

# Linguistic Analysis Of The Toponyms Of Sho'Rchi District

Qulto'rayeva Sarvinoz Bahodir qizi

Uzbek Language and Literature University named after A. Navoi, 2nd year basic doctoral student, Uzbekistan

**Received:** 22 October 2025; **Accepted:** 13 November 2025; **Published:** 18 December 2025

**Abstract:** This article focuses on the linguistic classification of the toponyms of the Sho'rchi district, paying attention to the features of the national language, the types of names and their motivating factors, their scope and scale, as well as the social and everyday reasons behind their formation.

**Keywords:** Onomastics, toponym, geographical names, Turkic names, Persian–Tajik component names, names borrowed from Arabic, ethnonym, primary toponym, word-forming morpheme, hydronym, toponyms with Mongolian roots.

**Introduction:** There is a name for everything in the world. When we say mountain, we understand a mountain in general—whether high or low, big or small. Lake is also a general term, a common noun. Such words can be translated into any language. A proper noun, however, refers to a specific thing, object, or place, and usually is not translated; it is written and pronounced almost the same in all languages. For example, when we say Samarkand, we understand a beautiful historical city located on the banks of the Zarafshan River in our republic. When we say Bukhara, the ancient city of Uzbekistan and the center of the region with the same name appears in our mind.

Thus, a toponym (geographical name) is, first of all, a word. However, it is not an ordinary word; first, it is a proper noun. At the same time, many toponyms are unclear even to linguists. Although many opinions have been expressed about the origins of names such as Khorezm, Samarkand, Fergana, and Namangan, their origins and etymology remain unknown.

Geographical names carry not only location information but also a great deal of historical, geographical, and linguistic data. Every geographical name has a specific meaning; there is no name without meaning. However, the meanings of many place names have been lost—or more precisely, have become unclear to people today.

Geographical names are witnesses to various periods of history. Scholars from different fields—linguists,

geographers, historians, archaeologists, geologists, and ethnographers—turn to toponymy in their research. By studying geographical names, it is possible to learn which peoples lived in the past, the relationships between different nations, and how they migrated from one place to another.

Y. Kho'jamberdiyev, an expert on Surxondaryo toponyms, notes that place names have at least three important functions:

1. Place names indicate a precise location. The importance of this can be shown with a simple example. If an ambulance is told, "Come quickly, the patient is in critical condition," but the address is not clear, then no matter how fast the ambulance drives, it will not be able to save the patient from serious trouble. This is because movement is not directed toward a specific object or location.

2. Place names provide valuable information about the historical past of peoples. This can be illustrated by the toponym "Qirg'intepa" located in the village of Sayrob in the Boysun district. In addition, toponymist H. Hasanov provides the following explanation about the name of the Temir Darvoza gorge in the Boysun mountains and its origin:

"In sources from the 7th century, it was written as Tamir Qapug'. In Persian–Tajik sources, it appeared as Dari Ohanin and Darbandi Ohanin (where dar means 'gate' and ohan means 'iron'). In Arabic, it was referred to as Bab ul-Hadid (bab — 'gate', hadid — 'iron').

Today, it is called Zheleznye Vorota in Russian. Thus, although it is expressed differently in four languages, the meaning remains the same. This gorge also has local names such as Buzg'olaxona ('Goat House') and Qo'hlug."

Place names also have an educational significance. Every geographical name has its own reason for being given and its own history. In Germany, there is a good tradition: at the beginning of streets or next to other historical place names, small plaques are placed with brief information about their history and the reason for their naming. If information about why streets, villages, mountains, cities, and other places received their names is periodically published in the press, and if conversations, lectures, and excursions are organized, people will gradually learn the history of their region and the peoples associated with it, and their love for their homeland will grow. Therefore, since very ancient times, this issue has attracted the attention of historians, ethnographers, geographers, and linguists.

Geographical names are a historical category, and their emergence and transformation are connected with the historical development of society. Each geographical name is an element of the lexicon and enters the vocabulary in either an active or passive form. The careful collection, study, and research of geographical names is entrusted to geographers, historians, archaeologists, and ethnographers, and primarily to linguists.

**SHO'RCHI** – a city and district in the Surxondaryo region. In the 1926 census, it was recorded under the name Sho'rcha. In addition, there is a Sho'rcha mountain in Qumqorgon, places called Sho'rcha in Boysun and south of the Amu Darya, and a stream named Sho'rchasoy in Qumqo'rg'on. During the 1916 census, 15 toponyms bearing the name Sho'rcha were recorded in the eastern part of the Bukhara Emirate.

Sho'rcha/Sho'rchi – indicates soil or water containing salt. The suffix -cha is a diminutive. Sho'rcha refers to a small salty place, salty water, or a saltwater pond (lake, well). It can also be explained as Sho'rchoh (a spring, well, or water source with salty water). Both forms originally referred to a water source and later became the name of a village. The word Sho'rcha came to be pronounced incorrectly as Sho'rchi.

Place names created on the basis of ancient lexemes characteristic of Turkic languages. It is worth noting that in the region, alongside Iranian-language toponyms, Turkic names were also formed in very ancient times. According to the historian Sh.S. Kamoliddin, who specially studied the ancient Turkic toponymy of Central Asia, names of Turkic origin have been widespread in the region since very early periods.

In the early Middle Ages, in terms of number, they ranked second after toponyms characteristic of Eastern Iranian languages. From the Middle Ages to the present day, Turkic toponyms form the most resilient and widely distributed layer of geographic names throughout the region.

Below, the place names of the Sho'rchi district have been analyzed from a linguistic perspective.

**JAYILMA** – a village in the Sho'rchi district and a place in the Oltinsoy district. The word "Jayilma" comes from the Turkic verbs jayil or yayil. Jayilmox, yayilmox mean "to spread, to disperse, to expand, to flow widely." Places with this name are typical for all districts at the foot of mountains. There are many places with names such as Kattajayilma, Kichikjayilma, Pastjayilma, Etakjayilma, Kichchikjayilma, and Qiziljayilma.

Jayilma refers to a place where waters flowing from ravines and small valleys converge, spread out due to the flatness of the streambed, and flow over a wide area. Such places are called Loyqa. The water carries silt and vegetation, and in the Jayilma, it spreads out and comes to rest.

**OQARBULOQ** – a spring and ravine in the Sho'rchi and Oltinsoy districts; a village in the Denov and Sho'rchi districts. The toponym "Oqarbuloq" is a purely Turkic name consisting of two components. Oqar is an adjectival form derived from the verb oqmoq ("to flow"). Buloq refers to a spring or a water source resembling a small stream. In Turkic, the verb oq means "to flow" or "to move." Oqar thus means "flowing," "running," or "moving." In Turkic, bulaq or bulak denotes a water source. Oqarbuloq refers to a spring that flows continuously and has abundant water, or to a place located near such a water source.

**SHALDIROQ** – the name of a neighborhood in the Sho'rchi district. The word "Shaldiriq" comes from the Uzbek words shaldiriq or shaldirash, which mean the gurgling or splashing sound of water flowing. When the neighborhood was first established, the Surxon River flowed through this area, and at that time, the river was very deep. The abundance of water in the Surxon River produced a gurgling sound, which served as a natural sign. For this reason, the neighborhood was named "Shaldiriq." The neighborhood consists of 11 streets, and because of the gurgling sound of the river during the early years, the neighborhood council gave it this name.

**QO'SHTEGIRMON** – the name of a neighborhood in the Sho'rchi district. "Qo'shtegirmon" is a compound toponym consisting of two elements. It comes from the Turkic language: qo'sh means "two," "pair," or "combined," and tegirmon comes from the Turkic verb tegir ("to turn") with the suffix -mon, meaning a

mechanism or device (mill). According to local residents' estimates, at the beginning of the 19th century there were "two combined mills" in the area of this neighborhood, which were in constant use by the local population. Over time, the residents began calling the area "Qo'shtegirmon," derived from the name of the "two mills" located there. People gradually settled around the area, engaged in livestock breeding and farming, improved the surroundings, and the settlement eventually developed into a neighborhood.

**SAKSONKAPA** – the name of a neighborhood in the Sho'rchi district, established in 1968. "Saksonkapa" is a compound toponym consisting of two elements. Sakson is a word indicating a number, while kapa is related to the Turkic forms kapa/kupa/kopa and means "hut, small house, or shelter." The neighborhood consists of 33 streets, and because it initially consisted of eighty small houses, the neighborhood council gave it the name "Saksonkapa."

**DO'STLIK** – the old name of the neighborhood was "Ko'ltepa." "Do'stlik" is a basic (simple) toponym, consisting of a single element. The word do'st has existed in Turkic languages since ancient times and has a common Turkic root. The suffix -lik is also a Turkic derivational morpheme. The neighborhood was named "Do'stlik" because people who came from different regions lived together in a friendly and harmonious manner. As a result of these friendly relations, residents from four surrounding neighborhoods were consolidated to form the Do'stlik neighborhood.

**KATTA SAVUR** – In history, the largest hill in the Sho'rchi district was located in this neighborhood, and for this reason the neighborhood was named after this hill as the "Katta Savur" Citizens' Assembly. "Katta" is an adjective of Turkic origin. "Savur" is a Turkic toponym that appears in many regions with the meanings "hill, elevation, mound, rise." "Katta Savur" means "the neighborhood formed around the largest hill (Savur) in the area."

**LAYLAKXONA** – This neighborhood was named "Laylakxona" because there were many stork nests here. In spring, many storks fly to this area and settle on the hills. The toponym is formed from the lexemes laylak (a bird species belonging to the stork family) and xona ("place, location, dwelling"). Thus, this name means "a place where storks nest, an area where many storks live."

**BAXSHITEPA** – A village in the Sho'rchi district. In the waqf documents of Khoja Ahrar, the Baxshikent irrigation canal is mentioned. The word baxshi comes from Sanskrit and means "Buddhist priest, sage, prayer reader, dervish." In ancient Turkic, baqsi means "master, teacher". In modern Uzbek, baxshi has the

following meanings:

1. A poet or singer who performs folk songs and epics;
2. A healer who treats people through rituals, recitations, and spiritual practices;
3. An official in the Bukhara Khanate responsible for supervising the accounting of funds allocated for construction.

In the court of Muhammad Shaybani Khan, there was an official known as Mansur Baxshi. According to local understanding, a baxshi is a fortune-teller or bird diviner (qushnoch), as well as a folk artist who performs epics and traditional narrative songs (doston and terma).

**EGARCHI** – The name of a neighborhood in the Sho'rchi district. The toponym is Turkic (specifically Uzbek). The base lexeme egar refers to "a saddle (placed on a horse)." The word-forming suffix -chi denotes a profession or occupation (e.g., egarchi – a craftsman who makes saddles). Thus, egarchi originates from the word meaning "a saddle-maker, a craftsman who produces saddles." According to local accounts, saddle-making has been practiced in this area since the 18th century. People seeking saddle-makers would come here asking where the egarchi craftsmen were located, and over time the place came to be known as "Egarchi," deriving from the name of these saddle-making artisans.

**Place names formed on the basis of components borrowed from the Persian-Tajik language.** The Turkic and Persian peoples who lived in the territory of present-day Uzbekistan have long maintained close economic, cultural, and political relations. These interactions and connections have influenced the toponymy of both people.

**BO'STON** – The name of a neighborhood in the Sho'rchi district. The word bo'ston is borrowed from the Persian-Tajik language. Bustan, bostan means "garden," "orchard," "a flourishing place," "a location with many trees," or "a cultivated/pleasant land." The Citizens' Assembly of this neighborhood was named "Bo'ston" with the intention that it be a green, flourishing, and blossoming place filled with gardens and orchards.

**KO'LOBARIQ** – A canal in the Sho'rchi district. It is a hybrid name formed from the Persian lexeme ob and the Uzbek lexemes ko'l and ariq. The name "Ko'lobariq" is a mixed (hybrid) toponym created by combining three different lexemes. Ko'l is Uzbek and means "a place where water accumulates"; ob is Persian and means "water"; and ariq is Uzbek, meaning "an artificially dug water channel." In everyday speech,

water or a canal with an uneven flow, where the water becomes sluggish or stagnant, is also called ko'lob. Therefore, Ko'lobariq means "a canal flowing out of a lake" or "a heavily watered canal with a sluggish flow."

**TALXOBI** – A stream in the Sho'rchi district. It is linked to the Persian word taxxir. The word Talxobi is formed from the Persian–Tajik lexemes taxxir / talk meaning "bitter, sour, salty" and ob meaning "water." Thus, talk + ob means "bitter water" or "salty water." The original form is tarxi ob – "bitter water." This stream in the Sho'rchi area was given this name because its water tastes bitter and slightly salty. Therefore, the toponym is a Persian-derived hydronym, and the term originates from the natural characteristics of the water.

**KONOBOD** – The name of a neighborhood in the Sho'rchi district. The word Konobod is formed from two main lexemes. Kon in Uzbek means "mine" or "a place of mineral extraction," and obod is of Persian origin, meaning "prosperous, well-developed place, or inhabited area." Konobod thus means "a prosperous place with mines" or "a well-developed area known for its mines." The name of this neighborhood originated because there were seven mine wells in the Konobod Citizens' Assembly area, and the locals began calling it "Konobod."

**OBODON** – A village in the Sho'rchi and Denov districts. The toponym is originally derived from the Persian word obdon, which means "lake, pond, collected water." It is a dialectal form of the Persian obdon. During spring, the water from natural precipitation would accumulate and remain until the middle of summer, and this collected water was called obdon (a place where water gathers). The village located near such a water source came to be called Obdon > Obodon.

**GULISTON** – The name of a neighborhood in the Sho'rchi district. "Guliston" is formed from the Persian words gul ("flower, flowerbed") and the suffix -iston ("place, location"), meaning "a place where flowers grow" or "a flourishing, blossoming area." The neighborhood was named for its location at a crossroads connecting neighboring neighborhoods, as well as for its well-maintained and blooming natural environment. After World War II, houses were built here for highly educated teachers and doctors, and the neighborhood was given the name "Guliston."

**OQKAMAR** – The name of a neighborhood in the Sho'rchi district. The color white symbolizes purity. Oq comes from the Turkic root ak/aq and appears in ancient Turkic inscriptions as aq. As a color name, it is often used in many toponyms with the meanings "pure, clear, honest." Oqkamar literally means "white belt." Symbolically, it was given this name by the elders of the

neighborhood with the wish that the community be "belted and strong." Kamar has existed in Turkic languages since ancient times. Kemer/kamar means "belt, something wrapped around the waist; a stretched line or narrowness" (in geographic terms: the foot of a mountain, the lower extended part of a slope). In toponyms, kamar usually refers to a landform or an area that widens like a belt. Oq symbolizes purity, goodness, and blessing, while kamar means "belt." The name was chosen with the symbolic meaning: "May it be a white-belted, strong (prosperous) place."

Toponyms with Mongolian roots. In the territory of Uzbekistan, toponyms formed from words borrowed from the Mongolian language are connected to the Mongol invasions of the 13th century. Mongolian toponyms constitute a small group within regional place names, forming the fourth historical layer. The Mongolian language did not become a vernacular among the population in present-day Uzbekistan. For this reason, toponyms related to the Mongolian language are relatively few, and identifying them is not difficult. Some specialists argue that the scarcity of Mongolian names in Uzbekistan's toponymy is due to the Mongols having assimilated with the local population, adopting the local language and religion. Some toponyms in Uzbekistan formed on the basis of Mongolian words have survived to the present day.

**QO'NG'IROT** – A neighborhood in the city of Sho'rchi, and also the name of neighborhoods in the Termiz and Muzrabot districts. Qo'ng'irot is an ethnonym. It refers to a tribe included among the Uzbek, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, and Karakalpak peoples. Its origin traces back to Mongolian: Xongirat, Xungirat, Hungirad. The word qo'ng'ir meaning "brown" has no relation to this ethnonym. Xun is an ancient Mongolian/Kipchak term representing a unit of measurement or a zoological symbolic component. Kerey is the name of an ancient tribe, associated with the semantics of "crow person" or "black crow." The suffix -t in Mongolian languages denotes plural or collective meaning. The ethnonym Qo'ng'ir is formed from the Mongolian xun kerey ("black crow," "crow person"). The final suffix -t indicates a group of people, a collective, or a community: xun + kerey + t → xunkereyt → xunkirat → qo'ngirat → qo'ng'irat. Kerey / qarg'a refers to an ancient clan or tribe. Over time, this ethnonym became the name of a village.

**Toponyms borrowed from Arabic.** The formation of these names is linked to the centuries-long presence of Arabs in the region. Along with introducing Islam, they actively contributed to the creation of toponyms based on words of Arabic origin. In Central Asia, including the territory of Uzbekistan, many names formed from Arabic elements are anthroponyms. Although the

historical emergence of the Arabic language in the region is well established, the factors that led to its use in naming geographical features have been less studied. The words forming the basis of geographical names in this layer were borrowed from Arabic in ancient times and adapted into Turkic languages. Today, most Arabic-based toponyms in Uzbekistan are formed according to Uzbek grammatical rules.

**OLIYHIMMAT** – The name of a neighborhood in the Sho'rchi district. According to Mamatlaliyev Rahmatullo, a local resident, the Sho'rchi district administration gave this neighborhood the name "Oliyhimmat." The name is a toponym formed from a combination of two Arabic-rooted words in Uzbek. Oliy – Arabic for "great, high," and himmat – Arabic for "help, generosity, zeal." This is an Uzbek toponym of Arabic origin. Oliyhimmat conveys the meaning "high-spirited, generous, noble." The name was given with the intention that the neighborhood would be home to many highly educated people. Additionally, the village is known for having many elderly, respected, and honorable residents.

**TAMADDUN** – The name of a neighborhood in the Sho'rchi district. The word Tamaddun is Arabic in origin: madan means "city," madaniy means "culturally or spiritually developed," and tamaddun refers to "progress, civilization, cultural development." The neighborhood was given this name as a symbol of the community's aspiration for knowledge, culture, and progress. The word Tamaddun represents the concept of a society's level of development, encompassing culture, science, technology, and related fields.

**Root toponyms.** Toponyms consisting of only one base and containing no word-forming suffixes. Karvon, Savur, Kakan, Tolli, Tamshush, Olatemir, Ozod, To'la, Yalti, Do'lba.

**Affixed toponyms or simple derived toponyms.** These are place names that contain word-forming suffixes or toponymic formants in their structure: Egar+chi, Sohib+kor, Hur+lik, Do'st+lik, Ezgu+lik, Shaldir+oq, Qo'l+dosh, Qo'sh+tegirmon, Go'zal+lik, Tosh+li, Baxt+li.

**Compound toponyms.** According to the morphological basis and structure of compound toponyms found in the region, the following types can be identified:

**Noun + noun structural toponyms:** Bobo+tog', Qora+suv, Qo'l+dosh, Jar+qishloq, Laylak+xona, Savur+tepa, G'arma+qo'rg'on, Oyna+ko'l, Shakar+ko'l, Hazrat+bobo, Sovjiron+bobo, Tolli+ota, Cho'pon+ota, Habibulla+eshon, Dalvarzin+tepa, Shoniyoz+tepa, Ko'l+tepa, To'qqiz+shahid, So'fi+bobo.

**Adjective + noun structural toponyms:** Yangi+ariq, Yangi+bozor, Oq+qo'rg'on, Oq+kamar, Xush+chekka,

Yangi+davr, Oq+mozor.

**Numeral + noun structural toponyms:** Besh+tom, Sakson+kapa.

Researchers have focused on various aspects when classifying toponyms. In doing so, the characteristics of the national language, the types of names, their motivations of origin, size and scope, the social and everyday reasons for their emergence, as well as factors related to history, geography, and other disciplines have played a decisive role. In studying the microtoponyms of the Surxondaryo region, we rely on the classifications proposed by such scholars as Z. Do'simov, S. Karimov and S. Bo'riyev, as well as K. Nazarov and T. Enazarov, whose approaches are distinguished by their relative comprehensiveness.

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