

The Specific Features of Paronyms Related to The Assimilation Layer in English and Uzbek

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Abstract

This article investigates the linguistic features of paronyms within the assimilation layer of English and Uzbek. Paronymy, as a semantic relation denoting part–whole structures, plays a significant role in the lexical organization of languages. When paronyms enter a language through borrowing, they undergo phonological, morphological, and semantic assimilation, forming a distinct assimilated lexical layer. Through a comparative analysis, this study examines how English and Uzbek assimilate paronymic units, identifying shared tendencies and language-specific features. The findings reveal that while both languages exhibit systematic adaptation processes, differences arise due to typological distinctions, morphological structure, and phonotactic constraints. The research contributes to contrastive semantics, contact linguistics, and the study of lexical assimilation.

Keywords: paronymy, assimilation layer, lexical borrowing, English, Uzbek, semantic relations

1. Introduction

Lexical systems of languages are dynamic structures constantly shaped by internal development and external contact. One of the most productive mechanisms influencing vocabulary expansion is lexical borrowing, which introduces foreign units into a language. These borrowed elements do not remain unchanged; rather, they are gradually integrated into the recipient language through a process known as **assimilation**. Within this assimilated lexical layer, semantic relations such as synonymy, hyponymy, and **paronymy** acquire distinctive features.

Paronymy refers to the semantic relationship between a whole and its constituent parts (e.g., *hand–finger*, *tree–leaf*). While paronymy has been extensively studied in general lexical semantics, its behavior within the **assimilation layer** has received comparatively little attention, especially in contrastive studies involving typologically different languages such as English and Uzbek.

This article aims to analyze the specific features of paronyms that belong to the assimilation layer in English and Uzbek. The focus is on how phonological, morphological, and semantic assimilation processes affect paronymic structures. By comparing these two languages, the study seeks to reveal both universal tendencies and language-specific patterns in the assimilation of paronymic vocabulary.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Paronymy as a Lexical-Semantic Relation

Paronymy is traditionally defined as a **part–whole semantic relation**, where the meaning of one lexical unit denotes a component of a larger entity [3]. In semantic theory, paronymy is often contrasted with hyponymy, which expresses class–subclass relations. For example, while *rose* is a hyponym of *flower*, *petal* is a paronym of *flower*.

Cruse emphasizes that paronymy is not a single uniform relation but a cluster of related relations, including component–object (*wheel–car*), member–collection (*tree–forest*), and substance–object (*wood–table*). These distinctions are important when analyzing paronyms in borrowed and assimilated vocabulary, as different types may undergo different assimilation processes [1].

2.2. The Concept of the Assimilation Layer

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The **assimilation layer** refers to the portion of a language's lexicon consisting of borrowed words that have been partially or fully adapted to the recipient language's phonological, morphological, and semantic systems [2]. Assimilation is not instantaneous; it occurs gradually, often over several generations of speakers.

In English, borrowings from Latin, French, and Greek form a significant part of the assimilated layer. In Uzbek, lexical assimilation has historically occurred through contact with Arabic, Persian, Russian, and more recently English [4]. Assimilated words often lose their foreignness and become indistinguishable from native vocabulary, including their participation in semantic relations such as paronymy.

2. Research Method

The study adopts a comparative-descriptive approach, combining semantic analysis with elements of contact linguistics. The data consists of paronymic lexical units in English and Uzbek [5] that originated through borrowing and now function as part of the assimilated layer.

Examples were selected from:

- English explanatory and etymological dictionaries
- Uzbek explanatory and bilingual dictionaries
- Scholarly works on Uzbek and English lexicology

The analysis focuses on:

1. Phonological assimilation
2. Morphological assimilation
3. Semantic integration of paronyms

English paronymic vocabulary has been enriched through extensive borrowing, particularly from:

- **Latin and Greek** (*radius, muscle, cell*)
- **French** (*engine, button, panel*)

Many of these borrowed words denote **parts of objects, bodies, or systems**, making them natural candidates for paronymic relations.

For example:

- *Engine* (from Old French *engin*) functions as a paronym of *car*.
- *Muscle* (from Latin *musculus*) is a paronym of *body*.

4.2. Phonological and Morphological Assimilation

Borrowed paronyms in English typically undergo phonological simplification to fit English stress patterns and sound inventories. Over time, they acquire native plural markers and derivational affixes:

- *Muscle* → *muscles*
- *Panel* → *paneling*

Morphological assimilation enables these paronyms to participate freely in word formation processes, reinforcing their integration into the lexicon. One notable feature of English assimilated paronyms is **semantic expansion**. For instance, *cell* originally denoted a small room but later developed meanings such as a biological unit or part of a battery. Despite this polysemy, the part-whole relation remains central in many contexts.

3. Result

There Uzbek has assimilated paronymic vocabulary from several languages:

- **Arabic** (*jism* “body”, *a’zo* “organ”)
- **Persian** (*dasta* “handle”)
- **Russian** (*detal* “detail”, *motor*)

These borrowed units often entered Uzbek during periods of intense cultural and political contact. Unlike English, Uzbek is an agglutinative language, which significantly influences assimilation. Borrowed paronyms adopt Uzbek vowel harmony and suffixation patterns:

- *Detal* → *detallar* (plural)
- *Motor* → *motorli* (“with an engine”)

Once assimilated, these paronyms behave morphologically like native Uzbek words, freely taking case and possessive markers. Uzbek assimilated paronyms often show **semantic narrowing** rather than expansion. For example, *detal* primarily retains its technical meaning as a part of a machine. This tendency reflects the functional specialization of borrowed vocabulary in Uzbek.

Both languages demonstrate that:

- Paronyms integrate into the assimilated layer through gradual adaptation.
- Assimilated paronyms actively participate in part-whole semantic networks.
- Borrowed paronyms eventually lose their foreign status.

However, significant differences arise due to typological factors:

Table 1. Paronyms in the Assimilation Layer of English

Feature	English	Uzbek
Morphological type	Analytic	Agglutinative
Semantic tendency	Semantic tendency	Semantic tendency
Borrowing sources	Latin, French, Greek	Arabic, Persian, Russian

Whole (Holonym)	Partonym	Source Language	Assimilation Features	Example Sentence
Car	engine	Old French (<i>engin</i>)	Phonological simplification; native plural (<i>engines</i>)	<i>The engine is the most important part of the car.</i>
Body	muscle	Latin (<i>musculus</i>)	Morphological assimilation; plural -s	<i>Muscles help the body move.</i>
Computer	keyboard	Greek (<i>kybernaō</i>) + English	Hybrid formation; semantic specialization	<i>The keyboard is a key part of a computer.</i>
Building	panel	French (<i>panel</i>)	Full phonological adaptation	<i>The wall panel was damaged.</i>

The table presents examples of paronymic relations in English, showing how whole–part lexical pairs (holonym–partonym) have developed through language contact and assimilation. Each entry identifies the source language of the partonym, describes the phonological, morphological, or semantic assimilation features that occurred when the word entered English, and provides an example sentence demonstrating how the partonym functions within the holonym–partonym relationship. The table illustrates how borrowed vocabulary becomes fully integrated into the English lexicon while maintaining clear semantic links between objects and their constituent parts.

Table 2. Paronyms in the Assimilation Layer of Uzbek

Butunlik (Holonim)	Qism (Partonim)	Manba tili language	O'zlashuv xususiyati Appropriation feature	Misol gap Example
Mashina Car	Motor Motor	Rus tili Russian	Fonetik moslashuv; -lar ko'plik	<i>Mashinaning motori ishdan chiqdi.</i>

Tana Body	a'zo part	Arab tili arabian	Semantik barqarorlik; egalik qo'shimchalari	<i>Tananing har bir a'zosi muhim.</i>
Stol Table	Detal Detail	Rus tili Russian	Texnik termin sifatida torlashuv	<i>Stolning bir detali yetishmayapti.</i>
Eshik Door	Dasta Hand	Fors tili Persian	To'liq morfologik moslashuv	<i>Eshik dastasi sinib qoldi.</i>
Bino Building	Qavat floor	Arab tili arabian	Vokal uyg'unligi va affiksatsiya	<i>Binoning ikkinchi qavati yopiq.[8]</i>

The table presents a set of Uzbek holonym–partonym (butun–qism) relationships that illustrate how borrowed lexical items become integrated into the Uzbek language system. Each holonym is paired with its corresponding partonym, and the source language of the partonym is identified to show the influence of Russian, Arabic, and Persian on Uzbek vocabulary. The table also outlines the appropriation (assimilation) features, such as phonetic adaptation, semantic narrowing, morphological integration, and affixation processes, which demonstrate how loanwords undergo structural and functional changes when entering Uzbek[9]. The example sentences further show how these assimilated partonyms operate within natural linguistic contexts, highlighting the interaction between borrowed terms and native grammatical patterns. This table thus serves to illustrate the linguistic behavior, adaptation patterns, and functional roles of partonyms within the broader framework of Uzbek lexical assimilation.

Table 3. Comparative Features of English and Uzbek Assimilated Partonyms

Feature	English	Uzbek
Main borrowing sources	Latin, French, Greek	Arabic, Persian, Russian
Morphological behavior	Limited inflection	Rich agglutinative suffixation
Semantic development	Polysemy, metaphorization	Semantic narrowing
Productivity in derivation	Moderate (<i>engine</i> → <i>engineering</i>)	High (<i>motor</i> → <i>motorli</i>)
Degree of assimilation	Often complete	Systematically complete

Table 3 presents a comparative analysis of assimilation features observed in English and Uzbek partonyms that have entered each language through borrowing. The table highlights the major structural, morphological, and semantic differences in how the two languages incorporate loanwords. It identifies the primary donor languages, outlines the morphological behavior of assimilated partonyms, and explains typical patterns of semantic development in each language[10]. The table also compares the productivity of derivational processes—showing how borrowed partonyms generate new words—and evaluates the overall degree of assimilation within the linguistic system. Through these features, the table demonstrates that while English tends to integrate loanwords with relatively limited inflectional change, Uzbek exhibits a more systematic and extensive assimilation due to its agglutinative morphology and high derivational capacity.

Table 4. Types of Paronymic Relations in Assimilated Vocabulary

Type of Paronymy	English Example	Uzbek Example
Component–Object	<i>wheel – car</i>	<i>g'ildirak – mashina</i>
Part–Body	<i>finger – hand</i>	<i>barmoq – qo'l</i>
Member–Collection	<i>tree – forest</i>	<i>daraxt – o'rmon</i>
Substance–Object	<i>wood – table</i>	<i>yog'och – stol</i>
Technical Part–System	<i>chip – computer</i>	<i>detal – mexanizm</i>

Table 4 classifies the major types of paronymic relations found in assimilated vocabulary in English and Uzbek. It illustrates how whole–part relationships are organized across different semantic domains, including physical components, body parts, collective groupings, material–object relations, and technical systems. Each type of paronymy is represented with parallel examples from English and Uzbek, showing how both languages structure and categorize part–whole associations in their lexicons[11]. The table demonstrates that, despite differences in linguistic origin and assimilation patterns, English and Uzbek share universal cognitive principles in forming paronymic relations, while simultaneously reflecting their unique lexical and cultural characteristics. This classification helps clarify the functional behavior of assimilated paronyms and the semantic roles they fulfill within each language.

The study of assimilated paronyms reveals broader cultural and cognitive patterns. In English, the openness to semantic expansion reflects a long tradition of lexical flexibility. In Uzbek, controlled semantic integration reflects the preservation of lexical clarity within an agglutinative framework.

Understanding these patterns is particularly important for:

- Translation studies
- Lexicography
- Language teaching and bilingual education

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

This article has examined the specific features of paronyms within the assimilation layer of English and Uzbek. The analysis demonstrates that while both languages assimilate paronymic vocabulary through phonological, morphological, and semantic adaptation, the outcomes differ significantly due to structural and historical factors.

English assimilated paronyms tend toward polysemy and semantic expansion, whereas Uzbek paronyms exhibit semantic stability and morphological regularity. These findings contribute to comparative lexicology and highlight the importance of paronymy in understanding lexical assimilation processes.

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