










Ethnocultural Originality of Color Toponyms in Turkic Folklore

Abat Sh. Pangereyev^a, Zhanna M. Umatova^b, Ariya Kh. Azamatova^c,
Zhanar K. Ibrayeva^d, Danel A. Karagoishiyeva^e, Gulnar S. Umarova^f,
Ainur Z. Kenbayeva^{g*}

^a Doctor of Philology, Professor of K. Zhubanov Aktobe Regional University, Aktobe, Kazakhstan.

Email: pan.abat@mail.ru

^b Candidate of Philological sciences, Assistant Professor of KIMEP University, Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Email: zh.umatova@mail.ru

^c Doctor of Philology, Assistant Professor of KIMEP University, Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Email: ariya_azamatova@mail.ru

^d Doctor of Philology, Associate Professor of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Email: zhanar.kulmat@gmail.com

^e Candidate of Philological sciences, PhD, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Email: Karagoishiyeva.daneliya@gmail.com

^f Candidate of Philology, Associate Professor of M. Utemissov West Kazakhstan University, Uralsk, Kazakhstan.

Email: umarova_1959@mail.ru

^g PhD student, M. Utemissov West Kazakhstan University, Uralsk, Kazakhstan.

Email: takeshi_aynur@mail.ru

Received: 02 September 2023 | Received: in revised form 21 October 2023 | Accepted 07 December 2023

APA Citation:

Pangereyev, A. S., Umatova, Z. M., Azamatova, A. K., Ibrayeva, Z. K., Karagoishiyeva, D. A., Umarova, G. S., Kenbayeva, A. Z. (2023). Ethnocultural Originality of Color Toponyms in Turkic Folklore. *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 9(3), 216-225.
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.32601/ejal.903019>

Abstract

The national and cultural originality of color designations in place names are often employed in the folklore of the Turkic peoples. Drawing material from famous epic poems in the Azerbaijani, Yakut, Kyrgyz and Kazakh languages, common and specific features in the frequency and semantics of color terms are distinguished. This qualitative study combines the intensive topology approach with frequency and component analyses. As a result of the frequency analysis, the most salient toponymic colors in Turkic culture are identified, among which yellow and pink appear to be more frequent than in most world languages. As a result of the component analysis, symbolic meanings of color terms “white”, “yellow” and “black” in toponyms are identified. A conclusion is drawn that the semantics of color toponyms in the epos of the Turkic peoples has a significant similarity, which indicates close linguistic contacts of the speakers of the Turkic languages in the past and their belonging to one common linguacultural zone. The color perception reflected in the Kipchak group within the Turkic family is shown to stand out due to the most frequent use of the color term “pink” and larger diversity in the figurative uses of colors in place names. The study enables a better understanding of national preferences in using color designations as part of Turkic culture.

© 2023 EJAL & the Authors. Published by Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics (EJAL). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (CC BY-NC-ND)

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>.

Keywords: Folklore, Color Term, Toponymy, Epos, Turkic.

* Corresponding Author

Email: takeshi_aynur@mail.ru

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.32601/ejal.903019>

Introduction

Due to globalization, it is of utmost importance to preserve the cultural heritage of nations as spiritual and moral values are embedded in the history and traditions of any ethnic group. Of great significance in exploring the cultural heritage and originality of an ethnic group is to address the specific characteristics of perceiving color as an element of their culture. It is well known that each language, in its own way, divides the color space as an element of reality, and the specificity of color lies in the connotative understanding by representatives of different cultures. People see color as a physical characteristic in almost the same way, but the awareness and connotative meaning of the color component can vary in different cultures, although some meanings can be universal. It is especially true for place names, or toponyms, as, being reflections of various elements of the material and spiritual culture (Turaevich, 2021), they accumulate certain color perceptions of the people inhabiting a particular territory (Hamurkoparan, 2013). Color meanings and color symbolism are vividly discussed in modern onomastics. Thus, in studies of Turkic toponymy, recent analyses focus on the color symbolism of space in the Turkic languages (Khassenov et al., 2022), the functions and cultural meaning of toponyms containing color designations in Bashkir fiction (Gataullin et al., 2018), and the semantics of the color terms *kök* and *kök* in the Kazakh and Altaic languages (Abzhaparova et al., 2020).

Moreover, recent studies of toponyms discuss the specific features of color designations in relation to one or several cultures. Monocultural investigations primarily focus on the frequency of color terms in certain cultures, such as Mongolian (Purev et al., 2023), Uzbek (Rakhmatova, 2020) or Bashkir (Khisamitdinova et al., 2019). Cross-cultural studies deal with languages from different backgrounds and provide explanations for their differences. Thus, comparing color toponyms in the French and Azerbaijani languages, Askerova (2022) argues that the differences between them lie, on the one hand, in their genealogical and morphological belonging to different language families, and on the other hand, in the location of the countries under study in different political and geographical zones. In their comparative analysis of the Kazakh, Russian and English linguistic cultures, Kaskatayeva et al. (2020) conclude that differences between the ethnic groups in color designations are significantly determined by their natural and climatic living conditions and mentality.

Despite the growing interest in Turkic toponymy and related color designations, little is known of the prominent features of place names containing color terms in different Turkic languages that account for the traditional worldview of the Turkic peoples. Unlike previous cross-cultural investigations, our study addresses ways of using color terms in naming places specific of closely related languages, both genealogically and morphologically, that reflect the common nomadic lifestyle and corresponding culture, a significant part of which is a special perception of color. Until now, color toponyms have not been subjected to a comprehensive comparative analysis in terms of their frequency and the connotative component of their semantics based on a common Turkic background, nor have they been comprehensively explored based on national folklore. Being one of the most important components of ethnic culture (Ergashevna, 2020), folklore is “multi-layered, multi-leveled, multi-valued, and multi-faceted” (Mamayev et al., 2021) and serves as one of the main sources of experiencing a nation’s worldview and originality (Zhanibekova et al., 2021) through color perception. Hence, the purpose of this study is to reveal common and specific features of Turkic culture through the use of color toponymical designations in national oral folk art.

This study presents a small part of our research on the toponymy of the folklore of the Turkic peoples, an attempt is made to reveal the ethnocultural originality of the use of color terms in place names based on the material of the epos of the Turkic peoples. To identify the specifics of the use of color toponymical designations in national folklore, we selected well-known epic poems in the Azerbaijani, Yakut, Kyrgyz and Kazakh languages. In our opinion, these poems are vivid examples of traditional Turkic folklore and accurately reflect the features of the Turkic worldview. In our study, we identify the most frequent colors in Azerbaijani, Yakut, Kyrgyz and Kazakh folklore and compare them to the most salient toponymical colors in other Turkic cultures. We also distinguish between the direct and figurative meanings of color toponyms in Turkic traditional epic literature. We will show that, despite geographical differences, the Turkic peoples are united by a common culture preserved and transmitted by their ancestors through folklore, and color toponyms play a significant role in the transmission of an original ethnocultural code. We will also show that the analysis of the specificity of color perception allows identifying the peculiarities of the worldview not only of all Turkic peoples as a whole, but also of a specific group within the Turkic family that is characterized by the closest connection and similarity in terms of natural and climatic conditions.

Literature Review

- *Toponyms in folklore*

The possibilities of the multifaceted nature of folklore and its strength in explaining and revealing the meaning of the world are manifested in place names. Folklore is evidence of the historical memory of a nation, a mirror of the history of an ethnos. Toponyms used in epic poems and historical songs enable readers to

discover characteristic features of a nation's traditional lifestyle and mentality, which are determined by a specific geographical position (Gritsenko et al., 2015; Hadieva et al., 2015). Without toponymy, folklore plots, narrated in a historical vein, would be abstract and devoid of concretization. Based on this, the connection between folklore and toponymy is inextricable, arising from the culture of the Turkic peoples, their nomadic way of life, poetic intelligence, aesthetic dreams, and general national identity.

A number of onomastic studies have been devoted to analyzing Turkic toponyms. Thus, Makhpirov (1997) carried out an investigation into the sources of the formation, peculiarities of functioning, structural types and semantic models of ancient Turkic onomastics. Tolibayev (2020) described the role of proper names in the Karakalpak epic poems to translate relevant ethnocultural information about the historical past and culture of the people, and the boundaries of their distribution. Kadina et al. (2022) related the toponyms in one of Auezov's epic novels with people's lifestyle and existence conditions. Mengkai (2019) addressed the geographic distribution and historical value of place names in Kalmyk heroic epos. Kenbayeva et al. (2022) identified the main functions of toponyms in national Tatar and Kazakh versions of a famous Turkic epic poem. Kurilova et al. (2023) identified ethnocultural differences in naming geographical objects peculiar to northern regions. However, despite the increasing interest in toponymical analysis, the color aspect of place names has not yet become the object of research in the folklore of the Turkic peoples.

- *Toponyms as carriers of ethnocultural originality*

The ethnocultural peculiarity of folklore is manifested in the identification of the features of the ancient cultural heritage reflected in toponymy. In recent years, the use and meaning of toponyms in folklore have attracted increasing attention from linguists and literary scholars. Thus, Harte (2019) deals with special linguistic markers of moral and imaginative content in place names to provide evidence for traditional culture. In their study of toponyms functioning in Tuvan folklore, Ondar et al. (2018) relate place names to the mythological ideas of the people and describe how toponyms serve in temporal-spatial orientation. Toponyms used in national versions of Turkic epos are shown to convey the cultural code common to the Turkic peoples and, at the same time, reveal the cultural originality of a certain nation (Kenbayeva et al., 2022). Kurilova et al. (2023) treat toponyms as geocultural codes that provide ethnocultural, geographic and spatial information, and enable a clearer understanding of the historical settlements, inter-ethnic contact, and societal values of indigenous peoples in the Russian Far North.

Toponyms are referred to as carriers of national-cultural information and background knowledge (Lanovaya, 2021). It means that the analysis of toponyms can provide a description of the spiritual culture and worldview of the people who speak the given language (Vasil'Eva Svetlana, 2021). Being related to different historical epochs, peoples, and languages, place names can function as cultural, historical, and social formations testifying to the time of the development of a territory and the various peoples inhabiting it (Lutfullina, 2021). They are also shown to reflect the historical stages of the settlement, economic activity, ancient migrations, and interethnic contacts of certain ethnic groups (Ganieva et al., 2020). Therefore, a comprehensive investigation into toponyms used in national folklore can reveal the connection between the people and culture, which are specific in certain geographic and spatial conditions. In this respect, color toponyms can greatly contribute to the determination of ways, in which representatives of certain ethnic groups and cultures perceive the world around them.

- *Universal sequence of color term development*

Of particular relevance to our study is the concept of the universal sequence of color term development suggested by Berlin et al. (1991) and modified by McCarthy et al. (2019). To provide evidence for the universal sequence, Berlin and Kay's (1991) study was based on the results of the analysis of the most frequent terms in 20 languages, while the study by McCarthy et al. (2019) was extended to include 2,491 languages. According to this cognitive model, the most univernally frequent color terms are "white" and "black". To be more exact, the model presents the following sequences of color terms: "white" > "black" > "red" > "green" > "yellow" > "blue" > "gray" > "gold" > "brown" > "pink" (McCarthy et al., 2019). The cognitive perspective adopted in these studies is helpful in a more accurate determination of the ethnocultural specificity of different languages as it clearly demonstrates the sequences of color term preferences in national toponymy.

Another idea in the previous literature is of importance to our study. Purev et al. (2023) claim that the cognitive model of color term development is also helpful in a more accurate interpretation of toponyms. Thus, in accordance with the model, it is obvious to refer Mongolian toponyms with the color component *khökh* 'dark blue' to a green landscape rather than a blue one, as in the universal sequence of color term development "green" is followed by "blue". In our paper, the universal sequence of color term development will be used to identify the common and specific features charactering the Turkic languages and cultures.

- *Symbolic meaning of color in Turkic toponymy*

Language is a significant factor in the formation of cultural codes of ethnic groups. Color toponyms act as and code signs of the national identity and cultural heritage of the Turkic peoples (Bakirov, 2015). According to

Mironova (1984), “the concepts of color harmony are greatly influenced by the coloristic nature of a given country” (p. 12). The colors of native nature are decisive when naming surrounding realities, in particular geographical objects. As part of toponyms, Turkic color names in some cases refer to the real color of a topographic object, in others they serve to reveal its internal qualities and characteristics that are significant for the worldview of the people, thus receiving symbolic meaning. Kononov (1978) expressed confidence that color designations are associated with color geo-symbols used by different peoples, and believed that at different times and among different peoples, color symbolism could change. The use of identical color designations is based on the specific worldview of the Turkic peoples, reflecting their common past.

A number of recent studies focus on the symbolic meanings of color terms in the Turkic languages. In addition to the main denotative meaning, color terms in toponyms may have a secondary, figurative meaning, which may contain ethnocultural connotations revealing the originality of the symbolic color perception of the world by the people. For example, the color term “white” as part of Turkic toponyms may contain the meanings “light”, “transparent”, “sacred”, “snowy”, “fluid, flowing”, “southern”; and the color term “black” can mean “dark”, “muddy”, “abundant”, “underground”, “northern”, “evil, malicious”, “unhappy”, etc. (Gataullin et al., 2018). In the Chuvash, Yakut, and Khakass languages the color term “red” symbolizes heroism and protection of life on Earth, being a symbol of various spheres of human life (Gabysheva, 2019). Based on metaphorical transfer, the color term “pink” can mean “beautiful”, “colorful”, “variegated”, “multi-colored” (Muratova, 2020). The semantics of the color terms “blue” and “green” is ambiguous in Turkic languages, as it is often expressed by the same element such as *kök* in Kazakh or *kök* in the Altaic languages. This element can have different meanings depending on the geographical object being defined: for example, in a description of a landscape it has the meaning “green”, and in a description of the sky it means “blue” (Abzhaparova et al., 2020; Bakirov, 2015).

Thus, the study of the literature has shown sufficient development of certain aspects in connotative meanings of color toponymy, however, a more comprehensive analysis is needed to compare Turkic languages representing different family subtypes. The present investigation into color toponyms in the folklore of the Turkic peoples will reveal the ethnocultural originality of culture and mentality of the Turkic peoples, focusing on similarities and differences in their worldviews, which can be explained by relations and differences at the conceptual level.

Methodology

- *Research design*

The present study employed a qualitative research design with the intensive topology approach suggested by Tent (2015). When examining the corpus of color toponyms, we tried to answer the following questions on their etymology and meaning: (1) What does the name of the given place mean? (2) Why was the place called in this way? (3) What color element does the place name contain and what is the basic meaning of this color term? (4) What additional meaning(s) does the color term have in the context of the national epos? The answers to these questions enabled a clearer understanding of the sample of Turkic color toponyms collected from the national epic poems.

- *Sampling and research procedure*

The research material was extracted using purposive sampling from the folklore of the Turkic peoples. The research data were drawn from texts of famous epics in four Turkic languages – Azerbaijani (Southwestern Common Turkic), Yakut (Northeastern Common Turkic), Kyrgyz and Kazakh (Northwestern Common Turkic), namely: “Songs of the Great Steppe: Kazakh Folklore” (2009), “Keroglu. Azerbaijani Folk Epic” (2012), “Manas. Kyrgyz Heroic Epic” (2020), “Yakut Heroic Epic ‘Olonkho’” (1975). From the texts of the national epic poems, we first extracted names of geographical objects such as types of soil, mountains, hills, rivers, lakes. Among these toponyms, we identified those containing color terms, which could be speech units, including root morphs, semantically or etymologically associated with color names, which can have both direct and additional figurative symbolic meanings. The etymology and semantics of words were identified on the basis of the “Ancient Turkic Dictionary” (1969) and works by Turkic scholars. The research procedure comprised examining the selected toponyms in terms of their frequency and meaning in the selected epic poems.

- *Data collection*

From the original texts of the national epic poems in the Azerbaijani, Yakut, Kyrgyz and Kazakh languages, we selected all the examples that contained names of geographical objects. The primary research corpus comprised 181 toponyms. From the primary corpus we selected toponyms containing color elements. The final research corpus was obtained that consisted of 29 toponyms containing color components (color terms).

- *Data analysis*

The obtained data were analyzed and systematized in accordance with the categorization of generic elements as described by Purev et al. (2023): agronyms (e.g., fields, plains), hydronyms (e.g., rivers, lakes), oronyms (e.g., mountains, hills). They were further systematized according to the language and frequency. The results were correlated with the universal sequence of color term development (Berlin et al., 1991; McCarthy et al., 2019) to identify universal and specific features of toponyms containing color elements in the Azerbaijani, Yakut, Kyrgyz and Kazakh languages.

In order to study the content of color toponyms, the method of component analysis of significant units of the language was used by decomposing their meanings into semes. The basic meaning and figurativeness of connotation invested by native speakers in a particular color term were identified. The distributive method was used to study the context of the use of toponyms with color components in the selected folklore texts. Contrastive (comparative) and comparative-historical methods were used to describe the selected toponyms containing color elements in different Turkic languages from the point of view of identifying both differences and universal features in them. In accordance with the linguoculturological paradigm, the color toponyms selected from the heroic epic poems in the Azerbaijani, Yakut, Kyrgyz and Kazakh languages were regarded as elements of the linguistic worldview to reveal the ethnocultural originality of the use of color terms in Turkic folklore.

Results and Discussion

- *Frequency analysis*

Table 1 presents toponyms from Turkic epic poems that contain color elements. The color toponyms are systematized by belonging to the language (Azerbaijani, Yakut, Kyrgyz or Kazakh) and name category (agronyms, hydronyms or oronyms) in alignment with the categorization of generic elements (Purev et al., 2023). The frequency analysis shows that out of the four languages under study, Kazakh is the most diverse in the use of color toponyms, especially in the use of hydronyms and oronyms, whereas the Yakut language shows greater diversity in the use of agronyms. This can be explained by the differences in the western and northern territories.

Table 1: Place names containing color terms in Turkic epos by language and name category.

Category	Azerbaijani	Yakut	Kyrgyz	Kazakh
Agronyms	-	<i>Manhayan kostor sir</i> (<i>Manhayan kostor</i> 'white loamy' + <i>sir</i> 'soil'), <i>Urun ilgeleekh</i> (<i>urun</i> 'white' + <i>ilgeleekh</i> 'grace'), <i>Us baaragai syrдыk khallaan</i> (<i>Us baaragai syrдыk</i> 'very white, bright' + <i>khallaan</i> 'heaven'), <i>Biltagar sir</i> (<i>biltagar</i> 'yellow clay' + <i>sir</i> 'soil')	<i>Sary-Arka</i> (<i>sary</i> 'yellow, endless' + <i>arka</i> 'steppe'), <i>Kok-Noor</i> (<i>kok</i> 'green' + <i>Noor</i> 'soil, surface, meadow')	<i>Sary-arka</i> (<i>sary</i> 'yellow, endless' + <i>arka</i> 'steppe')
			<i>Kara-Suu</i> (<i>kara</i> 'black; huge' + <i>suu</i> 'water; river'), <i>Sary-Tal</i> (<i>sary</i> 'yellow' + <i>tal</i> 'narrow'), <i>Sary-Ozon</i> (<i>sary</i> 'yellow' + <i>ozon</i> 'lake')	<i>Aq Teniz</i> (<i>aq</i> 'white; bright; much; clean' + 'sacred water'), <i>Aq Zhaiyq</i> (<i>aq</i> 'white; bright; much; clean' + <i>kol</i> 'lake'), <i>Aqshauly</i> (<i>aq</i> 'white; bright; much; clean' + <i>shauly</i> 'noisy'), <i>Qara Teniz</i> (<i>qara</i> 'black' + <i>teniz</i> 'sea'), <i>Qarasu</i> (<i>kara</i> 'black; huge' + <i>su</i> 'water')
Hydronyms	<i>Sarkamış</i> (<i>sari</i> 'yellow' + <i>kamış</i> 'reed'), <i>Zümrüd bulaq</i> (<i>zümrüd</i> 'emerald' + <i>bulaq</i> 'spring')	<i>Aragas ilgeleekh</i> (<i>ilgeleekh</i> 'yellow' associated with grace + <i>aragas</i> 'river')		
Oronyms	<i>Ak-k'aya</i> (<i>ak</i> 'white' + <i>k'aya</i> 'rock'),	<i>Saharkhai ilgeleekh</i> (<i>Saharkhai</i> 'yellow; wide; endless' + <i>ilgeleekh</i> 'grace')	<i>Ala-Too</i> (<i>ala</i> 'pink, mottled' + <i>too</i> 'mountain')	<i>Aqshatau</i> (<i>aqsha</i> 'white; snowy' + <i>tau</i> 'mountain'), <i>Qaraenis</i> (<i>qara</i> 'black; big; huge' + <i>tobe</i> 'peak, high'), <i>Qyzylbelbeu</i> (<i>qyzyl</i> 'red' + <i>belbeu</i> 'belt; chain'), <i>Alatau</i> (<i>ala</i> 'pink, mottled' + <i>tau</i> 'mountain'), <i>Altynsandyq</i> (<i>altyn</i> 'yellow; golden; wide; endless' + <i>sandyq</i> 'chest'), <i>Koktau</i> (<i>kok</i> 'blue; green' + <i>tau</i> 'mountain')

Table 2 shows the frequencies in the use of color toponymical elements in Turkic folklore by name category. The most frequent in terms of using color components are hydronyms. The dominance of water objects in color toponymy can be explained by the fact that the Turkic tribes have historically settled in the Eurasian territories, normally abundant in water sources. This accounts for the great role water historically played in the lives of the Turkic peoples (Mindibekova, 2020). The most diverse in the use of color terms are oronyms, i.e. names of different types of relief. This is explained by the use of the “red” and “pink” color terms to describe the specific features of the landscape. The red color serves to describe a mountain, whose red rocks visible from afar. The pink (or mottled) color is used in the Kyrgyz and Kazakh languages to describe mountains where rock and soil stand out as mottles. This aligns with Muratova’s (2020) findings, that the color term *al* ‘pink, mottled’ is widely used mainly in Northwestern Turkic (Kipchak) languages, such as Kyrgyz and Kazakh.

Table 2: Frequency of color terms in the toponymy of Turkic folklore.

Color term	Agronyms	Hydronyms	Oronyms	Total
white	3 (10.3%)	4 (13.9%)	2 (6.9%)	9 (31.1%)
black	0 (0%)	3 (10.3%)	2 (6.9%)	5 (17.2%)
red	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.4%)	1 (3.4%)
green	1 (3.4%)	1 (3.4%)	1 (3.4%)	3 (10.3%)
yellow	3 (10.3%)	4 (13.9%)	2 (6.9%)	9 (31.1%)
pink	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (6.9%)	2 (6.9%)
Total	7 (24%)	12 (41.3%)	2 (6.9%)	29 (100%)

The frequency analysis allowed placing the Turkic color toponyms within the universal sequences of color term development. Based on the results of the frequency analysis, the sequence for the Turkic languages can be presented in the following way: “white” > “yellow” > “black” > “green” > “pink” > “red”. The Turkic sequence is similar to the universal model (McCarthy et al., 2019) in the first order of the color term “white”. However, the Turkic sequence shows three major inconsistencies with the universal model. Firstly, the Turkic folklore under analysis abounds in toponyms containing the color element “yellow”, which is equal to “white” in the number of occurrences in the texts. The high frequency of using the color term “yellow” is confirmed by previous studies of color term frequency in other Turkic languages. For example, in the Turkish language, the most frequent color terms are “white”, “black”, “red”, “yellow” and “green” (Hamurkoparan, 2013). The same color sequence is characteristic of the Tuvan (Suvandii, 2019) and Uzbek (Rakhmatova, 2020) languages. It is interesting that in our sample the color term “yellow” is even more frequently used than it was shown in previous studies. Probably, a larger sample comprising a corpus of toponyms used in folklore in these as well as other Turkic languages would enable a deeper understanding of national preferences in using color designations in place names.

Secondly, the color term “red” in the Turkic model appears to lose its third position in the universal sequence and becomes much less frequent in Turkic folklore. For the most part this is connected with the third inconsistency with the universal model. Although in the universal model the color term “pink, mottled” is in the least frequent (tenth) position, in Turkic folklore, especially in the folklore of the Northwestern Common Turkic (Kipchak) group, it moves to the fifth place before the color term “red”. This finding agrees with the results of the study carried out by Khisamitdinova et al. (2019), who identified the sequence of color terms in the toponymy of the Bashkir language as follows: “white” > “black” > “red” > “yellow” > “pink” > “green”. Despite differences in the frequency of use of the term “yellow”, the Kazakh and Kyrgyz languages exhibit a similarity with the Bashkir language in the use of the term “pink”. According to the authors, the Bashkir sequence of color terms corresponds to the typical characteristics of the Bashkiria territory, where rock and soil stand out as spots and mottles in the descriptions of plains, steppes, mountains, rocks, and rivers. Such a type of landscape is also characteristic of the territory in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, therefore it is not surprising that these languages are similar in employing the color term “pink” to describe the specific landscape in the northwestern territories. In this regard, the frequency of the color term “pink” is indicative of place names in the Kipchak languages within the Turkic language family.

- *Semantic analysis*

In Turkic folklore, color toponyms can be used both in direct and figurative meanings. The color designations “green”, “pink, motley” and “red” are used in toponyms mainly in their direct meaning. For instance, the variegated, mottled color (the color term “pink”) is used in its direct meaning: *Ala-Too* (Kyrgyz), *Alatau* (Kazakh). The green color is represented in the toponyms *Koktau* (Kazakh) ‘Green mountains’, *Kok-Noor* (Kyrgyz) ‘green possessions’. These green color toponyms are used in direct nomination and reflect shades of green as a color of landscape. The color toponyms employed in their direct meanings illustrate the vision of the world by the ancient Turkic peoples through the nomination of culture objects by their ancestors.

Regarding the connotative semantics of color toponymy in Turkic folklore, the largest number of color terms were found to have the components “white” and “yellow”. These toponyms are often associated with the

folk interpretation of geographical places, the events narrated in the epos, the characters and actions of the heroes of the epic legends. We can say that toponyms connect epics with a specific geographic place, giving it an ethnic flavor. For example, the toponym *Sary Arka* is translated in most scientific publications as 'a yellow ridge'. However, we believe that this translation does not reveal the sacredness of the toponym, its special meaning for the Kazakhs. In the "Ancient Turkic dictionary" (1969), the word *arqa* in a figurative sense is designated as 'support' (*kimnin argasi bolsa kuclug bolur* 'who has support is strong') (p. 53). The ancient Turkic peoples considered the yellow color (*sary*) to be valuable, symbolizing gold. All the phenomena of nature that have a yellow color were treated with respect. The color term *sary* is often found in Turkic anthroponyms (*Sarybek*, *Sarybai*, etc.), toponyms (*Sarysu*, *Sarytau*) and shows in this case, from our point of view, not a color, but the significance and value of the second component of the toponym. Therefore, the toponym *Saryarka* can be viewed as having the importance and value of support for each other by the steppe peoples living in difficult conditions of a nomadic lifestyle, when support by others was a necessity.

The color term "white" also turned out to be one of the most frequent in the selected epic poems of the Turkic peoples. We see a direct connection with color designation in the following toponyms: *Manhayan kostor sir* (Yakut) 'white-clay land'; *Ak-kaya* (Azerbaijani) 'a rocky ridge in the Caucasus with sparse vegetation'; *Aqshatau* (Kazakh) 'whitish, light mountains'; *Urun ilgeleekh* (Yakut) 'white grace, associated with milk'. From our point of view, the meaning of the toponym *Aqshauly*, which still exists in the Ayagoz district of the East Kazakhstan region, is ambiguous. On the one hand, a toponym can consist of two components (in this case, *aqsha* 'whitish, light' and *uly* 'poisonous'), a variant of the second component of the lexeme *uly* 'great' being possible. On the other hand, division into other components of the lexeme is also possible: *aq* 'white' and *shauly* (perhaps *shuly* 'loud, noisy, stormy'). In favor of the possibility of the second version, the Bashkir language has an identical word *shauly* translated as 'noisy'. We are inclined towards the second connotation of this toponym, however, this undoubtedly requires a separate, deeper study.

The toponyms *Aq Teniz* (Kazakh), *Aqkol* (Kazakh), *Aq Zhaiyq* (Kazakh) exhibit figurative, symbolic meanings. The toponym *Zhaiyq* is found in many Turkic languages: *Yayık* (Turkish), *Yayix* (Azerbaijani), *Zhaiyq* (Kazakh), *Zhaiyk* (Kyrgyz). There are different interpretations of this toponym. According to one version, the toponym is based on the legend of Jayık Khan, who in Turkic mythology is the god of all rivers and lakes that are under his jurisdiction. His image is associated with both the destructive and purifying power of water. According to another version, the toponym *Aq Zhaiyk* is connotatively associated with the understanding of it as a wide river. In the Kazakh language, the verb *zhaiylu* means 'to spread, outspread, stretch out'.

We would rather agree with the second version of the interpretation of this toponym, because the Kazakh people over the centuries have made their own adjustments to its connotation, adding the component *aq* (*Aq Zhaiyq*). To the present day, the white color bears the signs of purity, nobility, everything light, sublime. Thus, children call their grandmothers *aq azhe*, refer to a good person as *aq zhandy* 'a person with a pure soul', and to nobleness and fulfilling a person's duty *anasynyn ak sutin emgen* meaning 'justified mother's milk'. There are a great number of such examples in the Kazakh linguistic culture: *aqsagal* 'respected and honored elder', *aqmandaily* 'a light-faced beauty', *aq zhurek* 'kindness', *aq tilek* 'sincere wishes', etc. Based on this, we believe that the toponym *Aq Zhaiyq* has in its connotation a wide, freely spreading river-nurse in the steppe, and it is for this reason that the people added the color *aq* to it as a symbol of purity, something positive and good.

The connotation of the color term "black" is ambiguous. The Kazakh linguistic consciousness perceives the black color as polysemantic and verbalizes it as a reflection of something bad: *Qara zhurek* 'black heart / bad person', *Qara sirak* 'black shin / poor man', *Qara bet* 'black face / stained his name with a bad deed', *Qara zher bolu* 'to become a black earth / remain ashamed'. All the meanings of these phraseological units have figurative meanings. At the same time, in the Kazakh linguistic culture, there is a huge number of nominations of the color term "black" with a positive connotation, and our research has shown that there are more such meanings: *Qara shanyrak* 'father's house', *Qara Qum* 'Karakum / Great Sands', *Qarakhan* 'Karakhanids / great khans', *Qara Qazan* 'black cauldron / hearth and home', *Qara koz* 'black-eyed / beauty', *Qara qyldy qaq zhargan* 'fair, honest', etc.

In the texts of the Turkic epic poems selected for the analysis, the "black" component carries a positive connotation, also being verbalized in a figurative meaning of 'great, big': *Qara Teniz* (Kazakh) 'black sea / great sea', *Qarasu* (Kazakh), *Qara-Suu* (Kyrgyz) 'black water / big water', *karatobe* (Kazakh) 'black peak / high, large mountain', *Qara* (Azerbaijani) from Proto-Turkic *kara 'black'. A similar connotation is observed in the Kazakh linguistic culture in other cases: *Qara Qaraqypshaq Qoblandy* 'Qoblandy from the clan of numerous Kipchaks', *Qaragash* 'a big tree', *Qarasu* 'big water', *Qaraotkel* 'a big ford'.

Conclusion

The study addressed universal and specific features of Turkic culture through the use of color toponyms in national epic poems. As a result of the study, the color designation system is shown to be ethnoculturally marked. A toponym containing a color element is a verbalization of the component of the linguistic picture of

the world of an ethnic group containing deep layers of the information base of the people about a particular color, in which the distinctive national-specific features of the mentality of a particular ethnic group are presented. In Turkic folklore, color toponyms act as national codes through which the worldview and attitude of the Turkic peoples are transmitted. The study of the semantics of color toponyms in the folklore of the Turkic peoples makes it possible to assess their historical and cultural heritage and take a fresh look at the universal and specific features of their worldview.

The cultural heritage of the Turkic peoples, reflected in folklore, is revealed through the correlation with the universal sequences of color term development. It is shown that the sequences of color terms in the Azerbaijani, Yakut, Kyrgyz and Kazakh languages do not agree with the universal model. In Turkic languages, the color terms “yellow” and “pink” appear to be more frequent than in most world languages, while “red” turns out to be less frequent. The frequency analysis shows that Kazakh folklore seems to be the most diverse in the use of color toponyms. Besides, names containing color elements are mainly common for water objects (hydronyms), which accounts for the great role water historically played in the life of Turkic tribes. Furthermore, the use of the color term “pink” is a remarkable feature of the Northwestern Common Turkic (Kipchak) group that is characterized by the closest connection and similarity in terms of natural and climatic conditions.

In Turkic folklore, color toponyms can be used both in direct and figurative meanings. The color designations “green”, “pink, motley” and “red” are used in toponyms mainly in their direct meaning. They illustrate the vision of the world by the ancient Turkic peoples through the nomination of culture objects by their ancestors. The figurative meanings of color terms “white”, “yellow” and “black” in the epic poems of the Turkic peoples are due to color symbolism. The color term “white” symbolizes holiness and wisdom, purity and kindness, sincerity and beauty, mostly having a positive connotation. The color components “yellow” and “black” emphasize the significance and value of the second component of the toponym: *Saryarka* (the significance of supporting each other by the steppe peoples), *Sary-Ozon* (great river), *Qara Teniz* (great sea), *Qara-Suu* (big water), *Qaratobe* (high, large peak).

The conducted research has revealed the similarity of ideas about the world, about the spiritual values of the Turkic peoples. We see the only insignificant difference in the fact that in the Kazakh and Kyrgyz (Kipchak) toponymy, reflected in the epics, there is more symbolism and the use of color designations in a figurative sense. In general, the semantics of color toponyms in the epos of the Turkic peoples seems to exhibit significant similarity, which indicates close linguistic contacts of the speakers of the Turkic languages in the past and their belonging to one common linguocultural zone. The present study reveals the role of color elements in toponyms as carriers of an ethnocultural code and provides valuable data about national preferences in using color designations as part of Turkic culture. The paper enables a better understanding of specific ways of using color designations in Turkic toponymy.

References

- Abzhaparova, M. D., & Shirobokova, N. N. (2020). Development and semantics of the coloronyms *kek* and *kök* in Kazakh and Altaic languages. *Vestnik NSU. Series: Linguistics and Intercultural Communication*, 18(4), 45-57. doi: <https://doi.org/10.25205/1818-7935-2020-18-4-45-57>
- Ancient Turkic Dictionary. (1969). *Nauka*. Retrieved from <https://www.academia.edu/24589240>
- Askerova, K. Y. (2022). Color Toponyms in French and Azerbaijani Onomastics. *Traektoria Nauki = Path of Science*, 8(5), 3001-3008. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22178/pos.81-2>
- Bakirov, M. K. (2015). Semantics of Color in the Context of History, Art and Literary Literature of the Turks. *Philology and Culture*, 1(39), 114-119. Retrieved from <https://www.elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=22969778>
- Berlin, B., & Kay, P. (1991). *Basic Color Terms: Their Universality and Evolution*. University of California Press. Retrieved from <https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/distributed/B/bo3643648.html>
- Ergashevna, T. A. (2020). Specific features of the language in the development of culture. *Issues of Modern Science and Education*, 3(148), 82-84. Retrieved from <https://www.elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=42563830>
- Gabysheva, L. L. (2019). Symbolic Meanings of the Name of Red in the Languages and Culture of the Turkic Peoples. *Bulletin of the North-Eastern Federal University named after M. K. Ammosov*, 6(74), 57-65. doi: <https://doi.org/10.25587/SVFU.2019.74.44569>
- Ganieva, E. S., Osmanova, Z. S., & Mazinov, A. S. (2020). Linguoculturological aspect of studying Turkic toponyms of Crimea. *Philology: Scientific Researches*, 5, 28-41. doi: <https://doi.org/10.7256/2454-0749.2020.5.33007>
- Gataullin, R. G., & Fatykhova, L. A. (2018). “Color” toponyms and their features. *Bulletin of Bashkir State University*, 23(1), 211-220. Retrieved from <https://www.elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=32777595>
- Gritsenko, E. S., & Aleshinskaya, E. V. (2015). Translanguaging in Music: Conceptualizing Modes of Interaction in Global Contact Zones. *Issues of Cognitive Linguistics*, (4), 73-80.
- Hadieva, G. K., & Akish, I. (2015). The Epic Poem Edigei and Its Poetic Toponymy. *Tatarica*, 2(5), 47-60.
- Hamurkoparan, D. (2013). Semantics of Color in Turkic Toponymy. *Teacher XXI Century*, 3(2), 338-343. Retrieved from <https://www.elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=20302547>

- Harte, J. (2019). Names and tales: On folklore and place names. *Folklore*, 130(4), 373-394. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0015587X.2019.1618071>
- Kadina, Z., Sateeva, B., & Akhmetova, Z. (2022). The essence of the nature of toponyms (on the material of M. Auezov's epic "The Way of Abai"). *Polish Journal of Science*, 50, 73-76. doi: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6557513>
- Kaskatayeva, Z. A., Mazhitayeva, S., Omasheva, Z. M., Nygmetova, N., & Kadyrov, Z. (2020). Colour Categories in Different Linguistic Cultures. *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 12(6), 1-13. doi: <https://dx.doi.org/10.21659/rupkatha.v12n6.14>
- Kenbayeva, A. Z., Bekmasheva, A. N., Umarova, G. S., Shakirova, K. M., & Tuimebekova, A. A. (2022). Functioning of toponymic lexis in Turkic epic literature. *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 8(3), 45-54. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.32601/ejal.803004>
- Keroglu. Azerbaijani Folk Epic. (2012). *Tales and legends of the peoples of the world*. Retrieved from <https://avidreaders.ru/book/keroglu-azerbaydzhanskiv-narodnyv-epos-perepechatano-s.html>
- Khasenov, B., Adilova, A., & Rapisheva, Z. (2022). Colour Symbolism in Turkic Culture: A New Look in the Reconstruction of Colour Designation. *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, 30(4), 1753-1766. doi: <https://doi.org/10.47836/pjssh.30.4.15>
- Khisamiddinova, F. G., Muratova, R. T., Yagafarova, G. N., & Valieva, M. R. (2019). Color terms in Bashkir toponymy. *Issues in Onomastics*, 16(1), 140-159. doi: https://doi.org/10.15826/vopr_onom.2019.16.1.008
- Kononov, A. N. (1978). *Semantics of Color Designations in Turkic Languages*. Nauka.
- Kurilova, S. N., Khokholova, I. S., Osipov, B. Y., & Kantarovich, J. (2023). Folklore narratives on the toponymy of the Russian Far North (based on the Yukaghir, Even, and Yakut languages). *Acta Borealia*, 40(2), 140-168. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/08003831.2023.2264661>
- Lanovaya, T. V. (2021). Units Reflecting the Geographic and Biological Diversity of the Region: Linguoculturological Aspect. In I. V. Kovalev, A. A. Voroshilova, & A. S. Budagov (Eds.), *Economic and social trends for sustainability of modern society (ICEST-II 2021)*, vol. 116. *European Proceedings of Social and Behavioural Sciences* (pp. 403-411). European Publisher. doi: <https://doi.org/10.15405/epsbs.2021.09.02.44>
- Lutfullina, A. A. (2021). Linguoculturological Approach to Studying Tomonyms of the UK. *International Journal of World Languages*, 1(2). Retrieved from <https://ejournals.id/index.php/IJWL/article/view/210>
- Makhpirov, V. U. (1997). *Names of Distant Ancestors: Sources of Formation and Features of the Functioning of Ancient Turkic Onomastics*. Ministry of Science. Academy of Sciences Rep. Kazakhstan. Institute of Oriental Studies. Center for Uyghur Studies.
- Mamayev, Z., Boranbayev, S., Karabayeva, K., Issayeva, Z., & Mamayeva, G. (2021). Kazakh-Uzbek Literary Relations: History and Specificity of Literary Translation. *International Journal of Society, Culture & Language*, 9(2), 114-122. Retrieved from https://www.ijscel.com/article_245185.html
- McCarthy, A. D., Wu, W., Mueller, A., Watson, B., & Yarowsky, D. (2019). Modeling color terminology across thousands of languages. In K. Inui, J. Jiang, V. Ng, & X. Wan (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 2019 Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing and the 9th International Joint Conference on Natural Language Processing, Hong Kong, China* (pp. 2241-2250). Association for Computational Linguistics. doi: <https://doi.org/10.18653/v1/D19-1229>
- Mengkai, B. (2019). The Jangar Epic: Origins of Some Toponyms Revisited. *Oriental Studies*, 12(1), 78-86. doi: <https://doi.org/10.22162/2619-0990-2019-41-1-78-86>
- Mindibekova, V. V. (2020). The mythological context of folk etymology: Hydronyms and oronyms in the non-fairy tale prose of the Khakas. *Siberian Journal of Philology*, 4, 29-40. doi: <https://doi.org/10.17223/18137083/73/2>
- Mironova, L. N. (1984). *Color Science*. Higher School.
- Muratova, R. T. (2020). Color Term al 'Scarlet, Pink' in Turkic Languages: Historical and Lexical-Semantic Development Revisited. *Oriental Studies*, 13(3), 714-727. doi: <https://doi.org/10.22162/2619-0990-2020-49-3-714-727>
- Ondar, M. V., Koshkendey, I. M., & Khomushku, C. O. (2018). Place names in Tuvan folklore: The case of heroic epics and folk songs. *The New Research of Tuva*, 3, 53-68. doi: <https://doi.org/10.25178/nit.2018.3.4>
- Pukhov, I. V. (1975). *Yakut heroic epic "Olonkho"*. Yakut branch of the Publishing House SB RAS. Retrieved from <https://www.elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=25214091>
- Purev, E., Tsend, O., Bazarjav, P., & Khishigsuren, T. (2023). Color Terms in Mongolian Place Names: A Typological Perspective. *Issues in Onomastics*, 20(1), 140-155. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.15826/vopr_onom.2023.20.1.008
- Rakhmatova, G. O. (2020). Semantics of the Symbols Connected With Color in the Quatrains of "Divani Lugati-t-turk". *Theoretical & Applied Science*, 82(2), 558-562. doi: <https://doi.org/10.15863/TAS.2020.02.82.92>
- Suslova, S. (2020). *Manas. Kyrgyz Heroic Epic*. Publishing house of KRSU. Retrieved from https://krsu.edu.kg/images/periodicals/manas_otr.pdf

- Suvandii, N. D. (2019). Place names of color designation in Tuvan language. *The New Research of Tuva*, 4, 195-206. doi: <https://doi.org/10.25178/nit.2019.4.16>
- Tent, J. (2015). Approaches to research in toponymy. *Names*, 63(2), 65-74. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1179/0027773814Z.000000000103>
- Tolibayev, K. Y. (2020). The specifics of perception in the Karakalpak epic poems of toponyms Mysyr", "Isfakhan", "Rum", "Crimea". *ISJ Theoretical & Applied Science*, 3(83), 129-132. doi: <https://dx.doi.org/10.15863/TAS.2020.03.83.28>
- Turaevich, T. M. (2021). Toponyms as a Cultural Value Heritage. *International Journal on Integrated Education*, 4(6), 22-24. doi: <https://dx.doi.org/10.31149/ijie.v4i6.1916>
- Vasil'Eva Svetlana, P. (2021). Review of Toponymic Studies of Altai and Siberia in the Anthropocentric Paradigm. *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences*, 14(4), 478-488. doi: <https://doi.org/10.17516/1997-1370-0735>
- Vladimir, W. (2009). *Songs of the Great Steppe. Kazakh folklore*. Culture of Eurasia. Retrieved from <https://www.moscowbooks.ru/bookinist/book/353724>
- Zhanibekova, B., & Beisenova, Z. (2021). Anuar Alimzhanov's Aesthetic Position and its Artistic Realization. *International Journal of Society, Culture & Language*, 9(2), 203-211. Retrieved from https://www.ijscsl.com/article_245959.html