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# WORD FORMATION ANALYSIS IN DENDRONYMS: A CASE STUDY OF THE GERMAN AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

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**Abstract**

This article is dedicated to the morphological, semantic, and toponymic analysis of dendronym formation in Uzbek and German languages. Dendronyms — place names derived from tree or plant names — reflect national linguistic mentality and cultural identity. The paper outlines the affixal, compositional, and semantic derivation methods using concrete examples, and provides a comparative overview of both language structures.

**Keywords**

dendronym, toponymy, Uzbek language, German language, word formation, affixation, semantics.

In our society, language is a product of human thought, reflecting the history, culture, and traditions of a community. From this perspective, place names—toponyms—serve as linguistic units that preserve the ecological knowledge, historical experience, and cultural values of a people. Among toponymic names, dendronyms occupy an important place; they are formed on the basis of plant names, especially trees, and are associated with the presence of particular flora species in a given area or with their historical and cultural significance.

Through dendronyms, it is possible to study the internal word-formation potential of a language, its semantic approaches, and people's attitudes toward nature as reflected in their linguistic worldview. This article comparatively analyzes the morphological formation of dendronyms in the German and Uzbek languages, the methods of their word formation, and their semantic content. Furthermore, based on the similarities and differences identified, the specific features of toponymic thinking in both languages are revealed.

**The term *dendronym*** is derived from the Greek words *dendron* – "tree" and *onyma* – "name", meaning "names of trees." In linguistics, dendronyms are considered a type of toponymic name and refer to place names formed on the basis of plant names, especially trees. Examples include **Olmalik, Archazor, Terakli** in Uzbek, and **Eichenwald, Birkenallee, Apfelbaumgarten** in German.

Dendronyms not only indicate the presence of a particular plant species, but also reflect:

- the historical and geographical conditions of a region,
- the activities of the local population,
- and the ecological environment.

In linguistics, dendronyms are mainly studied according to two major criteria:

1. **Morphological criterion** – how the word is formed: whether through affixation, compounding, or semantic formation.
2. **Semantic-normative criterion** – on what basis the name is given: whether it refers to a real existing tree, a mythical or symbolic element, or a figurative designation.

Although each language has its own morphological capabilities, dendronyms generally follow similar patterns of word formation. This creates an important scientific basis for comparative linguistics. In this article, we focus particularly on the formation of dendronyms in the Uzbek language, their types, and their analysis.

In the Uzbek language, the formation of dendronyms is carried out through several main methods of morphological word formation. The most common of them are the following:

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**Affixational formation.** Affixational dendronyms (formed by means of suffixes) are widely used in Uzbek. In this method, suffixes indicating place, area, or the presence of certain flora are added to the name of a tree:

- **-zor** suffix: *archazor* (juniper grove), *terakzor* (poplar grove), *olmazor* (apple orchard)
- **-lik / -liq** suffixes: *qayrag'ochlik* (elm grove), *terakli* (place with poplars), *yong'oqliq* (walnut area)
- **-li / -lilik** forms: *archali* (with junipers), *olmalik* (place with apples), *anjirli* (place with figs)

Through these suffixes, place names are derived from plant names, indicating the presence or abundance of particular plants in a given area.

**Compositional formation.** In this method of word formation, two or more lexical units combine to form a new dendronymic unit. For example:

- *olma* + *gilos* + *zor* → **olma-giloszor** (a place where apple and cherry trees grow together)
- *terak* + *archa* → **terakarcha**

Such compounds usually denote places where several types of trees grow within the same area. They often consist of two segments, where the first component refers to the plant, and the second carries a locative semantic meaning.

**Semantic formation**

Some names are not formed directly from plant names but arise through a semantic (meaning-based) approach. For example:

- **Olmalik** – a place where many apple trees grow (the suffix *-lik* strengthens the semantic meaning)
- **Archali** – a place where juniper trees are present
- **Yong'oqsoy** – a stream valley where walnut trees grow

These types of dendronyms often become officially recognized place names through toponymy and indicate either the current presence of certain flora or their historical existence in that location.

**Historical and dialectal forms.** Some Uzbek dendronyms also reflect historical or dialectal phonetic features. For example:

- **Zaranglik** (*zarang* – an old name for the plane tree)
- **Saqichli** (*saqich* – a specific type of tree, referred to in some dialects as "wild pistachio")

Such forms have been preserved in local dialectal layers and reveal the historical morphological potential of the Uzbek language. Similarly, we can analyze the formation of dendronyms in the German language and examine their types, structure, and patterns of formation.

In German, dendronyms are mainly formed through **compositional (compounding)** and **affixational** methods. In addition, the morphological layers involved in word formation are preserved both in pronunciation and spelling, giving these names specific structural and semantic characteristics.

**3. Compositional Formation (*Zusammensetzung*)**

In German, many dendronyms consist of two or more words that combine to form a new place name. For example:

- **Eichenwald** – *Eiche* (oak) + *Wald* (forest) → "oak forest"
- **Birkenallee** – *Birke* (birch) + *Allee* (tree-lined avenue)
- **Apfelbaumgarten** – *Apfelbaum* (apple tree) + *Garten* (garden)

Compound formations are very common in German and often indicate the specific flora characteristic of a particular place.

**3.2. Affixational Formation.** Affixational formation in German is not as widely used as in Uzbek; however, in some cases morphological elements are combined with plant names to form toponyms. Common components include -ach, -au, -dorf, -tal, which attach to plant names to create place names:

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- **Lindenau** – *Linde* (linden tree) + *-au* (valley, lowland)
- **Buchenbach** – *Buche* (beech tree) + *-bach* (stream)
- **Tannheim** – *Tanne* (fir tree) + *-heim* (settlement or dwelling place)

These elements function as productive morphological components that help form dendronymic toponyms in the German language.

These forms have been preserved in historical and cultural sources and are still actively used in modern German geography.

**Semantic-based formation.** Some dendronyms are formed on the basis of the symbolic or metonymic representation of existing tree species. For example:

- **Lindenberg** – a hill where linden trees grow
- **Eichstätt** – an ancient place name associated with oak trees
- **Tannenberg** – a hill covered with fir trees

These names are not only related to local flora but also have historical and folkloric contexts and occupy an important place in the cultural memory of the local population.

**Historical and dialectal forms.** Some German dendronyms preserve archaic or dialectal forms within their structure:

- **Aichach** – from *Eiche* (oak) in its old form + *ach* (river)
- **Birkfeld** – *Birke* (birch) + *Feld* (field)

Such forms are characteristic of specific local linguistic environments and are important for studying historical morphology.

**Conclusion.** In conclusion, dendronyms represent a distinct yet highly significant category of place names. They are not only formed on the basis of plant names, especially trees, but also reflect local culture, history, ecological conditions, and people's attitudes toward nature. Through the comparative analysis of dendronyms in Uzbek and German, it becomes possible to observe both similarities and differences in the linguistic worldview and cognitive patterns of the two peoples.

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