



LINGUISTIC VIEWS OF MAHMUD AL-KASHGARI

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Annotation: *This article discusses Mahmud al-Kashgari, a great scholar and thinker of the 11th century who profoundly studied the language and culture of Turkic peoples and introduced them to the world. It examines his view that language is the spirit of a nation and his creation of a scientific work to demonstrate the richness of Turkic languages.*

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Mahmud al-Kashgari was a philologist, ethnographer and one of the founders of Turkology. By origin, he belonged to the Karakhanid dynasty. In 1072 he completed his world-famous work *Devonu Lug'otit Turk* (Compendium of Turkic Words) and dedicated it to the Abbasid caliph Abu'l-Qasim Abdullah ibn Muhammad al-Muqtadi. This work is the first universal dictionary in the history of Turkic peoples containing dialectological, explanatory, ethnographic and etymological elements. It introduced its author to the world as a distinguished writer, historian, geographer and encyclopedic scholar. In this book, al-Kashgari explains the meanings of words from various Turkic tribes in Arabic. Mahmud al-Kashgari traveled among different Turkic tribes to reveal the actual lexical potential of the Turkic language. He sought to identify both their common and unique linguistic features. He writes: "I traveled for many years through the villages and cities of the Turks, Turkmens, Oghuz, Chigil, Yagma and Kyrgyz. I collected vocabularies and studied the characteristics of different words. I did this not because I did not know the language, but to identify even the smallest differences." He demonstrated similarities and differences among Turkic tribes with strong evidence, opening a new chapter in linguistics. Al-Kashgari also presented valuable ideas on word formation, which is now considered a separate branch of linguistics. Affixation is the most productive method of word formation in Turkic languages, and he focused mainly on building words through affixes. He divides words into two types: root and derived. For example, he notes that nouns such as "tree" and "house" are root nouns that do not originate from other words, while derived nouns come from other roots. Some of these are widely used while others are less clear and based on comparison. He also provides information consistent with the three-component structure of word formation used in modern linguistics.

Mahmud al-Kashgari identified three parts of speech in Turkic languages based on Arabic linguistics: nouns (ism), verbs and particles (harf). He analyzed verbs in depth, explaining their tense, voice and person categories. He described different phonetic variants.



of affixes and the morphological reasons for their formation. His work also covers core topics of lexicology such as semantic shift, narrowing and broadening of meaning, antonyms, homonyms and synonyms. He explains such words separately. For example: *tut* (mulberry tree) and *tut* (to hold). Al-Kashgari reached great heights in lexicography. In the 11th century he compiled an explanatory dictionary of Turkic words. He critically examined the lexicographical principles of Arabic scholars such as Khalil al-Farahidi's *Kitab al-Ayn* and Sibawayh's *Al-Kitab*, and chose his own method. Unlike other lexicons, he included only words that were in actual use. His lexicographical approach continues to attract scholars worldwide. According to Solih Mutallibov, al-Kashgari's alphabetical ordering system played a crucial role in preserving word forms through centuries. Even if the manuscript is damaged, the system helps identify the beginning, middle and end of words. The manuscript of *Devonu Lug'otit Turk* was discovered in 1914 in Diyarbakir, Turkey. This rare 319-page manuscript is now preserved in Istanbul. It contains linguistic information about tribes and clans, more than 250 proverbs and sayings, and numerous poetic passages. According to sources, al-Kashgari also wrote an earlier work titled *Jawahirun Nahwi fi Lug'otit Turk* (Rules of Syntax of Turkic Languages), though it has not been found. He also identified differences among the languages of Turkic tribes and proved that they originated from a single root.

In short, Mahmud al-Kashgari scientifically demonstrated the prestige and beauty of the Turkic language in his era. His views are a valuable source not only for linguistics but also for culture, history and literature. His linguistic legacy remains significant today and continues to serve as an important resource in the study of Turkic languages. *Devonu Lug'otit Turk* serves as a foundation for comparative-historical linguistics and plays a major role in identifying the developmental stages and etymologies of Turkic words.

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