

**LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF SLANG UNITS IN THE KHOREZM DIALECT**

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**Abstract:** The article analyzes the linguistic features of slang units actively used in the Khorezm dialect. The study discusses scholarly interpretations of the concept of slang, its manifestation within dialectal speech, and its relationship with the literary language. In addition, evaluative, expressive, and structural characteristics of slang units in the Khorezm dialect are examined based on linguistic material.

**Key words:** slang, dialect, Khorezm dialect, dialectal vocabulary, expressiveness, evaluation.

In contemporary linguistics, the study of non-standard layers of language—particularly slang units that emerge in spoken discourse—has become one of the most relevant research areas. Slang is commonly interpreted as a lexical stratum reflecting the dynamic development of the language system and characterized by verbal creativity and evaluative potential [1]. Slang units found in regional dialects serve as an important source for revealing the linguistic landscape of a particular area [2]. The Khorezm dialect, as one of the regional varieties of Uzbek, displays distinctive lexical and semantic features. Slang expressions used in this dialect demonstrate the expressive capacities of local speech and develop in close interaction with the literary language [3]. For this reason, the linguistic analysis of slang units in the Khorezm dialect plays a significant role in the scientific description of regional language variation. The aim of the present article is to identify the linguistic characteristics of slang units employed in the Khorezm dialect and to describe their evaluative, expressive, and structural properties. The novelty of the study lies in the fact that slang expressions specific to this dialect are examined on the basis of clearly defined linguistic criteria, and their structural types as well as evaluative functions are analyzed through concrete linguistic material.

In linguistic scholarship, the concept of slang has been interpreted in various ways. O. S. Akhmanova defines slang as lexical units used in informal speech by particular social groups and characterized by emotional and expressive coloring, while V. V. Vinogradov regards slang expressions as devices that expand the evaluative and stylistic potential of discourse [4, 5]. In more recent studies, slang is distinguished from jargon and argot and is described as a lexical phenomenon with a broader communicative scope, strong contextual dependence, and rapid renewal. These features necessitate the investigation of slang as an independent linguistic object within contemporary research. Slang units occurring in the Khorezm dialect do not merely fulfill a communicative function; they also operate as linguistic tools through which speakers express personal attitudes and evaluations. In particular, a number of slang expressions are actively employed to assess individuals' character, social status, and patterns of behavior. Such units are frequently based on metaphorical motivation and are formed through semantic transfer, whereby features originally associated with objects are projected onto human qualities. In the Khorezm dialect, slang expressions primarily emerge in spoken interaction and serve to evaluate persons or situations. They enhance expressiveness in discourse and increase communicative impact through irony or sarcasm [7]. First, the majority of slang units are constructed on metaphorical grounds. In expressing mental or emotional states, speakers make extensive use of somatic and figurative components [8]. For example, the slang item *čišmä* ("chishma") is used to denote a boastful or

arrogant person who presents himself as “inflated,” that is, as exceptionally perfect. The expression *čolašiq* (“cho‘lashiq”), by contrast, refers to an indecisive or inert individual with a confused disposition. These two items illustrate metaphor-based semantic transfer, whereby properties associated with physical states (swelling, disorder) are mapped onto human characteristics. Similarly, the verb *sindirmaq* (“to break”) acquires a slang meaning that diverges from its literal sense and instead conveys notions such as “to impress,” “to defeat in argument,” or “to solve a problem skillfully.” The noun *tvarog*, despite its literal reference to a dairy product, is employed ironically in the Khorezm dialect to describe a person who frequently commits mistakes or becomes involved in quarrels and conflicts. The term *γältäk* (“g‘altak”) is likewise used for restless individuals who are constantly in motion and display psychological instability. Second, slang units in the Khorezm dialect are characterized by strong evaluative potential, expressing either positive or negative attitudes. In certain contexts, lexically neutral items from the standard language acquire reversed or ironic meanings when used as slang [9]. Third, from a structural perspective, slang expressions appear in single-word forms, multi-word combinations, and phraseological units, which demonstrates the structural diversity of this lexical layer. In the present study, slang units actively used in the Khorezm dialect were examined through descriptive and lexical–semantic analytical methods. As empirical material, slang expressions occurring in everyday spoken interaction were selected and analyzed with regard to their semantic and structural characteristics. In Khorezm dialectal speech, slang items often function as markers of in-group solidarity while remaining opaque or unintelligible to outsiders. This feature highlights the significant role of slang in mediating social relations between groups and in structuring interpersonal communication. To illustrate this claim, the analysis below presents a selection of slang expressions accompanied by interpretive commentary. The discussion first focuses on units carrying positive evaluative meanings. Among the slang units with positive evaluative meaning in the Khorezm dialect are *ataman*, which denotes a boy regarded as the most “respected” or influential within a school environment; *nayomnik*, referring to a person who performs tasks better than others and readily assists them; and *ot*, used to characterize a highly energetic, efficient, and proactive individual. The items *pir* and *usta* likewise convey positive evaluation, describing a master or expert in a particular field and a skilful craftsman, respectively. The expression *it vāž äkän* (“it vaj akan”) functions as an emphatic marker of admiration and is applied to something exceptional, unusual, or impressive. Similarly, the phrase *qizlarni äžäli* (“qizlarni ajali”) is employed to describe an extremely attractive young man or woman who easily captivates others. Slang expressions carrying negative evaluation are also attested in the Khorezm dialect. For instance, *alfons* designates a man who lives off women’s financial support. The phrase *dili sünnikdi* (“dili sunnikdi”) refers to a speaker who is unable to articulate thoughts clearly and consistently produces confused utterances. Another expressive unit, *mayzavadin kopirib ol* (“mag‘zavadin ko‘pirib o‘l”), is used to characterize an individual who talks excessively and becomes tiresome to others. From a morphological perspective, these slang items predominantly belong to the nominal and verbal word classes and carry a strong stylistic and expressive load. Their use in interaction serves the speaker’s communicative intentions, such as conveying irony, evaluation, or a particular interpersonal stance. At the same time, these units function as active instruments for expressing social relations between individuals, enabling speakers to assess and characterize others through discourse. The results of the analysis indicate that slang units in the Khorezm dialect are primarily characterized by evaluative and expressive functions. A considerable proportion of the analyzed items appear in multi-word combinations and phraseological forms, which enhance imagery and stylistic vividness in discourse. Furthermore, a tendency for certain slang expressions to approximate the literary standard has been observed, allowing these units to be interpreted as transitional phenomena within the language system.

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