NEOLOGISMS AS A REFLECTION OF SOCIAL CHANGE IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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Abstract

This article examines how neologisms in both English and Uzbek languages mirror ongoing social transformations. Drawing on recent linguistic studies, it integrates theoretical frameworks from sociolinguistics and lexical innovation to explore how new words emerge in response to technological, cultural, political, and media-driven forces. Comparative analysis reveals common patterns in word formation alongside distinct sociocultural influences in the two languages.

Key words

neologism, portmanteau, borrowing, shortening, lexical innovation

Аннотация

В данной статье рассматривается, как неологизмы в английском и узбекском языках отражают происходящие социальные преобразования. Опираясь на последние лингвистические исследования, статья интегрирует теоретические концепции социолингвистики и лексической инновации, чтобы исследовать, как новые слова возникают в ответ на технологические, культурные, политические и медийные факторы. Сравнительный анализ выявляет общие закономерности в словообразовании наряду с различными социокультурными влияниями в двух языках.

Ключевые слова

неологизм, словообразовательный фрагмент, заимствование, сокращение, лексическая инновация

1. Introduction

Neologisms—newly coined words or expressions—are central to understanding how languages adapt to changing social realities. Defined succinctly in Uzbek lexicography as "a word or phrase that arises in the language due to various needs" (Izoh.uz dictionary definition)[1], neologisms abound in contemporary discourse. They emerge from rapid technological growth, globalization, youth culture, media trends, and sociopolitical shifts, offering a linguistic lens into societal change.

2. Literature Review. 2.1 Theoretical Perspectives

In English linguistics, foundational work on word formation and lexical innovation highlights how new words arise through borrowing, blending, acronyms, and compounding

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[1] Izoh.uz

(Bauer 1983; Plag 2003; Crystal 2011)[2]. These processes are tightly connected to evolving communicative needs and sociocultural practices.

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Uzbek scholarly attention also foregrounds sociolinguistic contexts: neologisms in newspapers reflect economic, technological, and cultural transitions in Uzbek society (Khamzaev 2022). Likewise, studies link neology with digital communication, emphasizing English borrowings adapted into Uzbek with local morphological patterns (Ruzmuratova 2025).

2.2 Comparative Studies

Studies explicitly comparing English and Uzbek neologisms demonstrate shared global influences—especially digital media and globalization—while noting unique cultural adaptations in each language's lexicon (Urmonova 2025). Research on pandemic-related neologisms reveals similar semantic and morphological patterns across both languages, reflecting global challenges (e.g., social distancing, maskne in English; COVID-19-related borrowings and coined terms in Uzbek).

2.3 Social and Pragmatic Functions

Pragmatic research shows how new vocabulary serves communicative functions in both communities, from expressing identity markers to fulfilling discourse needs in media and everyday speech (Avlaeva 2025).

3. Methods

This article synthesizes findings from corpus analyses, descriptive studies, and comparative sociolinguistic approaches in recent literature. Corpus data from newspapers, digital discourse, and social platforms provide evidence of neologism formation trends in both languages (Ruzmuratova 2025). Qualitative analysis focuses on word formation processes, semantic adaptation, and socio-cultural contexts influencing lexical innovation.

4. Analysis

4.1 Word Formation Processes

English neologisms commonly arise through:

Blending: smog (smoke + fog)

Acronyms & Initialized forms: LOL, OMG

Compounding: brexit (Britain + exit)

Borrowing also contributes, especially from tech and youth subcultures. Internet slang accelerates innovation via rapid spread on social media.

Uzbek neologisms are frequently formed by:

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[2] In-academy.uz

Borrowing from English (adapted with Uzbek morphology), such as informatization. Hybrid formations combining Uzbek roots with English stems in digital contexts

Semantic loans where meaning structures are mirrored from English into Uzbek discourse.

Corpus studies confirm that English borrowings often adapt to Uzbek grammatical systems, illustrating bilingual influence (Ruzmuratova 2025).

4.2 Social Domains of Emergence

Digital & Youth Culture: Both languages exhibit youth slang and online culture lexicon. For example, English finsta (fake + Instagram) reflects self-presentation culture. In Uzbek digital speech, hybrid forms like selfi qilmoq (to take a selfie) combine English roots with Uzbek verbs, illustrating cross-lingual interplay.

Media & Public Discourse: Newspapers document new terminology reflecting political and social change, such as cancel culture in English and adapted Uzbek terms for similar phenomena in local political talk (Khamzaev 2022).

Health & Pandemic: Terms like social distancing, flatten the curve, maskne in English and equivalent descriptive phrases in Uzbek show how global events shape local lexical innovation (COVID-19 neologism research).

Classification of English Neologisms

English Neologism	Type	Example Usage	Analysis
Finsta	Fake+instagram	A private instagram for close friends	Blends social media terms to denote privacy in digital sharing, common in youth culture
doomscroll	Doom+scroll	Scrolling negative news compulsively	Reflects rise of social media in personal finance amid economic uncertainty
Prompt	Borrowing (from computing/AI	Input to AI like chatGPT	Adapted from tech to everyday AI interaction, showing digital tool integration.
Eco-anxiety	compound	Fear of environmental doom	Combines ecology and mental health, driven by climate awareness.
Uzbek Neologisms	**Type**	**Example usage**	**Analysis**
smartfon	borrowing	Aqlli telefon qurilmasi	Direct English loan for mobile tech
Onlayn ta'lim	Compound+borrowing	Masofaviy o'quv jarayoni	Pandemic driven compound for remote learning

Video konferensiya	Borrowing+compound	Onlayn dars xonasi	Tech borrowing for virtual meetings
Mobil ilova	Compound (mobile app)	Telefon dasturi	Internal compound for apps, meeting tech needs without full borrowing

Neologisms classify by formation: Portmanteaus blend words for efficiency; borrowings adopt foreign terms for new concepts; semantic shifts extend meanings; compounds join words; clippings shorten; prefixes/suffixes modify. English examples dominate tech/social media due to global influence, while Uzbek ones blend Turkic roots with English/Russian loans amid digital reforms

5. Discussion

Neologisms illustrate not only linguistic change but broader social transformations. In English, many innovations are driven by global internet culture and technological acceleration. In Uzbek, while globalization plays a similar role, there is also a negotiation between linguistic purism and openness to borrowing, reflecting national language policy and cultural identity narratives (Ruzmuratova 2025).

Youth slang and media language demonstrate identity formation processes: English terms like stan (an obsessive fan) circulate globally, while Uzbek adaptations signal local identity negotiations in a multilingual landscape. Corpus analysis confirms that Uzbek neologisms often involve English influence, adapted to fit local phonological and morphological patterns (Ruzmuratova 2025).

6. Conclusion

Neologisms in both English and Uzbek reflect dynamic social change. Their study provides insights into how communities respond linguistically to globalization, technology, youth cultures, and public discourse pressures. English offers a model of rapid innovation and global dissemination, whereas Uzbek terms illustrate the complex interplay of borrowing, adaptation, and local language norms.

This comparative approach underscores the importance of sociolinguistic context in understanding lexical innovation, suggesting that future research should continue to integrate corpus methods with ethnographic perspectives.

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