Local Features of the Turkic Toponymic Vocabulary in the Language Landscape of the North Kazakhstan

Yelena Sabieva – Maira Kakimova

DOI: 10.18355/XL.2025.18.02.09

Abstract
The territorial features of the Turkic appellative vocabulary in the toponymic system of North Kazakhstan have been identified. The sources of toponymic material were historical and modern resources: cartographic, archival, statistical, and documentary. Oikonymic, hydronymic, orographic terms, and microtoponyms are considered in the article. The analysis of the Turkic toponymic vocabulary made it possible to determine its place in the language landscape, to present toponymic categories in relation to designated geographical objects.
Turkic appellatives characterizing the natural and climatic realities of the region and ideological appellatives were identified. The frequency of the onyms (the proper names of any objects) use has been determined. The facts of direct and indirect use of appellatives in the geographical objects nominating process are revealed. The article focuses on the importance of studying toponymic landscapes. The revealed materials and facts are of interest to linguists, historians, geographers, sociologists etc. The results of the study can contribute to the formation of onomastic competence in the context of intercultural interaction.
Key words: language landscape, toponymic landscape, toponymic appellatives, toponym, hydronym

Introduction

It is currently difficult and almost impossible to define any territory as a zone where one single language functions. Monolingualism is not dominant in modern society, a society which, for centuries, has undergone change under the complex conditions of linguistic diversity and interaction. This problem is manifold and interdisciplinary in nature.
At the present stage, many scientists pay special attention to this problem. Recently, in modern geopolitical conditions, the problems of ethnic identity, support and vitality of national languages of different minorities, polytonicity and linguistic diversity have been increasingly highlighted in the works of sociologists, linguists, historians, cultural scientists, political scientists, educators, etc.
Among them are Professor R.B. Shaykhislamova, B.Z.Akhmetova, D.A. Omelchenko, O.E. Noyanzina, V.V. Kukanova, G.R. Asadullina, E.V. Sadretdinova, E.P. Bakayeva, A. Arutyunova, V.I. Shabykov, R.A. Kudryavtseva, A.T. Bayanova, A.V. Dybo, V.S. Vorontsova, and many others.
Notable as well are joint efforts by linguists from Kazakhstan and Russia (Madiyeva & Suprun 2023). The range of questions raised by these authors is now highly relevant and extremely diverse.
The results of the above-mentioned scholars' research provide ample evidence to assert that the ethnolinguistic conjuncture has a huge impact on the formation of the toponymic landscape in any region of any given country.
An identical situation is typical for the toponymic landscape of the North Kazakhstan region. The toposystem of the region is also a multiethnic area, where there is a heterogeneity in linguistic terms.
The study of the toponymic systems regional features of the individual territories is of particular interest to many scientists. Since the process of onyms formation in any

region takes place over a long period under the influence of various extralinguistic factors.

Many foreign scientists recognize the fact that the toponym is strongly linked to the landscape. Francesco Piero no Cacciafoco and Francesco Cavallaro call for exploring the landscape in a complex, taking into account physical, social, cultural, environmental and religious aspects (Cacciafoco & Cavallaro 2023).

In our study, we stick to the same principles when studying the local features of the Turkic appellative vocabulary in the toponymic landscape of Northern Kazakhstan.

The purpose of our study is a comprehensive description of the Turkic appellative vocabulary of the region toponymic system, its gradation in the context of toponymic categories, the frequency of terms uses in the toponymic landscape, and the Turkic appellative vocabulary in its direct and indirect meaning.

Theoretical Framework

Toponyms as a linguistic units of the onomastic system represent multidimensional layers. They are formed under the influence of extralinguistic factors, among which, in our opinion, interethnic language contacts are especially important. A toponymic landscape is an independent organized system of all geographical objects united by a certain territory.

Professor G.B. Madiyeva (2019), an esteemed Kazakhstani onomatologist, conducted a detailed analysis of the current level at which theoretical and practical onomastic research finds itself in today's Kazakhstani onomastic system. She notes: "Quantitative analysis allows us to conclude that modern Kazakhstani onomastics, which is characterized by an increased reflection on the state and prospects of onomastic research, with the latter's main object still the toponyms of Kazakhstan's various regions."

Over the years, regional studies in Kazakhstan have been carried out by such scientists as V.N. Popova in Pavlodar region, O.A. Sultanyev in Kokshetau Oblast, M. Kozhanov in Western Kazakhstan, B.K. Bektasova in Kustanai Oblast, G.B. Madiyeva in East Kazakhstan and Almaty (Madiyeva & Aliakbarova 2020), A.E. Zhartybayev in Karaganda Oblast, K.K. Rysbergenova in South Kazakhstan Region, K.E. Nurmukhametov in Kustanai Region, A.S. Omarbekova in Torgai Region, E.V. Sabiyeva in North Kazakhstan Region (Sabieva & Vasilieva 2020), A.A. Alimkhan in South Kazakhstan Region, G.S. Bekenova in North Kazakhstan Region, M.E. Kakimova in North Kazakhstan Region (Sabiyeva et al. 2022), K.T. Saparov in Pavlodar Region, and many others.

The Northern Kazakhstan may be characterized as zone where many ethnic groups have been living, therefore, the analysis of the geographical objects will be interesting in terms of determining multilingual inclusions in the toponymic landscape.

The toponymic space of any border territory, which is our region, is distinguished by ethnic diversity, indicating numerous migration processes. Historically, Kazakhs, Russians, Ukrainians, Germans, Belarusians, Poles, Tatars, Kalmyks, Bashkirs, etc. lived on the territory of Northern Kazakhstan. Therefore, the toponymic spectrum of the region represents a unique ethnolanguage area.

Under the circumstances of ethnic and linguistic diversity, the importance of the ethnic language understandably increases. It has a special role of uniting small ethnic languages functioning in a single space, within a certain local territory. N. Bitkeeva (2016) believes that "all communities consist of the ethnic component, but at the same time each social group reflects ethnic perceptions differently."

Harmonious coexistence of all ethnic groups in a multicultural setting eventually leads to the development of ethnic and national self-identity. According to Professor R.B. Shaykhislamova (2021), "every nation has its own ethnic and cultural core. The more diverse this latter is, the greater the opportunity for ethnic self-expression. A multinational country's balanced culture is defined by its universality as well as the

degree to which its constituent national cultures are unique."
With that said, the phenomenon of national unity of languages gains particular relevance. The same view is held by V.Y. Mikhalchenko (2016): "The world's experience of developing multinational states shows that peaceful, conflict-free existence in the field of national-language relations is only possible where the linguistic claims and linguistic orientations of all communities are taken into account."
Currently, the study of language units from the point of view of the language corpus is becoming more and more relevant. Thus, Kazakhstani scientists G. B., Tlegenova, K. K, Rysbergen A. A. Zhanabekova conducted a complete examination of mythonimic or mythonymic (names of mythological characters) and theonymic markings in several language corpora (English, German, Czech, Kazakh and Tatar). They revealed the various features in the use of mythonyms and theonyms across languages and civilizations. The main focus of their research is aimed at gaining a better understanding of the impact of mythonyms and theonyms on the diversity of linguistic expressions and cultural settings.
During the historical process, there is a tendency of mutual influence and interpenetration of societies, which is reflected in the nominating process of toponymic vocabulary. As our research shows, the language landscape of the North Kazakhstan region is represented by two main toposystems: Turkic and Slavic. However, Turkic toponyms are definitely primary by their origin, and they are the most ancient. Turkic toponymy is characterized by imagery and metaphor. The Kazakh nomination of Turkic toponyms reflects the ancient ideas about worldview and the nomadic Turks' lifestyle. The Turkic toponymic vocabulary of the region is represented by the main toponymic categories – oikonyms, hydronyms, oronyms and microtoponyms. They form the basis of the toponymic landscape.
The object of the study is the local features of Turkic appellatives as part of the geographical object's names in the language landscape of the North Kazakhstan region.
This issue has been discussed by many scientists for many periods whose concepts were interpreted in different ways. The theoretical prerequisites for our research were the works of the theoretical founders in the field of onomastics of the last century (A.V. Superanskaya, V.V. Reformatsky, V.V., Suprun V.I., Kabakchi, I.V Kryukova., A.M. Mezenko, etc.). They used various concepts to designate these objects, such as "classifier terms", "classifier word", "nomenclature term", "onomastic classifier", etc. The material of our research allowed us to define this terminology as the Turkic appellative vocabulary of the toponymic landscape.

Methodology

In order to achieve the set goals and objectives, various techniques have been used in our research. At the first stage of the study, a bibliographic database was compiled based on the systematization of available sources on the toponymic landscape of the North Kazakhstan region, to which we refer archival documents, works of geographers, travelers, and researchers of Western Siberia and Central Asia, cartographic and statistical data. It gave us the opportunity to describe the Turkic appellate corpus in its full object. The toponymic material has been used for the research extracted by the continuous sampling method.
Historical maps of the past centuries are of particular interest in this regard. In addition, up–to-date data taken from Internet resources such as Google Maps have been actively used in this research.
The use of cartographic materials made it possible to identify the variability of the region toponymic objects. Moreover, the cartographic method helped us to establish certain placement patterns connections and relationships of toponyms and appellatives

with respect to their realities reflected on maps of the studied region in different time periods.

For the reliability of the study, the use of modern statistical data taken from databases and electronic resources have been used. The following sources as "The Administrative-territorial division of the North Kazakhstan region", as well as the materials of the Bureau of National Statistics of the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan, North Kazakhstan region, were the most complete and reliable for the analysis.

Since the North Kazakhstan region includes 13 districts, it was logical to draw statistical data for each district separately. These data were distributed on Internet portals and on Wikipedia.

On the basis of the obtained cartographic and static data, toponymic material was identified, which made it possible to create an extensive factual base of Turkic appellatives in the toponymic landscape of the North Kazakhstan region.

In the process of collecting and analyzing factual material, the most acceptable traditional techniques and methods (continuous sampling method, descriptive, statistical, comparative, structural and semantic methods, etc.) have been used.

Each of these methods were used in the course of the study according to a logical sequence and expediency. It made us possible to systematize the studied toponymic material, to carry out gradation on separate grounds according to toponymic categories. We were able to identify the facts of the use of Turkic appellative vocabulary in their direct and indirect meanings, as well as the frequency of the use certain appellatives with their reference to the regions. So, in this way, we were able to determine the local specifics (phonetic and semantic) of the region's appellatives.

In turn, the comparative method gave us the opportunity to identify the commonly used terms (territories of Asia and partly Europe) and rare ones.

Structural, semantic and typological methods have made it possible to identify belonging to various toponymic categories. Oikonymic, hydrochemical, orographic terms, as well as appellatives recorded in microtoponyms, are considered separately. The ethnotoponyms of the region recreate the toponymic picture of the past, determining the areas of settlement and migration routes of numerous peoples. The presence of these names in the toponymic landscape allows us to conclude that the region is a zone of active ethnic contacts

In the course of studying the factual material, both traditional and innovative approaches were used, taking into account modern scientific trends (the integral approach). The transition from general theoretical knowledge to the achievement of concrete practical results was consistently carried out.

Results and Discussion

Toponymic vocabulary as a nuclear unit of the onomastic space captures and projects the results of language contacts as the interaction of various societies on the territory of the toponymic landscape. As it was mentioned above, the North Kazakhstan Region is a bilingual zone that represents a unique ethnolinguistic context. We believe that the toponymic landscape is a self-organizing system that closely interacts with society.

Its analysis indicates the presence of traces of a linguistic substrate in the toponymic spectrum of this territory. In the toponymic landscape of the region, toponyms can be distinguished that go back to such ethnonyms as *Kyrghyz upland* (Kyrgyz ethnonym), *Bashkir- Lake Bashkurt* (ethnonym), Mordvaul – the village of mordva (mordva ethnonym), Nogaibay Hill, where the element Nogai is ethnonym, etc.

4.1. Oikonyms

Maidan. The name of the settlement is interpreted as "a battlefield, a front or a square". In this case, the given oikonym refers to the second meaning – 'square'.

Aul Kystau. It is a widely used oiconymic term throughout the territory of

Kazakhstan. The Russian-Kazakh online dictionary interprets it as "to winter, to spend the winter; coercion, forcing; wintering, a place for wintering, winter camp, winter pasture" as well as provides that it derived from verb *kystau* (Kazakh-Russian online dictionary).

E. Koichubayev (1974) offers a similar interpretation to oikonym *Kystaukaragai* as a settlement in the Pavlodar region, derived from two stems *kystau* 'winter quarters' and *karagai* 'pine'.

Aul Zhailau. The name of a settlement is frequently used in various Turkic toponymic landscapes. The Kazakh-Russian online dictionary translates this term as "a summer highland pasture; a summer highland pasture setting; a period of spending time on summer pastures; to have summer activities, be on summer pastures; settle on a *zhailau*; use a horse to ride in summer; live, settle, arrange; habitation, location; to put in order, place, improve something; putting in order, accommodation; summer camp, summer pasture".

E. Koichubayev's dictionary (1974) also gives a similar interpretation of the term: "In the modern Kazakh language, *zhailau* means a place to stay in during summer".

Along with oiconymic terms, hydronymic terms, too, organically fit into the toponymic landscape under analysis. Several of them are listed below.

4.2. Hydronyms

Aksu. The name of the lake, *aksu* [ak 'white'+ su 'water'] is widely used throughout the territory of Kazakhstan. The same names of settlements, hydrographic objects, and microtoponyms can be found both in the south of the Republic of Kazakhstan and in the north.

E. Koichubayev (1974), referring to works by E. and V. Murzayev, defines it as follows: "*Aksu* is the name of many rivers in the republic. The word *Ak* indicates not the color of the water 'white', but rather that the river is fed by melting mountain snows, in contrast to the *Karasu* (*kara* 'black') Rivers, fed by groundwater. Hence the running water (river)".

G.K. Konkashpayev also associates this term with rivers fed by snow waters (lit. 'White water') (Konkashpayev 1963).

Lake Alka. This term is not as frequent as the ones we discussed above; nevertheless, it is part of the Northern Kazakhstan's toponymic landscape. This term literally means 'necklace'; ''place a necklace on the neck'; dial. 'earrings' (Kazakh-Russian online dictionary).

In E. Koichubayev's dictionary (1974), we find a similar interpretation: *alka* 'circle' and Turk *kol* 'lake': 'round lake'. The same translation is given by G.K. Konkashpayev (1963): "... in the form of a necklace".

Karasu. The name of the lake. The natural landscape of the region under consideration, with its forest-steppe and steppe zones, explains the plentiful number of geographical objects bearing one and the same name with the element *Karasu*. It translates as, "a section of a river or lake turned into an independent standing deep reservoir" (Kazakh-Russian online dictionary). G.K. Konkashpayev (1963) translates *Karasu* River directly: as 'Black River'.

In our region, this term has its own specificity. As a result of the spring flood, numerous lakes flood across the North Kazakhstan Region; according to the research, there are 2,328 lakes with a flood plain of over 10 hectares in the North Kazakhstan Region (Dmitriev et al. 2022). After the decline of the spring flood, when the lakes enter their shores, numerous small water bodies with an abundance of fish are formed. Kazakhs call such reservoirs *karasu*, and the Russians *staritsa*.

Some lakes of the region are relict and have a special sacred meaning for the Kazakhs. (Dmitriev et al. 2023).

Tagan. The name of the lake is probably related to the presence of rooks in this area; alternatively, it could have arisen from some sign or characteristic that is associated

with rooks. This term is unique in the toponym system under consideration and translates as ‘rook’; ‘tripod’ (Kazakh-Russian online dictionary).

Bakai. The name of the swamp contains *baka* ‘frog’ (Kazakh-Russian online dictionary).

Microtoponyms

The local geographical terms play an important role in the formation of microtoponyms of the region. These include:

Zharma. The microtoponym stands for ‘river’. This term is not a frequent one, but it is found everywhere throughout the territory of Kazakhstan. E. Koichubayev (1974) gives the following interpretation of this term: “Zharma is a cleft, a former riverbed, hence the name of the district in the Semipalatinsk region, from Kaz. verb *zharu* or *zhyru* ‘to dig’, cf. zhyrma ‘river’ in the Chuvash language”.

Bulak. The term contains the meaning ‘spring’. The online dictionary of the Kazakh-Russian language translates this term as “spring; the source of a spring; *bulaka* ‘underground spring’; bulak ‘transparent spring’ - bulak suy ‘spring water’ – *bulakty zher* ‘an area teeming with springs’; ‘source’(figurative)”.

E. Koichubayev (1974) notes the presence of this term in the territory of Northern Kazakhstan: “Derived from the word bulak ‘stream’, *Bulak* is the name of areas in the North Kazakhstan and Kokchetav regions.”

Aral. The geographical term is a frequent one and is widely spread throughout both Asia and Europe. In translation, *aral* means ‘island’ – *zharty aral* ‘peninsula’– *kishkentay aral* ‘islet’ (Kazakh-Russian online dictionary).

The above-mentioned appellatives are used in the toponymic landscape as a direct nomination in the natural environment. This type of nomination is the most ancient and archaic, which explains the frequency of distribution of such names in Europe and Asia, as a result of migration of ancient Turkic and Mongolian tribes. The authors of the article “Linguistic reception of toponyms of Central Asian geolocation (Turkic-Mongolian area)” claim that “the space between the two regions of the designated Turkic-Mongolian area witnessed the establishment of the ‘adaptation’ processes for the models of toponymic units, indicating deep and stable trends in Turkic-Mongolian linguistic interaction” (Akmatov et al. 2019).

Further, they note the frequency of toponyms: “... the Turkic-Mongolian toponymy is characterized by an abundance of similar geographical names throughout the Eurasian onomastic space ...” (Akmatov et al. 2019). We identified a second subgroup of appellative-related Turkic toponyms: complex Turkic toponyms that contain an appellative, which, most often, is a geographical term.

The following oikonymic terms are most often found in the toponymic landscape

auyl ‘village, settlement:

the settlement of *Aitkulov aul*;
the settlement of *Bartayauyl*;
the settlement of *Zhaksymbetauyl*;
the settlement of *Zhylkybayauyl*;
the settlement of *Isabekauyl*;
the settlement of *Makoshaul*;
the settlement of Seyitkulauyl;
the settlement of Tolegenaul.

konys ‘camping’:

aul *Zhana Konys* ‘new village for camping’.

kystau **‘**wintering’:

aul Kara-Kystau ‘severe wintering village’.

yurt (the oiconymic term) ‘dwelling, house’:

aul Shokat yurt-ata.

uy ‘dwelling, house’:

aul *Uy-Kesken-Sai*.

Names that include hydronymic terms

This group includes the following toponyms:

kol/gul (Lake)

Sarykol Ravine*;(a ravine located near Lake Sarykol, which means 'yellow lake');*

Lake *Egizekol;(meaning a pair of lakes that are similar to each other);*

the settlement of *Zhaltyrkol (the settlement, which is located on the shore of a lake, meaning as 'brilliant lake');*

the settlement of *Sasykkol (a settlement on the shore of a lake, meaning 'Yellow Lake');*

Lake *Saumalkol*; (*The word Saumal means 'mare's milk', probably this lake served as a watering place for mares);*

Lake *Akkol (meaning 'white lake');*

Lake *Koskol (translates literally as 'a pair of lakes');*

Lake *Zhetykol (translated as 'seven lakes');*

Lake *Terenkol* (*translated as 'deep lake');*

Lake *Ayakkol (translated literally Ayak 'foot' and kol 'lake', meaning 'lower lake');*

Lake *Baskol (translated literally as Bas 'head' and kol 'lake', meaning 'upper lake');*

Lake *Zhamankol (literally translated Zhaman 'bad' and kol 'lake', meaning 'bad lake');*

Lake *Zorkol (translated literally as Zor 'long' and kol 'lake', meaning 'long lake');*

Lake *Kumdykol (translated literally, Kumdy 'sandy' and kol 'lake', meaning 'sandy lake');*

Lake *Ortakol (translated literally, Orta 'center, middle' and kol 'lake', meaning 'central', obviously by the location of the geographical feature);*

Lake *Samankol (translated, literally, Saman 'straw' and kol 'lake', meaning "lake where plants grow, from which straw is produced." Previously, houses were made of this material in this area);*

Lake *Suatkol (translated, literally, Suat 'watering hole' and kol 'lake', meaning 'lake for watering', obviously, the lake served as a watering place for pets);*

Lake *Sulukol (literally translated, Sulu means 'beautiful' and kol means 'lake', meaning 'beautiful lake');*

Lake *Tuzkol (literally translated, Tuz 'salt' and kol 'lake', meaning 'Salt Lake');*

Lake *Shukyrkol (literally translated, Shukyr means 'good' and kol means 'lake', meaning 'good lake');*

Lake *Agashtykol (literally translated, Agashty 'forest' and kol 'lake', meaning 'forest lake' located next to the forest);*

Lake *Balykkol (literally translated, Balyk 'fish' and kol 'lake', meaning 'lake rich in fish, fish lake');*

Terenkol Swamp *(literally translated, Teren 'deep' and Swamp 'swamp', meaning 'deep swamp');*

Saumalkol Village *(a village located near Lake Saumalkol, which means Saumal 'mare's milk', probably this lake served as a watering place for mares);*

Koskol Village *(a village located near Lake Koskol, which translates literally as 'a pair of lakes');*

Sulukol Village *(a village located near Lake Sulukol; (literally translated, Sulu means 'beautiful' and kol means 'lake', meaning 'beautiful lake').*

Each of the 37 names contains the hydrographic phrase *kol/gul* which means 'lake'.

All of the names listed above are exclusively found in the Ayyrtau District of the North Kazakhstan Region. It is important to emphasize that, in the toponymic landscape under consideration, the hydrographic term (kol/gul) does not necessarily match the qualities of a geographical entity. Examples are Sarykol Ravine, the settlement of *Koskul* etc.

The abundance of lakes in the region explains the presence of numerous toponyms with rich semantic content. In this article, the authors do not pursue the task of considering all lexical and semantic categories of toponyms and developing a special classification. Nevertheless, the examples given show that in the toponymic landscape, there are names of water bodies that determine their color characteristics. First of all, this is due to the fact that color designation played an important role in the lives of nomadic peoples. Researcher of color symbolism in Bashkir culture A.M. Khakimyanova (2009) notes that "the color and color scheme preferred by the people is the most expressive element of the ethnic worldview. ... With the help of color, not only verbal and 'visible' portraits and landscapes are born, but also various representations of the people are conveyed, and the essence of the depicted feelings, objects, and phenomena is expressed. Considering the specifics of color designation in Kalmyk culture, A.T. Bayanova (2021) points out that "the color designation belongs to the most archaic stratum of vocabulary of any language, has a pronounced national and cultural specificity, and is an important component of the linguistic worldview."

The most common color modifiers in the toponymic landscape of the Kazakh-Russian borderlands are the lexemes *kara* (meaning 'black') and *ak* (meaning 'white') In her work, A.T. Bayanova (2021) suggests that "in Kalmyk culture, as well as in many other cultures, the color black is the antithesis of white and as such symbolizes darkness, death, evil, etc." This also holds true for the perception of black in Kazakh culture.

The determinant of *sarah* (means 'yellow') also has a deep meaning for nomadic peoples in addition to the basic color meaning. The Kazakhstani scientists B. Bazarbekov (2024), V. Tleuberdiev, S. Kulanova, D.Razieva, G. Khusainova also focus on this point of view. "The term 'yellow' is not only literally associated with a specific type and color but also carries an additional connotation related to change, serving as a way of creating people's image, their customs and symbolism".

Apart from the major color lexemes (*kara ('black') ak ('white') sary ('yellow'), kok ('green or blue')*, a significant place in the region's toponymic spectrum is occupied by words that denote shades, such as *zhaltyr* ('brilliant') and *konyr ('brown');* these words are typical for Turkic languages. According to R.T. Muratova (2020), "there are lexemes that, while they name shades rather than core colors, are still of ancient origin".

Numerals assume an active position as a modifier of the terminological appellative. In complex toponyms, attributives can be numerals: *bir* 'one', *eki* 'two', *ush* 'three', *tort* 'four', *bes* 'five', *alty* 'six', *zheti* 'seven', *segiz* 'eight', *togiz* 'nine', myn 'a thousand', etc.

This toponymic landscape also features isolated toponyms with the ordinal numeral *besinshi* 'fifth', e.g., Lake *Besinshikol (meaning 'the fifth lake').* Numerals in toponyms do not always convey the exact number of geographical objects (that is, *Bishkul (meaning 'five lakes')* does not always amount to five lakes). In this kind of names, the numeral indicates the 'plurality' of the objects in the toponymic landscape. On the list of such names (with this meaning of 'plurality') are the toponyms *Bishkul ('Five lakes'), Beskain ('five birches'),* and others.

In the toponymic system at hand, we recorded the following numerals with the

meaning of ‘plurality’: *ush* ‘three’ (*Ush Shok "three groves"), bes* ‘five’ (*Bestobe ("Five hills"), segiz* ‘eight’ (*Segez-Kuduk (("eight wells"), toksan* ‘ninety’ (*Toksan-Kul (ninety lakes")*, settlement *Toksan ("village Ninety").*

The sense of ‘plurality’ in the toponymic landscape can also be conveyed via numerical words: *dzhangiz* “one; alone; single” and қос ‘pair’; cf. the numerical indicators in the names of the geographical objects *Dzhangyz-Kul (‘solitary lake’), Kos-Kul (‘pair lake’), Kos-Agach (‘pair tree’), Kos-Tomar (‘Double Swamp’),* Lake *Egizekol (‘twin lakes’),* etc.

These occurrences have been the object of research for many toponymists specializing in Turkology. For example, Kazakh onomatologist E. Koichubayev (1974) noted that the main core numerals in toponymic structures are the lexemes ‘seven’, ‘nine’, ‘one hundred’, and ‘one thousand’. In Turkic and Indo-European languages alike, these denote the notion of ‘many’.

L.S. Kara-ool (2019) supports this perspective: “Quantitative indicators in toponyms that include numerals do not always correlate with geographical realities...”

Names that include orographic terms

A further special group consists of oronyms based on orographic terms:

mount *Ayutas* [*ayu* ‘bear’ + *tas* ‘stone’];

Aktas Hill [*ak* ‘white’ + тас ‘stone’];

mount *Bastau* [*bas* ‘head’ + *tau* ‘peak, mountain’];

aul *Akbas* [*ak* ‘white’ + *bas* ‘head’];

the *Bestube* settlement, with *bes* ‘five’ and *tobe* ‘peak’;

Zharkain area with ‘ravine, cliff’ and ‘birch’;

Karaoba Hill, [*kara* ‘black’ + *oba* ‘mound’ or ‘hill’;

Ulgenoba, [ulgen‘big’+ oba ‘mound’ or ‘hill’];

Araltobe River, literally [*aral* ‘island’+ *tobe* ‘peak’].

Names that include microtoponymic terms

The toponymy of the region includes appellatives inherent to microtoponyms. Examples are the following geographical terms:

Tomar (meaning swamp): Zholtomarsai Ravine, settlement *Zholtomar*, Lake *Zholtomar*, *Bestomar* Swamp, *Uzuntomar* Hill;

Sai (meaning ravine): Sarysai Ravine, *Karagaysai* Ravine, *Tereksai* Ravine, *Sarysai* Pond, settlement *Karasai*, settlement *Bestomaksai*, *Karasai* Hill;

agash (meaning tree): settlement *Kyrymbai Karagash*, aul *Qosagash*, aul *Egindyagash*, settlement *Kyzylagash*, *Aralagash* Village (former name Tonkeris), mount *Kosagash*, *Buyiragash* Hill;

shok (meaning grove): settlement *Ekishok*, *Akshoky* Village;

zhar (*meaning cliff):* Lake *Zharkent*, *Zharken* Swamp, *Akzhar* Hill, *Akzharkyn* Village;

bulak (*meaning spring):* Lake *Bulak*, Lake *Kumbulak*, *Sarybulak* Village, *Bulak* Hill;

oba (*meaning small hillock): Karaoba* Hill;

kudyk (meaning pit): settlement *Zhalgyzkudyk*.

The analysis of the region's toponymic landscape enabled us to identify the key geographical terms employed in the formation of toponyms:

oiconym type names: *zhailau, auyl, kystau;*

hydronymic terms: *aksu, bulak*, *karasu*, *kul* (*gul*), *kol*, *su*, *suat*, *tomar*, *ozek* (*uzek*);

orographic terms: *bas*, *zhar*, *tau, oba*, *tay*, *tas*, *tobe*;

microtoponymic terms: *sai*, *agash*.

In the toponymic landscape under analysis, orographic terms are often part of microtoponyms, depending normally on the size of the object. Within this territory,

microtoponyms can employ toponymic appellatives of hydronyms, oronyms, oeconyms. For example, the hydrographic term *kol* in the microtoponym *Sarykol* Ravine, the orographic term *tobe* in the name of the settlement *Zhuantobe*, *oba* (*Kara-Oba Monastery*), tomar (*Kara Tomar*), tas (*Ayu-tas*)

The diagram below demonstrates the most frequent geographical terms used in nomination.

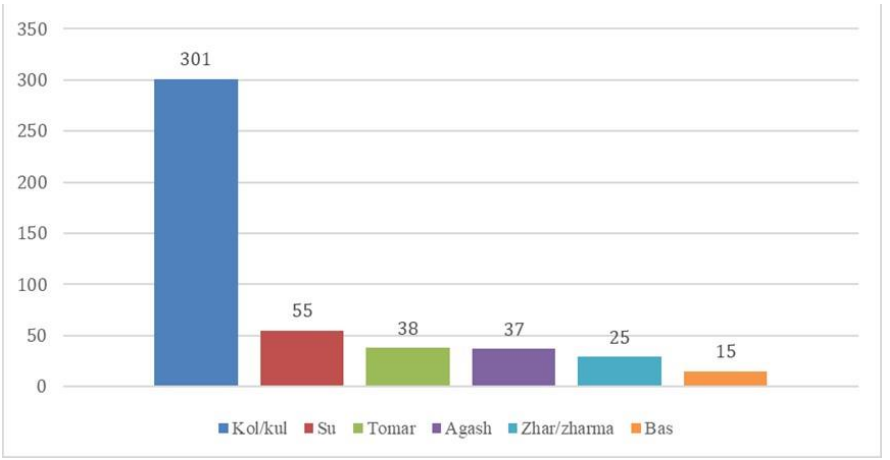


Figure 1 The Turkic appellatives usage frequency in the toponymic landscape of the North Kazakhstan region (on the level of districts)

The cases of Turkic appellative words were found as the part of geographical names:

kol/kul – 301 times (in 13 districts);
agash – 37 times (in 12 districts);
su – 55 times (in 12 districts);
tomar – 38 times (in 12 districts);
zhar – 25 times (in 10 districts);
bas – 15 times (in 8 districts).

The cases of single geographical name usage in toponymic landscape of the North Kazakhstan region are demonstrated below:

ozen/ozek – are found in 7 districts of the region;
bulak/ burluk– in 7 regions;
sai – in 7 districts;
sor – in 7 districts;
tas – in 7 districts;
shok – in 7 districts;
kopa – in 6 districts;
oba – in 6 districts;
auyl – in 6 districts;
zharma – in 2 districts.

Therefore, a comprehensive analysis of the Turkic toponymic appellative words has shown that the most used appellatives in the region are *kol/kul*, followed in descending order by *agash*, *su*, *tomar*, *zhar* and *bas*.

The diagram below shows that the largest number of Turkic toponymic appellative vocabulary is observed in the hydronymic entities of the region under study, followed by orographic microtoponymic and oiconymic terms.

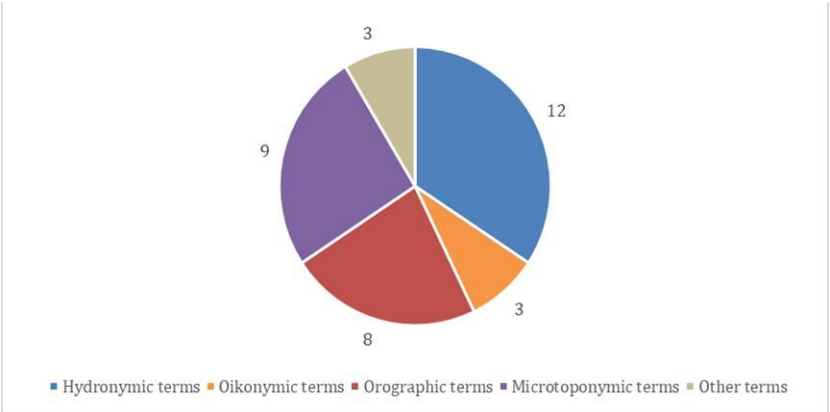


Figure 2. Toponymic classes of Turkic appellative words in the toponymic landscape of the North-Kazakhstan region

Hydronic (the names of any water objects) terms

Kol;
Sor;
Tomar;
Su;
Ozen/ozek;
Kopa;
Zharma;
Alka;
Batpak;
Teniz;
Burluk;
Aryk.

Orographic terms

Tau;
Tobe;
Tas;
Bas;
Oba;
Zhar;
Kurgan/korgan;
Sopka.

Oiconymic terms

Auyl;
Kystau;
Kudyk;

Microtoponymic toponyms

Bulak;
Kudyk;
Agash;
Oba;
Sai;
Aral;
Kopa;
Shok;

Kuduk/kudyk.

In the toponymic landscape of the North Kazakhstan Region, the same Turkic toponymic appellative terminology is used in the nomination of geographical objects as in Kazakhstan's shared toponymy. The famous Kazakh toponymist G.K. Konkashpayev (1963) considers toponymic terms under the sections "Local geographical terms included in Russian specialized literature" and "Local geographical terms and words requiring a fuller explanation", where he gives a complete interpretation of the following terms:

Sai. is a ravine, gully, dry riverbed, small river.

Tomar. is a bumpy and marshy area with meadow vegetation and abundant groundwater outlets, characteristic for the northern parts of Kazakhstan.

Agash has the following meanings: "a tree, wooden forest, wooded, grove";

Agashty is an area where there is a forest, grove.

Aksu 'white water' is a river fed mainly by snow and glacial waters…

Bas means 'head','top','headwaters', 'source', 'lake shore', etc.

Bulak is a 'spring', 'brook', sometimes a 'river'.

Zhaltyr 'smooth surface' is an open lake, not overgrown with grass.

Kainar 'boiling' is a spring.

Karasy 'black water' – a large, relatively deep river offshoot into which steppe rivers break up in summer; a river fed by groundwater at the foot of the mountains.

Ozek is a small river, tributary, gully, small valley.

The peculiarities of how different regions' toponymic terminological vocabulary is used in this case only boil down to phonetic interpretations of certain toponymic lexemes in Russian. For example, Zhaltyr (the final consonant is solid, South Kazakhstan) versus Zhaltyr' (the final consonant is soft, the North Kazakhstan Region). It should be noted that these features are not specific, as similar occurrences are characteristic of other Turkic toponymic areas.

The study of the region's toponymic landscape has shown how actively appellative vocabulary is used in the names of geographical objects, with the most diverse variations present. Our stance in this regard is confirmed by Akmatov et al. (2019), who contend that "the geolocation of Turkic- and Mongolian-speaking areas of Kyrgyzstan under analysis reveals established parallels in the use of geographical names, on the one hand, and appellatives used in this process, on the other". The Kazakh-Russian borderland witnesses the same process.

Our analysis reveals the extent to which toponymic terminology is diverse in the landscape of the North Kazakhstan Region. Names of geographical objects derived from appellative vocabulary are primary in relation to the others. The reason for this is that the process of nomination took place naturally in this case. The main purpose of appellatives under these circumstances is orientation on the terrain and localization of geographical objects. Another important factor was the intention to distinguish objects from a number of similar ones.

In addition to toponyms derived from appellative vocabulary and denoting natural or climatic features, there are appellatives with abstract meaning. This type of onyms is not related to the designation of a geographical object, nor does it express the belonging of this or that object, nor is it a landmark on the terrain. The main function of such names is, rather, ideological orientation. These are the so-called Sovietisms in toponymy.

This kind of names gained widespread use after the Great October Socialist Revolution 1917 in Russia and is frequently seen in the names of settlements, the most mobile stratum of toponymic vocabulary. We identified the following onyms of this type: *Alga* 'forward', kaz. *Enbek* 'labor', *Birlik* 'unity', *Talapker* 'initiative', *Ortalyq* 'central', *Medinyet* 'culture', *Bostandyk* 'freedom', *Zhanalyq* 'novelty', *Zhana Zhol* 'new way'. At present, this type of names is most subject to renaming,

necessitating the recording of these toponyms. They are associated with a certain period and reflect the history of our people.

Conclusion and recommendations

The Turkic toponymic landscape of the region under analysis, like any other system of toponyms, is represented by the main toponymic classes: hydronyms, oronyms, oikonyms, and microtoponyms. Each of these toponym classes has its own corpus of geographical terminology of indigenous Turkic origin. These groups of toponymic vocabulary form the basis of the region's toponymic landscape. These onyms are primary and significantly differentiated by the attributive part of the complex toponym. Toponyms that are derived from appellative vocabulary are recorded as independent geographical terms.

The modifier most often characterizes the geographical object by natural and climatic realities: shape taste of water characterization of hydronyms in terms of their suitability for agricultural activity, by the presence of minerals, thermal characteristics of the object, size of the object, depth of the object, location of the object, flora and fauna.

As a color determinant, toponyms may contain basic color lexemes (kara, ak, sary, kok) and words of a tonal nature – zhaltyr, konyr. The article discusses various variants of toponyms with numerical components.

Toponymic terminology can also be abstract, most often of ideological nature.

The corpus of the North Kazakhstan Region's toponymic vocabulary in most cases has the same set of appellative lexemes as the whole territory of Kazakhstan (*agash, aksu, aral, bas, bulak, zhar, karasu, kuduk, kol/kul, sai, sor, su, tomar, oba, tau, sai, tas, tobe, uzek/ozek*). These terms are frequent. Some rare geographical terms were also identified in the toponymic system: *kopa* – Lake *Kishkenekopa, zharma* – Lake *Bolshoy Zharma* (*Ulken Zharma*), *kordon* – settlement Kordon Alabotinsky (Alabota Kordony).

A characteristic feature of the region's toponymic landscape is the homonymy of different geographical objects (oronyms, hydronyms, and oikonyms). The region knows certain cases when three different geographical objects bear the same name: mount *Zhaksy Zhalgyztau*, Lake Zhaksy Zhalgyztau, Zhaksy Zhalgyztau Village.

The material presented in this article is recommended for use in the practice of teaching school and university disciplines. This can contribute to the formation of onomastic competence. In local history work in school practice, the presented materials will be useful in conducting educational activities designed to cultivate an interest in the region's history in the younger generation and instill in them ethnic, cultural, and confessional tolerance.

Turkic toponymic occurrences presented in this paper can be used in the development of recommendations for onomastic commissions dealing with the naming and renaming of various toponymic objects, as well as in the development of informational toponymic guides for the North Kazakhstan Region and other regions.

Acknowledgement

The research paper was carried out within the framework of the scientific project IRN AR19676219 “Integrated study of the toponymic landscape of the border regions of Northern Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation” in accordance with the Agreement of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan for Grant financing No. 243/23-25 dated August 03, 2023.

Bibliographic references

Akmatov, N. R., Abdullayev, S. N., & Mushayev, V. N. (2019). Central Asian Geolocation: Linguistic Reception of Toponyms. (Turko-Mongolic Area). Oriental Studies, 12(5), 945-956. https://doi.org/10.22162/2619-0990-2019-45-5-945-956

Bakberdi Bazarbekov, Bolatbek Tleuberdiev, Sandugash Kulanova, Dilfuza Roziyeva, & Gulmira Khussainova. (2024). Exploring the Linguistic and Conceptual Landscape: The Case of the Toponym 'Saryarka'. International Journal of Society, Culture, & Language, 12(1), 353-361. https://doi.org/10.22034/ijscl.2024.2018478.3310

Bayanova, A. T. (2021a). Semantics of the color designation of khar 'black' in the folklore text: a linguistic and cultural aspect (on the example of Kalmyk fairy tales recorded by G. J. Ramstedt). Mongol Studies, 13(1), 96-107. https://doi.org/10.22162/2500-1523-2021-1-96-107

Bayanova, A. T. (2021b). The semantic meaning of the word 'red' in the Kalmyk language and the possibility of its translation into German (on the example of a Kalmyk story in a note by G. Ya. Ramstedt). Oriental Studies, 14(1), 186-197. https://doi.org/10.22162/2619-0990-2021-53-1-186-197

Bitkeeva, A. N. (2016). Generic language as part of a multinational state. Oriental Studies, 9(5), 146-162. https://doi.org/10.22162/2075-7794-2016-27-5-146-162

Dmitriyev, P. S., Fomin, I. A., Dmitriyeva, I. M., Berdenov, Z. G., Ismagulov, S. M., Smagulov, N. K., & Abdrakhmanov, Y. A. (2023). Assessment of the resource potential of the bitter-salty sulfide lakes of the North Kazakhstan region for the development of ecological and balneological tourism. Geo Journal of Tourism and Geosites, 49(3), 866–874. https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.49303-1087

Dmitriyev P.S., Wendt J.A., Teslenok S.A., Nosonov A.M., Fomin I.A., Mushtaykin A.P., Ilkaev S.K. (2022). Use of geoinformation technologies in the study of cartometric and morphometric characteristics of lakes in the North Kazakhstan. InterCarto. InterGIS. GI support of sustainable development of territories: Proceedings of the International conference. Moscow: MSU, Faculty of Geography, 2022, 28(2), 719–736. DOI: 10.35595/2414-9179-2022-2-28-719-736

Cacciafoco, F. P., & Cavallaro, F. (2023). Landscape and Toponymy. In Toponymic Approaches and Perspectives in Toponymy and Toponomastics,134–157. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108780384.007

Kara-ool, L. S. (2019). Numerical in toponyms of Tuva. Oriental Studies, 12(4), 691-706. https://doi.org/10.22162/2619-0990-2019-44-4-691-706

Kazakh-Russian online dictionary. Accessed December 20, 2023. https://classes.ru/all-kazakh/dictionary-kazakh-russian-term-23984.htm

Khakimyanova, A. M. (2009). Color symbolism in Bashkir lyrical songs. K. M. Minnulin, R. F. Islamov, F. I. Urmancheev (Eds.), Actual problems of modern folkloristics: Materials of the International Scientific and Practical Conference, 288-290. Kazan: IYALI AN RT.

Koichubayev, E. (1974). A short explanatory dictionary of toponyms of Kazakhstan. Alma-Ata: Nauka.

Konkashpayev, G. K. (1963). Dictionary of Kazakh geographical names. Alma-Ata: Publishing House of the Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh SSR.

Madieva, G. B. (2019). Proper name in the context of cognition (3rd ed., supplement). Almaty: Kazakh University. Accessed September 18, 2023. https://dokumen.pub/9786010441927.html

Madieva, G. B., & Aliakbarova, A. T. (2020). On some modern trends in Kazakh anthroponymy (based on materials from Almaty). Questions of onomastics, 17(2), 312-322. https://doi.org/10.15826/vopr_onom.2020.17.2.030. Accessed May 06, 2025. https://onomastics.ru/content/2020-t-17-%E2%84%962-14

Madieva, G. B., & Suprun, V. I. (2023). Russian language in Kazakhstan. Neophilology, 9(2), 236-248. https://doi.org/10.20310/2587-6953-2023-9-2-236-248

Mikhalchenko, Y. (2016). Language planning in multiethnic countries. Oriental Studies, 9(5), 137-145. https://doi.org/10.22162/2075-7794-2016-27-5-137-145
Muratova, R. T. (2020). The historical and lexical-semantic meaning of the word “scarlet, pink” in the Turkish language. Oriental Studies, 13(3), 714-727. https://doi.org/10.22162/2619-0990-2020-49-3-714-727
Sabieva, E. V., Kakimova, M. E., & Kozlova, A. E. (2022). Hydronematic rings on the territory of the North Kazakhstan region. Power in Onomastics: materials of the XX International Scientific Conference, 400. Russia. Accessed April 18, 2023. https://igi.ysn.ru/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/onomastika-povolzhya.pdf
Sabieva, E. V., & Vasilyeva, O. V. (2020). Ethnotoponyms and anthropotoponyms of the North Kazakhstan region. Science and Life of Kazakhstan, International Scientific Journal, 6/4, 294-298. Accessed September 20, 2023. https://www.naukaizhizn.kz/index.php/journal/article/view/97/97
Shaikhislamova, R. B. (Ed.). (2021). Linguistic diversity in Russian regions: development opportunities. Ufa: RIC Bashgu.
Tlegenova, G. B., Rysbergen, K. K., & Zhanabekova, A. A. (2024). Representativeness of mythonyms and theonyms in language corpora. International Journal of Society, Culture, & Language, 12(1), 374-395. https://doi.org/10.22034/ijscl.2024.2017262.3288

Words: 6709
Characters: 46 459 (26 standard pages)

Yelena Sabiyeva, assoc. prof.
Institute of Language and Literature
North Kazakhstan Kozybayev University
150000, Kazakhstan
Petropavlovsk, Pushkin street, 86
mail@ku.edu.kz
evsabieva@ku.edu.kz
ORCID: 0000-0002-4440-9778
Scopus Author ID: 57221769278

Maira Kakimova, assoc. prof. – Corresponding author
Department of Germanic Philology
Institute of Language and Literature
North Kazakhstan Kozybayev University
150000, Kazakhstan
Petropavlovsk, Pushkin street, 86
mail@ku.edu.kz
mkakimova@ku.edu.kz
ORCID: 0000-0002-6833-5857