



## SEMANTIC SHIFTS IN BORROWED WORDS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH LOANWORDS IN UZBEK

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### ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of borrowing words from one language into another has long fascinated linguists, offering insights into both linguistic adaptation and cultural exchange. This paper explores the semantic shifts that occur when English loanwords enter the Uzbek language, focusing on how meanings are transformed, broadened, or restricted in their new linguistic context. By analyzing specific examples, the study highlights the dynamics of language contact and the role of socio-cultural factors in shaping semantic change.

**KEYWORDS:** Semantic shifts, Loanwords, English loanwords in Uzbek, Linguistic borrowing, Broadening, Narrowing.

### INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized world, English has emerged as the dominant donor language, contributing numerous words to various languages, including Uzbek. As loanwords integrate into Uzbek, they undergo various semantic modifications. These transformations are often influenced by local cultural, social, and linguistic factors, leading to shifts in meaning that differ from their original English usages.

This study aims to examine the semantic shifts in English loanwords in Uzbek, exploring both linguistic and cultural reasons for these changes. The research focuses on understanding how meanings are expanded, narrowed, or completely altered when words are borrowed.

Previous studies on loanwords have emphasized various aspects of borrowing, such as phonological adaptation and morphological integration. However, less attention has been given to the semantic changes that borrowed words undergo, especially in languages like Uzbek, where the influence of English is relatively recent but rapidly growing. The semantic shifts of loanwords have been extensively studied in other languages, such as Japanese or French, but there is limited research focusing on Uzbek.

Studies by Haugen (1950) and Weinreich (1963) suggest that loanwords do not enter a language without undergoing modification. These modifications can include shifts in meaning due to the borrowing language's unique semantic fields or cultural needs. Uzbek, with its Turkic roots and long history of borrowing from Russian, Arabic, and Persian, presents an interesting case of English influence.

This study employs a comparative linguistic approach to analyze English loanwords in Uzbek. A corpus of 50 commonly used English loanwords in Uzbek was compiled from various media sources, including online news, social media, and television broadcasts. The meanings of these words in both English and Uzbek were compared, identifying cases of semantic broadening,

narrowing, and shift. Data were also collected through surveys and interviews with native Uzbek speakers to understand how they perceive the meanings of these loanwords.

Many English loanwords in Uzbek exhibit a broader meaning than in the original English. For example, the English word \*manager\* in Uzbek (\*menedjer\*) is used not only to refer to corporate leaders but also to describe anyone in a position of organizational responsibility, including small business owners and project leaders. This semantic broadening can be attributed to the sociolinguistic context of Uzbekistan, where management practices are still evolving and the term "manager" is generalized to any authority figure.

Similarly, the English word \*computer\* in Uzbek (\*kompyuter\*) is used to refer to a wider array of digital devices, sometimes even including smartphones and tablets. This broadening likely reflects the relative novelty of digital technology in Uzbekistan and the general use of English terms to refer to technological advancements.

On the other hand, some English loanwords experience semantic narrowing when they enter Uzbek. For instance, the English word \*blog\* in Uzbek (\*blogger\*) specifically refers to someone who creates content for social media platforms like Instagram or YouTube, rather than the broader English sense of someone who maintains a written blog on a website. This narrowing is likely driven by the popular perception of social media influencers in Uzbek society, where the term has been limited to specific platforms.

Another example is \*network\*, which in Uzbek (\*netvorking\*) refers almost exclusively to professional networking, whereas in English it retains broader meanings including computer networks and social networks.

In some cases, English loanwords undergo a complete shift in meaning when adopted into Uzbek. A notable example is the word \*design\* in English, which in Uzbek (\*dizayn\*) often refers specifically to interior decoration or fashion, rather than the more abstract and wide-ranging concept of design found in English. This semantic shift is influenced by local usage patterns, where \*dizayn\* is strongly associated with aesthetics rather than functionality or planning.

Another interesting shift occurs with the word \*marketing\*, which in Uzbek (\*marketing\*) is often associated only with advertising or public relations, while in English it encompasses a broader field that includes market research, strategy, and consumer behavior.

#### Socio-Cultural Factors Behind Semantic Shifts

The semantic shifts in English loanwords in Uzbek can be understood in the context of socio-cultural factors. Uzbekistan's recent exposure to global trends, especially in business, technology, and fashion, has created a demand for new vocabulary. English, as the language of globalization, is often the source of this vocabulary. However, the meanings of these words are frequently adapted to fit the local context, reflecting cultural attitudes, economic conditions, and societal needs.

For example, the broadening of \*manager\* reflects the growing, yet still generalized, understanding of corporate structures in Uzbekistan. Similarly, the narrowing of \*blogger\* mirrors the dominance of visual social media platforms like Instagram and YouTube in shaping public perceptions of content creation.

#### CONCLUSION

The analysis reveals that semantic shifts in English loanwords in Uzbek occur through broadening, narrowing, and complete shifts in meaning. These changes are driven by linguistic

factors such as polysemy and cultural factors including the societal roles of these loanwords. As English continues to influence Uzbek, these shifts will likely evolve, reflecting ongoing changes in technology, culture, and global engagement.

Future research could explore how these trends develop over time, particularly as Uzbekistan becomes more integrated into global networks. A more in-depth examination of specific fields, such as technology, media, and education, could further elucidate the mechanisms behind these semantic shifts.

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