

# DIFFERENCES IN TOPONYMY BETWEEN UZBEK AND ENGLISH

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## Abstract

The article examines the differences in the toponymy of the Uzbek and English languages. The analysis is carried out on several aspects: historical origin, linguistic structure, cultural significance and modern changes. Uzbek toponymy reflects the influence of Turkic, Persian and Islamic cultures, while English toponymy was influenced by Celtic, Roman, Anglo-Saxon and Norman traditions. Studying these differences allows us to better understand the cultural and historical characteristics of peoples.

## Introduction

Toponymy, or the study of place names, is not only a linguistic field but also a reflection of the history and culture of a nation. Uzbek and English toponymies differ significantly due to their distinct geographical, historical, and linguistic backgrounds. This article outlines the key differences in how place names are formed and used in the Uzbek and English languages.

## 1. Historical Origins

### Uzbek Toponymy

The toponymy of Uzbekistan is deeply influenced by the region's history, particularly its location along the ancient Silk Road. Place names reflect the legacy of Turkic, Persian, Arab, and Mongol civilizations. Many cities and villages have names rooted in ancient languages, often linked to trade, religion, or nature.

Example:

Bukhara – of Persian origin, associated with learning and Islamic scholarship.

Khiva – likely of Turkic origin, connected with historic khanates.

## English Toponymy

English place names have evolved over centuries under the influence of multiple civilizations: Celtic tribes, Roman Empire, Anglo-Saxons, Vikings, and Normans. Each wave of settlement introduced new naming traditions. Example:

Manchester – from Latin Mamucium + Old English ceaster (fort).

York – from Viking Jorvik, earlier Celtic Eboracum.

## 2. Linguistic Structure and Naming Patterns

### Uzbek Place Names

Uzbek toponyms are often descriptive and use common suffixes and components: **-kent** (town), **-obod** (prosperous place), **-tepa** (hill), **-qurgon** (fortress).

Examples:

Namangan – possibly from Persian namak-kan (place of salt).

Yangiyer – “new land”.

### English Place Names

English place names frequently include Old English or Norse elements:

**-ton** (town), **-ham** (home), **-bury** (fortified place), **-ford** (river crossing), **-hill**, **-wood**.

Examples:

Oxford – “oxen’s ford”.

Greenwich – “green settlement”.

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## 3. Cultural and Religious Influence

**In Uzbekistan**, many place names have religious significance or honor historical figures. Islamic influence is strong, with names referencing saints, scholars, and religious structures.

Examples:

Hazrati Imam – “The Revered Imam”.

Imam Bukhari – named after a famous Islamic scholar.

**In English-speaking countries**, especially the UK, names often reflect ownership or geography, and less frequently religion. In the US, English place names are sometimes combined with Native American names or names brought by immigrants.

Examples:

St Albans – named after a Christian martyr.

New York – originally New Amsterdam, renamed in honor of the Duke of York.

#### **4. Modern Trends and Renaming**

**Uzbekistan** experienced significant renaming after independence in 1991, replacing Soviet-era names with traditional or national ones to restore cultural identity.

Examples:

Leninsk → Asaka

Streets renamed to honor Uzbek poets, leaders, and historical events.

**In English-speaking countries**, especially the UK, place names tend to remain unchanged for centuries. However, in multicultural countries like the US or Canada, there is growing recognition of indigenous place names.

Example:

Mount McKinley → Denali (Alaska, US – restored Native name).

#### **Conclusion**

The study of Uzbek and English toponymy shows how place names encapsulate the unique historical journeys and cultural landscapes of different regions. Uzbek toponyms highlight connections to Turkic roots, religion, and nature, while English toponyms reflect layers of conquest, colonization, and linguistic evolution. Understanding these differences enhances our appreciation of language as a living archive of human history.

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