

ANALYZING THE FUNCTIONS OF NUMBERS IN TWO DIFFERENT LANGUAGES: ENGLISH AND UZBEK.

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Annotation: This article examines the linguistic and cultural functions of numbers in English and Uzbek, offering a comparative analysis of their syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic roles. It delves into the complexities of numerical expressions and their use in communication, with an emphasis on the unique features of each language. Through an extensive set of examples, the study highlights both the similarities and differences in number usage, providing a rich and detailed discussion of their impact on linguistic structures.

Keywords: Numbers, English, Uzbek, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, cultural significance, linguistic comparison.

INTRODUCTION

Numbers are fundamental to human communication, playing a central role in how we quantify, organize, and conceptualize the world around us. They transcend their mathematical function and serve as linguistic tools that structure meaning in complex ways. This article aims to analyze the function of numbers in two distinct languages: English and Uzbek. While English belongs to the Indo-European family and is largely analytical in structure, Uzbek is part of the Turkic language family and is agglutinative, meaning that it uses affixes to express grammatical relationships. These typological differences influence how numbers behave in each language, both syntactically and semantically. In English, numbers primarily serve as quantifiers and modifiers, interacting minimally with the morphology of the language. By contrast, Uzbek numbers are subject to extensive morphological transformations due to the affixation process inherent in the language. This study explores these functions through a detailed analysis of cardinal, ordinal, fractional, and collective numbers, along with their cultural significance in both languages. A comprehensive set of examples will illustrate how numbers are integrated into linguistic structures, demonstrating both cross-linguistic similarities and differences.

Methods

The research for this article adopts a comparative linguistic methodology, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. The data were collected from a range of sources, including language corpora, grammatical references, and authentic textual materials in both English and Uzbek. The study focuses on:

1. **Cardinal numbers:** Numbers used for counting and quantification.
2. **Ordinal numbers:** Numbers that indicate order or rank.
3. **Fractional numbers:** Used to denote parts of a whole.
4. **Collective numbers:** Used to express group quantities.
5. **Cultural aspects:** Exploring numbers that have special cultural meanings.

Each category is analyzed in both languages, with attention to their syntactic, morphological, and semantic roles. The comparative approach allows for a detailed exploration of how numbers

function in different linguistic contexts, revealing the ways in which they contribute to meaning-making processes.

Results

1. Cardinal Numbers. Cardinal numbers are the most basic form of numbers used in language to count and quantify things. They answer the questions "how many?" and "how much?" and are fundamental to expressing quantities in communication. Cardinal numbers are different from ordinal numbers, which indicate rank or order (e.g., first, second, third), and from fractional numbers, which describe parts of a whole (e.g., half, one-third). The primary function of cardinal numbers is to count discrete objects. For example: **English:** "Three cats" **Uzbek:** "Uchta mushuk". In both languages, the cardinal number is placed before the noun to indicate the number of objects being discussed. The noun remains in its plural form in English ("cats"), but in Uzbek, the suffix "ta" is often used with numbers to indicate a count of objects ("uchta" meaning "three" in this case).

2. Quantification. Cardinal numbers quantify items or entities, providing precise numerical values to nouns. In this sense, cardinal numbers act like determiners, specifying how many units of the noun exist. For example: **English:** "She has five books." **Uzbek:** "U beshta kitobga ega." In English, the word "five" directly quantifies the noun "books," while in Uzbek, the word "beshta" includes the suffix "-ta" to indicate that five items are being quantified.

3. Indicating No Quantity (Zero). Zero is an essential cardinal number that represents the absence of quantity. It plays a unique role because it signifies nothingness, yet it is still a number. For instance: **English:** "There are zero participants." **Uzbek:** "Nol ishtirokchi bor." The use of "zero" or "nol" indicates the complete absence of items, which still has meaning in a grammatical and communicative sense.

Cardinal Numbers in English vs. Uzbek. In English, cardinal numbers are relatively straightforward. They are used in both singular and plural forms depending on the context: **Singular:** "One car" (refers to a single object); **Plural:** "Two cars" (refers to multiple objects). [3:62] Cardinal numbers in English generally do not change form based on the noun. The number remains constant regardless of case, gender, or other grammatical considerations. This simplicity makes English cardinal numbers easy to apply across different contexts. In Uzbek, cardinal numbers follow a more complex structure because Uzbek is an agglutinative language, meaning that words can take on multiple affixes to express various grammatical relations. For example: **Singular:** "Bir odam" (one person); **Plural:** "Ikki odamlar" (two people, though plural markers for nouns after numbers are optional). One key difference is the use of suffixes like "-ta" with smaller numbers, which are used when counting individual objects. For instance: **Uzbek:** "Uchtalik qalam" (three pencils) — the suffix "ta" can indicate that the object is countable. Moreover, in Uzbek, cardinal numbers may change based on grammatical case, especially in more complex sentences. For example: **English:** "I saw five students." **Uzbek:** "Men beshta talabani ko'rdim." Here, "talaba" (student) takes the accusative suffix "-ni" to indicate that it is the object of the sentence, but the number "beshta" remains the same.

Cardinal Numbers in Context: Syntax and Morphology: Cardinal numbers in both English and Uzbek typically come before the noun they modify. However, the rules around word order can differ slightly.

- **English:** "Four birds are flying." [1:57] The number "four" is placed before the noun "birds," and the noun is pluralized.
- **Uzbek:** "To'rtta qush uchmoqda." In Uzbek, the number "to'rtta" precedes the noun "qush" (bird), and the word remains singular, though pluralization is optional in such cases.

Agreement with Nouns

In English, cardinal numbers agree with the plural form of the noun: **One book** → Singular noun: "book", **Two books** → Plural noun: "books" [6:104]

However, in Uzbek, the plural form of the noun is often omitted after numbers. The noun remains in its singular form even when the number is greater than one: **Bitta kitob** (one book), **Ikkita kitob** (two books). This is because the number already indicates plurality, and plural markers like "-lar" are not always needed.

Morphological Flexibility in Uzbek

Uzbek cardinal numbers exhibit more morphological flexibility than their English counterparts. [2:74] Numbers can take on suffixes to indicate different grammatical cases or functions in a sentence. For example:

- **Nominative:** "Uchta o'yinchi" (three players)
- **Accusative:** "Uchta o'yinchini" (the three players, accusative)
- **Dative:** "Uchta o'yinchiga" (to the three players)

This flexibility is a product of Uzbek's agglutinative nature, where suffixes are attached to words to express grammatical relationships.

Cultural Significance of Cardinal Numbers

In addition to their grammatical roles, cardinal numbers can carry cultural significance. This is especially true in Uzbek, where certain numbers hold symbolic meaning. For example:

- **English:** While numbers such as 13 are culturally significant as being unlucky in English-speaking cultures, this superstition is not linguistically encoded.
- **Uzbek:** The number "40" is highly symbolic in Uzbek culture, associated with important rites and ceremonies. For example, "qirq kun" (40 days) is a cultural marker, often referring to mourning periods or significant stages in life events.

This cultural context influences how cardinal numbers are used in everyday conversation, sometimes adding a layer of meaning that goes beyond simple counting. Cardinal numbers are essential linguistic tools that allow speakers to count and quantify nouns. In English, cardinal numbers are generally simple and unchanging, serving as direct quantifiers. In contrast, Uzbek cardinal numbers are more complex due to the language's morphological rules, where suffixes and case endings modify the numbers according to context. The use of cardinal numbers in Uzbek showcases the agglutinative nature of the language, where numbers are not static but can adapt to grammatical needs. These differences highlight how language structure and cultural practices influence the use of cardinal numbers in both English and Uzbek.

Ordinal Numbers in English and Uzbek

English Ordinal Numbers

In English, ordinal numbers are relatively simple. They are usually formed by adding "-th" to the end of cardinal numbers, with some irregular forms for "first," "second," and "third." Here is a

breakdown of ordinal numbers in English: **1st**: First; **2nd**: Second; **3rd**: Third; **4th**: Fourth; **5th**: Fifth; **6th**: Sixth. After the tenth, ordinal numbers continue with the cardinal number followed by "-th": **11th**: Eleventh, **21st**: Twenty-first, **30th**: Thirtieth. The form remains consistent, with only minor spelling adjustments for certain numbers (e.g., "fifth" drops the "ve" in "five").

Uzbek Ordinal Numbers

In Uzbek, ordinal numbers are created by adding the suffix "-inchi" to the cardinal number. This process is regular and applies to most numbers in the same way, without as many irregularities as in English. Some examples include: **1st**: Birinchi; **2nd**: Ikkinchi; **3rd**: Uchinchi; **4th**: To'rtinchi; **5th**: Beshinchi; **6th**: Oltinchi. For larger numbers, the same rule applies. For example: **21st**: Yigirma birinchi, **100th**: Yuzinchi. Uzbek ordinal numbers maintain their consistency throughout, making the system relatively simple to apply across a wide range of numbers.

Historical Events and Dates

Ordinal numbers are frequently used to refer to historical events or specific dates, often to mark significant occurrences in a sequence. For example:

- **English**: "The First World War started in 1914."
- **Uzbek**: "Birinchi jahon urushi 1914-yilda boshlandi." [4:90]

Here, both "first" in English and "birinchi" in Uzbek highlight the ordinal nature of the event within a historical sequence. Ordinal numbers are critical when explaining instructions, steps, or procedures. They help guide the reader or listener through a series of actions:

- **English**: "First, turn on the computer. Second, open the program."
- **Uzbek**: "Birinchi, kompyuterni yoqing. Ikkinchi, dasturini oching."

Both languages use ordinal numbers to indicate the correct sequence for performing a task. This function is essential for clarity and organization in instruction-based communication. Ordinal numbers are often used to rank individuals, teams, or performances in competitions. In both English and Uzbek, ordinal numbers serve to denote position or rank in a competition or list:

- **English**: "She won first place in the competition."
- **Uzbek**: "U musobaqada birinchi o'rinni egalladi."

Ordinal numbers in this context give explicit information about where an individual or team stands relative to others.

Cultural Considerations of Ordinal Numbers

In addition to their grammatical roles, ordinal numbers sometimes carry cultural significance. For example, in English-speaking cultures, "First" often symbolizes importance or priority, and this concept is frequently extended to various domains:

- **English**: "First class" can imply luxury or the highest level of quality.

In Uzbek culture, ordinal numbers may not carry the same symbolic weight but are essential in organizing information, events, and sequences. For example, when organizing major life events (weddings, births, etc.), ordinal numbers are used to signify the order of events and their importance:

- **Uzbek**: "Birinchi to'y juda katta voqea edi." (The first wedding was a very big event.)

While both English and Uzbek use ordinal numbers to indicate position, the morphological rules of Uzbek introduce more flexibility. In English, ordinal numbers are largely invariable and placed before the noun they modify. In Uzbek, however, ordinal numbers can change based on the grammatical structure of the sentence, and case markings often interact with the numbers, influencing their form.

- **English:** "I am reading the second book."
- **Uzbek:** "Men ikkinchi kitobni o'qiyapman."
(The ordinal number "ikkinchi" changes form to accommodate the case marking on the noun.)

Ordinal numbers are crucial for expressing order, sequence, and rank in both English and Uzbek. In English, ordinal numbers are relatively simple, following a predictable pattern, while in Uzbek, they require more morphological adjustment due to the agglutinative nature of the language. Both languages rely on ordinal numbers to structure information, from steps in processes to ranks in competitions, though Uzbek offers a more flexible approach in terms of case and grammatical relations. Understanding how ordinal numbers function in different languages highlights the nuances of linguistic structure and provides insight into the ways languages manage sequential and positional information.

Fractional Numbers

Fractional numbers are used to represent a part of a whole or a division of a quantity into equal parts. They express the idea of something being divided into sections and indicate how many of those sections are being considered. In both English and Uzbek, fractional numbers are important for describing quantities that are less than one or for expressing ratios and proportions.

Use of Collective Numbers in Sentences.

In English, collective numbers are usually placed before the noun they modify and do not change form. The noun following the collective number can be singular or plural, depending on the context:

- **English:** "A dozen eggs were cracked."
- **English:** "The pair of shoes is in the closet."

When a collective number refers to a group acting as a single entity, the verb agrees with the collective noun. However, if the individual members of the group are acting separately, the verb may be pluralized:

- **English:** "The team is winning" (team as a single unit).
- **English:** "The team are arguing among themselves" (focus on individuals within the team).

In Uzbek, collective numbers can either precede or follow the noun they modify, depending on the structure of the sentence. The collective number often takes on a suffix to indicate the size of the group. For example:

- **Uzbek:** "Yigirmatalik guruh mashg'ulotlarda qatnashdi." (A group of twenty participated in the training.)

In this example, "yigirmatalik" refers to a group of twenty people, and "guruh" (group) is used as the noun. The suffix "-talik" indicates the number of participants in the group. Collective numbers

are also commonly used with nouns like "to‘da" (herd, group) or "kuchsizlar" (weak people) to express a collective entity.

The way numbers are perceived and used in both languages reveals the influence of religion, tradition, and superstition on language and communication. Understanding these cultural aspects of numbers enriches our understanding of how language operates within a cultural context, shaping the way we express and interpret meaning in everyday life. The number "5," for example, which falls outside the range of anyone's definition of subitization, may perhaps be so readily understood because it combines "3" and "2," both of which are subitizable and might act as memory chunks (e.g., Gobet et al. 2001).

DISCUSSION

The analysis reveals significant differences in how English and Uzbek treat numbers at the grammatical and cultural levels. One of the key findings is the role of morphology in shaping the way numbers are used in Uzbek. The agglutinative structure of Uzbek allows for complex transformations of numerical expressions, with affixes that alter the syntactic and semantic functions of numbers.

In contrast, English numbers are relatively fixed in form and exhibit less morphological variation. This difference can be attributed to the analytic structure of English, which relies more on word order than on affixation for meaning. As a result, English numbers are more static, functioning primarily as modifiers or quantifiers.

Another important aspect is the cultural significance of numbers in both languages. While English cultural numbers are often associated with superstition (e.g., "13"), Uzbek numbers are more closely tied to religious and social traditions (e.g., "40"). This cultural dimension affects how numbers are interpreted and used in daily communication, providing insight into the broader social and cultural context of each language.

The pragmatic implications of these differences are also worth noting. In English, numbers are typically used for clear, unambiguous communication, whereas in Uzbek, numbers may carry additional layers of meaning depending on the context and the affixes used. This makes Uzbek numerical expressions more context-dependent, requiring speakers to be more aware of the grammatical and cultural nuances of number usage.

CONCLUSION

This comparative study has demonstrated that while both English and Uzbek use numbers for similar purposes—quantification, ordering, and grouping—their grammatical treatment of numbers is significantly different. Uzbek, with its agglutinative structure, allows for greater morphological flexibility in number usage, while English relies on a more fixed and analytical approach.

Culturally, numbers in Uzbek carry more symbolic meaning, especially in social and religious contexts, whereas English numbers tend to serve more functional or superstitious roles. This cultural aspect underscores the importance of understanding not only the linguistic but also the sociocultural contexts in which numbers are used.

Further research could expand this analysis to other Turkic and Indo-European languages to explore whether similar patterns exist across these language families. Additionally, studying the role of numbers in other aspects of communication, such as idiomatic expressions or metaphors, could provide a more nuanced understanding of their function in different languages.

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