

BORROWING AND ADAPTATION OF ENGLISH TERMS IN THE UZBEK HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Abstract: This article explores the processes of borrowing and adaptation of English terminology in the Uzbek higher education system. It analyzes linguistic, social, and institutional factors influencing the adoption of English terms. The study examines phonetic, morphological, and semantic adaptation and provides real-life examples from academic practice. It also identifies challenges related to terminology standardization and offers recommendations for improving terminology management.

Keywords: higher education, terminology, borrowing, adaptation, English influence, academic discourse

In recent decades, the globalization of education has significantly increased the influence of English on national higher education systems. Uzbekistan is not an exception, as reforms in higher education have introduced numerous international standards and practices. These transformations have led to the active borrowing of English terminology.

The transition to a credit-modular system, expansion of academic mobility, and integration into global educational platforms have accelerated the incorporation of English terms into Uzbek academic discourse.

The aim of this study is to analyze the mechanisms of borrowing and adaptation of English terms and to assess their impact on the Uzbek higher education system.

The concept of linguistic borrowing has been widely studied in modern linguistics. According to E. Haugen, borrowing involves the importation of linguistic elements from one language into another. D. Crystal highlights the role of English as a global language influencing terminology across various domains, including education. Recent studies emphasize that terminology in higher education is particularly sensitive to globalization due to international collaboration, research exchange, and digital learning environments.

In our study, we apply a complex approach to analyze the borrowing and adaptation of English terminology in the Uzbek higher education system. First, a

descriptive analysis was conducted to identify and examine the terminology currently used in academic practice. The data for this analysis were collected from authentic sources, including curricula, course syllabi, institutional regulations, and teaching materials used in universities. This approach made it possible to determine the frequency, context, and functional role of specific terms within academic discourse.

In addition, a comparative analysis was employed to examine the relationship between English terms and their Uzbek equivalents. This method helped to distinguish between directly borrowed terms, adapted forms, and translated concepts. Through comparison, the study revealed patterns in how terminology is transferred and transformed across languages.

The research also involved observation of real academic usage in higher education institutions. This included analyzing how teachers and students use terminology in both formal and informal communication. Such observation allowed for a more realistic understanding of how borrowed terms function in practice rather than only in official documents.

Furthermore, the identified terms were classified into categories based on their linguistic characteristics, including phonetic, morphological, and semantic features. This classification provided a structured framework for understanding the different types of borrowing and their specific properties. All examples used in the study are drawn from real educational contexts, ensuring the reliability and practical relevance of the findings.

The analysis shows that English terminology in the Uzbek higher education system is integrated through several distinct types of borrowing, each reflecting different levels of linguistic adaptation and functional use.

Direct borrowing represents one of the most common processes, where English terms are adopted with minimal or no structural changes (Haugen, 1950). Examples such as “credit” becoming “kredit,” “module” becoming “modul,” “bachelor” becoming “bakalavr,” and “master” becoming “magistr” demonstrate this pattern. These terms are now firmly established in official educational standards and are widely used in administrative and academic communication. Their adoption is largely driven by the need to align with international educational frameworks and ensure compatibility with global systems.

Another important category is phonetic and orthographic adaptation, in which borrowed terms are modified to conform to Uzbek pronunciation and writing conventions. For instance, “syllabus” is adapted as “sillabus,” “dean” as “dekan,” and “faculty” as “fakultet.” This type of adaptation facilitates easier pronunciation and comprehension for native speakers while preserving the original meaning of the term. In practical usage, sentences such as “Talabalar sillabus asosida baholanadi” illustrate how these adapted forms are fully integrated into academic communication.

Semantic borrowing, also known as calque, involves translating the meaning of a term rather than adopting its original form (Crystal, 2003). Examples include “higher education” translated as “oliy ta’lim,” “distance learning” as “masofaviy ta’lim,” and “learning outcomes” as “o‘qitish natijalari.” This approach allows the language to maintain its structural integrity while accurately conveying new academic concepts. It is particularly effective in ensuring clarity and accessibility for users who may not be familiar with English terminology.

In addition to these types, hybrid usage has become increasingly common in recent years (Cabr , 1999). This involves combining English and Uzbek elements within a single term or phrase, such as “online kurs,” “IT yo‘nalishi,” and “research faoliyati.” These hybrid forms are especially prevalent in areas related to digital education and technology. For example, the sentence “Talabalar online kurs orqali bilim olmoqda” reflects the natural integration of mixed-language terminology in everyday academic practice.

The borrowing of English terminology in Uzbek higher education is influenced by several key factors. One of the most significant is globalization, which has intensified international cooperation in education. Joint programs, academic exchanges, and international research collaborations require a shared terminology that facilitates effective communication across institutions and countries.

Digitalization also plays a crucial role in this process. The widespread use of online learning platforms and learning management systems has introduced a range of new terms that are often borrowed directly from English. As digital tools become an integral part of education, their associated terminology becomes embedded in academic language.

Policy reforms within the Uzbek higher education system have further accelerated the adoption of English terms (O‘zbekiston Respublikasi normativ hujjatlari). The introduction of the credit-modular system, as well as efforts to enhance academic mobility, has necessitated the use of internationally recognized terminology. These reforms aim to align the national system with global standards, making borrowing both practical and unavoidable.

Another important factor influencing the borrowing of terminology is the absence of equivalent terms in the Uzbek language. When new academic, technological, or pedagogical concepts emerge, the local language may not yet have precise or widely accepted expressions to convey these ideas. In such cases, borrowing from English becomes the most efficient and practical solution, as it allows for the immediate integration of new knowledge without delays associated with term creation and standardization. This phenomenon is particularly evident in rapidly evolving fields such as information technology and modern pedagogy, where innovations occur at a pace that often exceeds the capacity of national languages to generate timely

equivalents. Consequently, borrowed terms serve as a bridge that enables scholars, educators, and students to engage with global developments and access up-to-date information.

However, despite these clear advantages, the borrowing of English terminology also introduces a number of challenges that affect the clarity and consistency of academic communication. One of the primary issues is inconsistency in usage, which arises when the same term is represented in multiple forms across different institutions, documents, or even within the same organization. Such variation may result from differences in translation practices, individual preferences, or the absence of unified guidelines. As a result, identical concepts may be expressed using different terms, or the same borrowed word may appear in slightly altered forms, leading to confusion among users. This lack of uniformity not only complicates understanding but also reduces the overall precision and effectiveness of communication within the higher education system.

The absence of a unified standard for terminology further complicates the situation. Without centralized regulation, different interpretations and adaptations of terms may coexist, reducing the effectiveness of communication. This problem is especially evident in translated materials and unofficial documents.

Another important concern is the excessive reliance on foreign, particularly English, terminology, which may have a negative impact on the natural development and functional richness of the Uzbek language. When borrowed terms are used too frequently and without sufficient adaptation or explanation, they may gradually replace existing native expressions or prevent the creation of appropriate Uzbek equivalents. As a result, the linguistic balance between internationalization and national identity may be disrupted. Moreover, the overuse of such terminology can make academic discourse less accessible, especially for students, educators, or stakeholders who do not possess a strong command of English. This, in turn, may create barriers to comprehension, reduce the inclusiveness of the educational environment, and limit effective knowledge transfer within the local academic community.

In addition, ambiguity in translation represents another significant challenge in the process of terminology adaptation. Many English academic terms are polysemous, meaning they carry multiple meanings depending on the context in which they are used. When these terms are translated into Uzbek without clear and standardized guidelines, different interpretations may emerge across institutions, disciplines, or even individual users. This variability can lead to confusion, misinterpretation of key concepts, and inconsistency in academic communication. For example, a single term may be translated differently in textbooks, official documents, and classroom practice, which undermines clarity and coherence. Therefore, without a unified and systematic

approach to translation and terminology management, the effectiveness of communication within the higher education system may be significantly reduced.

The borrowing and adaptation of English terminology in the Uzbek higher education system is a natural outcome of globalization and ongoing educational reforms, which are reshaping the structure, content, and communication practices of modern universities. This process clearly reflects the country's strategic efforts to integrate into the global academic community, enhance international cooperation, and adopt widely recognized standards in teaching, learning, and research activities. In this context, the use of English-based terminology not only facilitates academic mobility and collaboration but also contributes to the modernization and competitiveness of the national education system.

At the same time, however, this process inevitably introduces a number of challenges related to standardization, consistency, and the preservation of linguistic identity. The coexistence of multiple variants of the same term, inconsistencies in translation, and the uneven adaptation of borrowed terminology may lead to misunderstandings and reduce the overall clarity of academic communication. Moreover, excessive reliance on foreign terms without proper adaptation may weaken the functional capacity and development of the Uzbek language in the academic sphere.

Addressing these issues requires a systematic and well-coordinated approach that integrates international best practices with the careful preservation and development of national language norms. This includes the creation of unified terminology standards, the development of academic glossaries, and the promotion of consistent usage across institutions. Equally important is raising awareness among educators, researchers, and students about the correct and balanced use of terminology.

Ultimately, achieving an effective balance between global integration and national linguistic identity is essential for ensuring clear, precise, and inclusive academic communication. Such a balance will not only improve the quality of education and research but also strengthen the role of the Uzbek language as a fully functional medium in the modern academic environment.

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