CONTRASTIVE FEATURES OF THE ADJECTIVE IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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Abstract: The article compares the adjective as a part of speech in English and Uzbek, two languages of different structural types: analytical with inflectional remnants in the first case, agglutinative in the second. The comparison covers degrees of comparison, the predicative use of adjectives, word-building means, the position of the adjective in the noun phrase, substantivization and adverbial use. It is shown that the Uzbek adjective has a richer system of degree forms, including attenuative (-ish, -imtir) and intensive (qip-qizil, oppoq) forms that English renders lexically, while English has a fixed order of several prenominal adjectives and allows postposition, which Uzbek does not. In Uzbek a substantivized adjective takes plural, case and possessive suffixes, whereas English needs the prop-word one or the article construction the + adjective. The results can be used in teaching contrastive grammar and in translation practice.

Keywords: adjective, contrastive grammar, degrees of comparison, agglutination, substantivization, word formation, attributive position, English, Uzbek.

The adjective is usually defined in both English and Uzbek grammars as a word denoting a property of an object. Beyond this shared semantic core the two languages treat the adjective quite differently, and the differences follow from their typology. English has lost almost all of its adjectival inflection: an adjective does not agree with the noun in number, gender or case, and the only inflectional category left is degree [1; 3]. Uzbek is agglutinative, and its adjectives also lack agreement, but they combine freely with suffixes once they leave the attributive position [6; 7]. A teacher or translator working with both languages meets these differences daily, which is why they deserve a systematic description.

The first point of contrast is the category of degree. English forms the comparative and superlative synthetically with -er and -est (tall, taller, tallest), analytically with more and most (more interesting, the most interesting), and suppletively in a small

group of words (good, better, best; bad, worse, worst). The choice between the synthetic and the analytic form depends largely on the length of the stem [1; 2]. Uzbek has one productive comparative suffix, -roq: katta – kattaroq, baland – balandroq. The superlative is analytical and is built with the particle eng: eng katta, eng baland. Suppletion is absent. Uzbek grammars also describe degrees that English does not have as grammatical forms [6; 7; 8]. The attenuative degree expresses a weakened quality through the suffixes -ish, -imtir, -mtil: ko‘kish, qizg‘ish, oqimtir, achchiqmtil. English renders these meanings with the lexical suffix -ish (reddish, bluish) or with words like slightly and somewhat, and the suffix is far less regular than its Uzbek counterpart. The intensive degree is formed by partial reduplication of the first syllable with an inserted consonant: qip-qizil, yap-yangi, ko‘m-ko‘k, oppoq, yam-yashil. An English translation needs an adverb or a compound (bright red, brand-new, snow-white), so the grammatical form of one language corresponds to a lexical combination in the other.

The comparative construction itself is arranged differently. In English the object of comparison is introduced by the conjunction than and the comparative form is obligatory: My brother is taller than me. In Uzbek the object of comparison takes the ablative suffix -dan, and the adjective may stay in its base form: Akam mendan baland. The form akam mendan balandroq is also possible, but the ablative already carries the comparative meaning. The opposite case occurs as well. Uzbek -roq used without an object of comparison often means "a little, rather": kattaroq xona is "a fairly large room", not necessarily "a larger room". Learners who translate -roq automatically as -er produce sentences that sound incomplete in English.

The predicative use of adjectives gives the second group of differences. An English adjective in the predicate needs a link verb: The house is old; She seems tired. In Uzbek the third person present tense needs no copula at all (Uy eski), and in formal style the affix -dir may be added (Uy eskidir). In the first and second person the adjective takes personal predicative endings directly: Men xursandman, Sen xursandsan, Biz xursandmiz. An English adjective cannot take person markers, so the category of person in an Uzbek predicate corresponds to the form of the verb to be in English.

Word formation in the two languages shows a number of parallels. English derives adjectives with suffixes such as -ful, -less, -ous, -al, -ive, -able, -y and with negative prefixes un-, in-, non-, dis- [1; 4]. Uzbek has its own suffixes -li, -siz, -chan, -kor, -gi/-ki/-qi, -simon, the borrowed suffix -iy (ilmiy, tarixiy) and prefixes of Persian origin be-, no-, ser-, kam-, ba- [6; 8]. Several pairs correspond almost one to one: -ful and -li (useful – foydali), -less and -siz (hopeless – umidsiz), un- and no- (unclear – noaniq). The correspondence is not complete. The Uzbek suffix -gi forms relative adjectives from words of time and place (kechki, ertangi, ichki, tashqi), and English uses either a separate adjective (evening, inner) or a noun in attributive position. Compound

adjectives are productive in both languages, for example blue-eyed and ko‘k ko‘zli, but English writes them as one word or with a hyphen, while Uzbek writes the components separately.

The borderline between the adjective and the noun is a separate problem. In English a noun can stand before another noun as a modifier without any change: stone wall, gold ring, evening news. Quirk and his co-authors do not regard such nouns as adjectives because they do not take degrees and cannot be used predicatively in the same sense [1]. Uzbek allows the same pattern: tosh devor, oltin uzuk, temir eshik. Uzbek grammarians have long discussed whether words like oltin and temir in this position become adjectives; the traditional view treats them as nouns in the function of an attribute [6; 7]. The two languages therefore have a similar zone of transition, and in both it is the syntactic position, not morphology, that marks the attributive function.

The position of the adjective in the noun phrase gives the clearest structural difference. Both languages place the attributive adjective before the noun, which fits the general tendency of verb-object languages like English and object-verb languages like Uzbek to differ in many other respects [10]. English, however, allows postposition in several cases: after indefinite pronouns (something new, nobody else), in fixed expressions (court martial, the president elect), with some adjectives in -able and -ible (the best solution possible) and with adjectives that have their own complement (a man proud of his son) [2]. Uzbek keeps the adjective before the noun in all these cases: yangi narsa, o‘g‘li bilan faxrlanadigan odam. When several adjectives modify one noun, English follows a fairly stable order: opinion, size, age, shape, colour, origin, material, purpose (a lovely little old Italian leather bag) [2; 4]. In Uzbek the order is freer and is guided by the communicative weight of each word, although a similar tendency to put the more objective property closer to the noun can be observed. Article usage adds one more feature. English adjectives stand between the article and the noun (a big house), and the absence of articles in Uzbek means that the indefinite meaning is conveyed by bir, whose place can vary: bir katta uy and katta bir uy are both possible, the second giving more prominence to the quality.

Substantivization works in opposite ways in the two languages. An English adjective used without a noun keeps its adjectival form and needs the definite article (the rich, the young, the unknown). Such groups denote a class of people and agree with a plural verb, but the adjective itself cannot take the plural -s [2]. When a particular object is meant, English uses the prop-word one: the red one, the bigger ones. An Uzbek adjective in the same situation behaves like a noun: it takes plural, case and possessive suffixes. Yaxshilar, kattalarga, qizilini olaman ("I will take the red one"), eng kattasi ("the biggest one"). The possessive suffix -i/-si in kattasi plays roughly the role of English one combined with the definite article. This difference matters for

translation, because a learner who does not know it either omits one in English or adds an unnecessary noun in Uzbek.

Adverbial use also differs. Most Uzbek qualitative adjectives can modify a verb without any suffix: yaxshi o‘qiydi, tez yuradi, chiroyli yozadi. English normally derives an adverb with -ly (beautifully, quickly) or uses a separate word (good – well). Only a limited set of English adjectives has the same form as the adverb, such as fast, hard and late. The Uzbek attributive and adverbial uses of yaxshi are thus covered by two English words, good and well.

The semantic classification is close in both traditions. English grammars distinguish qualitative and relative adjectives, gradable and non-gradable ones [3; 5]; Uzbek grammars use the terms asliy sifatlar and nisbiy sifatlar [6; 8]. In both languages only qualitative adjectives take degree forms, and relative adjectives like wooden, yog‘och or ilmiy normally do not. Dixon’s observation that the adjective class is open in some languages and small and closed in others [5] does not separate English and Uzbek, since in both the class is large and open. What separates them is the formal behaviour of the adjective outside the attributive slot.

The comparison leads to several practical conclusions. Uzbek grammar expresses weakened and intensified quality with regular morphological means, and English uses lexical ones for the same meanings. The comparative construction in Uzbek depends on the ablative case more than on the comparative suffix. The English adjective needs a copula in the predicate and has strict rules of order and postposition, while the Uzbek adjective takes personal endings in the predicate and becomes a noun with full nominal morphology when the noun is omitted. In teaching English to Uzbek students these points should be presented as contrasts with ready translation equivalents, since interference here is regular and predictable [9].

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