

## LEXICO-SEMANTIC GROUPS OF ORNITHONYMS IN KARAKALPAK AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES

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**Abstract:** *This article analyzes the lexico-semantic groups of bird names (ornithonyms) in the Karakalpak and English languages. It examines the origin, semantic layers, and cultural characteristics of ornithonyms in both languages, as well as their symbolic meanings and representations in folklore and literature. The study reveals that bird names in Karakalpak and English are formed not only on the basis of biological features but also under the influence of national worldview, cultural traditions, and symbolic associations.*

**Keywords:** *ornithonym, lexico-semantic group, Karakalpak language, English language, national culture, folklore, semantics, bird names.*

### INTRODUCTION

The lexical system of every language is closely connected with the lifestyle, culture, and worldview of its people. Words related to nature, especially animal names, reflect the historical experience, attitude toward nature, and aesthetic values of a nation. From this perspective, ornithonyms – names of birds – form an essential layer of vocabulary. They not only denote biological species but also express cultural perceptions and symbolic meanings embedded in people’s consciousness.

Although the Karakalpak and English languages belong to different language families, both have rich layers of ornithonyms that carry semantic, cultural, and symbolic meanings. For instance, in English, dove symbolizes peace and eagle represents strength and freedom, while in Karakalpak, *bürkit* (eagle) and *qarlığash* (swallow) appear as symbols of bravery and purity in folk traditions and oral literature.

In modern linguistics, the semantic study of ornithonyms is gaining importance not only within onomastics but also within cultural semantics and cognitive linguistics. Bird names serve as reflections of national identity and human interaction with the natural world. Comparative analysis of ornithonyms in Karakalpak and English allows us to identify linguistic parallels and differences, uncover common cultural perspectives, and better understand the national lexical worldview. Such research contributes not only to linguistics but also to cultural studies and ethnolinguistics.

The concept and linguistic nature of ornithonyms

Ornithonyms (from Greek ornīs - “bird”, onyma - “name”) are words denoting bird species and constitute an important part of zoonymy, a branch of onomastics. They reveal how people perceive and name elements of nature based on observation and cultural experience.

From a linguistic standpoint, ornithonyms are divided into two main types:

Natural names - names that directly denote specific species (e.g., g’arğa, u’yrek, bu’rgit - crow, duck, eagle);

Symbolic or figurative names - names that have metaphorical or cultural meanings (qarlığash - purity, dove - peace).

Etymologically, many ornithonyms originate from distinctive natural features. For example, the Karakalpak toqıldağ (“woodpecker”) derives from the verb toqıl- (“to knock”), reflecting the bird’s sound. Similarly, the English woodpecker follows the same semantic principle.

Lexico-semantic groups of ornithonyms in Karakalpak and English

The analysis shows that ornithonyms in both languages can be classified into several semantic groups:

Based on natural habitat

This group includes names formed according to the birds’ living environments:

- Water birds: Karakalpak g’az, u’yrek - English goose, duck;
- Land birds: tawıq, torğay - hen, sparrow;
- Mountain birds: bu’rgit, sunqar - eagle, falcon.

These names reflect direct associations with the birds’ ecological surroundings.

Based on color and appearance

Names in this group derive from visual characteristics:

- Karakalpak: aqqarğa (“white crow”), qaratorğay (“black sparrow”), sarğaltush (“yellow bird”);
- English: blackbird, goldfinch, white dove.

Color words play a central role in forming the semantic core of these names.

Based on sound and movement

Some ornithonyms are based on the sounds birds make or their movements:

- Karakalpak: toqıldağ, qaqquqush;
- English: cuckoo, woodpecker, twitterbird.

These examples demonstrate people’s close observation of nature and sound imitation in language.

Based on symbolic and cultural meaning

Many bird names carry symbolic meanings in both languages:

- In English, dove symbolizes peace, eagle – power and freedom, owl – wisdom;

- In Karakalpak, qarlıgash symbolizes happiness and purity, bu'rgit – bravery and independence.

Such parallels indicate universal human tendencies to attribute moral and spiritual qualities to birds.

#### Ornithonyms in proverbs and idioms

Bird names are actively used in folklore and proverbs:

- Karakalpak proverb: “Bu'rgit qanatin joytqani menen, bu'rgitligin joytpaydi ” (“Even if the eagle loses its wings, it never loses its pride”) – symbolizing courage;

- English proverb: “A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush” – emphasizing the value of what one already possesses.

Thus, ornithonyms function not only as lexical units but also as carriers of moral and cultural meaning.

#### Etymological and cognitive analysis

The etymology of ornithonyms helps to reveal their conceptual meanings.

- The English raven comes from the Old Germanic hraban, meaning “black”;
- The Karakalpak g'arğa also originates from a root meaning “black.”

Despite belonging to different language families, both reflect similar cognitive associations between color and symbolism, indicating parallel human perception of nature.

#### Ornithonyms in national culture

Birds play a significant symbolic role in both Karakalpak and English cultures.

- In Karakalpak folklore, birds often symbolize heroism, freedom, and loyalty (“Sunqar” epic and others).

- In English folklore, birds symbolize emotional and spiritual concepts – nightingale for love, raven for mystery or darkness.

Therefore, ornithonyms are not only lexical items but also elements of the cultural semiotic system, linking language, thought, and tradition.

#### Comparative results

Comparative analysis demonstrates that:

- In both languages, ornithonyms are semantically connected to natural characteristics;

- In English, they often bear mythological or symbolic meanings, while in Karakalpak, they are more closely tied to everyday life and folklore;

- Some semantic parallels exist: qarlıgash – swallow (hope), bu'rgit – eagle (freedom), g'arğa – raven (mystery, darkness).

These findings confirm that the lexico-semantic structures of ornithonyms in both languages reflect a blend of universal and culturally specific features.

### CONCLUSION

Ornithonyms in Karakalpak and English serve not only as names of bird species but also as reflections of each nation's cultural worldview and perception of nature. They carry symbolic, aesthetic, and moral meanings that enrich the linguistic and cultural heritage of both peoples. Comparative semantic analysis reveals both commonalities and differences in conceptualization, showing how human experience and culture shape the language of nature.

Hence, the study of ornithonyms contributes to understanding the interconnection between language, culture, and cognition, offering valuable insights for linguistics, cultural studies, and ethnolinguistics.

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