

The Importance of Loanwords in The Historical Development of The Uzbek Language

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Abstract: In this article, much attention is paid to the syntactic and semantic study of the lexicon of the acquisition layer in the Uzbek language. Borrowed words played an important role in the historical development of the Uzbek language. They entered the language through cultural and scientific relations, trade and other fields and enriched it. Borrowed words from Arabic, Persian, Russian and other languages increased the vocabulary of the Uzbek language and contributed to the further development of the language.

Keywords: Homonyms, lexical abbreviations, “purists”, alternative words, international term, vocabulary, terms, affixes, loan words, lexeme.

Introduction: The lexical layer of a language inevitably expands and undergoes numerous linguistic changes over time. According to the Altaic theory, the formation history of Turkic languages, including the Uzbek language, began in the Altaic period [8, 3]. The vocabulary of the Uzbek language, like that of other languages, develops and enriches based on both internal and external sources. Source availability is an important resource in enriching the Uzbek vocabulary. Approximately half of the current Uzbek vocabulary consists of Turkic words [14, 124]. By utilizing the internal potential of its native lexical layer—such as dialectal terms and words, abbreviations, and using homonyms in new meanings—it is possible to increase the volume of the vocabulary.

Over the centuries, different nations and peoples have been in mutual social, economic, and cultural contact. As a result, words and terms from various fields have been transferred from one language to another. Sometimes these borrowings were adopted without change, while other times they were adapted to the grammatical and phonetic norms of the receiving language.

METHODOLOGY

The research on the importance of loanwords in the historical development of the Uzbek language employs a qualitative, descriptive, and analytical approach grounded in linguistic and historical analysis. The study investigates how Uzbek has been enriched through the integration of foreign lexical elements over time, focusing on their origin, adaptation, and functional roles within the language.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

Practical recommendations for enriching and developing the Uzbek language vocabulary through internal and external sources were given at the “Tilimlo” conference held in Samarkand in 1929. The conference concluded with the following decision:

“While preserving all the characteristics of the Uzbek language, it is necessary to enrich and expand it with new terms. This enrichment should occur, on one hand, through native Uzbek words, and on the other hand, through international words. If an appropriate word cannot be found or derived in Uzbek, international terms should be adopted directly, without resorting to unnecessary artificiality” [13, 90].

This shows that the vocabulary of the Uzbek language requires either replacing old words with new ones or borrowing from other languages. “No matter how developed a language is, it still cannot meet all its needs solely through its native lexical resources” [10, 9]. It is nearly impossible to rely exclusively on internal means and avoid borrowing words from other languages. However, preserving the purity of the language is considered an inseparable value and cultural element of a nation. Proponents of language purity, known as purists, oppose the adoption of foreign borrowings or suggest limiting their use [1, 91]. According to them, if the share of loanwords in a language becomes excessive, it is crucial to immediately find native equivalents for newly introduced foreign terms based on the internal resources of the language [2, 18–19]. Otherwise, if a borrowed word or term gains wide usage without an equivalent, later proposed alternatives may not be successful or widely accepted.

It should be kept in mind that borrowed words do not always become widely accepted or integrated among the general population. Borrowings from Arabic and Persian-Tajik languages such as *jumhuriyat* (republic), *firqa* (party), *riyoziyot* (mathematics), *kurrai musannaa* (globe), and *hikmat* (physics) failed to gain widespread usage and have consequently fallen out of use. It would not be an exaggeration to say that, like many other languages, Uzbek cannot boast a vocabulary consisting solely of native Uzbek words, as a significant portion of its lexicon consists of lexemes borrowed from other languages over the course of several centuries and at various stages.

Uzbek linguists typically classify borrowed words into three groups for study: Persian, Arabic, and Russian-European origin [9, 107]. Among these, Arabic borrowings are numerically dominant. In one of his studies, Candidate of Philological Sciences Fotih Abdullayev reported that Arabic words make up 55% of the Uzbek language (Abdullayev F., 1945). According to Yorqinoy Hamrayeva’s calculations, the share of Arabic loanwords in the Uzbek vocabulary exceeds 34% [5, 2]. Alongside other Turkic languages, Arabic is considered one of the most influential languages in the formation and enrichment of the Uzbek lexicon, and this influence has been explored in various scholarly studies [15, 124–131]. Although Arabic borrowings make up a large portion of the Uzbek vocabulary, their grammatical function and morphological roles are quite limited, and semantically they tend to be abstract in nature. Most of the Arabic lexemes belong to the noun and adjective parts of speech. This is confirmed by the fact that the majority of the following examples are nouns: *ilm* (علم), *kitob* (کتاب), *maktab* (مدرسة), *inson* (إنسان), *hurriyat* (حرية), *kattalik* (كبير), *ma’rifat* (معرفة), *taqdir* (قدر).

Arabic words adapt morphologically into Uzbek in two primary ways:

- a) by serving as the base for the creation of new Uzbek words;
- b) by accepting Uzbek grammatical suffixes.

This adaptation is clearly observable [9, 170].

“The large number and diversity of Arabic words show how deeply they have been absorbed into the Uzbek language. Among these borrowed Arabic words, new Uzbek words are formed with the help of native Uzbek suffixes” [6, 38]. For example:

with the suffix *-chi*: *aloqachi* (messenger), *a’lochi* (honor student);

with *-lik*: *asirlik* (captivity), *a’zolik* (membership);

with *-li*: *ahamiyatli* (important), *muvaqqiyatli* (successful);

with *-cha*: *shahobcha* (small meteor);

with *-gi*: *hozirgi* (present);

and with *-la* or verbal suffixes derived from such roots: *aniqlamoq* (to clarify), *asoslanmoq* (to be based on), *tarbiyalamoq* (to educate), etc.

The interactions between Persian-Tajik and Uzbek languages span a long historical period. Historically, many Turkic peoples have lived in the territory of present-day Uzbekistan. During those times, science, culture, and trade flourished, and as a result, vocabulary used in communication between these two closely related nations eventually became part of each other’s lexicon, either directly or indirectly—sometimes undergoing phonetic and grammatical changes, and sometimes remaining unchanged.

In the 7th century, along with Arabic, the Persian-Tajik language also served as a prominent language of science and culture. Especially during the peak of the Samanid dynasty in the 9th–10th centuries, Persian (specifically *Farsi-ye Dari*, the main spoken language of the Tajiks living in Khorasan) gradually began to displace Arabic. As a result, Persian became the dominant language in daily communication and was widely used, which in turn led to the creation of literary works in that language [3, 19–20].

The Uzbek language also fell under the influence of the Persian-Tajik language. Due to this influence, a bilingual environment began to form in the region. By the 19th–20th centuries, when Tsarist Russia—and later the USSR—gained control over Central Asian states, the influence of the Russian language in our country significantly increased.

Russian loanwords are frequently found in poems written in the “*barmaq*” scale of that time, whereas

they are rarely, if ever, encountered in works written in the “aruz” scale. This is because literary works in the “aruz” scale were mostly created in Persian-Tajik and Arabic, which had long served as the dominant languages of communication [12, 274].

Semantically, Russian words do not always retain their full original meanings in Uzbek. As loanwords, they often take on new meanings in everyday use. For instance, the Russian word *самовар* (*samovar*) is made up of “сам” (self) and “варить” (to boil), meaning “a device that boils water by itself.” In Uzbek, it was initially used to mean “a metal container for boiling tea.” Later, its meaning expanded and began to refer to a place where men gather to drink tea or eat together — *choyxona* (teahouse).

Borrowings from Russian, or through Russian from European languages, differ grammatically. Some borrowed words entered the language as root forms, while others came along with affixes (derivational morphemes). However, it would be incorrect to assume that these affixes themselves have been fully integrated into Uzbek. Since a morpheme conveys a specific meaning, it may be borrowed into another language when needed. Still, as affixes are auxiliary word-forming elements, they do not easily become part of another language’s system.

Derivational affixes are never borrowed in isolation. However, affixes that are part of borrowed words formed through the derivational methods of another language can, over time, contribute to increasing a language’s productivity [11, 469].

Many such words have entered the Uzbek language through affixation — that is, with the help of derivational suffixes — and have become fully integrated. For example: *biblioteka+chi* (librarian), *traktor+chi* (tractor driver), and *aktiv+lik* (activity).

Some borrowed words have undergone phonetic changes and are now pronounced differently in Uzbek: *stakan* (стакан – glass), *stadion* (стадион – stadium), *mashina* (машина – car), *svetoфор* (светофор – traffic light), and so on.

Russian and international lexical borrowings can semantically belong to various domains, such as: *fabrika* (factory), *zavod* (plant), *stanok* (machine tool), *texnologiya* (technology), *elektronika* (electronics), *kompyuter* (computer), *mobil telefon* (mobile phone), *televizor* (television), and *fizika* (physics).

CONCLUSION

Borrowed words have played a significant role in the historical development of the Uzbek language. Throughout history, contact with various cultures and languages has led to the adoption of many new words

into Uzbek. Words borrowed from Arabic, Persian, Russian, Turkish, and other languages have not only enriched the vocabulary but have also supported the development of the language in fields such as science, literature, culture, and commerce. For instance, Arabic scientific terms, Persian literary expressions, and Russian technical vocabulary have all contributed to the expansion of Uzbek.

Moreover, borrowed words have helped to strengthen international relations and foster intercultural communication. In general, loanwords have played an essential role in the evolution, enrichment, and modernization of the Uzbek language, laying the foundation for its greater popularity and strength in the present day.

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