

## ANALYSIS OF THE BORROWING PROCESS OF BANKING AND FINANCIAL SYSTEM TERMINOLOGY FROM RUSSIAN INTO UZBEK

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19132071>

**Qutliyeva Muhayyo G'ulomovna**

*Senior Lecturer, Department of Interfaculty Foreign Languages  
Bukhara State University*

### **Abstract**

The present study examines the process by which banking and financial terminology has been borrowed from Russian into the Uzbek language, a phenomenon closely tied to the political, economic, and cultural transformations of the post-Soviet period in Central Asia. Drawing on a corpus of over 200 financial and banking terms collected from Uzbek legislative documents, banking regulations, academic textbooks, and media sources, this paper analyses the phonological, morphological, and semantic adaptations that occur during the borrowing process. The study identifies four primary borrowing mechanisms: direct phonological assimilation, morphological adaptation, calquing (loan translation), and hybrid formation. Particular attention is paid to the sociolinguistic context, including Soviet-era language policies, post-independence language reform in Uzbekistan, and the influence of international financial institutions on contemporary Uzbek economic vocabulary. Findings indicate that a significant proportion of Russian-origin financial terms have been integrated into Uzbek with minimal structural modification, while a growing trend toward indigenous term formation and replacement is observable following the 1995 transition to the Latin script. The paper concludes by discussing implications for terminology standardisation, lexicographic practice, and language planning policy in Uzbekistan.

### **Keywords**

lexical borrowing, banking terminology, financial vocabulary, Russian-Uzbek language contact, morphological adaptation, terminological calque, post-Soviet linguistics, language planning

### **INTRODUCTION**

Language contact is one of the most productive forces in the expansion of any lexical system. When two speech communities interact intensively – through trade, governance, education, or shared institutional frameworks – the vocabulary of one language inevitably permeates that of the other. Nowhere is this dynamic

more evident than in the economic and financial terminology of Uzbek, a Turkic language spoken by approximately 35 million people in Uzbekistan and neighbouring states, which bears the unmistakable imprint of decades of Russian linguistic dominance.

The banking and financial sector provides a particularly fertile ground for such analysis. Financial institutions, regulatory bodies, and monetary systems were largely constructed during the Soviet era using Russian as the primary language of administration and professional communication. As Uzbekistan gained independence in 1991 and embarked on the development of a sovereign economic system, the Uzbek language was simultaneously elevated to the status of official state language. Yet the technical vocabulary required to describe modern financial instruments, banking procedures, and monetary policy had to be either borrowed from Russian, constructed anew from Uzbek morphological resources, or adopted from international sources (primarily English and Arabic).

This paper investigates the mechanisms and outcomes of that terminological borrowing process, focusing specifically on terms derived from Russian and examining how they have been phonologically, morphologically, and semantically integrated into Uzbek. The research is motivated by both theoretical interest in language contact phenomena and practical concerns about terminological standardisation and language planning in Uzbekistan's rapidly evolving financial sector.

The article is structured as follows: Section 2 reviews the theoretical framework; Section 3 outlines the research methodology; Section 4 presents a sociohistorical background; Sections 5 through 7 analyse the data according to phonological, morphological, and semantic criteria; Section 8 provides a comparative discussion; and Section 9 offers conclusions and recommendations.

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The study of lexical borrowing has a long and distinguished history in linguistics. The foundational work of Haugen (1950) distinguished between loanwords (direct phonological adaptations), loan shifts (semantic extensions of native words), and loan translations (calques). This tripartite framework, later refined by Weinreich (1953) and Thomason and Kaufman (1988), continues to provide the conceptual backbone for studies of inter-language lexical transfer.

In the context of Turkic languages, borrowing from Persian, Arabic, and Russian has been extensively documented. Johanson (2002) offers a comprehensive account of Turkic contact linguistics, while more recent work by Sjoberg (1963), Wurm (1959), and Clark (1998) has addressed the specific case of Uzbek. The Soviet period, during which Russian was imposed as the language of science, higher

education, and administration across Central Asian republics, produced what Schlyter (2003) describes as 'a massive influx of Russian and international vocabulary' into Uzbek, effectively creating a diglossic situation in many professional domains.

Post-independence language reform in Uzbekistan has generated a rich body of scholarship examining the tension between purism and pragmatism in terminology policy. Suleymanova (2006), Saidova (2011), and more recently Mustafayeva (2019) have examined the competing pressures of de-Russification, modernisation, and international integration on Uzbek lexicography. The financial domain, however, has received comparatively little focused attention, and this study aims to address that gap.

For the purposes of this paper, borrowing is understood broadly to include any process by which a lexical item, a semantic feature, or a structural pattern is transferred from a donor language (Russian) to a recipient language (Uzbek). The analysis draws on Poplack and Sankoff's (1984) distinction between established loanwords and nonce borrowings, as well as Matras's (2009) integrated framework for understanding lexical borrowing in multilingual communities.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The primary data for this study consists of a corpus of 214 banking and financial terms collected from four source categories: (1) Uzbek banking legislation, including the Law on the Central Bank of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Banking Law of 2019; (2) regulatory documents and circulars issued by the Central Bank of Uzbekistan; (3) Uzbek-language university textbooks on banking and finance published between 1995 and 2023; and (4) financial journalism published in major Uzbek-language newspapers and online portals.

Each term was catalogued according to its form in contemporary literary Uzbek (both Cyrillic and Latin scripts where applicable), its Russian source form, its field of application (commercial banking, investment, monetary policy, insurance, accounting), and its mode of entry into Uzbek. Morphological analysis was conducted using the grammatical categories established in Reshetov's (1966) grammar of Uzbek and Kononov's (1960) Uzbek grammar for Russian speakers. Semantic analysis drew on Blank's (1999) framework of semantic change and Geeraerts's (2010) cognitive approach to lexical semantics.

Quantitative data on term frequency were obtained through analysis of a 1.2-million-word journalistic corpus compiled from digitised issues of the newspaper *Xalq so'zi* (2010–2023) and the financial portal *banker.uz* (2015–2023). The quantitative findings are presented in tabular form in Section 8 and inform the qualitative analysis throughout.

## SOCIOHISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The linguistic history of the Uzbek financial lexicon cannot be understood in isolation from the broader political and economic history of Uzbekistan. Three distinct periods are particularly relevant to the present study.

**The Pre-Soviet Period (before 1924).** Before the establishment of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, the territories that now constitute Uzbekistan were part of the Bukhara Emirate and the Khanates of Khiva and Kokand, as well as the Tsarist Russian protectorate. Financial and commercial vocabulary in this era was predominantly of Arabic and Persian origin, reflecting the mercantile traditions of the Silk Road and the administrative practices of Islamic polities. Terms such as *tanga* (monetary unit), *qarz* (debt/loan), *foiz* (interest), and *bozor* (market) derive from this stratum and remain in active use today.

**The Soviet Period (1924–1991).** The Soviet period fundamentally transformed the linguistic landscape of Uzbekistan. The establishment of a centralised banking system (Gosbank, Vnesheconombank, Sberbank) conducted exclusively in Russian meant that all professional financial communication required Russian fluency. The *Korenizatsiya* (indigenisation) policy of the 1920s briefly supported Uzbek-language administration, but was effectively reversed by the 1930s as Russian was promoted as the language of 'proletarian internationalism' and scientific progress.

As a result, an entire generation of Uzbek financial professionals was educated and trained in Russian, and when Uzbek was used for financial communication – in trade union meetings, local party documents, or popular newspapers – it was heavily interlarded with Russian loanwords and calques. This process created what Akiner (1983) calls a 'hybrid register' of Uzbek economic language that persists to the present day.

**The Post-Independence Period (1991–Present).** Independence brought both opportunity and challenge for Uzbek financial terminology. On one hand, the state language law of 1989 (reaffirmed in 1995) declared Uzbek the official language and mandated its use in all official documentation including financial and legal texts. On the other hand, the simultaneous need to integrate into global financial systems, comply with international accounting standards, and attract foreign investment generated pressure to adopt English-origin international financial terminology, often via Russian as an intermediary. The transition from the Cyrillic to the Latin script in 1995 added a further layer of complexity to terminological standardisation, as many Russian-origin borrowings required phonological re-analysis when represented in the new orthography.

Phonological adaptation. The phonological adaptation of Russian loanwords into Uzbek is governed by several systematic correspondences that reflect the structural differences between the two languages. Russian is an Indo-European language with a phonological inventory that includes front vowels (e, yo, yu, ya), consonant clusters, and a stress-based prosodic system, all of which are either absent or structurally marginal in Uzbek.

Vowel Adaptation. The Russian front vowel /e/ (as in *benzin, kredit, depozit*) is typically rendered as /e/ in Uzbek, where it does not constitute a significant phonological category in native vocabulary. However, in many borrowed terms, particularly those of Soviet-era vintage, the original Russian vowel quality is approximately preserved: *kredit* → *kredit*, *depozit* → *depozit*, *leasing* → *lizing*. The Russian back vowel /o/ in unstressed syllables, which is realised phonetically as /a/ in colloquial Russian (a phenomenon known as *akan'ye*), is generally represented orthographically as /o/ in literary Uzbek borrowings, in conformity with the Russian orthographic norm rather than the spoken form.

Consonant Clusters. Uzbek syllable structure generally does not permit complex initial consonant clusters. Russian loanwords containing such clusters are typically adapted through vowel insertion (epenthesis) or cluster simplification. For example: *investitsiya* (Russ.) → *investitsiya* (Uzb.) – here the cluster is tolerated in the formal register but simplified in colloquial speech. The cluster /str/ in *strukturaviy* is maintained in written Uzbek but often reduced in spoken forms. Such variation between formal written registers and colloquial speech is a characteristic feature of loanword integration in Uzbek.

Word-Final Consonants. Russian nouns frequently end in consonants that are permitted in Uzbek native morphology (e.g., *bank, fond, buxgalter, kredit*). These are generally borrowed without modification. However, Russian nouns with soft-sign finals (e.g., *kapital', rubly'*) lose the palatalization marker, as Uzbek has no phonemic palatalization distinction in final position.

Table 1.

Examples of phonological adaptations of russian banking terms in uzbek

Russian Form	Uzbek Form	Phonological Change	English Equivalent
кредит	kredit	Direct adoption	Credit
депозит	depozit	Direct adoption	Deposit
ЛИЗИНГ	lizing	/e/ → /i/ reduction	Leasing
бухгалтер	buxgalter	/x/ substitution	Accountant
ИНВЕСТИЦИЯ	investitsiya	Direct adoption	Investment
ипотека	ipoteka	Vowel preservation	Mortgage
акция	aksiya	/ц/ → /ts/ adaptation	Share/Stock

ДИВИДЕНД	dividend	Direct adoption	Dividend
----------	----------	-----------------	----------

**Morphological adaptation.** Morphological adaptation is the process by which borrowed words are integrated into the inflectional and derivational system of the recipient language. In Uzbek, which is an agglutinative language with suffixal morphology, this process is both systematic and productive.

**Noun Inflection.** Russian nouns, when borrowed into Uzbek, shed their original case and gender inflections. Russian banking terms typically enter Uzbek as bare stems, to which Uzbek nominal suffixes are subsequently attached. The Russian genitive plural of bank (bankov) has no equivalent in Uzbek: the Uzbek form banklar uses the native plural suffix -lar. Similarly, the Russian prepositional case form v banke ('in the bank') corresponds to Uzbek bankda, using the Uzbek locative suffix -da.

**Derivational Suffixation.** One of the most productive aspects of morphological adaptation is the attachment of Uzbek derivational suffixes to Russian-origin stems. This creates hybrid formations that are morphologically Uzbek but lexically Russian. The following patterns are particularly common in the financial domain: the suffix -chilik (forming abstract nouns from agent bases) combines with banki- to produce bankachilik ('banking activities'); the suffix -lik (adjectival nominalisation) produces moliyaviylik ('financial character/quality') from moliyaviy ('financial'); and the verbal suffix -lamoq is attached to borrowings to form action verbs, e.g., investitsiya qilmoq ('to invest').

**Calquing (Loan Translation).** Calquing, or loan translation, is the process by which the individual components of a compound term are translated into the recipient language while the overall meaning and structure of the donor-language model are preserved. In the Uzbek financial lexicon, calquing has been an important mechanism for creating indigenous alternatives to Russian-origin borrowings. Examples include: qimmatli qog'ozlar (lit. 'valuable papers') as a calque of Russian tsennyye bumagi ('securities'); moliyaviy bozor as a calque of finansovyy rynok ('financial market'); va markaziy bank as a direct translation of Tsentral'nyy bank ('central bank').

Table 2.

Morphological patterns in russian-uzbek financial borrowings

Mechanism	Example (Russian → Uzbek)	Meaning
Direct Borrowing	bank → bank	Bank
Suffixation	bank → bankachilik	Banking activities
Calque	tsennyye bumagi → qimmatli qog'ozlar	Securities
Hybrid Formation	investitsiya qilmoq	To invest

Semantic adaptation and change. Semantic adaptation refers to the shifts in meaning that may occur when a term is transferred from one linguistic system to another. In the case of Russian-to-Uzbek financial borrowing, three types of semantic change are particularly noteworthy: semantic narrowing, semantic broadening, and semantic shift.

**Semantic Narrowing.** Several Russian financial terms have been borrowed into Uzbek with a narrower range of meaning than they possess in the source language. The term *renta* (Russian: 'rent' in the economic sense, including land rent, ground rent, and differential rent) is used in Uzbek primarily in the phrase *er rentasi* ('land rent'), with the broader economic applications of the term being expressed through other lexical means. Similarly, *fond* in Russian covers both 'fund' (as in investment fund) and 'foundation' (as in a non-profit foundation), while in Uzbek, *jamg'arma* ('savings/reserve') and *fond* are used in complementary distribution, with *fond* confined mainly to institutional and investment contexts.

**Semantic Broadening.** Conversely, some borrowed terms have acquired broader semantic ranges in Uzbek than they have in their Russian source. The term *bank*, which in Russian refers specifically to a financial institution, has in Uzbek extended its meaning to include colloquial usage for any repository or database, as in *ma'lumotlar banki* ('database'), a construction that mirrors the English usage of 'data bank' and may reflect triadic influence from English via Russian.

**Semantic Shift and False Friends.** A small but significant number of terms exhibit semantic shift – that is, the borrowed form has come to denote a different concept in Uzbek from the concept it denotes in Russian. Such terms constitute a category of inter-language 'false friends' in the financial domain. For example, *schet* in Russian refers to a bank account as well as a bill or invoice, but in Uzbek, the borrowed term *schyot* (in its Cyrillicised form) has become primarily associated with invoicing and billing, while *hisob* or *hisob-raqam* are preferred for bank accounts.

**Quantitative analysis and comparative discussion.** To supplement the qualitative analysis presented above, this section presents quantitative data on the distribution of borrowing types in the corpus. Of the 214 terms analysed, the following distribution was found:

Table 3.

Distribution of borrowing mechanisms in the corpus (N=214)

Borrowing Mechanism	Number of Terms	%	Field of Origin
Direct phonological borrowing	89	41.6%	All sub-fields
Morphological adaptation (suffixation)	52	24.3%	Banking, Accounting
Calque / Loan Translation	38	17.8%	Securities, Monetary Policy

Hybrid Formation	21	9.8%	Investment, Insurance
Semantic Extension / Shift	14	6.5%	General Finance

The dominance of direct phonological borrowing (41.6%) confirms the general finding of contact linguistics that, under conditions of strong societal bilingualism and institutional prestige of the donor language, loanwords tend to be integrated with minimal structural modification. The relatively high proportion of morphological adaptations (24.3%) reflects the agglutinative nature of Uzbek, which readily accommodates borrowed stems by attaching native suffixes. The 17.8% share of calques represents the most consciously planned stratum of the lexicon, corresponding to terms that were created or standardised through the work of Uzbek language commissions during the post-independence period.

Comparison with comparable studies of Turkish financial terminology (Aksan, 2015) and Azerbaijani banking vocabulary (Akhmedov, 2018) reveals broadly similar patterns, suggesting that the mechanisms of financial terminology borrowing in Turkic languages from Indo-European donors follow systematic typological tendencies. However, the Uzbek case is distinctive in the relatively large role of hybrid formations, which may reflect the particular intensity of Uzbek-Russian bilingualism in the professional sphere and the absence, until recently, of a well-developed tradition of indigenous financial terminology creation.

The diachronic dimension of the data also warrants comment. Terms borrowed during the Soviet period (pre-1991) tend to show deeper morphophonological integration – multiple suffixation, productive derivation, stable inflectional behaviour – than terms borrowed in the post-independence period, which more frequently retain the phonological profile of the Russian source form. This finding aligns with Winford's (2003) observation that the degree of phonological and morphological integration of a loanword is correlated with the duration and depth of language contact.

Implications for language planning and terminology standardization. The findings of this study have several practical implications for language planning and terminological standardisation in Uzbekistan. Three issues are of particular significance.

First, the persistence of Russian-origin loanwords in the most technically demanding sub-fields of banking and finance – notably derivatives, structured finance, and monetary policy – suggests that any programme of de-Russification in financial terminology must contend with the deep entrenchment of these terms in professional education and practice. Abrupt replacement of established borrowings with indigenous neologisms risks creating confusion and impairing communication in high-stakes financial contexts. A gradualist approach, of the kind

adopted by Kazakh language planners for the legal lexicon, may be more appropriate.

Second, the productivity of Uzbek morphological processes in adapting borrowed stems (as demonstrated by the 24.3% of morphologically adapted terms in the corpus) suggests that the language has sufficient internal resources to generate indigenous derivatives from borrowed bases. Language planners might therefore focus not on replacing loanwords themselves, but on developing systematic suffixation norms that allow Uzbek speakers to derive adjectives, verbs, and abstract nouns from the borrowed stems already in use.

Third, the discrepancy between written and spoken forms – particularly in phonological adaptation and the use of Cyrillic versus Latin orthographic norms – underscores the need for a unified, authoritative terminological standard for Uzbek banking and financial vocabulary. The existing Uzbek State Dictionary does not adequately cover the full range of financial terminology, and the terminological databases maintained by the Central Bank of Uzbekistan and the Ministry of Finance lack coordination. The establishment of a Financial Terminology Commission, analogous to the commissions that have proved effective in Kazakhstan and Turkey, is strongly recommended.

This study has examined the process of Russian-to-Uzbek borrowing in the banking and financial domain, analysing a corpus of 214 terms according to phonological, morphological, and semantic criteria. The principal findings may be summarised as follows.

Direct phonological borrowing is the dominant mechanism of terminological transfer, accounting for 41.6% of the corpus. This pattern reflects the historical conditions of Soviet-era language contact, in which Russian enjoyed overwhelming institutional prestige and Uzbek speakers acquired financial vocabulary through immersion in Russian-medium professional education.

Morphological adaptation, accounting for 24.3% of terms, demonstrates the productive capacity of Uzbek agglutinative morphology to integrate borrowed stems into the native grammatical system. Calquing (17.8%) represents the contribution of conscious language planning and indigenisation efforts in the post-independence period, while hybrid formations (9.8%) reflect the ongoing creativity of bilingual speakers in constructing terminology that bridges the two linguistic systems.

Semantically, most borrowed terms have retained their source-language meanings, but a significant minority (14 terms, 6.5%) show evidence of semantic narrowing, broadening, or shift, with implications for terminological

standardisation and the avoidance of inter-language false friends in financial communication.

The study contributes to the broader literature on language contact and lexical borrowing by providing detailed empirical documentation of a contact situation characterised by post-colonial dynamics, active language reform, and rapid economic transformation. It also makes a practical contribution to the debate on language planning in Uzbekistan by identifying specific areas where terminological standardisation efforts are most urgently needed.

Future research might profitably extend this analysis in three directions: diachronic corpus analysis covering a longer historical period; comparison with the borrowing of English-origin financial terms (both directly and via Russian); and sociolinguistic investigation of the attitudes of Uzbek financial professionals toward Russian-origin loanwords and indigenous alternatives.

#### REFERENCES:

1. Akiner, S. (1983). *Islamic peoples of the Soviet Union*. Kegan Paul International.
2. Akhmedov, R. (2018). Azerbaijani banking vocabulary in the post-Soviet period: Patterns of borrowing and standardisation. *Turkic Languages*, 22(1), 45–67.
3. Aksan, Y. (2015). Turkish financial terminology and English influence. *Language in Society*, 44(3), 389–412.
4. Blank, A. (1999). Why do new meanings occur? A cognitive typology of the motivations for lexical semantic change. In A. Blank & P. Koch (Eds.), *Historical semantics and cognition* (pp. 61–90). Mouton de Gruyter.
5. Clark, L. (1998). Uzbek. In J. Garry & C. Rubino (Eds.), *Facts about the world's languages*. H.W. Wilson.
6. Geeraerts, D. (2010). *Theories of lexical semantics*. Oxford University Press.
7. Haugen, E. (1950). The analysis of linguistic borrowing. *Language*, 26(2), 210–231.
8. Johanson, L. (2002). *Structural factors in Turkic language contacts*. Curzon.
9. Kononov, A. N. (1960). *Grammatika uzbekskogo yazyka* [Grammar of the Uzbek language]. Akademiya Nauk SSSR.
10. Matras, Y. (2009). *Language contact*. Cambridge University Press.
11. Mustafayeva, N. (2019). Language reform and financial terminology in post-Soviet Central Asia. *Central Asian Survey*, 38(2), 213–230.
12. Poplack, S., & Sankoff, D. (1984). Borrowing: The synchronics of integration. *Linguistics*, 22(1), 99–135.

13. Reshetov, V. V. (1966). *Uzbekskiy yazyk* [The Uzbek language]. Uchpedgiz.
14. Saidova, M. (2011). *Terminologiya v sovremennom uzbekskom yazyke* [Terminology in modern Uzbek]. Fan.
15. Schlyter, B. N. (2003). Sociolinguistic changes in transformed Central Asian societies. In J. Maurais & M. Morris (Eds.), *Languages in a globalising world* (pp. 157–187). Cambridge University Press.
16. Sjoberg, A. F. (1963). *Uzbek structural grammar*. Indiana University Publications.
17. Suleymanova, D. (2006). Language policy in independent Uzbekistan. *Language Problems and Language Planning*, 30(2), 115–135.
18. Thomason, S. G., & Kaufman, T. (1988). *Language contact, creolisation, and genetic linguistics*. University of California Press.
19. Weinreich, U. (1953). *Languages in contact*. Linguistic Circle of New York.
20. Winford, D. (2003). *An introduction to contact linguistics*. Blackwell.