



NOMINALIZATION STRATEGIES IN ANALYTIC VS. AGGLUTINATIVE LANGUAGES

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Abstract: Nominalization in analytic and agglutinative languages reveals distinct morphological and syntactic patterns that shape discourse organization. By examining derivational processes and argument structures, this analysis highlights cross-linguistic contrasts and their impact on information density, cognitive processing, and linguistic expression.

Keywords: Nominalization, analytic languages, agglutinative languages, morphology, syntax, English, Uzbek, Turkish, linguistic typology, discourse

Annotatsiya: Analitik va qo‘shilmali tillardagi nominizatsiya turli morfologik va sintaktik tuzilmalarga ega bo‘lib, diskursni tashkil qilishga ta’sir qiladi. Morfologik hosil qilish va argument tuzilmasi tahlili til tipologiyasidagi farqlar, ma’lumot zichligi va kognitiv jarayonlarga ta’sirini ko‘rsatadi.

Kalit so‘zlar: Nominizatsiya, analitik tillar, qo‘shilmali tillar, morfologiya, sintaksis, ingliz tili, o‘zbek tili, turk tili, tipologiya, diskurs

Аннотация: Номинализация в аналитических и агглютинативных языках демонстрирует различные морфологические и синтаксические схемы, влияющие на организацию дискурса. Анализ деривационных процессов и структуры аргументов выявляет типологические различия и их влияние на информационную плотность и когнитивные процессы.

Ключевые слова: Номинализация, аналитические языки, агглютинативные языки, морфология, синтаксис, английский, узбекский, тюркский, типология, дискурс

Introduction

Nominalization, the process of converting verbs, adjectives, or clauses into nouns or noun phrases, plays a key role in shaping morphology, syntax, argument structure, and discourse organization. It enables abstraction of actions and processes, supporting formal and academic expression. Its realization depends on a language’s typological profile. Analytic languages like English rely on word order and function words, using derivational affixes (e.g., *-ment*, *-tion*)

and periphrastic constructions, which allow flexible argument placement but may obscure agents. Agglutinative languages such as Uzbek and Turkish use sequences of affixes to encode grammatical relations directly within nominalized forms. This results in compact, information-rich expressions that integrate event and participant roles. Comparing these systems reveals how languages map events and participants into nominal structures and highlights differences in abstraction and argument expression. This study examines English, Uzbek, and Turkish to identify patterns in morphology, syntax, and discourse, emphasizing typological distinctions and cognitive implications.

Methodology

This study employs a descriptive-comparative approach to investigate nominalization in English, Uzbek, and Turkish. Data were drawn from contemporary corpora, grammatical descriptions, and typological studies. Instances of nominalization were systematically categorized according to source word class (verbal, adjectival, clause-based), morphological strategy (affixation, zero derivation, periphrastic construction), and syntactic placement within noun phrases or clauses. English data focused on both written and spoken registers, with attention to suffix-based derivations (-tion, -ment, -ing) and syntactic nominalizations. Uzbek and Turkish data emphasized bound affixation patterns, including deverbal and deadjectival suffixes (-ish/ma, -ish/ma), and their interaction with case, number, and possessive markers. Each form was analyzed for argument expression, syntactic flexibility, and discourse function. The analysis combined qualitative examination of morphosyntactic patterns with quantitative evaluation, including frequency counts and distribution across discourse types.

Results and Discussion

1. English Nominalization

Nominalization in English represents a complex interaction between morphology, syntax, and discourse, reflecting the broader typological characteristics of analytic languages. Unlike morphologically rich languages, English relies heavily on syntactic structures and limited derivational morphology to encode grammatical relations. As a result, nominalization strategies often involve restructuring argument relations and shifting the informational focus of the clause.

One of the most productive mechanisms is derivational suffixation, which transforms verbs into abstract nouns. Common suffixes include -tion, -ment, -ance, and -ing. For example:

develop → *development*

decide → *decision*

perform → *performance*

These derivations do not merely change word class; they also alter the argument structure of the base verb. Consider the transformation:

The committee decided the issue.

The committee’s decision on the issue.

In the verbal clause, the committee functions as the subject (agent), and the issue as the object (theme). In the nominalized form, however, the agent becomes optional or possessive,

and the object is restructured as a prepositional phrase (on the issue). This demonstrates a process of argument demotion and valency reduction, where core participants are no longer syntactically central. Such restructuring contributes to the abstraction of the event, shifting focus from “who did what” to “what happened.”

Another important strategy is zero derivation (conversion), where a verb becomes a noun without any overt morphological change:

to run → *a run*

to walk → *a walk*

This process highlights the flexibility of English lexical categories. However, because no explicit marker signals nominalization, interpretation depends on syntactic context and semantic cues. Conversion often produces polysemous forms, where meaning varies depending on usage. For instance, a run can refer to an event, a duration, or even a sequence, illustrating the importance of context in analytic languages.

Periphrastic nominalization represents another key strategy:

the act of running

the decision to postpone the meeting

These constructions rely on function words (of, to) to encode argument relations, compensating for the lack of rich morphological marking. They often preserve argument structure more transparently than derived nouns and are particularly common in formal and academic discourse. Periphrastic forms also allow greater explicitness, which can reduce ambiguity compared to more compressed nominalizations. From a discourse perspective, English nominalizations play a crucial role in information structuring. They enable thematization (placing important information in subject position) and compression (condensing clauses into noun phrases).

For example:

The rapid development of technology has transformed society.

Here, a complex process (technology develops rapidly) is packaged into a nominal phrase, allowing it to function as a single discourse unit. This contributes to the density and formality of academic texts.

From a cognitive perspective, however, nominalization may increase processing complexity. Because arguments are often implicit or restructured, readers must infer relationships between participants. This can increase cognitive load, particularly for non-native speakers. Thus, English nominalization balances between efficiency and interpretive effort.

2. Uzbek Nominalization

In contrast to English, Uzbek nominalization is deeply rooted in its agglutinative morphological system, where grammatical relations are encoded through sequences of suffixes attached to a lexical base. This allows nominalized forms to retain a high degree of structural transparency and argument representation.

The most common strategy is deverbal nominalization using suffixes such as -ish:

o‘qimoq → *o‘qish*

ishlamoq → *ishlash*

These forms preserve the semantic core of the verb while enabling it to function as a noun. Crucially, Uzbek nominalizations can take additional morphological markers:

o‘qish-ni (reading-ACC)

o‘qish-im (my reading)

o‘qish-lar (readings-PL)

This demonstrates that nominalized forms are fully integrated into the inflectional system of the language. Unlike English, where nominalization often reduces argument structure, Uzbek allows arguments to remain explicitly marked.

For example:

Kitobni o‘qish juda foydali.

Here, *kitobni* (the book-ACC) retains its role as the object, even within the nominalized structure. This indicates that Uzbek nominalization preserves valency, maintaining the relationship between the verb and its arguments.

Another important feature is morphological layering, where multiple suffixes can be combined:

o‘qish-im-ni (my reading-ACC)

Such constructions encode possession, case, and number within a single word, illustrating the high degree of morphological density characteristic of agglutinative languages.

Deadjectival nominalization is also productive:

yaxshi → *yaxshilik*

tez → *tezlik*

These forms allow abstract qualities to be expressed as nouns while maintaining semantic transparency. This contributes to lexical productivity and facilitates the formation of abstract vocabulary.

From a discourse perspective, Uzbek nominalizations enable highly compact expressions. Complex actions and relationships can be encoded within a single word or tightly structured phrase. This supports textual cohesion and reduces the need for auxiliary syntactic constructions.

From a cognitive perspective, this compactness can enhance processing efficiency for native speakers, as relationships are explicitly marked. However, for learners, the complexity of suffix sequences may increase processing difficulty. Mastery of affix order and function is essential, as errors can lead to misinterpretation.

3. Turkish Nominalization

Turkish nominalization exhibits similar agglutinative properties to Uzbek but also demonstrates unique patterns of derivation and argument encoding. As a highly regular morphological system, Turkish allows systematic integration of nominalization into its grammatical structure.

Deverbal nominalization is achieved through suffixes such as -me, -ma, and -iş:

gelmek → *geliş*

pişirmek → *pişirme*

These forms can be further inflected:

Gelişi bekliyorum

Pişirmenin püf noktaları

In these examples, possessive and case markers encode argument roles within the nominalized form. This reflects a key feature of Turkish: internal argument encoding, where participants remain structurally integrated rather than externalized.

Deadjectival nominalization includes:

güzel → *güzellik*

hızlı → *hız*

These derivations allow the expression of abstract qualities, similar to Uzbek, but often exhibit phonological and morphological alternations specific to Turkish.

A notable feature of Turkish is its ability to embed complex structures within nominalized forms. Multiple participants, modifiers, and grammatical relations can be encoded through suffix sequences, resulting in highly compact expressions. This demonstrates a strong reliance on morphology for grammatical organization.

From a discourse perspective, Turkish nominalizations contribute to efficiency and clarity. By encoding relationships morphologically, they reduce reliance on word order and function words. This allows for flexible sentence structure while maintaining coherence.

From a cognitive perspective, Turkish nominalization supports efficient information processing by providing explicit markers for grammatical relations. However, the complexity of suffix chains may pose challenges for learners, particularly in distinguishing between derivational and inflectional functions.

Comparative analysis of nominalization strategies reveals consistent typological contrasts between analytic and agglutinative languages. English primarily employs derivational affixes and syntactic constructions, often externalizing arguments through prepositions and allowing agent omission. This leads to a shift in focus from participants to processes, increasing abstraction but sometimes reducing clarity of semantic roles. In contrast, Uzbek and Turkish encode grammatical relations directly within nominalized forms through affixation, preserving argument structure and maintaining a clearer mapping between participants and actions. These structural differences also influence information packaging. English distributes meaning across syntactic units, supporting flexibility and stylistic variation, particularly in academic discourse. Meanwhile, Uzbek and Turkish achieve higher information density by integrating multiple grammatical elements into a single morphological unit, resulting in more compact and cohesive expressions.

From a discourse-functional perspective, English nominalizations contribute to impersonality and thematic progression, whereas agglutinative languages enhance explicitness

and structural transparency. Pedagogically, this creates distinct learning challenges: English learners must interpret implicit arguments and agentless constructions, while learners of Uzbek and Turkish need to master complex affix ordering and morphological encoding. Overall, nominalization reflects different strategies of balancing abstraction, clarity, and efficiency across languages.

Conclusion

Nominalization reflects fundamental typological distinctions. Analytic languages like English utilize syntactic constructions and derivational affixes, often separating participants from the nominal. Agglutinative languages such as Uzbek and Turkish integrate nominalization within morphological chains, preserving argument structure and allowing high information density. Understanding these patterns enhances cross-linguistic awareness, informs second-language instruction, and contributes to morphological and syntactic theory. These differences also shape discourse organization, influencing how information is packaged and interpreted in academic, literary, and spoken contexts. Future research may explore psycholinguistic processing of nominalized forms and the impact on discourse comprehension.

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