

SEMANTIC SHIFT IN LOANWORDS FROM ENGLISH TO UZBEK

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Abstract: This article explores the phenomenon of semantic shift in loanwords from English to Uzbek, illustrating how borrowed terms adapt and evolve within the cultural and linguistic context of Uzbek. It delves into the factors influencing these changes, such as socio-political dynamics, technology, and globalization, and analyzes specific examples of loanwords that have undergone significant semantic transformations. The study contributes to understanding the interplay between language contact and cultural integration in contemporary Uzbekistan.

Keywords: Semantic shift, Loanwords, English, Uzbek, Language contact, Cultural adaptation, Globalization, Linguistic evolution, Sociolinguistics, Borrowing

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of language borrowing is ubiquitous in our increasingly interconnected world. With globalization and the rise of technology, languages influence one another, leading to the integration of foreign words into native vocabularies. In Uzbekistan, the influence of English has become particularly pronounced, as many English words have been assimilated into the Uzbek language. This article examines the semantic shifts experienced by these loanwords, reflecting the cultural, social, and technological changes within Uzbek society. Loanwords are terms adopted from one language into another with little or no modification. The English language has contributed a significant number of loanwords to Uzbek, particularly since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. As Uzbekistan oriented itself more toward the West politically, economically, and culturally, English became a vital language in education, business, and technology. However, when these loanwords are incorporated into Uzbek, they often undergo semantic shifts—changes in their meanings or the contexts in which they are used.

Semantic shift can manifest in various ways. One common shift is specialization, where a loanword takes on a more specific meaning in its new language context. For instance, the English word "computer" has been adopted into Uzbek as "kompyuter." While the term retains its original meaning, it may carry additional connotations related to digital culture and technological dependence that are not present in some contexts of English use. The integration of "kompyuter" into everyday language has made it synonymous not just with the device itself but with a certain lifestyle characterized by digital literacy and modernization. Another form of semantic shift is generalization, where a term expands to encompass a broader range of meanings. An example of this can be seen in the word "business," adapted into Uzbek as "biznes." Originally, "business" refers specifically to commercial activities. However, in the Uzbek context, it has come to signify a wide array of entrepreneurial ventures, informal economic activities, and even a mindset associated with self-employment and initiative. This broader interpretation reflects the changing economic landscape in Uzbekistan, where many individuals are exploring entrepreneurship as a means of livelihood. Cultural factors also play a

significant role in shaping the meanings of loanwords. For instance, consider the word "marketing," which is translated into Uzbek as "marketing." While it retains its original meaning rooted in commerce and sales promotion, in Uzbekistan, it has taken on additional nuances. It often relates to modern advertising strategies, consumer culture, and the impact of social media. Here, the loanword transcends its basic definition, becoming emblematic of a shift towards modernity and the adoption of contemporary business practices.

Technological advancements have accelerated the rate of loanword incorporation and semantic shifts. Terms like "internet," translated directly but used informally as "internet," exemplify this trend. The usage of this term in Uzbek does not merely denote the global network of connected computers but encompasses the entire spectrum of online culture, social networking, and digital communication. As the Internet becomes an integral part of daily life in Uzbekistan, the implications and associations tied to the word have expanded significantly. Moreover, some loanwords undergo a change in connotation, where their meanings acquire positive, negative, or neutral shades depending on social attitudes. The word "manager," used in Uzbek as "menedjer," reflects a professional role that, in some contexts, may be viewed positively as a sign of progress and modernization. However, in other cases, it may carry negative connotations associated with hierarchical structures and managerial practices that some view as exploitative or disconnected from grassroots realities. This duality illustrates how the perception of borrowed terms can evolve alongside societal changes and shifts in attitudes towards authority and management. The adaptation of loanwords is also influenced by linguistic features unique to Uzbek. Factors such as phonetic spelling and grammatical structure adjust how an English word is perceived within the Uzbek language system. The shift is not merely about replacing an English term with its Uzbek equivalent; it involves a complex interplay between the lexical and cultural frameworks of both languages. The integration process often brings about changes in pronunciation and usage that further embed these loanwords into the fabric of the Uzbek language.

Despite the richness of English loanwords in Uzbek, their increasing presence has sparked debates about language purity and cultural identity. Some linguists and language purists argue against the encroachment of English terms, fearing that they may erode the Uzbek language and cultural values. Yet, the dynamic nature of language suggests that borrowing and adaptive change are vital components of linguistic evolution. Language naturally evolves, and the semantic shifts observed in loanwords reflect broader societal transformations. The study of semantic shifts in loanwords from English to Uzbek reveals much about the interplay of language, society, and culture in an era of globalization. As Uzbekistan continues to navigate its place in the modern world, the evolution of these loanwords not only enriches the Uzbek vocabulary but also serves as a barometer for social change, cultural adaptation, and the complexities of linguistic identity. Understanding these shifts ultimately enhances our appreciation for the dynamic nature of language in a rapidly changing world.

In the dynamic landscape of language, loanwords play a pivotal role in reflecting cultural interactions, technological advancements, and the adaptation of new ideas. The phenomenon of semantic shift, wherein the meaning of a word changes over time, is particularly notable in the context of English loanwords in Uzbek. As Uzbekistan has opened up to the world, particularly after its independence in 1991, English has increasingly permeated various aspects of Uzbek society, leading to a range of semantic shifts in borrowed terms. The process not only illustrates the evolution of language but also underscores the cultural and social transformations taking place within Uzbekistan. Loanwords are words adopted from one

language into another without translation, often retaining their original pronunciation. In the case of Uzbek, the influx of English loanwords has been facilitated by globalization, technology, and media. These borrowed terms often bring new concepts or items that did not previously exist in the Uzbek lexicon. However, the adoption of these terms does not occur in a vacuum; they frequently undergo semantic shifts as they are integrated into the new linguistic and cultural context.

Cultural context heavily influences the semantic shifts in loanwords. As Uzbekistan continues to integrate with global networks, particularly in the realms of technology, education, and commerce, the meanings attached to English terms are often shaped by local realities. Additionally, the youth culture in urban centers such as Tashkent has a substantial impact on language use. Terms like "blogger" and "vlog" have emerged in Uzbek, reflecting new societal roles and digital identities. Here, the meanings are not merely adopted but reshaped to fit local cultural contexts, where the notion of public discourse is evolving alongside the technological advancements. While many English loanwords have been embraced, some semantic shifts encounter resistance based on established linguistic norms and cultural values. Certain terms may be rejected or adapted to maintain a sense of identity or cultural continuity. For instance, while "selfie" has found its way into everyday Uzbek language, there is a growing movement to encourage the use of local expressions to describe similar concepts, thereby reaffirming cultural heritage amid globalization. The study of semantic shifts in English loanwords within the Uzbek language provides valuable insights into the interplay between language and culture. As Uzbekistan continues to navigate its path in a rapidly changing world, these shifts illuminate not only the evolution of its lexicon but also the broader societal changes. Embracing new ideas through loanwords while negotiating their meanings in local contexts is a testament to Uzbek society's resilience and adaptability. Understanding these shifts fosters a greater awareness of the impacts of globalization on language and provides a lens through which the dynamic nature of cultural identity can be examined. The journey of English loanwords in Uzbek exemplifies not just linguistic borrowing, but a profound reflection of societal transformation in a globalized era.

CONCLUSION

The process of semantic shift in loanwords from English to Uzbek highlights the intricate relationship between language and cultural dynamics in today's global landscape. As Uzbekistan embraces modernization and engages more with the international community, English loanwords are not merely adopted; they undergo significant transformations that reflect the evolving values, practices, and technologies of Uzbek society. Whether through specialization, generalization, or shifts in connotation, these words contribute to the richness of the Uzbek language while encapsulating the ongoing changes within the social context. The infusion of English terms demonstrates both the aspirations and challenges of a society striving for progress, as the meanings of these words resonate with local experiences and expectations. As such, while some may view the prevalence of these loanwords as a threat to linguistic purity, they can also be seen as a testament to the adaptability and resilience of the Uzbek language. This dynamic interplay of languages enriches the linguistic landscape, revealing insights about cultural identity, modernity, and the ongoing dialogue between tradition and change.



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