



THE HISTORICAL-LINGUISTIC FORMATION OF ANIMAL NAMES IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH

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Annotation: This article investigates the historical-linguistic formation of animal names in Uzbek and English. The study analyzes the etymological origins, semantic development, and cultural significance of zoonymic units in both languages. Special attention is given to the influence of historical processes, intercultural relations, mythology, and social development on the formation of animal names. Comparative and diachronic methods are employed to identify similarities and differences between the two linguistic systems. The research demonstrates that zoonymic units serve not only as lexical elements but also as reflections of national worldview, cultural identity, and historical memory. The findings contribute to comparative linguistics, lexicology, ethnolinguistics, and translation studies.

Keywords: zoonym, etymology, historical linguistics, Uzbek language, English language.

Animal names, known as zoonymic units, occupy an essential place in the lexical system of every language. They reflect the interaction between humans and nature, embody cultural symbolism, and preserve traces of historical development. In both Uzbek and English, animal names have undergone long historical transformations influenced by migration, trade, mythology, religion, and intercultural communication [1, p. 15].

The historical-linguistic study of zoonyms provides valuable insights into the evolution of language and culture. Comparative analysis of Uzbek and English animal names reveals common semantic tendencies alongside unique national characteristics. Moreover, zoonymic vocabulary demonstrates how societies conceptualize the animal world and transfer these conceptualizations into figurative and symbolic meanings [2, p. 41].

The objective of this article is to investigate the historical formation of animal names in Uzbek and English, identify their etymological origins, and analyze their semantic and cultural development.

Zoonymy represents a branch of lexicology dealing with the names of animals and animal-related concepts. According to linguistic scholars, zoonyms function as important lexical units that preserve historical and cultural



information [1, p. 27].

The development of zoonymic vocabulary is closely connected with human civilization. Primitive societies named animals according to their appearance, behavior, or usefulness in daily life. Over time, these names acquired symbolic and metaphorical meanings [2, p. 53]. For example, the English word *fox* historically denoted a wild animal but later developed the figurative meaning of “a cunning person.” Similarly, the Uzbek word *tulki* also symbolizes cleverness and хитрость in Uzbek culture [3, p. 88]. Thus, zoonymic units demonstrate the interaction between language, cognition, and cultural perception.

The English language inherited many animal names from Old English, Germanic, Latin, and French sources. Historical invasions and cultural contacts significantly enriched English zoonymic vocabulary [4, p. 102].

For instance:

Wolf derives from Old English *wulf* and Proto-Germanic *wulfaz*.

Horse originates from Old English *hors*.

Lion entered English through Old French from Latin *leo* [5].

After the Norman Conquest of 1066, numerous French-origin animal terms entered the English vocabulary. This historical event influenced not only pronunciation but also semantic distinctions between domestic and wild animals [6, p. 76]. Another important aspect is semantic extension. Many English animal names evolved metaphorical meanings:

Snake symbolizes deceitfulness.

Owl represents wisdom.

Lamb indicates innocence [7, p. 64].

Such figurative meanings emerged under the influence of mythology, religion, and literary traditions.

Uzbek zoonymic vocabulary developed under the influence of Turkic linguistic traditions, Persian culture, Arabic civilization, and later Russian contact [8, p. 119].

Many basic animal names in Uzbek originate from ancient Turkic roots:

Ot (horse)

Bo‘ri (wolf)

Qo‘y (sheep)

It (dog) [9, p. 57]

Mahmud Kashgari’s famous work “*Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*” contains numerous ancient Turkic animal names still preserved in modern Uzbek [10, p. 143].

The semantic development of Uzbek zoonyms is strongly connected with nomadic culture and folklore traditions. For example:

Bo‘ri symbolizes bravery and strength.

Tulki represents cunning.



Sher expresses courage and leadership [11, p. 92].

Islamic civilization also influenced Uzbek animal terminology through Arabic borrowings. Some zoological and literary terms entered Uzbek during the medieval period [12, p. 38]. During the Soviet era, Russian influence introduced scientific and zoological terminology into Uzbek vocabulary. Consequently, the lexical system became richer and more diversified. Comparative analysis demonstrates that Uzbek and English share universal semantic tendencies despite belonging to different language families. For example, both languages associate the fox with cunningness:

English: *as sly as a fox*

Uzbek: *tulkiday ayyor* [13, p. 51]

Similarly, wolves symbolize danger and power in both cultures. However, some symbolic meanings differ across national worldviews and cultural traditions.

In English culture, the owl is associated with wisdom because of Greek mythology and Western educational symbolism. In Uzbek tradition, however, owls may sometimes carry mystical or negative associations [14, p. 133].

The horse occupies a particularly important position in Uzbek culture due to the historical nomadic lifestyle of Turkic peoples. Consequently, Uzbek contains numerous phraseological units connected with horses [15, p. 47].

Another significant difference concerns lexical borrowing. English absorbed many animal names through Latin and French influence, whereas Uzbek predominantly preserved Turkic roots while integrating Persian, Arabic, and Russian elements [16, p. 201]. Therefore, zoonymic vocabulary reflects both universal human cognition and culture-specific linguistic evolution.

Animal names perform several linguistic and cultural functions:

Nominative function – identifying animal species.

Symbolic function – expressing cultural meanings.

Metaphorical function – describing human characteristics.

Phraseological function – forming idioms and proverbs [17, p. 34].

For example:

English: *busy as a bee*

Uzbek: *asalariday mehnatkash*

Such expressions reveal anthropocentric tendencies in language, where animal behavior is projected onto human qualities [18, p. 66].

Zoonyms also play active roles in folklore, literature, and mythology. Fairy tales and epic traditions in both cultures frequently use animals as symbolic characters representing moral or social values [19, p. 21]. Consequently, the study of zoonymic units contributes not only to linguistics but also to cultural studies, anthropology, and semiotics.



In conclusion, the historical-linguistic formation of animal names in Uzbek and English reflects the complex interaction between language, culture, history, and human cognition. The comparative analysis demonstrates that zoonymic units preserve traces of ancient beliefs, intercultural relations, and social development.

English zoonymic vocabulary developed under strong Germanic, Latin, and French influence, while Uzbek animal names largely preserved Turkic foundations enriched by Persian, Arabic, and Russian contacts. Despite structural and historical differences, both languages reveal universal symbolic associations connected with animals. The research confirms that animal names function not merely as lexical units but also as cultural symbols embodying national worldview and historical memory. Therefore, zoonymic studies remain an important field in comparative linguistics, ethnolinguistics, and historical lexicology.

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