

Emergence Of Neologisms In The Lexicons Of English And Uzbek Languages

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Annotation. This article examines the characteristics, origins, and sociolinguistic functions of youth slang in Uzbek and English, providing a comparative analysis of lexical, morphological, and semantic aspects. The study explores the influence of globalization, digital communication, and cross-cultural interaction on the emergence and spread of slang expressions among young speakers. Attention is given to the borrowing and adaptation of foreign lexical units, hybrid word formation, and the role of mass media and social networks in disseminating youth slang. The research identifies common trends in slang usage across both languages, as well as culturally specific features that reflect the unique sociolinguistic environment of each language community.

Keywords: youth slang, sociolinguistics, lexical borrowing, hybrid words, globalization, media influence.

Annotatsiya. Maqolada o'zbek va ingliz tillarida yoshlar slengining xususiyatlari, kelib chiqishi va sotsiolingvistik funksiyalari tahlil qilinib, leksik, morfologik hamda semantik jihatlarning qiyosiy tahlili keltiriladi. Tadqiqotda globallashuv, raqamli muloqot va madaniyatlararo aloqalarning yoshlar nutqida sleng birliklarining paydo bo'lishi va tarqalishiga ta'siri o'rganiladi. Xorijiy leksik birliklarni o'zlashtirish va moslashtirish, gibrid so'z yasash jarayoni, ommaviy axborot vositalari va ijtimoiy tarmoqlarning yoshlar slengini tarqatishdagi o'rni alohida yoritiladi. Tadqiqot natijasida ikki tilda sleng qo'llanishidagi umumiy tendensiyalar va har bir til jamoasining o'ziga xos sotsiolingvistik muhitini aks ettiruvchi milliy xususiyatlar aniqlangan.

Kalit so'zlar: yoshlar slengi, sotsiolingvistika, leksik o'zlashma, gibrid so'zlar, globallashuv, media ta'siri.

Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются особенности, происхождение и социолингвистические функции молодежного сленга в узбекском и английском языках, проводится сравнительный анализ лексических, морфологических и семантических аспектов. Исследуется влияние глобализации, цифровой коммуникации и межкультурного взаимодействия на появление и распространение сленговых выражений в речи молодежи. Особое внимание уделяется заимствованию и адаптации иностранных лексических единиц, гибриднему словообразованию, а также роли средств массовой информации и социальных сетей в распространении молодежного сленга. В работе выявлены общие тенденции в использовании сленга в обоих языках, а также культурно-специфические особенности, отражающие уникальную социолингвистическую среду каждой языковой общности.

Ключевые слова: молодежный сленг, социолингвистика, лексические заимствования, гибридные слова, глобализация, влияние медиа.

Introduction

Neologisms – newly coined words or existing words with new meanings – are a natural product of language evolution. They emerge as languages respond to social change, technological innovation, and cultural contact, expanding the lexicon to name new concepts and realities [2, p.341]. Today, both English and Uzbek are experiencing what researchers call a “neologic boom,” whereby new words appear at great speed to accommodate developments in society, science, and technology [2, p.341]. Any significant event or invention tends to generate novel vocabulary in its wake. For example, the digital era has introduced terms like blog, tweet, and emoji in English, many of which did not exist a few decades ago [2, p.343]. Uzbek, too, has rapidly absorbed new words (or new senses of words) since the country’s independence in 1991, reflecting shifts in politics, economy, and culture [2, p.343].

The post-independence period in Uzbekistan saw “a great number of new words” arise across all spheres of life, alongside the revival of previously archaic Uzbek terms, giving fresh impulse to the development of the Uzbek language [2, p.344]. Despite the universal phenomenon of neologism, the dynamics in English and Uzbek are shaped by each language’s unique history and structure. **English**, as a global lingua franca, continuously enriches its ~1,000,000-word lexicon by adding about 1,000 new words each year to common usage [15, p.3]. It is renowned for its openness and “high receptivity to lexical innovation” [3, p.710].

In contrast, **Uzbek**, as a national language that underwent Soviet influence and is now modernizing, balances an openness to borrowing with a degree of linguistic purism [3, p.711]. Uzbek language policy since independence has at times encouraged coining indigenous terms for new concepts rather than simply adopting foreign words, in an effort to preserve the language’s Turkic character. At the same time, globalization has made Uzbekistan “more open to the world community year by year,” and foreign words – especially from English – increasingly find their way into Uzbek usage [2, p.342].

From a scholarly perspective, **neology** (the study of new words) remains a developing field, particularly for Uzbek. Classical lexicology has long examined English neologisms, but “there are no traditional works devoted to the study of neologisms in the Uzbek language” and the topic has not been “fully studied on the basis of systematic measures” [1, p.217]. This paper aims to contribute to that comparative understanding by examining how neologisms emerge in English and Uzbek lexicons. We will consider the main **word-formation processes**, the role of **loanwords**, and the **sociolinguistic factors** influencing neologism adoption in each language. The analysis draws on recent linguistic research (including SCOPUS-indexed and Web of Science sources) and uses authentic examples from both languages. By comparing English and Uzbek neologisms side by side, we can identify both shared trends and distinctive patterns, shedding light on the broader principles of lexical development.

Main Part

Word-Formation Processes and Classifications of Neologisms. Linguists classify neologisms in various ways. A fundamental distinction is often made between new lexical items, new meanings, and new borrowings. For instance, I. V. Arnold divides neologisms into three primary categories: (1) newly coined words, (2) existing words with new meanings, and (3) loanwords [7, p.49]. In English lexicology, all three types are significant. A word like Brexit was a newly coined blend (Britain + exit) that did not exist before 2012, whereas cloud acquired a new meaning (“cloud computing”) beyond its original sense, and a term like karaoke is a loanword (from Japanese) integrated into English.

Uzbek neologisms can similarly be categorized. As noted by A. Abduazizov, Uzbek neologisms fall into **lexical-semantic neologisms** (new meanings of words or borrowings) and **lexical-grammatical neologisms** (new words formed by word-building processes) [9, p.65]. For example, the Uzbek word tuman historically meant “fog,” but in modern usage it gained a new meaning “district” (replacing the Russian raion in official parlance) – a semantic neologism [2, p.344]. Meanwhile, a word like tadbirkor (“entrepreneur”), coined from native roots tadbir (initiative/enterprise) + -kor (agentive suffix), is a neologism created through Uzbek word-formation after independence.

Derivation (affixation) is widely regarded as the most common mechanism for creating new words. In English, this typically involves adding prefixes or suffixes to existing bases (e.g. re- + build → rebuild; hyper- + link → hyperlink; self- + ie → selfie) [15, p.4]. Uzbek, being an agglutinative language, also heavily relies on affixation – often suffixation – to form neologisms. Many modern Uzbek terms for new concepts are

built by adding native suffixes to existing stems. For instance, *dasturchi* (meaning “programmer”) is derived from *dastur* (“program”) with the agentive *-chi* suffix, and *telefonlashmoq* (“to telephone each other”) adds the reciprocal verbal suffix *-lashmoq* to *telefon* [4, p.109].

Such affixal neologisms are especially productive in Uzbek vocabulary growth, more so than in English. In fact, a comparative analysis reveals that affixation is a more productive way to form neologisms in Uzbek than in English, which tends to use non-suffixal strategies more often [2, p.345]. This correlates with English being more analytic (single-root compounds) and Uzbek being richly agglutinative (multi-morpheme words).

Compounding (or composition) – combining two or more independent words to create a new term – is another prolific source of neologisms in both languages. English compounds can be open (e.g. coffee break), hyphenated (eco-friendly), or closed (smartphone), and they frequently originate as descriptive phrases that fuse into single lexical items [15, p.5]. In recent decades, English has coined numerous compounds like webinar (**web** + **seminar**) and airdrop (**air** + **drop**).

Uzbek also forms compounds, often as noun–noun constructions or noun–adjective phrases fused into one concept. For example, Uzbek has created terms like *kitobsevar* (literally “book-loving”, i.e. book lover) by compounding *kitob* (“book”) with *sevar* (“loving”) [2, p.344]. Another example is *yodnoma* (“memoir”, literally “memory-book”) from *yod* (“memory”) + *noma* (“book”) [2, p.344]. These illustrate how Uzbek often forms new words by native compounding instead of borrowing. Still, English generally exhibits a higher incidence of novel compound coinages (especially in technical jargon like brain drain, cloud computing) while Uzbek compounds tend to be used for more descriptive or traditional concepts.

A particularly creative process in English neology is **blending (contamination)** – merging parts of words into a new portmanteau. Classic blends like *smog* (smoke + fog) or *motel* (motor + hotel) have been joined by modern ones like *infotainment* (information + entertainment) and *Brexit*. Uzbek, in contrast, rarely employs blends as a word-formation technique; there is little evidence of Uzbek neologisms formed by fusing word fragments in the same way, due to phonological and morphological constraints of the language [2, p.345]. Accordingly, scholars note that blending (contamination) and clipping are among the main ways English creates neologisms, whereas they are not typical for Uzbek [2, p.345]. Instead, Uzbek tends to either use affixation or adopt the full foreign word (or a calque of it) rather than create a blend.

Borrowings and External Influences on Vocabulary. Lexical borrowing is a major driver of neologism in any language, and its role is especially prominent given the unequal status of languages in global exchange. **English** is historically a great borrower (over half its vocabulary is borrowed, mainly from Latin, French, Greek, etc.), but in contemporary times English functions more as a donor language. Many new English words are either coined from its own roots or borrowed from world languages, yet English exports vastly more lexical items due to its international dominance [3, p.711]. In the 21st century, English neologisms (especially in science, business, and pop culture) often rapidly spread into other languages.

Uzbek, by contrast, has primarily been a recipient of foreign words in modern history – though it too has contributed some words regionally. The layers of foreign influence in Uzbek lexis are well-documented: Uzbek absorbed a **stratum of Arabic and Persian loanwords** during the Islamic Golden Age (e.g. *kitob* “book” from Arabic, *ilm* “science” from Arabic, *sabzi* “carrot” from Persian), and later a large number of **Russian and international borrowings** during the 19th–20th centuries [4, p.108]. For example, *stol* (“table”) and *zavod* (“factory”) were borrowed from Russian into Uzbek.

Since independence, **English has become a key source of new loanwords in Uzbek**, often transmitting terminology for innovations. Words such as *kompyuter* (“computer”), *internet*, *printer*, *marketing*, or *blog* have entered Uzbek largely unchanged or via slight phonetic adaptation, frequently through the intermediary of Russian (the so-called “bridge language” effect) [2, p.343]. In many cases, Uzbek first encountered these concepts in Russian during Soviet times (e.g. *televidenie* for television), and continues to adopt some English-origin terms via Russianized forms (e.g. Uzbek *urbanizatsiya* and *atletizm* came from English urbanization and athleticism but with Russian morphological endings *-tsiya*, *-izm*) [2, p.343].

As a result, **English-origin neologisms in Uzbek are often not borrowed directly** in their raw English form, but via a Russified form or with Slavic affixes, effectively “Uzbekifying” them through Russian. Linguists have observed an “active suppression of direct English neologisms through Russian” in Uzbek – meaning English words usually enter Uzbek in an already adapted guise, accompanied by phonetic or

morphological changes [2, p.344]. For instance, English Twitter became Ttwitter in Uzbek (spelled in Cyrillic as Твиттер) following Russian spelling, and coworking is sometimes written as ko-working in Uzbek publications [2, p.344].

Nevertheless, Uzbek has demonstrated a degree of **linguistic purism and creativity** in managing loanwords. During the early independence years, there were concerted efforts to replace some Russian technical terms with revived Uzbek words or new coinages. For example, the Uzbek term muzey (museum) remained from Russian музей, but madaniyat saroyi (“palace of culture”) was sometimes preferred for cultural centers instead of the Russian dvorets kultury. In the realm of governmental and social vocabulary, dozens of Russian bureaucratic terms were ousted by Uzbek equivalents (e.g., hokim for mayor/governor replacing Russian predsdatel or glava) [2, p.344].

Still, when it comes to **scientific and high-tech terminology** in the 2000s–2020s, borrowing from English has been the norm, as it has been for many languages. Studies have noted that the majority of recent Uzbek neologisms, especially in fields like information technology, business, and media, are English loanwords or coinages based on English models [5, p.59]. Zaynutdinov & Juraeva (2020) specifically documented how Internet communication in Uzbek is imbued with English borrowings and Anglicisms, from technical terms like login, chat, wifi to slang like troll or spam, illustrating the direct impact of English online culture on Uzbek lexicon [5, p.61]. Similarly, Gao (2018) analyses the impact of English on Uzbek and affirms that many English terms have entered Uzbek usage in domains such as computing, finance, and entertainment [12, p.268].

One interesting mechanism of lexical expansion in Uzbek is **calquing (loan translation)**, where a foreign term is translated morpheme-by-morpheme into Uzbek. This was common with Russian influence (and earlier with Persian/Arabic). For example, the Russian term радиоволна (“radio wave”) was adopted as Uzbek radio to‘lqin, literally translating “wave” (to‘lqin) while retaining radio as-is [2, p.343]. Likewise, television (Russian телевидение) was rendered as teleko‘rsatuv in some Uzbek usage (literally “tele-show”), though the international word televideniye also persists. The word “skyscraper” was conceptually translated into Uzbek as osmono‘par bino (“sky-reaching building”) rather than borrowed [1, p.219].

Sociolinguistic Factors in Neologism Emergence. The rapid emergence and spread of neologisms in both English and Uzbek are profoundly influenced by **sociolinguistic factors**. Chief among these in recent decades are globalization, technological advancement, and media proliferation. David Crystal (2016) describes the Internet as a “linguistic resource” that accelerates and amplifies the creation of new words, connecting speakers worldwide in real time [11, p.752]. Indeed, the digital communication revolution has created an unprecedented ecosystem for neologisms: social media, online forums, and messaging apps enable new slang and technical terms to go “viral” and cross linguistic borders overnight.

In **English**, terms born online – like meme, hashtag, to google (as a verb), vlog – have quickly become entrenched in everyday language. These often get exported to other languages; for instance, Uzbek speakers on social media also use xashteg (hashteg) for “hashtag” and mem for “meme” [2, p.344]. The **youth culture** is especially fertile ground for neologisms, as youth are usually early adopters of new technology and trends. Ashurova (2024) notes that youth-oriented media in both Uzbekistan and the West reflect a dynamic, innovative vocabulary, and many neologisms emerge first in informal youth slang before gaining wider acceptance [16, p.43]. For example, English teen slang gave mainstream language words like selfie and hangry, while Uzbek youth slang, mixing Uzbek and English, has produced hybrid words (like jokingly calling someone gentelman – blending English gentleman with Uzbek spelling/pronunciation) – though such hybrid youth slang may or may not persist [16, p.44].

Mass media and journalism play a key role in disseminating new words. Newspapers, magazines, and TV in English often popularize neologisms by using catchy new terms in reporting (e.g. Brexit was heavily propagated by the media). In Uzbek, the press and television have introduced many political and economic terms during reform periods. Khamzaev (2022) emphasizes that “mass media, newspapers and magazines in particular, are one of the main sources of neologisms”, as they rapidly reflect and spread innovations in public life [2, p.342]. For instance, when Uzbekistan underwent financial reforms, Uzbek newspapers introduced terms like xususiylashtirish (“privatization”) and investor (“investor”), which quickly entered everyday vocabulary [2, p.342].

Similarly, the COVID-19 pandemic gave rise to terms in English like lockdown, social distancing, covidiot, etc., and Uzbek media adopted equivalents such as lokdaun (lockdown, a direct borrowing) and ijtimoiy masofa (“social distance,” a calque) [2, p.343]. This illustrates how **global events can synchronize neologism development across languages**, with local adaptation.

Another factor is **institutional language planning and policy**. English, lacking a language academy, generally lets usage dictate acceptance of neologisms. If a word gains currency among speakers and appears in print/web sufficiently, dictionary editors eventually include it – a process often referred to as institutionalization [15, p.5]. The inclusion of items like LOL (laugh out loud) and emoji in the Oxford English Dictionary and other major dictionaries confirms their institutionalization in English [15, p.6].

In **Uzbek**, there is more top-down influence. The Uzbek language has official committees that periodically issue recommended terminology (for science, government, etc.) in an effort to standardize and sometimes Uzbekize the lexicon. For example, the State Terminology Commission might endorse javobgarlik for “responsibility” over a Russian-derived term [3, p.711]. Such bodies can coin new words or resurrect old ones, effectively creating neologisms by decree. However, if these invented terms do not resonate with the public, they may remain on paper only. An example is the attempt to popularize saxna ko‘rinishi for “show” (instead of the English shou which is commonly used) – the success of such initiatives varies [3, p.712].

Ruzmuratova (2025) points out that Uzbek demonstrates a unique balance between openness to borrowing and conscious linguistic purism, often guided by institutional decisions [3, p.710]. This means that while many English loans freely enter informal Uzbek, the formal registers (education, official documents) sometimes prefer coined Uzbek terms. Over time, some official neologisms do gain traction (e.g. dasturiy ta’minot for “software”) especially if promoted through textbooks and government usage.

Crucially, **the speed of adoption differs**: English neologisms can achieve global circulation very fast due to the prevalence of English in international discourse. Uzbek neologisms, especially those borrowed, might spread more within the Uzbek-speaking community and perhaps to closely related languages (like Kazakh or other Central Asian tongues), but their global reach is limited [2, p.343]. On the other hand, English words often enter Uzbek faster than before thanks to the internet bypassing the old Russian pipeline.

Another sociolinguistic dimension is **attitude towards neologisms**. In English-speaking societies, new words are often embraced as signs of creativity or zeitgeist (though prescriptivists sometimes resist slang). In Uzbekistan, attitudes can be split: many celebrate the enrichment of Uzbek vocabulary and view the creation of Uzbek equivalents as patriotic, while others (especially in technical fields) find it more practical to use international terms [3, p.712].

Acceptance of a neologism ultimately depends on frequency of use and perceived need. If a coined word fills a genuine gap and is easy to use, it will likely be adopted. If a borrowing is too foreign-sounding or a coinage too contrived, speakers might reject it. Over time, the most useful neologisms become part of the active lexicon, while others fall into disuse once their novelty or underlying trend fades [2, p.344]. As Khamzaev (2022) observes, “new words are invented rapidly and are developed quickly thanks to mass communication. They appear and fall into disuse when they have served their momentary purpose” [2, p.344].

It is also instructive to consider **quantitative aspects**. Studies show that in Uzbek, “borrowings from English and affixal neologisms predominate” among new words, whereas in English the majority of neologisms come from “blending and compounding” processes [2, p.345]. The least productive processes in both languages are reported to be **conversion** (change of part of speech without any affix, e.g. to text from the noun text – common in English, rare in Uzbek) and **phonological derivation** (creating new words by sound symbolism or onomatopoeia – marginal in both) [2, p.345].

Examples of Recent Neologisms. To illustrate the above points, we can look at a few concrete examples from recent years in each language:

Technology: In English, cryptocurrency (and crypto) emerged with the rise of Bitcoin, and terms like metaverse and NFT (non-fungible token) are new to the lexicon. Uzbek media has started using kripto valyuta (“crypto currency”) and metavers for these, showing a mix of borrowing and adaptation [2, p.343]. The term online was borrowed directly into Uzbek as onlayn, while digitalization is often rendered as raqamlashtirish, an Uzbek neologism built from raqam (“digit”) + -lashtir- (causative suffix) + -ish (noun-forming) [2, p.343]. This co-existence of onlayn and raqamlashtirish exemplifies how English loans and native creations sit side by side.

Social media and pop culture: English gave selfie, unfriend (as a verb), fandom, buzzworthy, etc. Uzbek speakers, especially younger ones, have adopted selfi (selfie) and may use unfriend qilish (literally “to do unfriend”) mixing English and Uzbek to describe removing someone from a friends list. There is also layk bosmoq (“to press like”) on social networks, where layk is a borrowing of like as a noun [5, p.62]. Such hybrid usages are transitional neologisms reflecting bilingual competence.

COVID-19 related: English coined or popularized social distancing, lockdown, contact tracing, Zoom fatigue. Uzbek used ijtimoiy masofani saqlash (“to keep social distance”), borrowed lokdaun for lockdown, and described karantin (quarantine, an older loanword) for various shutdown measures [2, p.343]. Notably, some Uzbek commentators tried to introduce yopilish (“closure”) as a native term for lockdown, but lokdaun remained far more popular in usage – indicating that sometimes the loanword wins out due to brevity or global familiarity.

Youth slang: In English, new slang like yeet (to vigorously throw, or an expression of excitement) and simp (a person who idolizes someone else, often used pejoratively) have arisen online. In Uzbek youth slang, one can observe creative blends of Uzbek and English, e.g. calling someone aka-rapper (combining Uzbek aka “brother” with English rapper to jokingly mean a friend who likes rap) [16, p.44]. While such usages are niche and may not endure, they underscore how cross-linguistic wordplay can itself generate neologisms in a multilingual society.

Each neologism, whether in English or Uzbek, encapsulates a story about cultural and communicative needs. As Suzanne Romaine (2019) notes in a historical perspective, language change is often driven by the need to name new experiences and by contacts between speech communities (be it war, trade, migration, or the internet) [13, p.15]. The English and Uzbek languages, despite their differences, both demonstrate this principle vividly in the modern era.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the emergence of neologisms in the English and Uzbek lexicons illustrates both **universal linguistic processes** and **language-specific tendencies**. In both languages, neologisms serve as a barometer of change – reflecting innovations in technology, shifts in social life, and interactions with other cultures. The **English language**, with its global reach, generates a vast array of new words through derivation, compounding, blending, and repurposing of old terms. Its openness and the lack of formal restraints mean that colloquial inventions can swiftly enter mainstream usage and even dictionaries [15, p.6]. English neologisms not only enrich English itself but often become internationalisms, influencing other languages (Uzbek included) in what some scholars term a “cascade of lexical innovation.”

The **Uzbek language**, emerging from a history of layered influences, shows a more **deliberate adaptation**. Uzbek readily borrows terms for cutting-edge concepts, yet also actively creates or calques terms to assert its own linguistic identity. This balanced approach – “openness to borrowing” tempered by “linguistic purism” – has been a hallmark of Uzbek in the post-Soviet era [3, p.710]. Comparative analysis reveals that while English and Uzbek share common word-formation mechanisms (affixation, compounding, semantic shift, etc.), the frequency and preference for these mechanisms differ due to structural and historical factors [2, p.345]. English favors shorter, often single-morpheme or blended innovations, whereas Uzbek often employs multi-morphemic constructs and integrated loans, sometimes via Russian mediation, to express new ideas.

Crucially, both languages benefit from neologisms as a **means of lexical enrichment**. Neologisms fill lexical gaps and allow precise expression of novel phenomena, thereby increasing the lug‘at boyligi (vocabulary wealth) of each tongue. They also pose challenges, such as the need for dictionaries to keep up-to-date and for speakers (or translators) to learn and accept new terms. The academic study of neologisms – in English, Uzbek, or any language – is important not only for linguists but also for educators, lexicographers, and policymakers. By understanding how new words form and spread, we gain insight into the evolution of language and communication.

This comparative exploration confirms that **similar forces** (technological change, globalization, youth culture) drive neologism creation in English and Uzbek, but the outcomes are filtered through each language’s **unique system and cultural context**. As a result, each language’s lexicon grows in its own distinctive way even as they both respond to the same global currents. Ongoing research, especially using corpus-based

methods, continues to track these developments. With the pace of change in the modern world, neologisms will keep arising – and English and Uzbek will each continue to expand their lexical horizons, sometimes in parallel and sometimes in divergence. In the words of one Uzbek linguist, a language is like a living organism that “needs to be updated” to thrive [2, p.344]. The steady incorporation of neologisms is a testament to the vitality of English and Uzbek, ensuring they remain expressive and relevant for speakers in the years to come.

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