



Article

Lexical Assimilation of English Borrowings in the Uzbek Language

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Abstract: This article investigates the processes of lexical and semantic adaptation (assimilation) of English loanwords in the Uzbek language, which stands as one of the pressing issues in modern Uzbek linguistics. The paper analyzes the pathways through which borrowed vocabulary enters the Uzbek lexicon, their phonetic and morphological transformations, and the evolution of their meanings based on the language's internal potential. Furthermore, the role of English terminology in enriching the Uzbek language fund during the era of globalization is scientifically substantiated.

Keywords: Lexical assimilation, English borrowings, language integration, Uzbek linguistics, neologisms, lexical layer, terminology, semantic change.

Introduction

In the era of rapid globalization and unprecedented technological advancement, linguistic interaction and the mutual influence of lexical layers have reached significant levels. As English has become firmly established as the global language of science, economy, technology, and culture, the influx of English borrowings into the Uzbek lexicon has intensified [1]. This process involves not only the introduction of words representing new concepts but also the lexical assimilation of these terms their adaptation to the internal phonetic, morphological, and semantic systems of the Uzbek language [2].

While the study of borrowed layers in Uzbek linguistics has a long history, the current integration of English vocabulary and its absorption into the linguistic fabric requires specialized research. A foreign word does not simply "transfer" into a new language; it is reprocessed according to the pronunciation norms, grammatical rules, and word-formation capabilities of the Uzbek language. In some instances, a borrowed term retains its original meaning, while in others, it acquires new semantic nuances within the local linguistic environment[3].

The primary objective of this article is to determine the position of English borrowings within the Uzbek lexical system and to provide a scientific analysis of the stages of their assimilation. The study focuses on the significance of English neologisms in enriching the Uzbek vocabulary and explores the balance between preserving linguistic purity and utilizing international terminology. Ultimately, this research aims to contribute new insights to modern Uzbek lexicology and terminology, reflecting the dynamic nature of the language in a globalized world [4][5].

Methodology

The methodological foundation of this research is based on a qualitative approach to linguistic analysis, specifically focusing on the structural and semantic transformation of English borrowings within the Uzbek language. Since the study is theoretical and analytical in nature, the following scientific methods were employed to ensure the objectivity and depth of the investigation:

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1.Descriptive methods. This was the primary tool used to identify and categorize English loanwords currently active in the Uzbek lexicon. It allowed for a systematic observation of how these units are integrated into everyday communication and specialized discourses.

2.Comparative-typological analysis. This method was utilized to contrast the phonetic, morphological, and semantic structures of the source words in English with their adapted forms in Uzbek. By comparing these two systems, the degree of lexical assimilation and the specific changes triggered by the internal laws of the Uzbek language were identified.

3.Contextual and semantic analysis. To understand the evolution of meaning, words were analyzed within various contexts (media, academic texts, and social networks). This helped determine whether a borrowing retained its original meaning, narrowed its scope, or acquired new connotative nuances.

Results

The analysis of the collected data reveals that the lexical assimilation of English borrowings in the Uzbek language is not a uniform process but a multi-level integration governed by the linguistic requirements of the receptor language. The research identifies that most English terms undergo a “filtering” process through three primary stages: phonetic adjustment, morphological integration, and semantic stabilization [6].

One of the most prominent results is the phonetic restructuring of English words to fit the vocalic and consonantal constraints of Uzbek. English phonemes that do not exist in Uzbek, such as the *dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/* or the *open back vowel /æ/*, are replaced by the closest equivalents in the Uzbek sound system. For instance, the word “*thriller*” is adapted as “*triller*”, and “*marketing*” is pronounced with a distinct Uzbek stress pattern. Interestingly, the research shows that direct borrowings from English (e.g., “*smartfon*”, “*brend*”) are increasingly bypassing the Russian phonetic mediation that was dominant in the 20th century, leading to a more authentic orthographic representation in the current Latin-based Uzbek alphabet[7].

From a morphological perspective, English borrowings are predominantly categorized as nouns upon entry. However, the results show a high degree of productivity as these nouns quickly adopt Uzbek functional affixes. The study highlights the “verbification” of English nouns through the use of the Uzbek auxiliary verb “*qilmoq*” (to do). For example, the English noun “*post*” or “*chat*” transforms into the verbal phrases “*post qilmoq*” (to post) or “*chat qilmoq*” (to chat). This indicates that the Uzbek language does not merely accept the foreign word but actively processes it to function within its agglutinative grammatical structure[8].

The semantic analysis indicates a tendency toward “semantic narrowing” (*spetsifikatsiya*). Many English words with broad polysemantic meanings in their native context enter the Uzbek language with only one specialized meaning. For instance, while “*cluster*” in English can refer to a group of stars, grapes, or sounds, in contemporary Uzbek, it has been strictly assimilated as an economic and agricultural term referring to a specific system of production and management[9].

To provide a clearer overview of these processes, the following table categorizes various English borrowings based on their assimilation type and current usage in Uzbek:

Table 1. English borrowings based on their assimilation type and current usage in Uzbek.

Category	English Source	Uzbek Form	Type of Change / Adaptation
Technology/IT	Software	Softver / Dastur	Technical term; phonetic adaptation.
Economy	Investment	Investitsiya	Morphological adaptation via Latin/Russian suffix.
Social Media	Influencer	Inflyuenser	Direct phonetic borrowing; semantic narrowing.

Food/Lifestyle	Smoothie	Smuzi	Phonetic simplification (th -> z).
Daily Life	Voucher	Vaucher	Orthographic adaptation; preservation of meaning.
Business	Startup	Startap	Complete lexical integration as a new concept.
Sports	Coaching	Kouching	Phonetic adaptation; specific to professional training.

The results further suggest that the intensity of English borrowings is highest in the domains of information technology, economy, and popular culture/media. A significant finding of this study is the emergence of “hybrid” forms where English roots are combined with Uzbek suffixes to create new linguistic units (e.g., “printerlamoq” – to print). This demonstrates that the Uzbek language is currently in a state of high lexical flexibility, where English borrowings act as a catalyst for the modernization of the vocabulary without undermining the fundamental grammatical core of the language [10].

Discussion

The findings of this study underscore that the lexical assimilation of English borrowings in the Uzbek language is not merely a process of mechanical adoption, but a complex linguistic phenomenon that reflects the socio-cultural dynamics of modern Uzbekistan. The transition from indirect borrowing (via Russian) to direct English-Uzbek integration marks a significant shift in the phonetic and orthographic landscape of the language. This trend suggests that the Uzbek linguistic consciousness is increasingly interacting with the global anglophone environment without intermediary filters [11].

One of the most debatable aspects of this assimilation is the “hybridization” of the vocabulary. While purists might argue that the influx of English terms like “kouching” or “startup” threatens the integrity of the mother tongue, the analytical data suggests otherwise. These borrowings primarily fill lexical gaps (lacunae) created by rapid technological and economic shifts. The morphological resilience of Uzbek, its ability to attach agglutinative suffixes to English roots (e.g., “onlayn-lashmoq”): demonstrates that the core grammatical structure of the language remains intact while its periphery expands to accommodate international standards [12][13].

Furthermore, the semantic narrowing observed in many terms indicates that the Uzbek language exercises a “selective” assimilation. It does not adopt the entire polysemantic range of an English word but focuses on the specific functional utility needed for professional or social discourse. This selective nature is a hallmark of a healthy, evolving language that prioritizes communicative efficiency over redundant borrowing [14][15].

Conclusion

In conclusion, the investigation into the lexical assimilation of English borrowings in the Uzbek language reveals a high degree of linguistic adaptability. The research confirms that the majority of English terms undergo systematic phonetic, morphological, and semantic modifications to align with the internal laws of the Uzbek language. The primary drivers of this process are the globalization of the economy, the digitalization of daily life, and the increasing role of English as a primary source for international terminology.

The study proves that:

Phonetic adaptation is moving toward more direct representations of English sounds, reflecting a higher level of bilingualism among the population.

The Uzbek language demonstrates remarkable flexibility by incorporating English nouns into its verbal and adjectival systems through productive word-formation patterns.

The impact of English borrowings is most profound in specialized sectors, yet these terms are rapidly permeating colloquial speech, leading to a modernized lexical stratum.

Ultimately, lexical assimilation should be viewed as an enriching factor that enhances the functional capacity of the Uzbek language in the 21st century. While it is

essential to monitor the balance between native preservation and international integration, the current trajectory suggests that English borrowings are being successfully synthesized into a new, more versatile Uzbek lexicon. Future research should focus on the sociolinguistic impact of these borrowings on the younger generation to further understand the long-term evolution of the language.

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