Alisher Navoi: The Founder of the Theory of Homonymy

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Abstract: This article explores Alisher Navoi's views on homonymy, presenting them as the theoretical underpinning of the concept. It highlights the significance of homonyms in cognitive evolution and their ability to maintain formal unity while expressing different meanings. Various methods of forming homonyms, including the semantic method leading to generic syncretism, are discussed. Navoi's adeptness at using homonyms in his works, particularly in the Tuyuk genre and Tajnis art, is examined. The paper underscores the role of texts containing homonyms and fine arts in language and cognitive development. Recommendations for broadening the use of homonyms, particularly in the teaching of the Uzbek language and computer languages, are also suggested.

1 INTRODUCTION

Homonyms are units with identical forms but distinct content. The term 'homonym' derives from the Greek for "the same name". There are multiple methods of creating homonyms; one of which is the semantic method where, over time, the connection between the meanings of a single word vanishes, and new words evolve. Etymological observations and Sem's analysis reveal that these words actually stem from a common root.

In Turkic languages, homonymy arises from a phenomenon known as generic syncretism, inherent to ancient Turkic words. This is termed by E.V. Sevortyan as "verb-noun stems", demonstrating the use of a monosyllabic lexical stem as both a noun and a verb with the same lexical meaning in the early stages of Turkic languages' development. Sevortyan employed terms such as "verb-noun homonymy", and "verb-noun homoform". Alternatively, he suggests "lexico-morphological syncretism" as a more accurate term for this phenomenon. Modern Uzbek words such as 'summer' (yoz), 'mulberry' (tut), 'swelling' (shish), and 'wedding' (to'y), exhibit traits of generic syncretism. This category syncretism is also observed in other Turkic languages.

Various forms of homonyms exist:

1. Graphic homonyms - letter homonyms, for example, Ji (j) I and Ji (j) II.
2. Lexical homonyms - words with identical pronunciation and spelling, but different meanings.
3. Phraseological homonyms - phrases with identical form but different meanings.
4. Paraphrasal homonyms - idioms with different meanings.
5. Grammatical homonyms - homonymy between grammatical forms.
6. Symbolic homonyms - homonymy between characters.

Among these types, lexical homonyms are the most commonly used. Lexical homonyms are words that are spelled identically but have different meanings. They are employed for various artistic purposes in classical texts.

Homonyms were used in classical literature to create the art of tajnis and the tuyuk genre, and in askiya payra as a pun and a basis for fugitives. The profusion of homonymous words in Turkic languages formed the basis for the art of tajnis and iyham in literature. The tuyuk genre was widely used in classical literature.

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A. Nurmonov notes that some linguistic concepts were proposed by Eastern thinkers, particularly Alisher Navoi, long before their European counterparts. Navoi first outlined the theoretical foundations of homonyms and their role in the development of thinking. His scientific work, "Muhokamat ul-lug'atayn" is a valuable source for understanding homonymous words.

Navoi identified traits such as "resourcefulness", "high perception", "sincerity", and "purity", characteristic of the Turkic peoples. He suggested that "wisdom", "understanding of science", "perfection", and "virtue" are typical of the Sarts. He particularly focused on their resourcefulness and high perception.

Homonymy is crucial for the emotive expression of thought, capturing the listener's attention. Understanding homonymous words requires knowledge, skills, a normative level of thinking, and attention. In neurolinguistic analysis, the link between the assimilation of the literal and figurative meanings of a word and brain activity is emphasised. A.R. Luria discusses the figurative meaning of words and the challenges in assimilating the meaning of homonymous words due to speech mechanism disruptions or abnormal levels of speech activity. He notes that patients with disrupted mental development often fail to differentiate between homonymous forms. Understanding homonyms is related to an individual's cognition and perception.

Word games in classical literature, and the arts of tajnis and iyham, enhance cognitive development. The articulation of tajnis, using words that are identical in form but different in meaning, illuminates the "resourcefulness, high perception" characteristic of the Turkic peoples, as noted by Alisher Navoi.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Alisher Navoi writes about the Turks' use of artistic words, tajnis and iyhoma. He asserts that there are more takallufs and puns adorning the poems among the Turks than the Persians. He highlights that the tuyuk genre, grounded in the art of tajnis and iyhoma, is exclusive to Turkic peoples: "Yana she'rda barcha tab' ahli qoshida ravshan va majmu' fusaho ollida mubarhandurki, tajnis va iyhom bag'oyat kulliydur. Va bu farxunda iborat va xujasta alfoz va ishoratda forsidin ko'proq tajnis omiz lafz va iyhom angez nukta borki, nazmg'a mujibi zeb va ziynat va boisi takalluf va san'atdur... ham turk shuaturrosi xos sasidurki, sartda va yo'q muni tuyuq derlar". The

tuyuk genre, and its primary meaning — various meanings concealed within the same form — are connected to the intelligence and astute nature of the Turkic peoples. The genres of askiya, tuyuk, riddles, mysteries, and iyhom art, puns, which are characteristic of the Turkic peoples' poetic creativity, are products of a high level of thinking (Kh. Z. Turdievna, K. M. 2022,58).

Alisher Navoi also refers to the peculiarities of the tuyuk genre and the art of tajnis in his work, "Mezonu ul-avzon": "Va bu ikki baytki, tajnisi tomdur, ham turk shuarosi xos sasidurki, sortda yo'qtur va muni tuyug' derlar. Va muning ta'rifin "Mezonul-avzon" otlig' aruzga bitilibdur, anda qililibdur" (Alisher Navoi. 2011,9).

Besides a skilful description of the tuyuk genre features and the art of tajnis, Navoi provides unique examples of tuyuk. His skill in creating a riddle was also acknowledged by scholars: "Especially, the most difficult art in poetry is tajnis and inspiration; the poet uses one word in two meanings, and the second meaning is a hidden edge. It can be very striking or significant. This phenomenon is, of course, not unfamiliar to Persian literature. However, the situation of full tajnis, suitable for expressing three or four meanings of one word, as in Uzbek, practically does not occur in Persian. Navoi cited such words as "(ot) horse", "(it) dog" and "(o`t) grass" as examples (Kislov A.V., 2017,180).

The noun in the first verse used in this verse means "(ot) name". That is: "Begim, sening isming hurdur, paridur." The word "(ot) horse" in the second line means "animal": "Sening oting tezlikda dev erur". The noun in the fourth line is an action verb (otmoq-to throw): "Har kim o'zini olib qochadigan g'amza o'qini notavon jonim tomon oting."

The word it (dog) in the first verse means an animal. That is: O adversary, even if you treat him like a dog... The dog in the second line means "to pass": "Have mercy on us, cross his sea, surrender." The word "it" in this sense is not used in the Uzbek literary language. In literary language, the word "throw" is used. This word is the accusative form of the stem (it) used in Navoi's tuyuks. (It) in the fourth line means "bring", "take away": "Although the place of your love is hellish (here we mean love suffering), lead us to it with your own hands."

Alisher Navoi noted the appearance of homonyms based on the words tush (dream), yon (side), bor (have), sog'in (miss), tuz (salt), ko'k (blue). Muhokamat ul-lug'atayn ranges from two to six homonymous paradigms.

Homonymy of three words: Alisher Navoi highlighted that the homonyms 'tush' (dream) and 'yon' (side) each carry three different meanings, but he did not elucidate them: Va tush lafzida ham bu nav' uch ma'ni bor. Va yana yon lafzida va yoq lafzida ham bu holdur va bu nav' lafziki, anda uch ma'ni bo'lg'ay, had va hasrdin ko'prak topilur (Alisher Navoi. 2011, Rakhmonov V. (2014)). These homonyms are also utilised in modern Uzbek literary language: tush I "a dream seen in a dream"; tush II "movement directed from top to bottom"; tush III "time";

Yon I "side"; yon II "movement of fire"; yon III "return". Only the word "Yon III", meaning "to return", is not used in contemporary Uzbek.

Homonymy of four words: Alisher Navoi cited four-value homonymous words: Va xili lafz ham topilurki, to'rt ma'nisi bo'lg'ay, andoqki, bor lafziki, bir ma'nisi mavjudlug'dur va bir ma'nisi amrdur boruvg'a va bir ma' nisi yukdur va bir ma'nisi samardur (Alisher Navoi. 2011, Rakhmonov V. (2014)). In modern Uzbek literary language, forms of the homonym 'bor' are employed, with meanings such as "existence", and "order". Homonyms with the meanings "effective" and "load" are not utilised.

Homonymy of five words: Navoi pointed out that there are homonyms carrying five different meanings: Va andoq lafz ham topilurki, besh ma'nisi bo'lg'ay: sog'in lafzidekki, bir ma'nisi yod qilmoqqa amrdur va biri sutluk qo'y otidur va ishq masti va majnuni va bemori muqobalasida sog'in desa, har biriga itloq qilsa bo'lur (Alisher Navoi. 2011, Rakhmonov V. (2014)). Sog'in I means "miss"; Modern Uzbek employs the homonym Sog'in II, which is "a word used to refer to an animal to be milked". Sog'in III "intoxicating with love", Sog'in IV "majnunvash", Sog'in V "sick" are not used in modern Uzbek literary language.

Homonymy of six words: The poem 'tuz' by Alisher Navoi exemplifies the phenomenon of six homonymous forms:

Yana andoqki, tuz lafziki necha ma'ni iroda qilsa bo'lur. Biri tuzki, o'q yo nayzadek nimani derlar Yana– tuz hamvor dashtni derlar. Yana tuz - rost kishini derlar. Yana tuz - sozni tuzmakka amr qilmog'ni, yana tuz - ikki kishi orasida muvofaqat solmog'ni (derlar). Yana tuz - bir majlis asbobini ham desa bo'lur (Alisher Navoi. 2011, Rakhmonov V. (2014)). Homonyms 'tuz' are essentially formed from one word.

Turning to the etymology of the word, we can see that all homonymous forms contain symbols of "correctness" and "norm".

Among these homonyms in the Uzbek literary language, only tuz V, meaning "binding, matching" (association), is used. Modern Uzbek also contains the word "tuz", which signifies "sodium chloride, fit for consumption", but Alisher Navoi does not mention this term.

The homonyms tuz I "bullet, spear", tuz II "field, plain, steppe", tuz III "the right word of a man", tuz IV "the correct word"; and tuz VI "assembly tool" types are not used in modern Uzbek literary language.

Alisher Navoi adroitly employed the term "tuz" in the text: "…va bu hol turklarning sidq va safo va tuz niyatidin va sortlarning ilm va funun va hikmatidin zohir durur".

In the Annotated Dictionary of the Uzbek Language, there are three homonyms of tuz. Tuz II.1. is flat land, a wide plain. Tuganmas konimizdir tog' bilan tuz. Habibi. Yo'l yuramiz qumloq, suvsiz tuzlarga… "Hasankhan". This word is utilised in modern Uzbek dialects. It is not observed in the literary language. Navoi refers to the "correct" meaning of the word "Tuz niyati" and emphasises that the nature of the Turkic peoples is upright, and that they are not deceptive.

Alisher Navoi presented six different forms of the homonym for the word ko'k: ko'k I "sky", ko'k II "chant", ko'k III "nature", ko'k IV "package"; ko'k V "greenery", ko'k VI "field". He stated that harmony could be created in other ways:

Va ko'k lafzin ham necha ma'ni bila iste'mol qilurlar. Biri ko'k - osmonni derlar. Yana ko'k ohangdur. Yana ko'k tegrada ko'klamdur. Yana ko'k qadog'ni ham derlar. Yana ko'k sabza va o'langni dog'i derlar. Bu nav'alfoz hamki, uch ma'ni va to'rt ma'ni va ortug'roqkim, iroda qilsa bo'lg'ay, ko'p borki, forsiy alfozda andoq yo'qtur (Alisher Navoi. 2011, Rakhmonov V. (2014)).

In many studies, researchers have focused on the meaning of the word "ko'k" in "Muhokamat ul-lug'atayn", its semantic features, and its homonymous meanings.

"The main common Turkic root of the lexeme with the meaning ko'k occupies a prominent place in the works of Navoi: ... har gunbazi sýmўzi manzilatdin falaknиҥ kök gunbazidin bash ötkäribdўr. Tiniq osmon randidagi; moviy, zangori (ЎTIL-Annotated dictionary of the Uzbek language. I. – 2006; 16, 412) The sememe root lexical unit first appears in the Kultegin inscription: ...ўzä kök tänri asra yagyz yer (Ibragimova Z. 2021,312). The lexeme is used with

the same meaning in the ancient Turkic language monuments (DC - Ancient Turkic Dictionary.-L., 1969,317) and the ancient Turkic language of the XIII-XIV centuries (Kholmanova S. 2021,617).

In the Annotated Dictionary of the Uzbek Language, the word "ko'k" is presented as an ambiguous lexical unit. Among its meanings are "a layer of air visible above the ground in the form of a dome"; "heaven"; "growing grass, grass"; "the grass is green". It is also noted that edible berry plants such as cilantro, ginger, and dill have a 'green' meaning (ŬTIL-Annotated dictionary of the Uzbek language. I. – 2006; 16, 412).

Researcher Sh. Egamova emphasises that the lexeme "ko'k" is not a polysemous word, but a homonym: "In our view, the following lexemes are not additional meanings of the analysed lexeme, but are homonyms of the root word. This opinion is also based on the dictionary of Mahmud Koshgari (DC - Ancient Turkic Dictionary.-L., 1969,317) and comments in Navoi's work "Muhokamat ul-lug'atayn" (Egamova Sh. 2019.,304).

3 DISCUSSION

Let's summarise the contributions of Alisher Navoi to the development of homonymy as follows:

1. Alisher Navoi emphasised the traits of "high perception" and "insight" among the Turkic peoples. He underscored that reading tajnis using homonyms, unique to this national language, demonstrates the most fundamental and significant factor in the characteristics linked to the Turkic peoples' way of thinking - the enhancement of linguistic consciousness, cognition, and perception.

2. He explicitly illustrated the emergence of homonyms in Turkish languages in quantitative terms.

3. The semantics of homonyms are underscored using the tuyuk genre as an example.

4. He analysed homonyms formed via the semantic method.

It is appropriate to present Alisher Navoi's definition of homonyms, homonymous words, homonymous genres, and tajnis based on homonyms, his analysis of the art of iyhom, his contributions to the lexicology

of the great Uzbek thinker, word form, and his ideas about the semantic paradigm in textbooks, teaching aids, and dictionaries as a scientific dissertation. "Muhokamat ul-lug'atayn" offers a substantial reference point.

4 CONCLUSION

Homonyms are a linguistic issue that garners attention in global linguistics. Wordplay based on homonyms, along with sayings and the askiya genre, are recognised as influential in cognitive development. The inclusion of the askiya genre in the UNESCO list as a unique and rare cultural phenomenon emphasises the significant role homonyms play in shaping worldviews, cognition, and evaluative abilities. Unfortunately, askiya is currently utilised within a narrow circle and its benefits are confined to a limited group of people. It is vital to eliminate the subjective approach in interpreting askiya, expand its content, and promote its broad application in the educational process.

The widespread use of homonyms is also observed globally. For instance, homonymy in Chinese plays a vital role throughout all stages of its historical development. Currently, considering the extensive capabilities of Chinese characters, computer games are being developed based on homonyms.

Homonymy is one of the distinctive characteristics of the Uzbek language, and it is practically used not only to express concepts and cultivate logical thinking but also to educate the mind.

The effective use and understanding of homonyms as a cognitive development factor set forth a number of tasks. In this regard, it's necessary to:

- Clarify the etymology, communicative, and accumulative functions of homonymy, from its emergence among lexical units to other types. This includes the collection of grammatical, affixal homonyms, homonymous phrases, combinations, symbols, and homonymous units in dialects;
- Use examples from written sources and standard speech materials in compiling a dictionary of homonyms;
- Employ classical scientific, artistic, and historical sources that reflect theoretical information and the results of scientific research devoted to solving problems associated with homonyms, as well as use advanced foreign experience in clarifying the relationship between form and meaning;

- Analyse the foundations of artistic creativity based on homonyms in classical sources and form a linguistic database;
- Expand the scope of the Uzbek language, make it a technical language, establish a formal basis for homonyms for the development of an information-computer style, and effectively use modelling. It's necessary to implement tasks such as developing markup models with special homonym tags and creating an electronic platform.

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