



## The Role of Toponyms in the Russian Language

*Salomat Khushbakovna Khusanova*

*Lecturer at the Denau Institute of Entrepreneurship and Pedagogy*

**Annotation:** *B*This article discusses the role of toponyms in the modern Russian language, their structure and the difference between the class system.

**Keywords:** *Toponyms, grammar, Russian language, toponymic classes, geographical names, dialectical toponyms.*

*Date of Submission: 03-11-2022*

*Date of Acceptance: 07-12-2022*

In order to fully understand the meaning of this topic, we would like to explain what Toponyms are and their role in modern Russian. Toponym (from the Greek τόπος (topos)-"place", and ὄνομα (onoma) — "name, title") is a proper name that denotes the name (identifier) of a geographical feature<sup>1</sup>. There are different classes of toponyms, such as:

buronyms — names of any territories, regions, or districts.

astionyms — names of cities.

urban names — names of inner-city items.

godonyms — street names.

agoronyms — names of squares.

dromonyms — names of transport routes.

hydronyms — geographical names of water bodies, including:

pelagonyms — names of seas.

limnonyms — names of lakes.

potamonyms — names of rivers.

gelonyms — names of swamps and wetlands.

oronyms — names of elevated landforms (mountains, ridges, peaks, and hills).

oikononyms — names of localities.

microtoponyms — names of small objects (lands, tracts, hayfields, pastures, swamps, woodlands, harees, pastures, wells, springs, pools, rapids, etc., usually known only to a limited circle of people living in a particular area).

geonyms — names of roads, driveways, etc.

<sup>1</sup> Барандеев, А. В. История географических названий. Русская топонимия в терминах / А.В. Барандеев. - М.: Либроком, 2014. - 320 с.

In toponyms (especially hydronyms), archaisms and dialectisms persist, they often go back to the substratum languages of peoples who lived on this territory in the past, which allows them to be used to determine the boundaries of the settlement of ethnic communities (for example, Slavs in Europe or Turkic peoples and ethnic groups in Ukraine).

Practical transcription of toponyms, which establishes their original and uniform spelling and transmission in other languages, is important for mapping. Among the stylistically differentiated variants of toponyms, the most numerous are colloquial toponyms, poetical toponyms, and toponymic periphrases<sup>2</sup>.

Toponymy is the most important element not only of local lore, but also of linguistic work. It is a means of stimulating interest in the study of the past and present by searching for cognitive material, as well as links between geographical conditions of the area and their reflection in geographical names<sup>3</sup>. Toponyms as a result of social cognition arise in the process of mastering objects of the geographical environment with an ethno-linguistic composition of the population. They are formed from a variety of pre-technical names, including common words.

The names of geographical features were words that denoted the physical and geographical features of the landscape or a specific point in a particular area. This kind of characterological name acquired the status of a proper name. At the same time, there are many cases when a toponym reflects a property of the named place.

The famous researcher A. I. Popov wrote: "Many facts of toponymy receive a proper explanation only with the involvement of very significant and diverse material - linguistic, historical and geographical"[23,p.20]. A.I. Поповым. The borderline position of toponymy at the intersection of geography, linguistics and history, noted by A. I. Popov, determines great opportunities for the implementation of the widest intersubject connections in the process of using toponymic material. Intersubject connections are a necessary condition for successful learning. Knowledge of related subjects expands the boundaries of students' abilities to find the way to learning new things faster and more accurately.

The importance of toponymic science, which studies one of the important subsystems of the lexical and semantic system of the Russian language, is great. Its significance is quite obvious even when the subject of research is regional non-Russian names, such as Dagestan<sup>4</sup>.

At school and in higher educational institutions, it is advisable, useful and interesting to use toponymic material in Russian language classes, instilling patriotic feelings in our students. The study of toponymic names is of interest to linguists, historians, ethnographers, and archaeologists.

When studying the history of a language, toponyms can contain words that have now disappeared from the language. The toponym motivation is lost, and it is difficult to interpret it. In the Old Russian language there was a word khamovnik – "weaver". While it was in general use, the name of the Khamovniki settlement in Moscow did not require explanation. It is clear that the name is associated with the khamovnik weavers who lived there. The common name khamovnik has fallen out of use, and the name of the settlement has become incomprehensible.

In the XVII century, the word basman was known in Russian басман – "bread for palace and state needs". It explained the name of the Moscow Basmannaya Sloboda: Basmanniki lived in it – "bread makers, palace bakers". The common names basman, basmannik, and basmanny disappeared from

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<sup>2</sup> Дегтярев, В. Н. БЕЕЛ ЛА РУСЬ. Тайны древних топонимов / В.Н. Дегтярев, С.А. Трахименок. - М.: Белые альвы, 2013. - 304 с.

<sup>3</sup> <https://scienceforum.ru/2015/article/2015016184#>.

<sup>4</sup> Джаксон, Т. Н. Austr i gordum. Древнерусские топонимы в древнескандинавских источниках / Т.Н. Джаксон. - М.: Языки славянской культуры, 2001. - 208 с.

the Russian language басманный– they lost their motivation and became an incomprehensible toponym.

The names of the localities Butyrki and Vorypaevo cannot be explained using words of the modern Russian language. In the old Russian language, butyrki were houses that stood separately, apart from others. The name Vorypaevo comes from the name Vorypay, which comes from the word vorop "robbery", "robbery"<sup>5</sup>.

Toponymic names may contain meanings of words that are not preserved in the modern dictionary. The name of the village Pyatnitskoe sel'tso may seem like a diminutive form of the word selo. But selets was the name of a village that was not a parish center.

For a historian, toponymy is interesting as a source of the history of settlement of this region and the reasons for the emergence and change of toponymic names. Ethnographers and archaeologists are interested in toponymy because toponyms reflect the national consciousness, aspects of the spiritual and material life of a person. Toponyms, folklore, rituals, and folk beliefs reveal the uniqueness of the people and their mentality.

In the course of historical events, one layer of toponymy is replaced by another. Here, it is very important to determine to what extent the language of the previous toponymy differs from the language whose toponymy is being assimilated. When a toponym is assimilated by the borrowing language, it adapts to the new language environment. The ethnos and culture disappear, the civilization changes, and the toponym, or rather, its phonetic appearance, changing, remains<sup>6</sup>.

Methods for studying toponymic names are diverse, but they are based on general principles. The researcher should take into account all possible cases of toponymic names changing, be able to etymologize, identify cases of phonetic and grammatical adaptation, changes in names as a result of folk etymology, take into account the emergence of new phonetic laws in languages and their dialects, use various maps, chronicles, scribal books, archival documents, folklore material as sources, and know the typology of toponyms formation in specific languages.

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<sup>5</sup> Джаксон, Т.Н. Austr i gordum. Древнерусские топонимы в древнескандинавских источниках / Т.Н. Джаксон. - М.: Языки славянских культур, 2001. - 232 с.

<sup>6</sup> Рассел, Джесси Переименование тюркских топонимов в Армении / Джесси Рассел. - М.: VSD, 2012. - 208 с.