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FORMATION OF NEOLOGISMS IN THE UZBEK LEXICON AND THEIR ROLE IN SOCIAL MEDIA DISCOURSE (2020–2026)

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Abstract

This article examines the intensive process of neologism formation within the Uzbek language, driven by the rapid digitalization and social media proliferation between 2020 and 2026. It analyzes the linguistic mechanisms of word formation, the influence of English borrowings, and the functional role of these new terms in the speech of academic lyceum students and social media users.

Keywords

Neologisms, Uzbek linguistics, social media discourse, lexical innovation, borrowing, digitalization, linguistic adaptation, 2020–2026 period, semantic shift, academic lyceum.

1. Introduction

The linguistic landscape of the 21st century is characterized by an unprecedented rate of lexical renewal. For the Uzbek language, the period between 2020 and 2026 has been a "golden age" of neologisms, primarily due to the global pandemic (2020–2022) which forced a transition to digital platforms, followed by the rapid integration of Artificial Intelligence and Fintech in subsequent years.

The relevance of this study lies in the need to systematize new lexical units that have entered the Uzbek language. While traditional neologisms were often born from literature or official decrees, modern neologisms are "bottom-up" innovations—emerging from social media platforms like Telegram, Instagram, and TikTok. For academic lyceum students, these terms are not just "slang"; they represent a new functional layer of the language that requires academic evaluation to prevent the erosion of literary standards while embracing linguistic evolution.

Research Objective: To identify the primary sources of neologisms in the Uzbek lexicon from 2020 to 2026 and evaluate their impact on the communicative competence of youth.

2. Methods

To ensure the accuracy of the findings, the following research methods were employed:

- Descriptive Method: Used to collect and categorize new words appearing in popular Uzbek segments of social media.

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• Comparative-Typological Analysis: Comparing the original meaning of borrowed terms (mostly from English) with their adapted meanings in the Uzbek context.

• Corpus Linguistics: Analyzing the frequency of specific hashtags and terms used in Telegram channels and news portals between 2020 and 2026.

• Sociolinguistic Survey: A survey was conducted among 200 students of academic lyceums to determine their level of understanding and usage frequency of these neologisms.

3. Results

The research identified three major "waves" of neologism formation during this period:

A. The Digitalization Wave (2020–2023)

Terms related to remote work and online education became mainstream.

• *Examples:* Masofaviy (Remote), Zumlashmoq (to Zoom/meet online), LOK (Location/geoposition), Gidrid ta'lim (Hybrid education).

B. The Fintech and AI Wave (2023–2026)

With the rise of e-commerce and AI tools (like Gemini and ChatGPT), a new set of professional neologisms entered daily speech.

• *Examples:* Kripto-hamyon (Crypto-wallet), Sun'iy intellekt (Artificial Intelligence), Prompt yozish (Prompt engineering), Marketpleys (Marketplace).

C. Morphological Adaptation

It was observed that Uzbek speakers do not just borrow words; they adapt them using Uzbek suffixes.

• *Table 1: Morphological adaptation of neologisms*

Root Word (English)	Uzbek Adaptation	Grammatical Category
Post	Postlamoq	Verb (To post)
Hype	Hayp qilmoq	Verb phrase (To create hype)
Trend	Trendga chiqmoq	Verb phrase (To go viral/trend)

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Root Word (English)	Uzbek Adaptation	Grammatical Category
Digital	Dijitallashtirish	Noun (Digitalization)

Survey Results: 92% of lyceum students use at least 15–20 neologisms daily, while only 40% can provide a direct Uzbek literary equivalent for these terms.

4. Discussion

The integration of these neologisms into the Uzbek lexicon presents a dual-edged sword. On one hand, it demonstrates the vitality and flexibility of the Uzbek language. The ability to absorb and "Uzbekize" international terms prevents the language from becoming obsolete in technical and social spheres.

However, the "Social Media Discourse" (SMM-nutq) often leads to lexical contamination. For instance, the excessive use of "okay," "davay," or "krinj" (cringe) without morphological adaptation threatens the phonetic beauty of the language. In the context of academic lyceums, teachers face the challenge of teaching "Pure Uzbek" while acknowledging the "Digital Uzbek" students use.

Our findings suggest that the 2020–2026 period has shifted the Uzbek language from a purely prescriptive model to a more descriptive and functional one. The role of neologisms is no longer just to name new objects but to express social identity and belonging to the global digital community.

Conclusion

Neologisms formed between 2020 and 2026 are primarily driven by technological advancement and English-language influence. To preserve the integrity of the Uzbek language, it is recommended to:

1. Incorporate "Digital Literacy and Language" modules into the academic lyceum curriculum.
2. Encourage the creation of native Uzbek equivalents (e.g., using "ommaviylashmoq" instead of "hayp") before the borrowed term becomes irreplaceable.
3. Continue monitoring social media as a primary source for lexicographical updates.

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