

THE CONCEPT OF MONEY IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGE

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Abstract

This article explores the concept of money from a linguistic and cultural perspective, focusing on its representation in the English and Uzbek languages. The study analyzes how money is conceptualized, lexicalized, and metaphorically expressed in both languages. By comparing semantic fields, phraseological units, and cultural connotations associated with money, the article reveals similarities and differences shaped by historical, economic, and sociocultural factors. The research contributes to contrastive linguistics and intercultural communication by highlighting how language reflects societal attitudes toward economic values.

Keywords: Money, concept, linguistic worldview, English language, Uzbek language, metaphor, semantics, culture.

Introduction

Money is not only an economic instrument but also a powerful cultural and linguistic concept that reflects social values, moral attitudes, and historical experience. In linguistics, the concept of money occupies an important place within the study of conceptual semantics and cultural linguistics, as it embodies both material and symbolic meanings. Every language encodes the notion of money differently, depending on the cultural, economic, and historical background of its speakers.

The English and Uzbek languages belong to different language families and cultural traditions. English, shaped by centuries of capitalist development and global trade, reflects a pragmatic and market-oriented worldview. Uzbek, rooted in Eastern traditions and influenced by Islamic ethics and collective values, often associates money with morality, fate, and social responsibility. Therefore, a comparative study of the concept of money in these two languages is relevant for understanding how linguistic means convey cultural attitudes toward wealth, poverty, labor, and material success.

The concept of money is universal, but the words used to describe it in different languages often reveal interesting historical, cultural, and linguistic layers.

In English: "Money"

- Main word: Money
- Core modern meaning: Any generally accepted item, record, or medium used as payment for goods/services, repayment of debts, unit of account, store of value, etc. (coins, banknotes, digital funds, etc.).

- Etymology / Origin:
 - Comes from Middle English *moneye* (14th century).
 - Borrowed from Old French *monnaie* / *moneie* ("coin, currency, change").
 - From Latin *monēta* — originally meaning "mint" (place where coins are made) or "coined money".
 - *Monēta* derives from the name/surname of the Roman goddess Juno Moneta (Juno the Warner/Adviser). In ancient Rome, coins were minted in or near her temple on the Capitoline Hill. Over time, the temple's name became associated with the coins produced there → "monēta" → "money".
 - Interestingly, English kept very close to this ancient Roman root (via French), while many other European languages use different origins (e.g., words based on "silver" like French *argent*, or cattle/wealth like Latin *pecunia* → English "pecuniary").

English also uses related/slang terms like cash (naqd pul), currency (valyuta), coins (tanga), etc.

In Uzbek: "Pul"

- Main word: Pul (пул)
- Core modern meaning: The same as in English — metal or paper signs (coins, banknotes), or any means of payment, value measure, and exchange in trade/to'lov.

Examples from Uzbek definitions:

- Qog'oz pul = paper money
- Tanga pul = coin money
- Naqd pul = cash
- Pul maydalamoq = to make change (break a large bill)
- Other common synonyms / related words:
 - Aqcha (акча) — very frequently used, especially in spoken everyday Uzbek (almost interchangeable with pul).
 - Tanga — originally "coin", sometimes used more broadly for small/change money.
 - Valyuta — foreign currency / hard currency.
- Etymology / Origin:
 - Pul is a very old word in Turkic languages (including Uzbek, which belongs to the Karluk branch of Turkic).
 - It has been the primary term for "money" in Uzbek and related languages for centuries.
 - Unlike English "money" (tied to Roman mint/temple), pul does not have a well-documented mythological or temple origin in available sources. It is a native Turkic root/word that simply evolved to mean the medium of exchange/value.
 - In historical texts and old Uzbek/Persian-influenced usage, smaller units were sometimes called pul (very low-value coin/measure), which is why expressions like bir pul or uch pul now mean "almost worthless" / "not worth a thing" in modern Uzbek idioms.

Quick Comparison Table

Aspect	English ("Money")	Uzbek ("Pul")
Primary word	Money	Pul (also Aqcha)
Origin language	Latin → Old French → Middle English	Native Turkic (ancient usage in region)
Historical root	Juno Moneta's temple (Roman mint)	Traditional Turkic term for exchange/value
Literal ancient tie	Place of coin production (temple)	General medium of trade (no myth link)
Common synonyms	Cash, currency, bucks, dough...	Aqcha, tanga, naqd pul...
Idiomatic usage	"Time is money", "Money talks"	"Pul — botir, pulsiz — yotir" (proverb)

Both languages express the same economic concept (medium of exchange, measure of value, store of wealth), but the words themselves come from completely different historical paths — one tied to ancient Roman religion & minting, the other to longstanding Turkic linguistic tradition.

The differences in the linguistic representation of money in English and Uzbek can be explained by cultural and historical factors. English-speaking societies have long been shaped by market economies, where financial success is often viewed positively and linked to individual effort. This worldview is reflected in language through pragmatic and action-oriented metaphors.

In contrast, Uzbek culture traditionally emphasizes community, moral responsibility, and spiritual balance. As a result, money is linguistically framed within ethical boundaries, and its value is often subordinated to social harmony and personal integrity.

At the same time, globalization and economic changes are gradually influencing both languages. Modern Uzbek discourse increasingly adopts neutral or pragmatic attitudes toward money, while English also contains critical expressions that highlight the negative impact of wealth on human relations. This shows that the concept of money is dynamic and evolves alongside societal changes.

Conclusion

The comparative analysis of the concept of money in the English and Uzbek languages demonstrates that money functions not only as an economic term but also as a culturally significant linguistic concept. While both languages share a common core meaning related to value, exchange, and material resources, their peripheral meanings differ due to historical, cultural, and social factors. English tends to conceptualize money in pragmatic and functional terms, emphasizing efficiency, success, and personal achievement. In contrast, Uzbek linguistic expressions often reflect moral evaluation, ethical restraint, and the social responsibility associated with wealth.

The study confirms that language serves as a mirror of societal attitudes toward economic values. English phraseology frequently portrays money as an active force capable of influencing time, power, and social status, whereas Uzbek proverbs and idiomatic expressions

underline the transient nature of wealth and prioritize human dignity, honesty, and spiritual balance over material accumulation. These differences reveal distinct cultural models of economic behavior embedded in linguistic worldviews.

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