ARCHAIC AND HISTORICAL WORDS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK: COMPARATIVE CONSIDERATIONS

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Abstract: Archaic and historical words constitute an integral dimension of the lexicon in any language, reflecting its diachronic evolution and cultural memory. This article examines the phenomenon of archaisms and historisms in English and Uzbek, drawing on comparative- typological and phraseological analyses. By exploring classification frameworks, semantic domains, functional roles in proverbs and literary texts, and the challenges of translation, the study highlights both commonalities and language- specific features. The findings suggest that while both languages use archaic vocabulary to evoke historical ambience, sociocultural customs, or stylistic authenticity, the processes of archaism formation, retention, and obsolescence differ significantly due to linguistic history, sociolinguistic dynamics, and literary traditions. The article contributes to a deeper understanding of lexical archaicism and its role in preserving cultural- historical identity across languages.
Keywords: archaism; historism; obsolete vocabulary; English language; Uzbek language; phraseological units; translation; language change.

Introduction
Language is not static: over time, its vocabulary evolves, some words become obsolete, others emerge. Among such changes are **archaisms** and **historical words (historisms)** — lexical units once common but now rare or obsolete, often preserved in literature, proverbs, religious texts, or historical works. In both English and Uzbek, these words serve as linguistic relics, reflecting historical contexts, cultural transformations, and shifts in everyday life.

Understanding archaic vocabulary is important for philologists, translators, and cultural historians: it helps to decode older texts, maintain cultural memory, and appreciate the stylistic choices of authors who deliberately invoke an earlier era. Comparatively examining archaisms in English and Uzbek can shed light on universal and language- specific tendencies in lexical obsolescence and retention.

This article reviews and analyses existing research on archaic and historical words in English and Uzbek, focusing on classification, semantic domains, phraseological and proverbial usage, and translation issues.

Methodology
This article is based on library- based research. I reviewed peer- reviewed articles, linguistic studies, and analyses focusing on archaic vocabulary in English and Uzbek. Primary sources include comparative- typological studies, investigations of proverbs and phraseological units, and translation analyses. Through comparative and analytical methods, I synthesize these studies to draw generalizations about the nature and functions of archaisms in the two languages. Specifically, I pay attention to:

- how scholars define and classify archaisms and historisms in English and Uzbek;
- semantic / functional domains in which archaisms occur;
- use of archaic vocabulary in proverbs, phraseological units, and literary texts;
- translation difficulties when archaic words are transferred across languages.

This method allows highlighting both cross- linguistic parallels and divergences in the phenomenon of lexical obsolescence and retention.

Results
Definitions and Classification

In English linguistics, archaisms (archaic words) are lexical items that have fallen out of ordinary use, replaced by modern synonyms, yet may survive in literary, poetic, or rhetorical contexts. Some words become **historisms** — i.e. refer to obsolete objects, customs or institutions — and lose referents entirely.

In Uzbek linguistics, similar classifications apply. Historical- archaic vocabulary often derives from older stages of Uzbek (or Turkic) or from classical literary language (e.g. the language of old manuscripts, classical poetry). For example, research on the works of Alisher Navoi shows that many lexemes used in his 15th- century texts are considered archaic today.

According to a comparative- typological study, archaisms in both languages can be categorized by semantic function or lexical domain (e.g. occupational archaisms, medical archaisms, topo- archaisms, etc.), rather than only by formal features (lexical, phonetic, grammatical).

Semantic and Functional Domains

Scholars have identified various semantic fields in which archaic vocabulary tends to cluster. In both English and Uzbek, archaisms often concern:

- Historical objects, institutions, customs. Words that refer to outdated social structures or material culture (e.g. old crafts, ancient social roles).
- Proverbs and phraseological units: Many proverbs preserve old vocabulary, idioms, or grammatical forms that are no longer part of everyday speech.
- Literary, poetic, or religious texts: archaic lexemes add stylistic, historical, or aesthetic flavor. In Uzbek classical literature — especially in the works of authors like Alisher Navoi — archaic vocabulary reflects the Old Turkic or early Uzbek heritage.

Additionally, in English, archaisms often include obsolete pronouns (e.g. "thou," "thee"), archaic verbs (e.g. "betide," "beseech"), outdated nouns and adjectives — all of which evoke a past era.

Usage in Proverbs and Phraseological Units

Research shows that both Uzbek and English proverbs retain archaic and historic words or constructions more often than everyday speech. In a study of proverbs, archaic and historical elements were identified, and the authors argued that such proverbs preserve cultural memory and linguistic heritage.

The retention of such vocabulary in proverbial expressions underlines their role as custodians of collective memory — they carry not only moral or practical wisdom, but also linguistic artefacts of past epochs.

Translation Challenges and Literary Use

Translating archaic or historical words — especially from Uzbek into English or vice versa — presents difficulties. For instance, in the translation of the Uzbek novel Bygone Days by Abdulla Qodiriy, the presence of numerous archaic Uzbek words posed a challenge to translators; choosing appropriate English equivalents — or preserving archaic flavour — required careful balancing between readability and historical authenticity.

Some translation methods involve preserving original archaisms (e.g. by using archaic English equivalents), while others opt for modern equivalents, at the cost of losing historical ambience.

Moreover, stylistic studies show that archaic words serve a deliberate function: by invoking outdated vocabulary, authors can evoke a sense of antiquity, solemnity, or cultural depth.

Discussion

The comparative analysis reveals that, despite linguistic differences, English and Uzbek share important features regarding archaic vocabulary. Both languages retain archaisms in literary texts, proverbs, and phraseological units, serving as vessels of historical memory and cultural heritage. The semantic- functional classification (e.g. by domain: occupational, topo, medical,

historical, etc.) works in both languages and helps linguists systematically analyse obsolete vocabulary.

However, the processes of lexical obsolescence and retention differ. In English, the gap between everyday modern vocabulary and archaic vocabulary is relatively well recognized: many archaic English words are no longer understood by modern speakers unless they study literature or history. In Uzbek, the situation is more complex: many archaic or historic words are preserved in classical literature (for instance, from works of Alisher Navoi), religious texts, or old manuscripts; but modern standard Uzbek language — especially in everyday communication — has replaced many such words with newer ones.

Furthermore, translation problems underscore the cultural and historical embeddedness of archaic words. A faithful translation must grapple with the issue of **equivalence**: modern equivalents may convey meaning but lose historical flavour; archaic equivalents may preserve ambience but hinder comprehension. This tension highlights the unique challenges of maintaining linguistic heritage across languages.

The retention of archaisms in proverbs and phraseological units suggests that some parts of the lexicon are more resistant to change — especially when embedded in collective memory, cultural practices, or canonical literature. This supports the idea that archaisms are not simply "outdated mistakes," but meaningful linguistic relics that contribute to cultural identity and historical consciousness.

Conclusion

Archaic and historical words in English and Uzbek reflect not only changes in language over time, but also cultural and historical transformations. Comparative study shows that while both languages use archaisms to evoke the past, the dynamics of lexical obsolescence, retention, and functional usage differ due to divergent linguistic histories and sociocultural contexts.

Archaic vocabulary remains particularly important in proverbs, phraseological units, classical literature, and translation — domains where historical authenticity and cultural memory matter. Translators and linguists must carefully balance meaning, readability, and historical flavour when dealing with archaic words, especially across languages.

Recognising and studying archaisms contributes to preserving linguistic heritage and deepening understanding of how languages evolve. Further research — for example, corpus-based diachronic studies, sociolinguistic surveys of archaism comprehension, or comparative translation experiments — would enhance our understanding of how archaic vocabulary persists or disappears in modern usage.

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