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SEMANTIC FIELDS AND THEMATIC GROUPS OF NEOLOGISMS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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Abstract: This article explores the semantic fields and thematic groups of neologisms in English and Uzbek within the domain of technology and digital culture. It examines the structural, semantic, and pragmatic characteristics of newly emerging lexical units, highlighting the contrast between English as a source language of innovation and Uzbek as a recipient language shaped by borrowing and adaptation. The study employs a comparative philological and corpus-informed approach to analyze mechanisms such as compounding, blending, and affixation in English, alongside transliteration and calquing in Uzbek. Particular attention is given to the role of neologisms in encoding technological concepts, shaping discourse, and reflecting broader socio-cultural and ideological processes. The findings reveal significant asymmetries in morphological productivity, metaphorical mapping, and discursive integration, which influence the degree of conceptual internalization in each language. The article also discusses challenges in lexicography and pedagogy, emphasizing the need for endogenous term formation, semantic domestication, and institutional support for the development of a localized digital lexicon in Uzbek.

Keywords: digital lexicon, semantic field, thematic groups, lexical innovation, borrowing, transliteration, calquing, metaphorical mapping, morphological productivity, sociolinguistics.

Within the framework of the lexicon of technology and digital culture, the emergence of neologisms constitutes one of the most dynamic and globally widespread trends of lexical innovation in both English and Uzbek. However, although the semantic content of these neologisms may appear easily translatable at first glance, their structural origins, pragmatic functions, and ideological encoding differ significantly across linguistic ecosystems. Comparative philological analysis reveals the internal derivational flexibility characteristic of English, in contrast to the adaptive selective borrowing typical of Uzbek. These differences are further shaped by broader macro sociolinguistic asymmetries (Hartig, 1980).[1]

In English, digital vocabulary develops through internal morphological processes such as compounding (*smartphone*), blending (*webinar*), affixation (*e-commerce, cybercrime*), and creative reformation (*google → googling*). These processes not only generate compact and semantically dense units but also encode new technological conceptualizations. For instance, neologisms such as *deep fake* and *meta verse* function not merely as descriptive units but actively participate in shaping cultural and ethical discourses surrounding digital simulation and identity. As McDonald (2005) notes, the prefix *e-* initially functioned as a marker of electronic mediation but later evolved into a symbol of socio-technological modernity.[2]

Thus, neologisms serve not only as naming devices but also as instruments of epistemic worldview formation.

In contrast, digital neologisms in Uzbek often enter the language from external sources, typically through transliteration (*kompyuter, email, kriptovalyuta*) or calquing (*raqamli*

[1] Hartig, M. (1980). *Macrosociolinguistics*. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 1, 168–180
[2] McDonald, L. (2005). *The Meaning of "e-": Neologisms as Markers of Culture and Technology*. *eTopia*, 0, 82–90.

iqtisodiyot, sun'iy intellekt), while internal morphological recombination remains limited. This asymmetry exists not only at the lexical level but also at the ideological level, reflecting the structural dependency of smaller language systems within the global linguistic economy. The adoption of terms such as *blockchain*, *cloud computing*, and *fintech* without semantic domestication creates terminological ambiguity for ordinary speakers, which in turn hinders cognitive comprehension and conceptual internalization.

Unlike Uzbek, English readily generates metaphorical mappings (*cloud* — storage space; *cookie* — tracking mechanism), whereas Uzbek tends to preserve denotative neutrality, thereby restricting opportunities for figurative extension and pragmatic play. As a result, the socio-semantic development of terminology in Uzbek remains constrained.

This contrast is also clearly manifested in the gaming lexicon—one of the most productive domains of youth digital language. In English, terms such as *grind, nerf, buff,* and *noob* develop distinct pragmatic and identity-marking meanings within specific gamer communities, serving both functional and socio-indexical roles (Richards, 2025).[3] These terms are acquired through repeated social usage, performativity, and humor.

In Uzbek, however, gaming terminology is often encountered through subtitles, translated content, or informal transliterations (*gamer, klaviatura*), which separates them from their original communicative and affective contexts. As a result, Uzbek tends to adopt the form but not the function—it absorbs terminology without the discursive environments that "animate" them. As Wolter (2006) argues, the stable retention of neologisms in second-language or peripheral language contexts depends more on syntagmatic integration than on paradigmatic familiarity.[4]

Sabirova's (2024) corpus-based comparative analysis of Uzbek, Russian, and English supports this view.[5] English generates innovation through morphological compactness and metaphorical abstraction (*mouse, web, cookie*); Russian, in contrast, often adapts by extending the semantics of its native roots; Uzbek, meanwhile, remains positioned between transliteration and selective calquing. Words such as *dastur* (*programma*) and *tarmoq* (*set'*) represent exceptions, as they have been successfully extended to convey new digital meanings using native lexical resources. However, such examples are relatively rare.

More often, the Uzbek digital lexicon reflects what Harutyunyan (2024) describes as a "lexical leap"—a form of enforced accelerated lexical change in which borrowed terms are "grafted" onto local speech with minimal semantic processing. Such a leap is not a marker of lexical vitality but rather an indicator of semiotic delay: the language "catches up" with innovation only after its socio-cultural referents have already been globalized.

From a structuralist perspective, this situation reveals the limits of neologisms as mere borrowings. As Hjelmslev (1942) and Lyons (1977) argue, the force of a sign (the signifier) emerges through its relations within the internal system. Therefore, if borrowed neologisms are not integrated into the morphological, syntactic, and stylistic matrices of the target language, they remain semiotically inert—recognized, but not rooted.

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[3] Richards, P. M. (2025). *Using researcher designed digital games to examine how game-mechanics impact pragmatic development: Some issues at play*. *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*, 4(2), 100203.

[4] Wolter, B. (2006). *Lexical Network Structures and L2 Vocabulary Acquisition: The Role of L1 Lexical/Conceptual Knowledge*. *Applied Linguistics*, 27(4), 741–747

[5] Сабирова, Н. (2024). *Семантические сдвиги в словах, связанных с технологическим прогрессом, в английском, узбекском и русском языках*. *Лингвоспектр*, 3(1), 262–269.

Since Uzbek lacks sufficiently robust mechanisms for endogenous term formation, there is a risk that incoming terminology will persist not as fully functional signs, but rather as linguistic artifacts.

Lexicographic and pedagogical efforts are also limited to a certain extent. As Salomova (2025) notes, English scientific and digital neologisms increasingly prioritize brevity, metaphoricality,[6] and conceptual density—features that are difficult to fully transfer into Uzbek through transliteration. As a result, in technical education, Uzbek-speaking students are often compelled to comprehend foreign neologisms without a localized semantic foundation. Terms such as *IoT (Internet of Things)* and *bioprinting* carry conceptual loads far beyond their literal meanings, which are frequently not adequately conveyed in Uzbek equivalents.

Looking ahead, the development of a localized digital lexicon in Uzbek will require not only terminological borrowing but also morphological innovation and socio-cultural integration. This includes the creation of local affixes, syntagmatic models, and metaphorical frameworks suited to technological discourse. In addition, lexicographic standardization and the promotion of such terms in mass media will require support from both governmental and academic institutions. Without such systematic intervention, digital neologisms in Uzbek will remain merely passive reflections of external realities, rather than becoming instruments of epistemic self-determination.

In conclusion, the comparative analysis of neologisms in English and Uzbek within the framework of technology and digital culture highlights both linguistic innovation and asymmetries in lexical adoption. English, benefiting from internal morphological productivity, compounding, blending, and creative reformation, demonstrates a high capacity for generating semantically dense, metaphorically rich, and conceptually innovative terms. These neologisms not only serve functional communicative purposes but also actively shape socio-cultural and ethical discourses, particularly in domains such as gaming, digital media, and emerging technologies like *deepfake*, *metaverse*, *IoT*, and *bioprinting*. The internal flexibility of English allows for rapid adaptation and integration of terms within native morphological and syntactic frameworks, enabling both cognitive assimilation and pragmatic deployment.

In contrast, Uzbek neologisms largely rely on external sources, typically entering the language via transliteration (*kompyuter, email, kriptovalyuta*) or calquing (*raqamli iqtisodiyot, sun'iy intellekt*), with limited internal morphological recombination. This results in semiotic inertia, where borrowed terms are formally recognized but functionally underdeveloped, often lacking integration into local syntactic, stylistic, and pragmatic matrices. Consequently, learners and speakers frequently process foreign terminology without a fully localized semantic anchor, hindering cognitive internalization and conceptual engagement. As observed in the gaming lexicon, metaphorical mapping—a common mechanism for extending semantic and pragmatic dimensions in English—is largely absent in Uzbek, which prioritizes denotative neutrality and restricts figurative expansion.

The structuralist perspective further underscores that the efficacy of neologisms depends on their relational integration within the linguistic system. In the absence of robust endogenous mechanisms for term formation, Uzbek risks preserving incoming digital terms as linguistic artifacts rather than fully functional signs. Lexicographic and pedagogical activities are correspondingly constrained, as the rapid influx of foreign neologisms challenges traditional semantic processing and educational transmission. Initiatives for morphological innovation,

[6] Qarang: Salomova, S. Ch. (2025). *Neologisms in Modern Scientific English: Trends and Challenges*. *IKRO jurnal*, 16(01), 68–71.

socio-cultural embedding, and institutional support are therefore critical for fostering a localized digital lexicon capable of supporting both terminological precision and conceptual literacy.

Ultimately, this study demonstrates that the dynamics of neologism creation and adoption are closely intertwined with broader socio-linguistic, ideological, and cognitive factors. English exemplifies a system of high internal productivity and discursive flexibility, whereas Uzbek illustrates the challenges faced by smaller, recipient languages in globalized digital contexts. The findings emphasize the necessity of systematic interventions—including semantic domestication, syntagmatic integration, and metaphorical framework development—to ensure that neologisms in Uzbek do not merely reflect external technological realities but actively contribute to knowledge formation, discourse participation, and epistemic self-determination.

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