

CENTRAL ASIAN JOURNAL OF LITERATURE, PHILOSOPHY, AND CULTURE

https://cajlpc.casjournal.org/index.php/CAJLPC

Volume: 07 Issue: 02 | April 2026 ISSN: 2660-6828

Article

On The Formation of Words Containing The Component "Flower" in The Epic "Saba'i Sayyor"

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Abstract: This article analyzes lexical units containing the component "gul" (flower) in Alisher Navoi's epic *Saba'i Sayyor* from historical and etymological perspectives and identifies the structural and semantic features of compound words. Particular attention is given to lexical units derived from the "gul" component through affixation and composition, as well as their meanings and functions in the literary text. The study discusses how these lexical formations reflect the richness and expressive potential of the lexical system of the Old Uzbek literary language. The analysis demonstrates that the "gul" component is used not only to denote a flower as a natural object but also to express aesthetic, symbolic, emotional, and metaphorical meanings depending on the textual context. Furthermore, the discussion shows that words formed from this component contribute to the development of semantic associations and enrich the expressive resources of the language. The lexical units identified in *Saba'i Sayyor* also demonstrate the interaction between historical vocabulary and productive word-formation patterns. The findings indicate that the use of "gul"-based lexical formations reflects Navoi's mastery of lexical selection and his ability to create diverse semantic and stylistic effects. Thus, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of the historical development of Uzbek vocabulary, the etymological characteristics of word formation, and the linguistic richness of Alisher Navoi's literary heritage.

Keywords: composition method, abbreviation, gul, gulšan, gulbán, gulqand, gulandám, gulzár, affix.

Citation: Satimboyevna, X. Z. On The Formation of Words Containing The Component "Flower" in The Epic "Saba'i Sayyor". Central Asian Journal of Literature, Philosophy, and Culture 2026, 7(2), 556-561

Received: 10th Dec 2025
Revised: 21th Jan 2025
Accepted: 14th Feb 2026
Published: 26th Mar 2026

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1. Introduction

Human life has been intrinsically connected with the plant world since ancient times. In order to survive and sustain their livelihoods, people have used various plants growing in their surroundings—including sprouts, branches, leaves, fruits, seeds, and roots—as sources of food. In the course of their daily lives, they encountered various phenomena and gradually learned about the different properties of plants, such as their bitterness or sweetness, sourness or sweetness, beneficial or poisonous characteristics, and other qualities [1]. Plant names constitute a distinct lexical-thematic layer in the language of every nation. This layer also reflects the diversity of the flora corresponding to the historical-geographical environment and climatic conditions of the territory inhabited by a particular people [2].

Plant names constitute a distinct lexical-thematic layer in every language. They also reflect the diversity of the flora characteristic of the historical-geographical region and climatic conditions in which a particular people have historically lived [3]. A number of scholarly studies have been conducted on phytonyms. In particular, A. K. Borovkov, Yu. Eshonqulov, and B. Bafoyev investigated the historical and etymological characteristics of the names of certain trees and fruits [4], while S. Sahobiddinov, Q. Zokirov, and H.

Jamolxonov studied the names of trees and fruits from botanical and lexicographical perspectives [5]. According to G. H. Ne'matova, "The semantic value of plant-name lexemes in the Uzbek language encompasses the principal semes of 'plant,' 'yield,' and 'product,' and in speech, one of these meanings is actualized under the influence of the context and surrounding words" [6]. In her study, N. Pazlitdinova examined plant varieties and species from a linguistic perspective and identified their lexical-semantic characteristics as well as their nominative and motivational bases [7]. M. Sapayev conducted a comparative study of melon and gourd crops in Turkic languages, covering Turkmen, Kazakh, Karakalpak, Uyghur, Kyrgyz, and Uzbek [8].

2. Materials and Methods

It is well known that a morpheme is a semantic-morphological unit that occupies a position after the sound in the system of linguistic expression and represents the smallest meaningful component of a word [9]. Unlike inflectional languages, the root in the Uzbek language is capable of expressing an independent lexical meaning. The other components of a word, apart from the root, cannot be used independently and do not possess an independent meaning [10]. Word formation arises as a result of both internal and external factors operating within a language. A. Hojiyev identifies the principal methods of word formation as follows: (1) semantic derivation; (2) phonetic derivation; (3) syntactic-lexical formation; (4) affixation; (5) composition; and (6) abbreviation [11]. The concepts of word formation, derived words, and the nature of their constituent elements are of considerable importance in determining the essence of the processes underlying the formation of linguistic units, particularly derived words, within the word-formation system [12]. The principal mechanisms of lexical development are borrowing words from other languages and creating new words through word formation [13].

3. Results

It is well known that borrowed words and word formation play a leading role in the enrichment and development of a language. In the epic poem *Sab'ai Sayyor*, there are numerous lexemes derived from the root *gul*. These include *gulšan, gulbán, gulqand, gulandám, gulzár, gulbárg, gulistán, gulnár, gulnári, gulfám, guláb, gulábpáš, gulpáš, gulrang, gulrux, gulruxsár, gulroy, gulfišánliγ, gulfám, gulxan, gulčehra, gulgün, gulrez*, and others.

In Old Uzbek literary language, the phytonym *gul*, denoting the sememe "the reproductive part of angiosperms consisting of the flower stalk, sepals, petals, stamens, and pistil" (O'TIL, I, pp. 516–517), is recorded in the *Persian-Russian Dictionary* in the form *gol*, meaning "flower" (p. 425), and in the *Tajik-Russian Dictionary* as *gul*, meaning "flower" (p. 106). The *ANATIL* dictionary records the following meanings of *gul*: (1) "flower"; (2) beautiful person, beloved, sweetheart, mistress, lover; (3) emergence, appearance, manifestation; (4) the opening of a bud, a blossoming flower; (5) produce, fruit; (6) the name of a village in the Herat region; (7) the period of youth, reaching maturity, adulthood; (8) any good things, beauties, and wonders; (9) fire, flame, the fire of love, a state of intense passion, setting something on fire; (10) blood; (11) bloody tears; and (12) child (pp. 409–412).

In the poet's epic *Sab'ai Sayyor*, the phytonym *gul* is used not only in its primary meanings but also in figurative and metaphorical senses. In the text of the work, the phytonym *gul* occurs in 58 instances with the following meanings [14]:

1) flower:
Báγ ačilmaq alar mururidin,
Gul sačilmaq alar yürürïdïn (276).
2) beautiful one, beloved, sweetheart, beloved woman, lover:
Ravšan aylab zulálďïn közgü,
Tutïï **gul** čehrasin aŋa otru (279).
3) the period of youth, reaching puberty, and the period of maturity:
Noš etärdä bu ráhi rayhániy,
Yüz **gul** ačïb yüzüŋ gulistánï (325).

The formation of lexemes containing *gul* actively involves the processes of compounding and metaphorical transfer, which demonstrates the figurative richness of the language of the epic and the author's high level of literary skill. Based on the artistic device of simile (*tashbeh*), the poet compares the hero's body to a *gul*:

Bargi **guldek** tanin tapïb yalanγač,
Ikki zálim urarlar erdi yïγač (504).

Navoi's mastery of word formation can also be observed in the words *gulzár* and *gulistán*.

The borrowing *gulzár*, meaning "a field covered with flowers, land planted with flowers, a flower garden, a rose garden" (O'TIL, I, 519), was used in Old Uzbek literary language in the following senses: (1) flower garden, meadow, rose garden; (2) a beautiful face, beauty (ANATIL, I, 415). Both meanings occur in the text of the epic [15]:

1) Flower garden, meadow, rose garden:
Ayla **gulzári** gullarin táza,
Bulbulïn qïl baland áváza (299).
2) Beauty of the face, facial beauty:
Yüzi **gulzár-u** iki lab anda,
Ikki gulbargi bul'ajab anda (354).

The Persian word *gulistán*, carrying the sememe "a flourishing, prosperous land; a region containing gardens and orchards" (O'TIL, I, 521), is formed by adding the suffix *-iston* to the noun *gul*, thereby expressing the meaning "a place of flowers" (O'TEL, III, 67). In the language of Navoi's works, it is used in the following senses: (1) flower garden, rose garden, garden, meadow; (2) benevolence, generosity, munificence; (3) a beautiful and pleasant place of recreation; (4) cheek, fortune; and (5) the famous work of Sa'di Shirazi (ANATIL, I, 415–416). In the text of the epic, it occurs in nine instances with the seme "flower garden, rose garden, garden, meadow" [16]:

Yüzigä bas tapánča urγánïdïn,
Nilufarlar ačïb **gulistánïdïn** (537).

A considerable number of lexemes containing *gul*, formed through the compounding process and borrowed as ready-made formations from Persian-Tajik, are actively used in Alisher Navoi's works. These include *gulbarg, gulqand, gulrang, gulčehra,* and *gulruxsár*.

Word formation through compounding refers to the formation of a new word by combining two words. According to A. Hojiyev, compound words should not be understood simply as two or more syntactically connected words; rather, they constitute a single word formed from more than one base. Regardless of the method by which compound words are formed or the parts of speech to which their components belong, they are regarded as derived words.

Gulbarg is a compound word consisting of two components and formed according to the *gul + barg* pattern. From an etymological perspective, this lexeme consists of the Persian noun *gul* and the noun *barg*, meaning "leaf" (TjRS, 46), and denotes "the small leaves surrounding the corolla of a flower" (O'TIL, I, 196; O'TEL, III, 66). In the *Sab'ai Sayyor*, the work examined in this study, the phytonym *gulbarg* occurs only once, with the semantic components "flower leaf" and "flower":

Yüzi gulzár-u iki lab anda,
Ikki **gulbargi** bul'ajab anda (354).

Our observations indicate that the lexeme *gulbarg* is also used in Navoi's other works, particularly *Lison ut-tayr* and *Farhod va Shirin*, with the meanings "flower leaf, flower," "beautiful appearance, beauty, handsome face," and "beloved, sweetheart" (ANATIL, I, 413):

1) Flower leaf, flower:
Čünki **gulbarg** üzrä sačïldi guláb,
Nargis ačïldiki erdi masti xáb (L.M, 91-16).
2) Beautiful appearance, beauty, handsome face:
Engim **gulbarg**idin bolγanda mahzun,
Yüziŋ gulgul qïlurmu aški gulgun? (F.Sh, 123)
3) Beloved, sweetheart:

Dedim kim sizga dey avval xabarnï,
Qïlay xandán burun gulbargi tarni (F.Sh,170).

In this verse, the author skillfully employs one of the types of figurative expression, namely metaphor. He metaphorically compares the beloved's lips to "the petals of a flower."

The borrowing *gulrū(y)* expresses the meanings "flower-faced; beautiful, lovely" in Old Uzbek literary language (ANATIL, I, 418). This lexeme is formed from the Tajik noun *gul* and the noun *ro'*, meaning "face, countenance" (TjRS, 329), and consequently conveys the meaning "flower-faced, beautiful-faced" (O'TEL, III, 68). This borrowing occurs 25 times in the text of the epic:

Atasïn ham bilür edi **gulrūy**,
Kim, erür dev fe'l-u vájun xoy (507).

Furthermore, in the text of the work, the borrowing *gulrū(y)* forms a synonymic series with the words *gulrux, gulruxsár,* and *gulxad*:

Aŋa tegrüki mehri **gulruxsár,**
Yüzigä yaptï pardai kohsár (482).

In this couplet, the author depicts the king drinking wine with his beloved until the sun, described as *gulruxsár*, draws a veil over its face from the summit of the mountain.

Qašïγa qoydi bir-iki **gulxad**,
Sarvi gulruxγa hamdamu hamqad.

According to the couplet, by the king's command, the moon-like maiden Zuhra was brought into the palace located in the garden. To ensure that she would not remain alone, one or two *gulchehra* ("flower-faced") companions were brought before her and placed beside the cypress-like *gulrux* as companions (X, 307).

4. Discussion

The findings demonstrate that lexical units containing the component *gul* in Alisher Navoiy's *Sab'ai Sayyor* represent an important intersection between word formation, semantic development, and literary expressiveness in the Old Uzbek literary language. The analysis shows that *gul* does not function only in its primary lexical meaning of "flower," but also develops a broad range of figurative meanings, including "beloved," "beautiful person," "youth," "beauty," and other metaphorical associations. This semantic expansion confirms that the lexical productivity of *gul* is closely connected with the poetic context in which it occurs. In the epic, the phytonym *gul* appears repeatedly with both denotative and connotative meanings, demonstrating that the same lexical base can participate simultaneously in nominative, aesthetic, and symbolic functions.

The results also indicate that compounding constitutes one of the most productive mechanisms in the formation of *gul*-based lexical units. Forms such as *gulzár*, *gulistán*, *gulbarg*, *gulrū(y)*, *gulrux*, and *gulruxsár* show how the component *gul* combines with other lexical elements to create new semantic units. These formations are not simple juxtapositions of two independent words; rather, they function as integrated lexical units with meanings that may differ substantially from the literal combination of their components. This is particularly evident in such words as *gulzár* and *gulistán*, which can denote not only a flower garden but also beauty, an attractive face, or a pleasant place. Therefore, the data support the view that compounding in the language of *Sab'ai Sayyor* serves both a morphological and a semantic function.

A further important finding is the significant role of Persian-Tajik lexical influence in the formation of *gul*-based compounds. Several analyzed units are either borrowed as ready-made lexical formations or consist of elements originating from Persian-Tajik. For example, *gulbarg* is formed from *gul* and *barg*, while *gulrū(y)* combines *gul* with *rū(y)*, meaning "face." Such examples illustrate the historical interaction between Turkic and Persian-Tajik lexical systems and show that borrowing and native word-formation processes operated together in the enrichment of Old Uzbek literary vocabulary. The continued use and semantic adaptation of these formations in Navoiy's works indicate that borrowed elements were not merely passive additions to the lexicon but became productive components of artistic language.

The semantic behavior of these compounds also reveals the central role of metaphor and simile in Navoiy's poetic style. Lexical units containing *gul* frequently move beyond botanical reference and become descriptors of human appearance, emotional states, and idealized beauty. For instance, *gulbarg* may metaphorically denote the lips or beautiful appearance, while *gulrū(y)* and related forms such as *gulrux*, *gulruxsár*, and *gulxad* form a synonymic series referring to a beautiful or "flower-faced" person. These semantic extensions demonstrate that word formation in the epic is closely connected with linguopoetic function: morphological structure provides the basis for lexical creation, while figurative usage enriches the resulting words with additional stylistic and emotional meanings.

Taken together, these findings show that the *gul* component is highly productive both structurally and semantically in *Sab'ai Sayyor*. Its productivity is manifested not only in the number of compounds formed from it, but also in the diversity of meanings and stylistic functions that these compounds acquire in context. The interaction of compounding, borrowing, semantic transfer, metaphor, and synonymy demonstrates the richness of Navoiy's lexical choices and highlights the dynamic nature of Old Uzbek literary word formation. Accordingly, the study of *gul*-based formations provides evidence that lexical development in Navoiy's language cannot be explained through morphology alone, because semantic and poetic factors are equally important in understanding how derived and compound words function in the text.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the lexical units containing *gul* in the epic *Sab'ai Sayyor* are manifested not only within the framework of word formation but are also enriched with linguopoetic, semantic, and stylistic functions. Words containing *gul* acquire distinctive semantic and artistic characteristics in the language and style of the epic. These words function not merely as lexical units, but also as means of creating imagery, developing a system of figurative expressions, and enhancing the expressiveness and imagery of the text.

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