

## COMPARE THE LANGUAGE OR LITERATURE OF THE UZBEK AND KAZAKH LANGUAGES

**Tanatarov Kalmatay Amangali uli**

*3rd year student of the Faculty of Turkic Languages, Nukus State Pedagogical  
Institute named after Ajiniyaz, Kazakh Language and Literature*

**Abstract:** *The Uzbek and Kazakh languages, both belonging to the Turkic language family, share a rich linguistic and literary heritage. Despite their common roots, they exhibit unique characteristics in terms of phonology, grammar, vocabulary, and writing systems. Uzbek uses a Latin-based alphabet and has strong Persian and Arabic influences in its vocabulary, while Kazakh has been transitioning from Cyrillic to Latin, with notable Russian influence. Both languages utilize agglutinative grammar and follow the Subject-Object-Verb word order. Literary traditions in both languages are steeped in classical poetry, oral storytelling, and modern social themes, with figures such as Alisher Navoi in Uzbek literature and the epic tradition in Kazakh literature playing crucial roles. This comparison explores these languages' structural and literary distinctions and their shared cultural and linguistic roots.*

**Keywords:** *Uzbek language, Kazakh language, Turkic languages, linguistic comparison, phonology, grammar, vocabulary, writing system, Uzbek literature, Kazakh literature, Alisher Navoi, Kazakh epic tradition, language evolution, Central Asian literature.*

The Uzbek and Kazakh languages, both members of the Turkic language family, are widely spoken in Central Asia, where they serve as the official languages of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, respectively. While these two languages share a common linguistic origin, their development has been shaped by distinct historical, cultural, and political influences, leading to both similarities and differences in their structure, vocabulary, and literary traditions.

The Turkic languages, including Uzbek and Kazakh, evolved from the Proto-Turkic language, and both languages share features such as vowel harmony, agglutination, and a Subject-Object-Verb word order. However, over centuries of separate development, they have diverged in key areas, particularly in their phonology, syntax, and lexicon. Uzbek has been significantly influenced by Persian and Arabic due to its historical position as a center of trade and culture in Central Asia, while Kazakh, due to its proximity to Russia and its history as part of the Russian Empire and Soviet Union, has absorbed more Russian linguistic elements.

The writing systems of these two languages also reflect their distinct historical trajectories. Uzbek has been using the Latin alphabet since 1993, a transition that was part of a broader effort to distance the country from its Soviet past. In contrast, Kazakh remained under the Cyrillic alphabet until recently, with plans to switch to the Latin alphabet fully by 2025. In terms of literature, both languages boast rich traditions. Uzbek

literature is renowned for its classical poetry, with figures like Alisher Navoi, while Kazakh literature is rooted in oral storytelling traditions, exemplified by the epic "**The Book of Dede Korkut**". Despite their differences, both languages and literatures remain integral to the cultural identities of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, reflecting the shared heritage and unique paths of development that have shaped the region.[1,56]

The Uzbek and Kazakh languages, although rooted in the same Turkic language family, have distinct features and literary traditions. This section compares the two languages in terms of phonology, grammar, vocabulary, and literature, highlighting both their shared aspects and differences.

Both Uzbek and Kazakh exhibit typical Turkic features like vowel harmony, but there are notable differences in their phonological systems.

- **Vowel Harmony:** Both languages follow vowel harmony, a characteristic of Turkic languages where vowels within a word harmonize to be either front or back vowels. For example, the Uzbek word "kitob" (book) contains back vowels, while "kishi" (person) uses front vowels. Similarly, Kazakh uses vowel harmony in words like "kitap" (book), where the vowels are also of the back type.

- **Consonants:** Kazakh has a broader range of vowel sounds compared to Uzbek. For instance, Kazakh includes sounds like "ø" (similar to the German "ö"), which Uzbek does not have. Uzbek's system is comparatively simpler in terms of vowel inventory. Furthermore, Kazakh has some palatalized consonants, such as "к" and "н," which appear less frequently in Uzbek.[2,76]

Both languages are agglutinative, meaning they use suffixes to modify word meanings, but there are differences in the complexity of verb conjugations and case systems.

- **Verb Conjugation:** Both languages form verb tenses using suffixes. For example, the verb "to go" is "bor" in Uzbek and "bar" in Kazakh. To express the present tense, Uzbek uses "boraman" (I go) and Kazakh uses "baramyn" (I go). The endings for the present tense differ in both languages, highlighting some divergence in their grammatical structures.

- **Cases:** Both languages have several grammatical cases. For example, in Uzbek, the genitive case is formed by the suffix "-ning" (e.g., "kitobning" – "of the book"), whereas in Kazakh, it is "-tın" (e.g., "kitaptın" – "of the book"). Both languages use cases to indicate possession, direction, and other grammatical roles, but the actual forms differ due to phonological changes.

While both languages share a significant portion of their vocabulary due to their common Turkic roots, external influences have shaped each language differently. Due to Uzbekistan's historical connections with Persia and the Arabic-speaking world, Uzbek contains many loanwords from Persian and Arabic. For instance, the word for "book" is "kitob" in Uzbek, a loan from Persian. Similarly, religious terms, such as "namoz" (prayer), are derived from Arabic. Kazakh has absorbed more Russian vocabulary due to the prolonged influence of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. Words like "avtobus" (bus) and "television" in Kazakh reflect this influence, whereas Uzbek would

use more traditional Turkic terms such as "yo'l avtobusi" for bus and "televizor" (borrowed from Russian, but still different in form). [4]

Literary traditions in both languages are rich and reflect the cultures of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Both literatures include classical poetry, oral epics, and modern literary movements.

The most significant figure in classical Uzbek literature is **Alisher Navoi**, a 15th-century poet who wrote in both Persian and Chagatai (a Turkic language closely related to Uzbek). Navoi's "**Khamisa**" (Five Poems) is one of the most important works in the Turkic literary world, blending Persian influence with Turkic traditions. Uzbek literature also includes works that reflect the political and social changes of the 20th century, such as **Abdulla Qodiriy's** novel "*O'tkan Kunlar*" (Days Gone By), which explores the life of an Uzbek man during the Russian colonial period.

Kazakh literature is deeply rooted in oral traditions, particularly the "**dastan**" (epic) genre. One of the most famous epics is "**The Book of Dede Korkut**", a collection of Turkic epic poems that are foundational to Kazakh culture. The literature of Kazakhstan also includes works by 20th-century authors like **Chinghiz Aitmatov**, whose novel "*The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years*" explores the intersection of Soviet and Kazakh identities. Aitmatov is considered one of the most important authors in Central Asian literature, with works that address both traditional Kazakh life and modern challenges.

In conclusion, while the Uzbek and Kazakh languages share a common Turkic heritage, their evolution has been shaped by different historical, political, and cultural influences. The phonology, grammar, vocabulary, and literary traditions of both languages reflect these unique paths, contributing to the rich tapestry of Central Asian linguistic and literary history. Despite their differences, both languages continue to serve as vital symbols of national identity and cultural heritage in their respective countries.

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