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DIFFERENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PROPER NOUNS IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

This article presents a comparative linguistic analysis of proper nouns in Uzbek and English, focusing on grammatical, morphological, syntactic, semantic, orthographic, and sociolinguistic distinctions. Drawing upon research in onomastics, anthroponymy, and contrastive linguistics, it explores how each language marks and utilizes proper nouns within grammar and discourse. The study reveals that while proper nouns share similar referential functions across both languages, Uzbek demonstrates greater morphological integration, whereas English relies heavily on capitalization and syntactic constraints. These findings contribute to cross-linguistic studies, language pedagogy, and computational linguistics by clarifying how naming systems encode cultural and grammatical differences.

KEYWORDS: *Proper Noun, Onomastics, Anthroponymy, Uzbek, English, Morphology, Capitalization, Contrastive Linguistics*

1. INTRODUCTION

Proper nouns are an essential grammatical and cultural category that link linguistic expression to specific entities in the world. Although the core function of naming is universal—identifying unique referents—languages differ substantially in how they formally and semantically encode proper nouns.

Uzbek, an agglutinative Turkic language, integrates proper nouns into its inflectional system, while English, an analytic Germanic language, distinguishes proper nouns primarily through orthographic and syntactic cues [1; 55]. This study examines these differences systematically, highlighting their implications for translation, education, and computational processing.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The field that studies proper nouns is called *onomastics*. *Onomastics* (from Greek *onomastikē* — the art of naming) is a branch of linguistics that studies all types of proper names in a language. *Onomasiology // Onomatology* (from Greek *onomasia* — naming, designation + *logos* — word, speech; literally "the science of names") is a field of linguistics that investigates the laws and principles of naming various objects[2; 60b].

Uzbek linguistics has developed a strong tradition of anthroponymic and onomastic research. Foundational works analyze the history, structure, and sociocultural roles of Uzbek personal names, toponyms, and ethnonyms. Uzbek naming traditions reflect the influence of Persian, Arabic, and Russian languages, as well as local Turkic derivational patterns. Studies have categorized Uzbek anthroponyms based on origin, morphology, and semantic transparency, emphasizing the cultural symbolism of name components [3; 632].

In Uzbek linguistics, a number of studies have been carried out in the direction of researching the system of proper nouns, or more precisely, their various types. In particular, scholars such as E. Begmatov[4; 176], G‘. Sattorov[5; 21], S. Rahimov[6; 25], I. Khudoynazarov[7; 26], and R. Khudoyberganov[8; 24], D. Yuldashev [9] have made significant contributions to the collection of materials on Uzbek anthroponyms, the comprehensive study of the lexical-semantic features of names, their linguistic structure, ethnographic and motivational meanings, the observation of distinctive aspects of regional Uzbek anthroponymy, as well as the compilation of orthographic and explanatory dictionaries of names. Orthographic and explanatory dictionaries of Uzbek personal names have been created. Nevertheless, issues such as the origin and development of Uzbek anthroponyms, the nominative features of names, the motivational bases of naming, and the role of linguistic and non-linguistic principles have not yet been fully studied in a monographic form, except for a few minor research works.

The study of the linguistic characteristics of proper names divides onomastics, according to its level of investigation, into such branches as literary and dialectal onomastics**,** ordinary (practical) and poetic onomastics (onomopoetics)**,** modern and historical onomastics**,** as well as theoretical and applied onomastics**.**

3. METHODOLOGY

This research is aimed at a comparative linguistic investigation of the system of proper nouns in Uzbek and English. The study employs *descriptive* and *contrastive-comparative* methods as its principal analytical approaches. Through these methods, the grammatical, morphological, syntactic, semantic, orthographic,

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and sociolinguistic characteristics of proper nouns in both languages are systematically compared. The methodological foundation of the study is based on the principles of modern grammar, onomastics, anthroponymy, and contrastive linguistics.

The research process consisted of several main stages:

1. *Theoretical Stage* – At this stage, the concept of the proper noun, its grammatical and semantic functions, and its role in the linguistic system were examined through a review of theoretical literature. Modern studies in onomastics, anthroponymy, toponymy, and paremiology were analyzed to establish the theoretical framework of the study.
2. *Data Collection Stage* – Real examples of the use of proper nouns in Uzbek and English were collected from descriptive grammars, anthroponymic and toponymic dictionaries, and academic publications issued between *2017 and 2024*. Additionally, linguistic corpora such as the *British National Corpus (BNC)* and *the National Corpus of the Uzbek Language* were utilized as data sources.
3. *Descriptive Analysis Stage* – The morphological structure, syntactic roles, orthographic representation, and semantic motivation of proper nouns in both languages were analyzed and described.
4. *Contrastive Analysis Stage* – The structural and functional similarities and differences of proper nouns in Uzbek and English were identified and compared using typological criteria. The analysis focused on aspects such as morphological integration, capitalization rules, definiteness expression, and the degree of semantic transparency.
5. *Generalization Stage* – Based on the collected data and analytical results, the study drew general conclusions about the position of proper nouns within the grammatical and cultural systems of both languages.

The main principle of this methodology is to examine linguistic units within their *contextual, systemic, and cultural frameworks*. Therefore, the study also applied *linguocultural* and *sociolinguistic* approaches to investigate the cultural and social functions of proper nouns.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Orthography and Capitalization

In English, capitalization distinctly marks proper nouns (e.g., London, Oxford, Shakespeare). In contrast, Uzbek orthography, affected by script transitions, shows variable conventions (e.g., Toshkent, Тошкент). While modern Uzbek employs initial capitalization in Latin script, inconsistencies remain in official and informal writing due to historical orthographic variation.

4.2 Morphological Integration

English proper nouns are minimally inflected. The only productive morphological process is the addition of possessive 's (John's car) or plural -s in family names (the Smiths). Conversely, Uzbek, as an agglutinative language, applies full case and possessive suffixation to proper names (Ali → Ali-ga "to Ali," Ali-ning "Ali's"). Uzbek proper nouns participate more fully in morphological paradigms, reflecting grammatical roles directly.

The morphological structure of proper nouns in English and Uzbek reflects the typological differences between the two languages. English, being an analytical language, has a relatively simple morphological system. Its proper nouns are generally monomorphic, meaning they do not undergo inflectional changes for case, gender, or number in most contexts. For example, *London*, *Elizabeth*, and *Oxford* remain unchanged regardless of their grammatical function in a sentence, with syntactic position determining their role. Plural forms of proper nouns are rare and usually limited to family names or collective entities, such as *the Smiths* or *the Browns*. In contrast, Uzbek, an agglutinative language, exhibits rich morphological inflection in its proper nouns. Proper names in Uzbek take various case endings, possessive suffixes, and postpositions to indicate grammatical relations and semantic nuances, such as *Toshkentda* (in Tashkent), *Dilshodning* (of Dilshod), or *O'qituvchiga Nodira sovg'a berdi* (Nodira gave a gift to the teacher). Moreover, Uzbek proper nouns can integrate derivational morphemes that form diminutives or affectionate variants, like *Nodiraxon*, *Oyijon*, or *Rustamcha*, reflecting social and emotional attitudes. Thus, while English proper nouns tend to maintain fixed forms and rely on word order, Uzbek proper nouns demonstrate morphological flexibility and semantic richness through extensive affixation, illustrating a fundamental typological contrast between the two languages

4.3 Syntactic Behavior

English proper names resist determiners except in fixed expressions (the Netherlands, the Sahara). Uzbek, lacking articles, conveys definiteness through word order and demonstratives (mana Ali "here is Ali," shu Ali "this Ali").
Finding: English employs determiner systems, while Uzbek uses morphological and pragmatic devices for referential specification.

4.4 Semantic Transparency

English proper nouns are often arbitrary and non-descriptive, while Uzbek names frequently retain clear lexical meaning derived from Turkic, Arabic, or Persian roots (Gulbahor "spring flower," Rustam "hero"). Uzbek anthroponyms exhibit higher semantic motivation, linking linguistic form to cultural concepts.

4.5 Sociolinguistic Dimensions

Naming conventions in English follow the "given name + family name" model and include titles (Mr., Dr.) and middle names. Uzbek naming, influenced by Islamic and Soviet traditions, often includes patronymics (Aliyev, Karimovna) and honorific suffixes (-jon, -aka, bek). These forms express politeness, kinship, or affection (4;45-b].

Finding: Uzbek proper nouns encode social relationships more overtly than English ones.

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4.6 Phraseology and Idiomatic Uses

Both languages incorporate proper nouns into idioms and proverbs. English uses them to reference historical or mythological figures (Job's patience), while Uzbek employs them in culturally embedded expressions (Alpomishdek bahodir "brave like Alpomish"). Idiomatic incorporation reflects each culture's literary and historical reference systems.

Similarities of Proper Nouns in Proverbs in English and Uzbek

Proverbs in both English and Uzbek languages demonstrate that proper nouns often serve as cultural symbols, historical references, or carriers of moral and social values. In both traditions, proper nouns are used to make proverbs more vivid, concrete, and emotionally resonant. They function as identifiers of well-known people, places, or events that embody universal truths or moral lessons. For instance, English proverbs often include biblical or historical figures such as *Rome*, *Caesar*, or *Job*, while Uzbek proverbs may contain names rooted in local culture and history, such as *Tohir*, *Zuhra*, or *Rustam*. In both languages, proper nouns are not only literal but also metaphorical, symbolizing traits like power, wisdom, loyalty, or foolishness. Additionally, both English and Uzbek proverbs use proper nouns to create a sense of national identity and collective memory, linking linguistic expression with cultural heritage. Therefore, the similarity lies in their shared cognitive and didactic function—using familiar names to express moral, social, or philosophical ideas in a memorable way

Table: Examples of Similarities of Proper Nouns in English and Uzbek Proverbs

Theme	English	Uzbek
Wisdom/Experience	*As wise as Solomon.*	*Donolikda Luqmondek bo‘l.*
Fame/Greatness	*All roads lead to Rome.*	Har kim o‘z yo‘lidan maqsadga yetadi.
Courage/Heroism	*Every Achilles has his heel.*	*Har bir Rustamning o‘z Zuxrasi bor.*
Patience/Faith	*The patience of Job.*	*Ayyub sabrini qil*
Love/Loyality	*Romeo and Juliet were never content.*	*Tohir va Zuhra muhabbati kabi*

5. APPLICATIONS

5.1 Language Pedagogy

Understanding differences in capitalization, morphology, and semantics assists bilingual learners. Uzbek learners of English must master capitalization rules and determiner use, whereas English learners of Uzbek must adapt to morphological suffixation and case usage.

5.2 Translation and Localization

Transliteration between Cyrillic and Latin scripts and the rendering of patronymics are critical in Uzbek–English translation. Misinterpretation of suffixes or honorifics may alter cultural tone.

5.3 Computational Linguistics

In NLP, named-entity recognition (NER) systems must accommodate Uzbek's agglutinative morphology and script variation. English models can rely on capitalization, whereas Uzbek requires morphological parsing and transliteration modules (2; 634-b).

6. CONCLUSION

Proper nouns in Uzbek and English exhibit universal referential functions but diverge structurally and socioculturally. English relies on orthographic conventions and syntactic restrictions, whereas Uzbek integrates proper names morphologically and semantically. These distinctions have practical implications for translation, teaching, and digital text processing. Future research should employ corpus-based methods to quantify morphological productivity and explore bilingual name recognition systems.

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