

LINGUOCULTURAL FEATURES OF TOPONYMS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

A.X. Kurbonov

*Lecturer at the Senior Department
of the Faculty of Philology, DIEP*

M.Ch.Abdusalomova

*Students of DIEP institute, Faculty of
Philology, Department of Foreign
Languages and Literature, 4th course*

Abstract

This article studies the linguocultural features of toponyms in English and Uzbek. The focus is placed on the way place names carry history, social memory, local identity, and emotion. Recent studies on toponymy are used together with short literary extracts from Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and Abdulla Qodiriy's *O'tkan kunlar*. Descriptive, comparative, contextual, and linguocultural methods are applied. The analysis shows that English literary toponyms often mark estate culture, rank, and social space, while Uzbek literary toponyms often reflect craft life, regional identity, and historical tension. It is also shown that a toponym may work as a small cultural text. The article may be useful for students of linguistics, translation, literary studies, and cultural studies.

Keywords: toponym, place name, linguoculture, English, Uzbek, literary text, comparison, translation.

Introduction

Place names look simple, but much meaning is often hidden in them. A toponym may keep an old word, an old belief, a social view, or a local memory. Because of this, toponyms are important not only for geography but also for linguistics, literary study, and cultural study.

English and Uzbek material gives a good field for such work. English names such as Longbourn, Meryton, and Pemberley bring estate life, class, and social distance into the text. Uzbek names such as Marg'ilon, Toshkand, and Qo'qon often bring trade, region, history, and collective feeling into the text. In both languages, a place name may do more than mark a point on a map.

This topic also matters for translation. A place name is sometimes carried into another language without change, but the cultural meaning may still be weakened. A translator may preserve the form and still lose the social or emotional force. Because of this, literary toponyms need slow reading and strong cultural attention.

The aim of the article is to show how English and Uzbek toponyms work as linguocultural units. Special attention is given to cultural meaning, literary context, and value for comparison and translation. The object of the article is the toponymic material used in scholarship and literary texts. The subject of the article is the cultural meaning carried by these names.

Literature review

Carole Hough's handbook presents place-name study as a central part of onomastics and gives a strong theoretical base for later research Hough. Francesco Perono Cacciafoco and Francesco Cavallaro explain the main terms of toponymy and describe toponyms as "linguistic fossils," because older language and culture may remain in a stable name form. These works are helpful because they show why place names should be studied as linguistic and cultural material together¹.

Another useful point is made in the Cambridge discussion of place names and society. There, place names are treated as social constructs that show attachment to land, help communities orient themselves, and carry symbolic and historical meaning. They may also be used in struggles over legitimacy and visibility. This idea is important for the present article because literary texts also use toponyms as signs of belonging and value.

Jan Tent and David Blair proposed a motivation-based typology for place names and showed that a name can be studied through the reason for naming, not only through form. This method is useful for the present article because English and Uzbek names also need to be compared through social background and naming motives.

In recent English-Uzbek research, Feruza Khayitova examined the cultural possibilities of toponyms in both languages and showed that national meaning remains active in place-name material. Safura Xudoyorova studied English and Uzbek toponymic phraseological units and, through descriptive and comparative methods, showed that such units preserve history and national-cultural specificity².

Lobarkhon Artikova focused on place names in English-Uzbek translation and paid attention to transliteration, adaptation, direct translation, and cultural context. Feruza Khayitova's later study on tribal-name-based toponyms in Uzbek and English showed that such names reflect settlement patterns, ethnolinguistic relations, and cultural memory (Khayitova, "Toponyms Associated"). Kyzdarkhan Rysbergen and co-authors also showed that color, numeral, plant, and myth-based toponyms may encode different layers of cultural knowledge.

¹ Carole Hough, "Introduction," in *The Oxford Handbook of Names and Naming*, ed. Carole Hough (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 1–16.

² Safura Xudoyorova, "English and Uzbek Toponymic Phraseological Units: Linguocultural and Historical Aspects," *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Culture*, vol. 7, no. 4, 2021, pp. 201–208.

These studies are helpful for the present article in two ways. First, they show that modern research reads toponyms as cultural signs. Second, they show that English and Uzbek material can be compared in a practical way. The present article continues this line, but does so through a short extract-based literary reading.

Methodology

The article uses four connected methods. The descriptive method is used to explain the main meaning and cultural function of the selected toponyms. The comparative method is used to place English and Uzbek examples side by side and to identify both common and different features. The contextual method is used because a place name changes meaning inside a literary sentence, scene, or dialogue.

A simple linguocultural analysis is also applied. In this stage, a toponym is read as a unit that connects language with culture. Attention is given to history, social value, emotional load, and local knowledge. This helps show why a literary place name often means more than a neutral map label.

The practical procedure is simple. First, the selected extracts are read closely. Second, the place names are linked with the wider scene. Third, each name is compared with similar or different material from the other language. The final results are then stated in short analytical form³.

Analysis and discussion

The analysis below uses two English extracts and three Uzbek extracts. The extracts are short, but the cultural role of the toponyms is clear in each case.

Extract 1. From Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*: "The village of Longbourn was only one mile from Meryton"⁴.

Simple analysis. Longbourn and Meryton are placed in one sentence, but their social roles are different. Longbourn suggests home, family, and estate life. Meryton suggests movement, news, shops, and public contact.

Discussion. The two toponyms build a small English social map. Place is used to show how private and public life are separated in the novel.

Extract 2. From Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*: "to be mistress of Pemberley might be something!"⁵.

Simple analysis. Pemberley is more than the name of an estate. Wealth, rank, taste, and moral value are gathered in the name.

Discussion. This example shows that an English literary toponym may become a symbol of class position and social worth. The name carries space, property, and prestige at the same time.

³ Simon Taylor, "Methodologies in Place-name Research," in *The Oxford Handbook of Names and Naming*, ed. Carole Hough (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 69–86.

⁴ Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (Project Gutenberg, eBook no. 1342), Chapter 7.

⁵ Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (Project Gutenberg, eBook no. 1342), Chapter 43.

Extract 3. From Abdulla Qodiriy's *O'tkan kunlar*: "Marg'ilon Turkistonimizning to'qug'uchilik hunarida birinchi shahridir"⁶.

Simple analysis. Marg'ilon is linked with craft culture. The city is presented through weaving, work, and local reputation.

Discussion. The toponym carries regional pride and economic memory. A city image is built through labor and market life. The name also helps form a cultural geography inside the novel.

Extract 4. From Abdulla Qodiriy's *O'tkan kunlar*: "Toshkand aholisi Azizbek istibdodidan ortiq to'yindi"⁷.

Simple analysis. The name Toshkand appears in a political and emotional context. The city is tied to public suffering and historical pressure.

Discussion. This extract shows that an Uzbek literary toponym may hold collective pain, political judgment, and historical memory. It also shows how older spelling can preserve a historical layer.

Extract 5. From Abdulla Qodiriy's *O'tkan kunlar*: "Marg'ilon havosi mizojimga to'g'ri kelmaganga"⁸.

Simple analysis. Here the place name enters a personal and emotional field. Marg'ilon is connected with inner mood, adaptation, and lived experience.

Discussion. The line shows that a literary toponym may work not only in social or historical description, but also in emotional expression. Place becomes part of personal feeling. This use is strong in Uzbek prose because city names are often linked with atmosphere, relation, and memory.

General discussion. Both English and Uzbek literary texts use toponyms as compressed cultural meaning. The English examples foreground estate culture, rank, and social space. The Uzbek examples foreground craft identity, region, history, and lived feeling. This result is important for literary reading and for translation, because a place name may carry more meaning than a direct equivalent can show.

A final point should be added. The selected English names are more closely tied to estate order and social movement, while the selected Uzbek names are more strongly tied to collective life, public history, and regional character. This does not mean that one language has deeper toponyms than the other. It shows that literary traditions activate different sides of place-name meaning.

Results and practical value

The results of the article may be grouped in three ways. First, a theoretical result is achieved: recent scholarship confirms that toponyms should be read as cultural signs, not only as naming units. Second, a literary result is achieved: short extracts from

⁶ Abdulla Qodiriy, *O'tkan kunlar* (Ziyouz kutubxonasi PDF version), p. 4.

⁷ Abdulla Qodiriy, *O'tkan kunlar* (Ziyouz kutubxonasi PDF version), p. 8.

⁸ Abdulla Qodiriy, *O'tkan kunlar* (Ziyouz kutubxonasi PDF version), p. 12.

English and Uzbek prose show clearly that a place name can mark class, labor, memory, emotion, and public history. Third, a comparative result is achieved: English and Uzbek material uses the same linguistic tool, but the cultural center of meaning is not always the same.

This has practical value for student research. A simple extract-based method can be used in course papers, graduation papers, and literary analysis classes. It may also help in translation practice. When a translator sees that a name such as Pemberley or Marg'ilon carries social or cultural weight, a better decision can be made about keeping the form, adding context, or choosing explanatory support⁹.

The material is also useful for classroom discussion in linguistics and literature. Students can be asked to identify the place name, describe its direct function, and then explain its deeper cultural role. Such work develops careful reading. It also shows that language and culture are connected, even in one small word or name.

Conclusion

The article has shown that toponyms in English and Uzbek are not simple geographical labels. History, social structure, memory, local identity, and cultural value may all be kept inside them. For that reason, a place name should be studied as a linguocultural unit.

The main result is clear. In the selected English material, toponyms mainly organize social space and estate culture. In the selected Uzbek material, toponyms more strongly reflect regional craft identity, historical experience, and collective feeling. The extract-based analysis also showed that a short literary line may carry a large cultural load when the place name is read in context.

The article also showed a practical result for translation. A place name should not be treated as an empty background. When social, emotional, or historical force is ignored, an important layer of the text is lost. Careful reading of context is therefore necessary in both literary analysis and translation practice.

The novelty of the article lies in a direct comparison of English and Uzbek toponyms through recent theory and short literary extracts. The material is simple, but the cultural meaning stays visible. This may help future students work on literary onomastics, translation of place names, and comparative linguocultural study.

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⁹ Botolv Helleland, "Place Names and Identities," *Oslo Studies in Language*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2012, pp. 95–116.

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