va boshqa suv havzalarining nomlari til, geografiya, tarix va madaniy xotira o‘rtasida foydali aloqa nuqtasini ta’minlaydi. Ushbu kontseptual maqola o‘zbek va ingliz gidronimlarini strukturaviy shakl, semantik motivatsiya, tarixiy qatlamlanish va madaniy talqin orqali qanday taqqoslash mumkinligini o‘rganadi. Maqola statistik korpus tadqiqotini taqdim etishni da’vo qilish o‘rniga, nashr etilgan ilmiy ishlar va tanlangan, ommaviy hujjatlashtirilgan misollar, jumladan, Amudaryo, Sirdaryo, Temza, Severn, Missisipi daryosi va Qora dengizdan foydalangan holda sifatli asos yaratadi. Tahlil nomning lingvistik shaklini unga hamroh bo‘lgan umumiy geografik atamadan ajratib turadi va shaffof zamonaviy ma’nolarni tarixan qayta tiklangan etimologiyalardan ajratib

turadi. Taqqoslash shuni ko‘rsatadiki, nomlash an’analari ham atrof-muhit haqidagi ma’lumotlarni va tarixiy aloqani saqlaydi, ularning ko‘rinadigan tuzilmalari esa turli nomlash konventsiyalari va til tarixlarini aks ettiradi. O‘zbek gidronimlari ko‘pincha Amudaryo va Sirdaryo kabi nomlarda fors tilidan olingan daryo («daryo») elementi bilan paydo bo‘ladi, ingliz geografik qo‘llanilishi esa odatda Temza daryosi, Temza daryosi va Missisipi daryosi kabi ma’lum bir nomdan keyin umumiy nom qo‘yadi.

Kalit so‘zlar: gidronimiya; O‘zbek tili; Ingliz tili; toponimiya; semantik motivatsiya.

ЛИНГВОДИДАКТИЧЕСКИЕ ВОЗМОЖНОСТИ ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЯ УЗБЕКСКИХ И АНГЛИЙСКИХ ГИДРОНИМОВ В ОБУЧЕНИИ АНГЛИЙСКОМУ ЯЗЫКУ

Аннотация. Гидронимы, или названия рек, озер, морей и других водоемов, представляют собой полезную точку соприкосновения между языком, географией, историей и культурной памятью. В этой концептуальной статье рассматривается, как можно сравнить узбекские и английские гидронимы с точки зрения структурной формы, семантической мотивации, исторического контекста и культурной интерпретации. Вместо того чтобы претендовать на проведение статистического корпусного исследования, в статье разработана качественная концептуальная модель с использованием опубликованных научных работ и избранных, общедоступных примеров, включая Амударью, Сырдарью, Темзу, Северн, Миссисипи и Черное море. Анализ различает лингвистическую форму названия от сопровождающего его общего географического термина и отделяет прозрачные современные значения от исторически реконструированных этимологий. Сравнение показывает, что обе традиции именования сохраняют информацию об окружающей среде и исторических контактах, в то время как их видимые структуры отражают различные конвенции именования и историю языка. Узбекские гидронимии часто встречаются с персидским элементом «дарё» («река») в таких названиях, как Амударё и Сирдарё, тогда как в английском географическом языке обычно после конкретного названия ставится родовой элемент, как в Thames River, River Thames и Mississippi River.

Ключевые слова: гидронимия; узбекский; английский; топонимия; семантическая мотивация.

Introduction.

Names of water bodies occupy a distinctive position in onomastic research because rivers, lakes, springs, and seas are persistent features of inhabited landscapes. A hydronym can identify a physical feature, distinguish it from other features, and preserve traces of the languages and communities that have interacted with it. Yet the meaning of a hydronym is rarely reducible to a simple dictionary gloss. A name may contain a recognisable generic element, an older lexical item, a transferred place name, or a form whose original motivation is no longer transparent to contemporary speakers. Comparative analysis therefore requires

attention to both linguistic structure and the historical circumstances in which names have been transmitted[1].

Literature review and methods.

Toponymic research has increasingly treated place names not merely as labels but as socially meaningful forms connected with memory, identity, authority, and everyday spatial practice. Tent and Blair (2011) argue that the analysis of place-naming benefits from a consistent typology of naming motivations, while their later revision of toponymic classification emphasises the need to make categories explicit and analytically useful (Blair & Tent, 2021). Research on historical place naming similarly demonstrates that naming practices can reflect unequal relations, changing political contexts, and competing understandings of landscape (Williamson, 2023). These perspectives are relevant to hydronyms because water bodies frequently cross administrative boundaries and may be known by different names in different languages or historical periods.

The Uzbek and English naming traditions provide a productive comparative case. Uzbek is a Turkic language whose contemporary geographical vocabulary includes elements with histories of contact, including Persian-derived *daryo*, meaning ‘river’. English, a Germanic language, contains river names with varied linguistic histories, including inherited forms and names transmitted through Celtic, Latin, Old English, and other historical layers. These differences make it unwise to assume that similar-looking name structures necessarily have equivalent origins. At the same time, both languages use descriptive elements and generic geographical terms, and both preserve names that have become opaque to ordinary speakers[2].

In Central Asia, major water bodies such as the Amu Darya and Syr Darya have long been important to settlement, irrigation, political boundaries, and historical geography. The Amu Darya is recorded under several names in historical sources, including Oxus in Greek and Latin traditions and Jayḥūn in Arabic sources; the modern form has a complex history and is commonly connected with Āmul and the Persian element daryā (Spuler, 1989). This example illustrates why a hydronym cannot be explained reliably by translating its contemporary components alone. In Britain, river names such as Thames and Severn also have long histories, and their present-day forms do not necessarily provide transparent lexical meanings to English speakers. These examples are illustrative rather than exhaustive, and detailed etymological claims should be checked against specialist gazetteers and historical linguistic sources.

Discussion and results.

Recent scholarship directly addressing Uzbek and English place names has discussed morphology, cultural interpretation, and cognitive dimensions. For example, G‘aniyeva (2025) examines morphological features of hydronyms in English and Uzbek, while Nuniyazova (2025a, 2025b) considers cultural and cognitive interpretations of hydronyms in comparative perspective. Such work establishes the relevance of the topic but also highlights the need to distinguish empirical corpus findings from interpretive generalisations. A conceptual comparison can contribute by making the units of analysis, evidence standards, and comparison categories explicit[3].

The present paper has three objectives. First, it proposes a framework for comparing Uzbek and English hydronyms at structural, semantic, historical, and cultural levels. Second, it demonstrates how this framework can be applied cautiously to selected examples from open scholarly and reference sources. Third, it identifies implications for translation and applied linguistics, especially the teaching of geographical vocabulary and intercultural interpretation. The guiding questions are: (1) What structural patterns are visible in selected Uzbek and English hydronyms? (2) How can semantic motivation be distinguished from historical etymology? (3) What does a careful comparison contribute to applied linguistic practice?

The paper is conceptual and qualitative. It does not claim to represent all hydronyms in either language, and it does not report frequencies or statistical differences. Its contribution lies in developing an explicit analytical framework and showing how that framework can guide a future, larger-scale corpus study[4].

Conceptually, the present study draws on the distinction between proper-name form and naming motivation. A name’s form is observable in a contemporary record, but its motivation concerns the circumstances, perceptions, or linguistic materials that contributed to the name’s creation or adoption. The two are related but not interchangeable. A transparent element may have become attached to a name after the original motivation had faded, and a name may be adapted phonologically or orthographically when it passes between languages. This distinction is particularly important in multilingual regions, where the same water body can have a local name, a standardised national form, and one or more historical exonyms.

Toponymic classification is useful only when categories are defined in a way that can be applied consistently. Tent and Blair (2011) propose a typology of place-name motivations that makes it possible to compare the reasons and processes associated with naming. For the present paper, the typology is treated as a conceptual resource rather than a coding scheme already validated for all hydronyms. Water names may be descriptive, commemorative, transferred from another place, associated with a nearby settlement, derived from an older language, or opaque in their present form. More than one process may contribute to a single name, and the evidence may not permit a definitive classification[5].

Research specifically addressing English and Uzbek hydronyms has begun to discuss morphology, cognition, and cultural interpretation. G‘aniyeva (2025) examines morphological and semantic features of hydronyms in the two languages. Nuniyazova (2025a) frames hydronyms through cognitive-linguistic questions and reports a comparative corpus-oriented approach, while Nuniyazova (2025b) discusses symbolic and cultural interpretations. These publications establish a recent local research context. However, broad contrasts such as ‘English names are descriptive’ and ‘Uzbek names are symbolic’ require systematic evidence from comparable datasets. Such statements should be treated as hypotheses to investigate, not as settled generalisations.

A further relevant line of research concerns the social use of names. Olma (2023), in a study of vernacular toponyms in Tashkent, illustrates that everyday place names can be produced and reproduced through routine mobility and social interaction. Although urban vernacular names are not hydronyms, this perspective encourages researchers to look beyond

official maps and dictionaries. A hydronym can circulate in local speech, administrative documents, educational materials, and international geographical reference works, and the form preferred in each setting may differ. Applied linguistic research can therefore ask not only what a name means, but also who uses which form, in what context, and with what communicative consequences[6].

From an applied-linguistics perspective, a hydronym is also a useful object for teaching source evaluation. Learners often infer meanings from familiar-looking elements or from literal translations. Such inferences may be plausible but historically wrong. Comparing an official geographical source with an etymological reference and a local-language form can help learners distinguish a fact, a hypothesis, and an unsupported interpretation. This is consistent with a broader research-literacy goal: language learners should be encouraged to ask what kind of evidence supports a claim and whether the evidence is sufficient for the conclusion.

Research design. The study uses a qualitative, document-based comparative design. It combines a focused review of onomastic scholarship with close analysis of a small set of publicly documented hydronym examples. A qualitative design is appropriate because the purpose is to clarify analytical categories and interpret the relationship between form, meaning, and historical context, rather than to estimate the frequency of naming patterns in a defined population[2].

The examples were selected purposively to illustrate different analytical issues rather than to constitute a representative sample. The Uzbek-oriented examples include Amu Darya/Amudaryo and Syr Darya/Sirdaryo, which are widely used names for major Central Asian rivers. English-oriented examples include Thames, Severn, Mississippi River, and Black Sea. The set includes names with complex historical backgrounds, names accompanied by a transparent generic term, and names whose descriptive elements may appear semantically transparent to contemporary speakers. The Amu Darya example is discussed with reference to Encyclopaedia Iranica (Spuler, 1989). Recent comparative studies of hydronyms and toponyms are used as secondary literature, while broader toponymic research informs the analytical categories.

Analytical procedure. Each example is considered through four dimensions. The structural dimension distinguishes a specific name from a generic geographical term and records whether the generic precedes or follows the specific in the cited form. The semantic dimension asks whether a component has a recognisable meaning in the contemporary language. The historical dimension considers whether the available source documents older forms, language contact, or a proposed etymology. The cultural-geographical dimension considers the role of the water body in settlement, mobility, irrigation, boundary-making, or collective memory, without assuming that every name has a symbolic meaning[1].

The analysis follows three safeguards. First, a contemporary gloss is not automatically treated as the historical origin of a name. Second, a name’s linguistic origin is distinguished from the language in which it is currently used. Third, cultural interpretations are framed as possibilities requiring evidence, not as inherent traits of an entire nation or language. This

approach is consistent with the broader onomastic argument that naming motivations require explicit classification and evidence.

Limitations. Because the study does not assemble a verified, balanced corpus of Uzbek and English hydronyms, it cannot establish quantitative differences in word formation, semantic categories, or naming motivations. The examples are illustrative and drawn from published or widely documented usage. Some etymologies of major river names remain contested or uncertain, and the paper does not attempt to resolve such debates. A future empirical study should specify a gazetteer, inclusion criteria, geographical coverage, date of data collection, and independent procedures for checking etymological claims.

Conclusion. The source base was assembled from accessible scholarly publications on hydronymy, toponymy, and comparative English–Uzbek naming, alongside an established reference discussion of the Amu Darya. Search terms included hydronym, hydronymy, English Uzbek hydronyms, place-name motivation, vernacular toponyms, and Amu Darya etymology. Sources were included when they directly addressed naming, provided a relevant theoretical framework, or documented a specific historical form. The review is focused rather than exhaustive and should not be represented as a systematic review of all available research.

References:

1. Qurbonova G. A. Preliminary study of Uzbek hydronymy on the roots // Academicia: An International Multidisciplinary Research Journal. – 2021. – Vol. 11, No. 7. – P. 215–218.
2. Qurbonova G. A. Hydronyms are a component of onomastics // International Conference on Modern Development of Pedagogy and Linguistics. – 2024. – Vol. 1, No. 1. – P. 169–172.
3. Ulugov N. O‘zbek tili gidronimlarining tarixiy-lisoniy tadqiqi. – Toshkent: Fan, 2008.
4. Hough C. (Ed.). The Oxford Handbook of Names and Naming. – Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
5. Kramsch C. Context and Culture in Language Teaching. – Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
6. Byram M. Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence. – Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1997.