2026. Volume 10, Number 1 Pages 11-15

UDC: 811.512.133'282
DOI: https://doi.org/10.30546/09081.2026.1.1008

THE CLASSIFICATION OF KHOREZM DIALECTS AS A SCIENTIFIC PROBLEM

Shahnoza Alimova
PhD in Philology, Associate Professor
Urgench State University,
Urgench, Uzbekistan
shaxnozaalimova103@urdu.uz
ORCID: 0009-0009-7837-8509

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received:2025-06-10
Received in revised form:2025-06-22
Accepted:2025-07-23
Available online:2026-06-19

Açar sözlər:
dialect, subdialect, dialect group, Khorezm dialects, Oghuz dialect group, Kipchak dialect group, intermediate dialects, classification of dialects.

ABSTRACT

This article provides information on the place of the Khorezm dialects within the classifications of Uzbek folk dialects and describes the dialects currently existing in the Khorezm region. Based on new approaches, a revised classification of the Khorezm dialects is proposed. It is well known that in dialectological classifications the Khorezm dialects have been presented under different names in various systems, and many of these classifications contain well-grounded views. The areas where the Khorezm dialects are spoken constitute a somewhat complex dialectal zone from an areal perspective. The Khorezm dialects, which form part of the Uzbek folk dialects, have attracted the attention of numerous researchers due to their distinctive linguistic features. Therefore, researchers have studied these dialects using different approaches.

2521-6333/© 2026 The Author(s). Published by Baku Engineering University.
This is an open access article under the CC BY 4.0 license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

INTRODUCTION. The study of Uzbek dialects began in the 1920s–1930s and was primarily conducted with the aim of identifying the principal dialectal bases of the literary language. During this period, the first dialectological classifications were also developed.

It is well known that the territories where the Khorezm dialects are spoken constitute a relatively complex dialectal area from an areal perspective. For this reason, researchers have examined these dialects on the basis of different linguistic and extralinguistic criteria, such as phonetic, morphological, lexical, historical, and ethnolinguistic characteristics. As a result, diverse scholarly approaches have emerged concerning the classification, dialectal boundaries, and interrelationships of the Khorezm dialects within the system of Uzbek dialects.

METHODOLOGY. It is well known that a number of scholars have contributed to the classification of Uzbek dialects. The first attempt to classify Uzbek dialects was made by Professor I. I. Zarubin [7], who divided them into four groups and included the Khorezm dialects within the "Khiva" group. However, he did not describe the main principles characteristic of this dialect group. It is natural that the earliest studies devoted to a particular scientific issue may contain certain shortcomings. Nevertheless, the limitations observed in Professor Zarubin's classification later served as a basis for the development of more refined and comprehensive classifications.

Professor K.K.Yudakhin [18], who divided Uzbek dialects into five groups, referred to the Oghuz dialects as the "Khiva (Khiva-Oghuz)" group. As can be seen, Russian scholars, when analyzing the dialects of the territory of the Khiva Khanate, assumed that only the Oghuz dialect was present in this region and therefore named the group accordingly.

Professor Y.D. Polivanov [13] who produced the first scientific classification of Uzbek dialects, divided Uzbek dialects into three major groups. Within the second group, termed the Oghuz dialect, he identified the Khorezm dialects as Type 1. He referred to them as the "Southern Khorezm group of dialects" and included within this group the dialects of Khiva, Urgench (New Urgench), Shovot, G'azovot, Hazorasp, Yangiariq, and Khonqa. In addition, the Shurakhan dialect was classified as a separate type within the same group. The second type was designated as the "Northern Oghuz group of dialects", which includes the Iqon–Qorabuloq dialects, as well as the Baghdad dialect of the Forish district, treated as a distinct type. It should also be noted that within Polivanov's classification, the third major group, the Kipchak dialect, likewise contains seven types. The first type in this group is referred to as "Middle Khorezm", which encompasses the dialects of Gurlan, Bog'ot, and Shobboz, as well as those described as Northern Khorezm, including the dialects of Xo'jayli, Qipchoq, and Qo'ng'irot districts, along with certain village dialects of the Mang'it district.

The work of Yevgeny Dmitrievich Polivanov devoted to a comprehensive study of the Khorezm dialects is undoubtedly his monograph "The Dialect of the Qiyot-Qo'ng'irot Village of the Shovot District [12]." In this work, the scholar presents a classification of Khorezm dialects and divides them into three groups: 1) the Southern Khorezm group, 2) the Middle Khorezm group, and 3) the Northern Khorezm group. Each of these groups is thoroughly described both from a territorial perspective and in terms of their phonetic, lexical, and morphological characteristics. For this reason, Fazliddin Abdullayev notes in his research that he took into account Polivanov's work "The Dialect of the Qiyot-Qo'ng'irot Village of the Shovot District"[2] as an important source.

Professor Y.D. Polivanov, in a number of his works, notes that the classifications of Uzbek folk dialects are not yet perfect, and argues that Uzbek linguistics needs a detailed classification of dialects.

Also, Professor Gazi Olim Yunusov [5], dividing Uzbek dialects into 3 groups, calls the third group the "Khiva-Urgench dialect". He noted that this group includes the Uzbek dialects living in Khiva, Khanka, Gazovot, Shohobod, Kat, Toshovuz, Old Urgench, New Urgench, Hazorasp, and Tortkul. The scientist divided this group into two and listed the specific features of the first group, the Khiva dialect. This group also includes the Qorluq dialect. The reason is that the Khiva-Urgench group refers to the Uyghurs living in the territory of the current Qoshkopir district.Yuqorida sanab o'tilgan prof. Y.D.Polivanov hamda prof. G'ozi Olim Yunusov tasniflari o'z vaqtida prof. I.A.Batmanov tomonidan tanqid qilingan [15].

Professor A.K. Borovkov [4], taking into account the historical development of the Uzbek language dialects, also divides them into four more dialects, calling the third group the "Southern Khorezm dialect". He includes the Khanqa, Hazorasp, Shovot, Yangiarik, Gazovot, Shorakhon and the rural dialects adjacent to them. He notes that they have 9 vowels, and says that this dialect differs from other dialects in terms of vocabulary and the presence of unique words.

Professor V.V. Reshetov's[14] classification of Uzbek folk dialects in graphic form is well known to all of us. Dividing Uzbek folk dialects into 3 dialects, the scientist calls the second group "Oguz dialect of the Uzbek language". The specific features of this dialect are the presence of contrasting vowels, the distinction between short and long vowels, the sonority of the sounds t and k at the beginning of words, the maximum softening of the sounds k and g, the use of the accusative case in the form -ing, the use of the accusative case in the form -a, and the dropping of the sound b in the verb bol in the form ol. He also emphasizes that this dialect also differs from other dialects in its own lexical and grammatical features.

At this point, special emphasis should be placed on the research of Professor F. Abdullayev, since he calls the second part of his book "Khorezm dialects of the Uzbek language" "Classification of Khorezm dialects" [3]. In this study, the scientist evaluates the classifications made before him on Uzbek folk dialects. It is known that the initial information about Khorezm dialects, especially Oghuz dialects, was provided by the famous Hungarian scientist German Vamberi. F. Abdullayev also reacted to the information provided by him, focusing on his far-fetched opinions. He also reacted to the information on the classification of Turkic languages given in the work of Academician A.N. Samoilovich "Addition to the Classification of Turkic Languages" [16]. The scientist also touched upon the research on Uzbek folk dialects by Zarubin, Yudakhin, Y.D. Polivanov, Gazi Olim Yunusov, A.K. Borovkov, and V.V. Reshetov, which were analyzed above. At the same time, the scientist presented a new classification of Khorezm dialects.

F. Abdullayev divides the Khorezm dialects into 2 groups, taking into account their phonetic-morphological and lexical features: 1. Kipchak dialect; 2. Oguz dialect [3]. He further divides them into groups and analyzes them. This classification was the first classification of Khorezm dialects. There is no doubt that all of F. Abdullayev's studies of Khorezm dialects are excellent studies of Khorezm dialects.

Although A. Ishayev's research mainly focused on the Uzbek dialects of Karakalpakstan, given that the distribution area of dialects does not always fully correspond to administrative divisions, the materials presented in the monograph, in particular the facts collected from the territory of Karakalpakstan, can also be used as an important source in the study of Khorezm dialects. The scholar's monograph "Uzbek dialects in Karakalpakstan" [8], as well as the dictionary given in it, are of scientific importance in that they reflect some words that are rarely used or almost out of use in the speech of representatives of these dialects today.

Although A. Ishayev's research mainly focused on the Uzbek dialects of Karakalpakstan, given that the distribution area of dialects does not always fully correspond to administrative divisions, the materials presented in the monograph, in particular the facts collected from the territory of Karakalpakstan, can also be used as an important source in the study of Khorezm dialects. The scholar's monograph "Uzbek dialects in Karakalpakstan" [8], as well as the dictionary given in it, are of scientific importance in that they reflect some words that are rarely used or almost out of use in the speech of representatives of these dialects today.

Although E.Urozov's work "Uzbek dialects in Southern Karakalpakstan" does not provide a classification of Khorezm dialects, it does pay special attention to the lexical layers of the dialects in this region. The same situation is also observed in the work's coverage of the Turkic lexical layer. M. Saparov's research is recognized as one of the main works of scientific importance, as it provides a comparative analysis of Khorezm Oghuz dialects with Turkmen language materials

[17]. Y. Jumanazarov, who has thoroughly studied the Hazorasp dialect, also briefly addressed the issue of the classification of Khorezm dialects in his book "Uzbek literary language and Southern Khorezm dialect" [6]. In the dissertation[9] completed by R.Yoldoshev, the dialects of Toshkhovuz were studied and classified from a linguistic point of view, special attention was paid to the issues of lexical layers and lexical-semantic features in the dialects; the work was supplemented with a dictionary and texts. It is important that the dictionary section includes more than 3,000 words, about 2,000 of which were recorded in lexicographic sources for the first time [9]. A.Matniyazov, while studying the language of ancient Khorezm written monuments, did not ignore the issue of the development of languages in this region [11]. Of course, in this regard, he provided valuable information on the formation of dialects existing in the Khorezm region and their phonetic features. Sh.M. Alimova, who studied the Khorezm Kipchak dialects, which are referred to as the "Northern Khorezm dialect" in most classifications, classifies the Khorezm dialects into 3 groups in her research: Oghuz dialects, Kipchak dialects, and intermediate dialects. She also included the "Dialectal Atlas of Khorezm Dialects" in her study, which reflects this situation [2]. In her study, she distinguishes "a"-ending dialects as the third type of Khorezm Kipchak dialects. The number of people who communicate in this dialect is relatively small, and they live in the villages of Shang'i, Qang'li (Gurlan), Qipchak (Urgench), Naiman (Bogot), Monoq (Shovot), Qatagon (Qoshko'pir), Qang'li (Pitnak), and Oyrot (Yangibozor). One of the linguistic features of this type of dialect is the regular use of the sound "a" instead of "e" in the first syllable of the word: for example, käl – come, tamir – iron, kitadi – go. The researcher considers it acceptable to call dialects with such features "intermediate dialects" [2]. That is, he considers the dialects of these regions within the Khorezm Kipchak dialects, which are the object of his research, to be intermediate dialects.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS. It is also appropriate to mention the works of E. Alimardonov[1] in the study of the interaction of Uzbek and Turkmen dialects in the Khorezm dialectal zone. This study studied the interaction of Uzbek and Turkmen dialects in the Khorezm dialectal zone, and within the framework of this process, their phonetic, morphological and lexical similarities and differences were analyzed. The results of the study show that language contacts play an important role in the development of the Uzbek language and dialects; the analysis of Uzbek-Turkmen language contact in the Khorezm dialectal zone was highlighted as an object of study for the first time. Also, the existing contact areas in the region, the composition and size of the population were determined, the system of isoglosses was established, and how the social life of the population in this area is reflected in the language and dialect is substantiated through examples.

CONCLUSION. The above classifications of Khorezm dialects do not lose their significance, despite the fact that dialects change and develop over time. These classifications will undoubtedly always serve as a basis for studying dialects and dividing them into groups.

Thus, the dialects of the Khorezm region, which have long historical roots and various ethnogenesis processes, have attracted the attention of a number of linguists. Their research aimed at studying Uzbek dialects has served as an important source in the formation and development of Uzbek dialectology, and this process continues consistently today.

The speech of the population speaking the Khorezm Uzbek dialects is characterized by a rich vocabulary reflecting centuries-old historical development, material and cultural life. Based on the materials collected in the process of studying regional dialects, although there are no sharp

differences between the dialects, some hesitation was observed in including them in a particular dialect group. This demonstrates the complex linguistic nature of the Khorezm dialectal area and its unique position within Uzbek dialectology.

REFERENCES

1. Alimardonov E.I. Xorazm dialektal zonasida o‘zbek va turkman shevalarining o‘zaro ta’siri (kontaktologik aspektda): Filol…fanlari fal...d-ri (PhD) diss…– Toshkent. 2024. – 160 b.
2. Alimova Sh.M. Xorazm qipchoq shevalarining leksik-grammatik xususiyatlari: Filol…fanlari fal...d-ri (PhD) diss… – Urganch. 2023. – 159 b.
3. Teymurlu Z. M. (2020) The Phonosemantic Research of Azerbaijani and Turkish in the Aspect of Literary Language and Dialect. *International Academy Journal Web of Scholar*. 2(44). doi: 10.31435/rsglobal_wos/28022020/6915
4. Абдуллаев Ф. Ўзбек тилининг Хоразм шевалари. I қисм. Луғат. II Хоразм шеваларининг таснифи. – Тошкент: Ўзбекистон Фанлар академияси нашриёти, 1961. –Б.259.
5. Боровков А.К. Вопросы классификации узбекских говоров. Известия АН УзССР, 5, 1953.
6. Ғози Олим Ю. Ўзбек лаҳжаларини таснифда бир тажриба. – Тошкент. 1936.
7. Жуманазаров Ю. Ўзбек адабий тили ва Жанубий Хоразм диалекти. – Тошкент: Фан, 1971. – 75 б.
8. Зарубин И.И. Список народностей Туркенстанское края. – Ленинград, 1925.
9. Ишаев А. Қорақалпоғистондаги ўзбек шевалари. – Тошкент: Фан, 1977. – 176 б.
10. Йўлдошев Р. Тошҳовуз вилоятидаги ўзбек шеваларининг лексик хусусиятлари: Филол.фан.н-ди...дисс. – Тошкент, 2002. – 289 б.
11. Мадраҳимов О. Ўзбек тили ўғуз лаҳжаси лексикаси. – Тошкент, 1973. – 190 б; ўша муалл. Ўзбек тили ўғуз лаҳжасининг қисқача қиёсий луғати. – Урганч: 1999. – Б. 194
12. Матниязов А.Р. Қадимги хоразм ёзма ёдгорликларининг график ва фонетик хусусиятлари (X-XV аср манбалари асосида): Фил…фанлари фал…д-ри дисс.. – Тошкент, 2018. – 158 б.
13. Поливанов Е.Д. Говор кишлака Кият-Конграт Шаватского раёна. сб.научних трудов УзНИИКС. 1934. Том 1. Вып II. – с. 3-17.
14. Поливанов Е.Д. Узбекская диалектолигия и узбекский литературний язык. –Тошкент. 1933.
15. Решетов В.В. Изучение узбекских народных говоров. Ўзбек диалектологиясидан материаллар. – Тошкент. 1957.
16. Решетов Р. Шоабдураҳмонов Ш. Ўзбек диалектологияси. – Тошкент: Ўқитувчи, 1978. – Б.33.
17. Самойлович А.Н. Два отрывка из “Хорезмнаме”, Записки Восточного отделение императорского русского археологического общесваю. 1910, т. XIX. – Б.078-083.
18. Сапаров М. Лексико-семантические особенности огузского наречия узбекского языка (в сравнении с туркменским языком): Автореф. дисс. канд. филол. наук. – Ташкент, 1983. – 24 с.; Шу муаллиф. Хоразм воҳасидаги туркий тилларнинг ўзаро муносабатлари. – Тошкент: Фан, 1988. – 118 б.
19. Юдахин К.К. Узбекский язык. Литературник энциклопедия, XI. – Москва. 1939.