

Study on the "Bird" as a Core Word in Yusuf Khas Hajib's *Qutadǵu Bilig*

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ABSTRACT

The core words play very important role in the study of the vocabulary of a language. This article discusses for the first time the word 'bird' in *Qutadǵu Bilig* (Wisdom of Royal Glory) from the perspective of the core word. An exhaustive search of relevant classic literature and inscriptions was conducted with semantic field theory, and a detailed co-temporal description of the members of the same concept presented. At the same time, the current use of these words is also discussed in the paper.

Keywords: *Qutadǵu Bilig*, Core word, Bird, Semantic field.

1. INTRODUCTION

Generally speaking, the core words are the basic words in the basic vocabulary, which are included in all languages. Despite studies have been done about core words in many languages, but the core words in Uyghur language have not been studied yet. [1] In fact, there are a lot of core words in China's masterpiece *Qutadǵu Bilig*. This cultural heritage provide us first hand materials for explore core words in Uyghur and some other related languages.

The core vocabulary in academic circles was proposed by the American scholar Morris Swadesh

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in 1952. His "100-item basic Vocabulary list" is still an internationally accepted form with universal applicability in most languages.

In order to clarify the changes in form and meaning of core words in *Qutadǵu Bilig*, we also would explore some other classic literature and resources. These resources are including materials, such as "Dictionary of Turkic" (DLT), "Legend of Ughus Khan" (Oǵ), Irik-Bitik (the Book of Omens)" (IB), and "An Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Thirteenth-Century Turkish" (ED). Among these resources, except the last one, all are belong to medieval classical materials, which are very helpful to this research.

2. THE CORE WORD "BIRD" AND ITS SEMANTIC FIELD

"Bird" ranks 20th in Swadesh's "100-item basic vocabulary list" and is one of the most core words in any language. In *Qutadǵu Bilig*, "quš" is the general word for express the concept of all types of "bird". However, there are many specific words in *Qutadǵu Bilig*, which are belong to the "quš" family. The member words in *Qutadǵu Bilig* that related to the "quš" semantic fields are as shown in "Table 1":

Table 1. The member words in *Qutadğu Bilig* that related to the "quš" semantic field.

Bird (quš)										
General	Specific names									
quš	todlič	toy	turna	čumğuq	sağızğan	sandwač	suñqur	sükič	siğurčuq	
	semürgük	kökiš	keklik	lačin	yüg	qaq	quğu	qil	üki	quzğun

quš: General name of all kinds of "bird".

This word appears in 23 places in the *Qutadğu Bilig*.

Do not be enamoured of life, it is like a dream

Don't boast of good fortune, for it goes like a bird's shadow^[2]

In the literature, this word is used in conjunction with the word for a particular bird. For example: white eagle, snow cock, eagle and so on.

The word appears in other relevant literature as follows:

A bird depends on its wings and a man on a horse (DLT, vol.1).^{[3]39}

"...Countless birds and animals"(Oğ, Line 20 line 20).^{[4]29}

"kuš—"bird" is often used as a sort of appendage to specific names of birds (ED).^{[5]670}

In the literature survey, it is found that the earliest written record of the word is found in the "Irik-Bitik" written in the 9th-10th century: "...baby birds fly away"(IR).^{[6]290}

This word is still used in modern Uyghur with the same sound and meaning.

Specific names:

todlič: this word means "swan". The word appears only once in the literature.

Whether white swan, yellow swan, wild goose, and water duck

Or great bustard (Otis tarda), quail, swan and Chinese copper pheasant (5377)

This word appears together with the names of other 8 species of birds in *Qutadğu Bilig*, which may be related to 'to:d, great bustard (*Otis tarda*)'. The word connecting suffix '-lič' is not found in other literature.

Toy: in the literature, this word is a polysemy, which means "people, masses", "an herb",

"banquet", "camp" and a bird name. This word only once referred to a bird name in the literature.

When the word means "bird name", it appears in the relevant literature as follows:

"toy - great bustard" (DLT, vol.3).^{[3]136}

This meaning of the word has not been found in other relevant literature except in the above two literature.

Turna: this word means wild goose.

Blue wild goose are singing in the blue sky

It's like a camel caravan, staggering and marching (74)

The word appears twice in *Qutadğu Bilig*.

The word appears in relevant literature as follows:

"turna - 'crane, *Grus japonensis*" (DLT, vol. 3)^{[3]234}

"turne – means 'crane, wild goose', usually written as 'turne', sometimes as 'tirna and torna'(ED).^{[5]551}

This word is not found in other relevant literature except in the above literature. In Uyghur, the word is preserved to this day with the same phonetic meaning.

Čumğuq: it means "starling". There is only one example of this word in *Qutadğu Bilig*.

The black starling opens its long mouth

The sound is like the voice of a young girl (77)

The word appears in the relevant literature as follows:

"čomğuq - red footed crow: a bird similar to a crow(DLT, vol.1).^{[3]496}

"čomğuk – white footed crow"(ED).^{[5]423}

The word has different phonetic forms in relevant literatures: 'čumğuq, čomğuq, čomğuk', but the phonetic forms or meanings are similar.

sağizğan: it means "magpie (*Pica pica*)". This word is appeared once in *Qutadğu Bilig*.

Be as sharp as a mountain eagle

Be as flexible and alert as a magpie (2313)

This word appears in the relevant literature as follows:

"sağizğan - magpie"(DLT, vol.1).^{[3]541}

"sağizğan – magpie, the name of the ancient animal that ended with the suffix '-ğan'"(ED).^{[5]818}

This word is still used in modern Uyghur in the phonetic form 'siğizxan', with the same meaning and a slight change in phonetic form, i.e. '-a' in the first syllable becomes '-i' and '-ğ' in the third syllable becomes '-x'.

sandwač: it means "nightingale". Three examples of this word are found in *Qutadğu Bilig*.

The nightingale is moaning in the flowers

A lover's heart rises and falls as he listens (5972)

This word appears in the relevant literature as follows:

"sanduwa č - nightingale; tatli ğ öter sanduwa č, nightingales sing beautifully"(DLT, vol. 1).^{[3]551}

" sanduwa: č- nightingale" (ED).^{[5]837}

Suñqur: it means "eagle, falcon". This word can be found in two places in *Qutadğu Bilig*.

The hair has become as thin and faded as dry grass

The beard has become the white plume of a falcon (5697)

The word occurs in the relevant literature as follows:

"suñqur - falcon, name of a species of raptor" (DLT, vol. 1).^{[3]372}

The word is not found in other literature.

Sükič: means "bird". This word is found in only one instance in *Qutadğu Bilig*. It does not appear in any other literature.

The morning bird rises and flies up into the sky

Chirping and singing the Psalms (5677)

Siğurčuq: means 'starling'. The word only appears in one place in *Qutadğu Bilig*.

You see the starling and the raven in the air together

The colour of the black is generally the same (4198)

The occurrence in the relevant literature is as follows:

"siğürčiq-partridge" (DLT, vol.1).^{[3]526}

"siğürčuk - a small bird" (ED).^{[5]816}

The word is not be found in other literature.

Semürgük: it means 'small bird, bird-spine dove'. There is only one instance of this word in *Qutadğu Bilig*.

Knowledge is like an ocean, bottomless and boundless

How can a little bird sip from the sea and drink it dry! (6609)

The word occurs in the relevant literature as follows:

"semürgük - lark. A bird resembling a lark" (DLT, vol. 2).^{[3]299}

"simürgük - a bird" (ED).^{[5]830}

The word occurs in two different phonetic forms in the relevant literature, which can be lexically identical, namely '-e' and '-i' in the first syllable.

Kökiš: the name of 'a bird'. This word occurs only once in *Qutadğu Bilig*. It does not appear in any other relevant literature.

The partridges and wild geese are singing in the blue sky

It's like a camel caravan, staggering and marching (74)

Keklik: copper pheasant. Only one example is seen in *Qutadğu Bilig*.

The copper pheasant flies in with a cackling laugh

Look at its dark eyebrows, and its peck as red as blood (76)

The occurrence in the relevant literature is as follows:

"keklik - Chukar Partridge" (DLT, vol.1).^{[3]505}
"keklik-partridge, capercaillie" (ED).^{[5]710}

This word has survived to this day in modern Uyghur with the same phonetic and meaning.

Lačin: it means eagle. Only one example is found in *Qutadğu Bilig*.

The hero gallops his horse and leads his troops forward

Capturing the enemy like an eagle capturing a small bird (2381)

In the relevant literature, it occurs as follows: "lač'in - falcon. It is a raptor" (DLT, vol.1).^{[3]432} "la:čin - shikra, falcon" (ED).^{[5]763}

This word still in use in modern Uyghur with the same phonetic meaning.

yügdik: name of a bird. This word occurs only once in *Qutadğu Bilig*. It does not appear in any other relevant literature.

Neither the white swan, the yellow swan, wild geese, the waterbuck

And also the great bustard, quail, swan, and Chinese copper pheasant (5377)

Qaq: the name of a bird. Two cases were found in the literature. It is not clear which kind of bird is named.

This meaning of the word has not been found in other relevant literature.

Quğu: it means white swan. 8 examples are found in *Qutadğu Bilig*.

If your hair turns as white as white swan

The mind must also become as clean as a white swan (1101)

It appears in the relevant literature:

"quğu - swan"(DLT, vol.3).^{[3]220}

kuğu - goose, duck (ED).^{[5]609}

This word is not found in other relevant literature.

Qil: it means sand grouse. There is only one example of this word in *Qutadğu Bilig*.

White swans and sand grouses are dissatisfied with the sky

Quack, bustling up and down (72)

Qil means Swans, wild ducks. Except for one exception in *Qutadğu Bilig*, this meaning of the word has not been found in other relevant literature.

üki: it means owl. Only one case seen in the literature.

Be as majestic and ferocious as a lion

Stay awake all night like an owl (2314)

In other relevant literature, it appears as follows: "ühi - 'owl', most people say 'üki'" (DLT, vol.3).^{[3]233}

This word is not be found in other literature.

Quzğun: it means crow. Three cases of this word are found in *Qutadğu Bilig*.

My hair was like the wings of a crow

Now it is like a white swan falling on the head (5643)

In other relevant literature, it appears as follows:

"quzğunüğ iğaçqa bamis"(they tied the crow to a tree) (IR).^{[6]289}

"kuzğun-'big crow,' usually used to denote a larger blackbird" (ED).^{[5]682}

The word has survived in modern Uyghur with the same phonetic meaning to this day.

3. CONCLUSION

Qutadğu Bilig contains a large number of words related to 'bird', including a generic term for birds, a specific term for a particular category and a lot of proper names. Some of these words are still in use in modern Uyghur, such as 'turna, keklik, lačin, quzğun'. There are also some words with slightly changed phonetic forms, such as 'sağizğan, sükič'. During the investigation, it was found that many of the words in *Qutadğu Bilig* relating to birds cannot be traced in modern Uyghur or have been abandoned. "quš" is the superlative and basic word of this semantic field.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Aibibula Tuersun wrote the manuscript; Sufeinuer Saifuding was responsible for material collection; Riziwanguli Kahaer contributed to revising and editing.

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