

# THE SYNTACTIC AND SEMANTIC FEATURES IN THE STREET NAME OF LONDON

*Hoang Trung Nghia\**, *Le Thi Minh Thao†*

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**Abstract:** *Each city's street name serves as either location labels or road identifications. They do, however, also contain excellent values. Street name is a system of vocabulary of a language, used to name for a place. Therefore, it is influenced and governed by general linguistic rules in terms of phonetics, vocabulary - semantics and grammar. Linguistic researchers have approached the name place from two different respects: geographical - cultural perspective and linguistic perspective. In this article, research approach, data collection, data analysis methods were used to analyze the street name of two districts and one area in London to indicate the syntactic and semantic features in the street name in London. Theoretically, this article contributes to a broader understanding of the street name in England from the linguistic and social-cultural standpoint.*

**Keywords:** *place names, street names, linguistic, cultural, semantic, syntactic.*

## **I. Introduction**

In the world, everywhere around us, everything and phenomenon has a name.

Studying place names is important in linguistics, especially in studying language history. In terms of internal structure, it has a significant impact and influence on finding the rules of language structure. The place name is a relatively fixed and long-lasting vocabulary, so investigating and studying it will give us more accurate conclusions than using other words.

The study of place names, in general, and street names, in particular,

clarifies the rules and ways of language structure and each region's culture, history, and traditions. Street names are closely related to the culture and history where they were formed. Each name, each place that appears, has its reasons and interpretations of the people there. Moreover, they can have many different names associated with various events. Those place names help us to go back in time and learn about the cultural features and changes in the nation's history. It is a mirror that reflects language and culture's contemporary and historical values. The study of street names is closely related to

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\*Celtic Pacific Viet Nam Import - Export Company

† Hanoi Open University

the study of culture and history, an urgent issue in the current period.

## **II. Literature Review**

### ***2.1. The definition of place name***

Currently, in the world, many researchers have given different definitions of places. A.V. Superanskaja - a Russian linguist, considered "The place name is the words that indicate "locations, geographical goals", "places, geographical goals are natural or artificial objects that determine the position on the surface of the earth."

Le Trung Hoa is one of those with a sense of the presence of places in linguistic settings, towards theory, more systematic than many other authors. He said: "Places are fixed words or words used as their names of the natural terrain, construction works in favour of two-way space, administrative units, territories". This definition is more about the outfit of the concept and points out how to classify places. Therefore, it is difficult to mould the diverse types of places in this classification definition.

### ***2.2. Researches on street place***

The first studies on the street place in the US began to appear in the late 19th century, and in the early 20th century, the number of research papers increased significantly. Some of the research on street places which were born early in the US can be mentioned here, such as the article *Some Principles of Nomenclature* by author W.J. McGee published in the *American Anthropologist* in 1895. Two years later, Alexander B. Hagner gave a very important speech titled *Street*

*Nomenclature of Washington City before the Congress of the United States.*

In 1992, Brenda published *Street names in colonial Singapore* in *Geographical Review*. In this paper, Brenda conducted a comparative study of two street name systems in Singapore, the official street name system issued by the British colonial government and the street name system named by the Chinese community.

## **III. Methods of the study**

The methods used in this study include qualitative research is primarily exploratory research. It is used to understand underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations. It provides insights into the problem or helps to develop ideas or hypotheses for potential quantitative research. Quantitative data collection methods are much more structured than qualitative data collection methods. Quantitative data collection methods include online surveys, [paper surveys](#), mobile surveys and kiosk surveys, face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, longitudinal studies, website interceptors, online polls, and systematic observations.

## **IV. The features of language of street names in London**

### ***4.1. Syntactic features.***

#### ***4.1.1. General structural model for street names***

To begin, we need an overview of a model known as "complex place names" in order to investigate the structural elements of street names. There are two parts to complex names: The first component is frequently accompanied by terms identifying the object's kind,

while the second portion is the name of the location (street name). The broad property, generality, is found in the first section, while the special attribution, peculiarity, is found in the second. We can easily differentiate those two sections in some of the following complexes of place

4.1.2. *Structural model of street names*

names from this perspective. For instance: Air street, Brewer road, Dean place. The department that stands in the first place is “place, street, road”, also known as the common component, and in second place is “Air, Brewer, Dean” which is the name of the street.

Complex of place names			
Street name			Common component
First element	Second element	Thrid element	Street (St)/Place (Pl)/Walk (Wk)/ Close (Cl)/Drive (Dr)/Court ( Ct)/ Yard (Yd)/ Row (Rw)/ Mews/Av- enue (Ave)

Table 4.1 *Structural model of street names*

The above structural model baseson the criterion of length from small to large of the complex of places appearing 3 London’s districts. The elements mentioned in the model, these elements also separate syllables when naming. Thus, analysis of the complex structure of place names will include two main parts. The first one analyzes the structure of the common element. The second one analyzes the structure of the street name. Each operation, there is a smaller division into the elements, the syllables that generate them. In street names of London’s districts, the maximum number of elements in common components is 1 and in street names is 3.

The following are some examples of common elements: For instance: Oxford street, Castle Lane, Salisbury place, Great Cumberland Mew, etc..

**A) Common component.**

Superanskaja referred to it as “a common name,” Paster referred to itas “a common noun,” Thomas Mener

referred to it as “a generic element,” and Le Trung Hoa referred to it as “a common factor.” Even though they are referred to in a variety of ways, researchers generally agree on the following contents:

- + One of the two elements that generate the place name complex.
- + They are common nouns (nouns).
- + Having the ability to denote a group of items and objects that share the same attributes.
- + Standing in front of the site name, indicating the type of object that has been identified.

However, we have taken AVSuperanskaja’s definition of the common component in order to have the most basic concept: “Geographical targets are given common names that connect them to everything else in thereal world. They are articulated using common nouns, which are words that are used to refer to all objects of the same type that have specific qualities.”

## B) The models reflect the complex structure of street names.

In London, as in other parts of England, street names are divided into two categories: simple structure and complex structure. The complex

structure is separated into many sorts of relationships, including equality relations, main-subordinate relationships.

The models reflect the complex structure of street names.

*Model 1:* Bird Cage Street, Horseferry road  
 ↓ ↓                    ↓ ↓

Noun + Noun      Noun+Noun

*Model 2:* Graycoat street, Whitehall street  
 ↓ ↓                    ↓ ↓

Adjective + Noun, Adjective + Noun

*Model 3:* Lookaroundland close, Meetupzing row  
 ↓ ↓ ↓                    ↓

Verb+ Preposition + Noun

*Model 4:* Adjective + Pronoun

*Model 4.1:* Upper James street, Upper Berkeley, Lower Jonh street  
 ↓ ↓                    ↓ ↓                    ↓ ↓

Upper + Pronoun

Lower + Pronoun

*Model 4.2:* Old Pye Street, New Quebec Street  
 ↓ ↓                    ↓ ↓

Old + Pronoun,      New + Pronoun

*Model 4.3:* Great Pulteney Street , Little Argyll Street  
 ↓ ↓                    ↓ ↓                    ↓ ↓

Great + Pronoun,

Little + Pronoun

*Model 5:* Cabbell Street  
 ↓ ↓

Personal name + Common component

Types of complex structure	The number of street	Rate (%)
Noun + Noun	59	23
Adjective + Noun	41	15,7
Verb+ Preposition + Noun	9	3,4
Adjective + Pronoun	11	4,2
Personal name + Common component	141	54
<b>Total</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>100</b>

*Table 4.2 The complex structure of street names.*

Looking at the table above, we can see those types of complex structure account for the highest percentage of 54%, which shows that London street names are mainly named after people, and have the lowest percentage of types of complex structure (Verb+) Preposition + Noun) only 3.4%

### **B) Street names have simple structure.**

These are street names that consist of an element or a syllable, and street names was named after people's names. Street names have simple structure accounting for 19% in types of structure of street names.

For example: Monk Street, Lexington Street

### **C) Street names have complex structure.**

Street names have complex structure accounting for 81% in types of structure of street names. Street names with complex structure are street names consisting of two or more meaningful elements (words, phrases). This type of structure is divided into two smaller types, according to the relationship between the elements: main-subordinate relationship, coordinated relationship.

➤ Street names have a complex structure according to the main-sub relationship:

The number of street names with complex structure according to main-sub-relationship includes one main component and one minor component.

For example: Normally, in this place name, the main element comes first, the

minor element comes after. The main element is usually a noun. For example, in street names: Bird Cage street, Moss Church street, Erapt Cathedral street,... then the main elements are "Bird ", "Moss ", "Erapt", come first, while the minor elements "Cage", "Church ", "Catherdal", are behind to supplement and distinguish the object.

➤ The street names have complex structure according to coordinated relationship.

The number of street names with complex structure according to coordinated relation accounts for very little in the total number of street names with complex structure, This type of street name with equal relationship has equal elements in term of meaning and the same function.

For example: Economy University Road, Century Hospital Street.

<b>Types of structure</b>	<b>Number of street names</b>	<b>Rate (%)</b>
Simple structure	211	81%
Complex structure	50	19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>100</b>

*Table 4.3: Statistics of street names by types of structure*

## **4.2. Semantic features**

Street names in London are also named according to the following criteria such as:

### *4.2.1. Street names describe colour*

Street names that describe colors account for only 2.2 %, For example: Orange street, Green street...

*4.2.2. Street names reflect the direction and position of objects relative to other objects*

It is also the same name for a street but different in high and low position to indicate the position of the two roads, Street names reflect the direction and position of objects relative to other objects accounting for 2,2% of all groups of names, For example: Lower John Street, Upper John Street

*4.2.3. The streets are named after the Abbot, bishop, Dean's name.*

Street names named after this category account for 11.8% of all naming criteria.

For example: Robert Stillington street, (Robert Stillington (1420 – May 1491) was Bishop of Bath and Wells (1465–1491) and a courtier under Edward IV of England. He twice served as Edward's Lord Chancellor and in 1483, he was instrumental in the accession of Richard III, leading to later reprisals against him under Henry VI). Stillington was selected as Bishop of Bath and Wells on 30 October 1465, and was consecrated on 16 March 1466. He was appointed Lord Chancellor on 20 June 1467 and held the office until 29 September 1470, when Henry VI was restored to the throne. After the return of Edward IV, he was reappointed to his former office and held it until 18 June 1473, when Edward dismissed him.

*4.2.4. Street names are named after people's wishes*

In any part of the world, people always desire the good for everyone, so

in London, there are a number of street names with names expressing the wishes of the indigenous people. Street names are named after people's wishes accounting for 1,4%. This is the smallest group in all.

For instance: Peace street, Prosperity Street, ...

*4.2.5. The streets are named after the famous people, history character*

Street names named according to this criterion account for 28 streets, accounting for 10.7%.

For instance: Hallam street, (Henry Hallam (9 July 1777 – 21 January 1859) was an English historian. Educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, he practised as a barrister on the Oxford circuit for some years before turning to history. His major works were *View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages* (1818), *The Constitutional History of England* (1827), and *Introduction to the Literature of Europe, in the Fifteenth, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (1837). Although he took no part in politics himself, he was well acquainted with the band of authors and politicians who led the Whig party. In an 1828 review of *Constitutional History*, Robert Southey claimed that the work was biased in favour of the Whigs.)

*4.2.6. Street names are named after local landowners*

Streets were named after local landowners have 51 streets, accounting for 19.5%, a fairly high percentage.

In London the wealthy upper and middle class owned a lot of estates, farms, real estate. Streets which are named after the owner are also numerous. The Portman family, a family that owns many properties in London, therefore there are

many family members named for the streets, The Portman Estate principally comprises the London estate and the two farms. The Portman family originated from the west country and purchased an interest in the London estate land in 1532, some 200 years before the beginnings of its development in the Georgian period. The Estate is now held in trust for the benefit of the wider family, with over 130 beneficiaries. The ancestral title is held by The Viscount Portman who leads the family's management of the Estate through the Estate Trustees and the management company, Portman Settled Estates Limited. On inheriting the title in 1999 Lord Portman became the 10th Viscount and began work on rejuvenating the Estate: working with Trustees, appointing its first Chief Executive, and forming the Board of Directors. Lord Portman plays a proactive role across the Estate and is the Chairman of the Board. Since then, the Estate has moved from strength to strength. The Estate actively manages its property assets both directly as landlord to a growing number of residential and commercial customers, and through its relationships with its long-term lease holders. Its aim is to be at the forefront of property management and place making in London, taking forward a contemporary estate within an historic context.

- In some streets in London, street names are named after certain villages where the Portman family owned a lot of land for example: Durweston Street, Clenston Mews, Dorset Street, etc...

- Harcourt Street, (Harcourt (14

December 1772 – 21 February 1810) of Ankerwycke, Buckinghamshire, was member of Parliament for Westbury 18 April 1800 – 1802. In 1791, Harcourt bought the manor house (now known as St. Dunstan's) at Lisson village near Marylebone along with several acres of farmland for development. This land was parcelled out to his stepfather Admiral Molyneux Lord Shuldham, Edward Homer of Marylebone and a Pentonville carpenter by the name of John Watson. The resulting streets were Harcourt Street, Molyneux Street, Shouldham Street, Homer Row, Homer Street and Watson's Mews)

For example: Francis Street (name after Francis Wilcox, local 19th century landowner; formerly Francis Place)

- Wardour Mews, (named after local 17th century landowners the Wardour family, and formerly called Colman Hedge Lane after a nearby field; the section south of Brewer Street was formerly Prince Street prior to 1878, in parallel with Rupert Street)

*4.2.7. Street names are named after other groups*

- Streets which are named after this group are very diverse, that is, the names of writers, poets, merchants, naval officers, painters, etc.

For example: Shouldham Street

(Molyneux Shuldham, 1st Baron Shuldham (1717 – 30 September 1798) was an officer of the British Royal Navy. He served for a time as colonial governor of Newfoundland)

Criteria for naming	Number of places	Rate (%)
The street is named after the British aristocracy and royalty. (King, Queen, Prince, Duke, Earl, Baron, etc...)	61	23,2
Street names describe colour	6	2,2
Street names reflect the direction and position of objects relative to other objects.	6	2,2
The street is named after the famous people, history character	28	10,7
The street is named after the Abbot, bishop, Dean's name	31	11,8
Street names are named after people's wishes	4	1,5
Street names are named after local landowners	51	19,5
Other types	73	27,8
<b>Total</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.4. Street names base on some criteria

## V. Conclusion

Studying the street places of London from a linguistic viewpoint is to point out the meaningful and cultural characteristics of the place. To understand London's street landmarks from a linguistic perspective, we know the meaning of the words that identify them. They have symbolic meaning and represent a hidden, symbolic meaning within. In fact, the linguistic viewpoint has implicit meanings in it. It is the soul of the language shell and the basis for cultural expression. That explanation can be a reflection from the senses brought to describe the object; it can also be the relationship between this object and another object or a reflection on it of feelings, love, wishes, general expectations about social life, personality, and human morality. Therefore, it is a picture showing the material and spiritual life of the people here. From the background of meaning, language characteristics have been clearly demonstrated in each element of street places.

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**Author address: B101, Nguyen Hien, Hai Ba Trung, Hanoi**

**Email: thaoltm@hou.edu.vn**



