

**VULGARISMS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES:
A COMPARATIVE LINGUISTIC STUDY**

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Abstract. This paper explores vulgarisms in English and Uzbek, focusing on their semantic categories, sociolinguistic roles, and cultural perceptions. By comparing lexical vulgarities in both languages, the study reveals how cultural, religious, and historical factors shape the formation, usage, and taboo status of vulgar expressions. Data were collected from media, literature, and online discourse. The results show that while both languages use vulgarisms for emotional expression and social functions, their domains and severity vary due to differing cultural taboos and linguistic traditions.

Key words: Vulgarisms, Uzbek language, English language, dastans, dialectal variation, poetic expression, connotative meaning.

**ВУЛЬГАРИЗМЫ В АНГЛИЙСКОМ И УЗБЕКСКОМ ЯЗЫКАХ:
СРАВНИТЕЛЬНОЕ ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКОЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ**

Аннотация. В данной статье рассматриваются вульгаризмы в английском и узбекском языках с акцентом на их семантические категории, социолингвистические функции и культурные восприятия. Сравнение лексических вульгаризмов в обоих языках позволяет выявить, как культурные, религиозные и исторические факторы влияют на формирование, использование и табуирование подобных выражений. Материал для анализа был собран из средств массовой информации, литературы и интернет-дискурса. Результаты показывают, что, несмотря на схожие функции вульгаризмов в эмоциональном и социальном аспектах, сферы их употребления и степень неприемлемости значительно различаются в силу культурных табу и языковых традиций.

Ключевые слова: вульгаризмы, узбекский язык, английский язык, дастаны, диалектные вариации, поэтическое выражение, коннотативное значение.

INTRODUCTION. Vulgarisms - also known as swear words, profanities, or taboo language - are a linguistic phenomenon present in every language, often carrying significant sociocultural weight. These words are typically restricted or avoided in formal settings, yet they play important roles in emotional expression, social bonding, and linguistic creativity.

In English, vulgarisms have been extensively studied, particularly in relation to their origins, psychological impacts, and usage contexts. In contrast, Uzbek - a Turkic language spoken predominantly in Uzbekistan - has a different cultural and religious backdrop that influences the use of such expressions. This study aims to explore the structure, function, and perception of vulgarisms in English and Uzbek, identifying both universal traits and culture-specific features. It is an important fact of life that colorful linguistic and poetic elements and ethnographic

expressions are preserved in the language of Uzbek dastans. Determining their role and importance in the study of the Uzbek language and dialects poses great challenges for today's linguistics.

METHODS. The data were collected from multiple sources, including: spoken language samples from movies, TV shows, and YouTube content, Online discourse, such as comments on social media platforms (Reddit for English, Telegram and local Uzbek forums), Literary and media texts, including novels, blogs, and comedy shows, Interviews and informal surveys with 10 native speakers of each language to assess usage and social attitudes. Qualitative categorization was used to classify vulgarisms into thematic types (e.g., sexual, religious, scatological, ethnic), Sociolinguistic analysis considered context, speaker intent, audience, and medium, Comparative linguistic analysis focused on morphology, word formation (e.g., compounding, euphemism), and pragmatic functions.

RESULTS.

Semantic Categories of Vulgarisms

Category	English Examples	Uzbek Examples
Scatological	s***, crap	ho'lqursa, sasigan
Religious/Blasphemous	goddamn, Jesus Christ	yo tavba, lanat bo'lsin
Ethnic/Identity-based	slurs based on race or gender	toifa, qoraqibcha (dialectal)
Insults to Family		onangni, otangga - (very taboo in Uzbek)

- English speakers used vulgarisms more frequently in casual conversation, online forums, and comedy.
- Uzbek speakers often avoided direct vulgarities, using coded language, euphemisms, or metaphoric insults, especially due to Islamic cultural norms and strong family values.
- Both languages showed higher usage among males and younger speakers.
- In Uzbek, vulgarisms by women are heavily stigmatized, while in English the stigma is reducing, especially in media.

In particular, the texts of our dastans contain vulgar linguistic elements influenced by various dialects, which are characterized by their dialectal and ethnographic features. This paper aims to provide scientific commentary on selected lexical units found in our dastans and compare these vulgar expressions with their counterparts in the Uzbek literary language.

One example is the expression *māñlāyqarā* — literally "the one whose forehead is black". While this phrase can be interpreted connotatively as "the one with a black forehead" it is more commonly used as a poetic tool to convey meanings such as "a person with a bad character" or "a stubborn person." Notably, this vulgarism is preserved in its original form and is frequently used in spoken language. However, its connotative meaning is almost never applied directly.

Phonologically, we observe a change in its structure. The third-person possessive suffix "-i" typically found at the end of the first component in standard Uzbek, has been omitted due to the interaction of the sounds "y" and "i." This phonological phenomenon enhances the expressiveness of the vulgarism, intensifying its poetic and emotional impact.

This term appears in the dastan "Kampir" (Old Woman), part of the "Gorogly" series of dastans: *Odanga xayri tegmaydigan manglayqora, pes bir kampir bor edi* (Gorogly, p. 210).

English translation: "There was a stubborn, ill-natured old woman who never helped anyone".

The word *pes* in this context is another vulgarism that has deviated significantly from its original meaning. Etymologically, it originates from the Persian language, where it refers to something "dirty" or "filthy," and also denotes "white spots on the skin caused by a lack of pigment" [1].

However, the vulgar usage in Uzbek derives from the Arabic root meaning “stupid,” “foolish,” or “unwise” [2]. In this connotation, *pes* functions as a tool for constructing a highly negative poetic image of the character and is used in both literary language and dialectal speech.

Another point worth considering is the distribution of these vulgar expressions. Most vulgarisms from the inactive lexical layer appear primarily in the prose sections of the texts. However, they are sometimes used in poetic parts as well. The inclusion of vulgar words in poetry significantly amplifies the expression of negativity. This is partly due to the possibility of repetition within poetic structures, which, as is well-known, greatly enhances the expressiveness of a linguistic unit.

DISCUSSION. This study illustrates that while vulgarisms exist in both English and Uzbek, their use is deeply shaped by cultural attitudes toward propriety, religion, and honor. English vulgarisms often stem from bodily functions or sexuality, reflecting a Western secular attitude. Uzbek vulgarisms, by contrast, frequently involve family and honor-based insults, which carry greater severity and are rarely used in public. Islamic norms in Uzbek society discourage overt references to sex and bodily functions, hence the presence of many indirect or metaphorical expressions. Blasphemy is also avoided due to religious respect. English, being more secular, has more open usage of religious profanities.

In both languages, vulgarisms serve to:

- Express strong emotion (anger, surprise, pain)
- Create solidarity or humor
- Mark in-group identity

However, the threshold of offensiveness differs. What may be casual in English (e.g., “shit”) could be deeply offensive in Uzbek.

CONCLUSION. The analysis of vulgarisms in Uzbek *dastans* reveals a rich interplay between language, culture, and poetic expression. These vulgar lexical units, often rooted in dialectal variations, carry connotative meanings that go beyond their literal interpretations. Expressions such as *māñläyyqarä* and *pes* serve not only as linguistic markers of character traits like stubbornness or foolishness but also function as powerful poetic devices that intensify emotional tone and narrative impact.

Phonological shifts, such as the omission of possessive suffixes, further illustrate the dynamic nature of spoken language in traditional oral literature. The strategic placement and repetition of vulgarisms in both prose and poetry highlight their stylistic role in amplifying expressiveness and shaping the reader’s perception of characters. Moreover, the presence of these expressions reflects the socio-cultural context in which they emerged, including influences from Persian and Arabic, and shows how vulgarisms, while often avoided in formal discourse, play a vital role in the oral storytelling tradition. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the linguistic and ethnographic dimensions of Uzbek folklore and underscore the importance of preserving and analyzing such features in historical texts.

Vulgarisms reflect the dynamic relationship between language and culture. While English and Uzbek share universal motivations for using taboo language, the expressions and acceptability are culturally distinct. Further research may explore bilingual usage of vulgarisms among Uzbek-English speakers or their presence in diasporic communities.

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