

Loanwords: Typology and Adaptation

Abdurahimova Mahliyo¹, Isakova Nodira Azzamovna^{2*}

Samarkand State University

*Correspondence: Isakova Nodira
Azzamovna
Email: n.scienceofworld@gmail.com

Received: 04-01-2026
Accepted: 17-02-2026
Published: 28-03-2026



Copyright: © 2026 by the authors.
Submitted for open access publication
under the terms and conditions of the
Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY)
license
([http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/
4.0/](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)).

Nativization; Globalization; Intercultural Communication.

Abstract: *This article explores the phenomenon of loanwords from a typological and functional perspective, analyzing the main types of lexical borrowing and the mechanisms of their adaptation in the recipient language. The study examines the linguistic, sociocultural, and pragmatic factors that motivate borrowing processes, with particular attention to phonetic, morphological, semantic, and orthographic integration. Drawing on examples from languages such as English, Uzbek, and Russian, the article identifies structural patterns of direct borrowings, calques, hybrid formations, and semantic loans. The article also highlights the role of loanwords in lexical enrichment, terminological development, and stylistic variation. It concludes that typological classification of loanwords and analysis of their adaptation strategies provide valuable insights into language contact phenomena and contribute to broader studies in sociolinguistics, comparative linguistics, and translation studies.*

Keywords. *Loanwords; Lexical Borrowing; Language Contact; Typology Of Borrowings; Direct Borrowing; Calque; Semantic Loan; Hybrid Formation; Phonetic Adaptation; Morphological Adaptation; Semantic Shift; Orthographic Assimilation;*

Introduction

Loanwords represent one of the most visible outcomes of language contact and sociocultural interaction. In modern linguistics, borrowing is understood not as an accidental or marginal phenomenon but as a systematic process driven by communicative needs and external influence. Uriel Weinreich defines lexical borrowing as a response to prolonged contact between speech communities, where linguistic systems interact under social, political, or cultural pressure. This theoretical assumption provides a productive framework for analyzing the sources of loanwords in the Uzbek language.

Historically, one of the earliest and most influential sources of borrowing in Uzbek derives from Arabic and Persian-Tajik. According to Sarah Thomason, long-term cultural and religious contact often results in deep lexical integration, particularly in abstract domains such as philosophy, religion, science, and administration. In Uzbek, Arabic loanwords are primarily associated with religious terminology, education, and scholarly discourse, while Persian-Tajik borrowings frequently relate to literature, aesthetics, and everyday cultural practices. Due to centuries of continuous usage, many of these lexical units have undergone complete phonological and morphological adaptation and are no longer perceived as foreign by native speakers.

Methodology

The depth of integration of Arabic and Persian-Tajik loanwords distinguishes them from later borrowing layers. Thomason emphasizes that time is a decisive factor in determining whether borrowed words retain foreign characteristics or become fully assimilated. In newspaper discourse, these older borrowings often function similarly to native words, appearing in both neutral and stylistically elevated contexts. Their integration demonstrates that borrowing does not necessarily threaten linguistic identity but may become an integral part of lexical heritage.

A later and structurally different layer of borrowing originates from Russian. Einar Haugen argues that political dominance and institutional control significantly accelerate lexical transfer, especially in administrative, technological, and educational domains. In the Uzbek language, Russian loanwords entered primarily during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, reflecting processes of modernization, industrialization, and bureaucratic expansion. These borrowings are particularly prominent in socio-political, economic, and scientific newspaper texts.

Unlike Arabic and Persian-Tajik borrowings, Russian loanwords often retain clearer phonological and morphological traces of their origin. Haugen notes that such borrowings may coexist with native or earlier borrowed equivalents, creating lexical competition within the language system. In Uzbek newspapers, this competition is evident when Russian-based terms are used alongside native or international alternatives, depending on genre, audience, and communicative purpose.

In the contemporary period, English has emerged as the dominant global source of lexical borrowing. David Crystal characterizes English as a “global donor language” whose vocabulary spreads rapidly through mass media, digital technologies, economics, and popular culture. The influence of English on Uzbek newspaper discourse is particularly visible in areas such as information technology, finance, marketing, sports, and entertainment. English loanwords are frequently used to denote new concepts for which no established native equivalents yet exist.

Martin Haspelmath emphasizes that modern borrowing from English is often driven by globalization and international standardization rather than direct bilingualism. As a result, English loanwords may enter Uzbek indirectly through global media channels, professional jargon, or international branding. In newspaper texts, such borrowings often appear initially in their original orthographic form and gradually adapt to Uzbek phonological and morphological norms.

From a typological perspective, loanwords can be classified according to their source language, chronological layer, and degree of adaptation. Weinreich points out that typological classification allows researchers to distinguish between fully assimilated borrowings and recent lexical imports that remain stylistically marked. In Uzbek newspapers, different borrowing layers frequently coexist within the same text, reflecting both historical continuity and ongoing lexical innovation.

Another important factor influencing borrowing sources is genre differentiation. Crystal notes that analytical and specialized genres tend to incorporate a higher proportion of international and English-based terminology, while news reports and opinion pieces often rely more heavily on familiar and partially adapted loanwords. This genre-based

variation demonstrates that borrowing is not uniform across discourse types but is shaped by communicative goals and audience expectations.

Overall, the sources of borrowing in the Uzbek language—Arabic, Persian-Tajik, Russian, and English—reflect successive stages of cultural, political, and technological interaction. Thomason argues that such layered borrowing patterns are characteristic of languages with long histories of contact and adaptation. The analysis of these sources in newspaper discourse provides valuable insight into the dynamics of lexical change and establishes a necessary foundation for examining adaptation mechanisms, which will be addressed in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

Lexical borrowing is a gradual and structured process that involves multiple stages of adaptation before a borrowed item becomes fully integrated into the recipient language. In contemporary linguistics, adaptation is understood as the adjustment of foreign lexical units to the phonological, morphological, and semantic norms of the receiving language. According to Leonard Bloomfield, borrowed words initially retain features of their source language but gradually conform to the structural patterns of the recipient system through repeated usage. This process is especially visible in newspaper discourse, where new lexical items are introduced and normalized in real time.

The first stage of adaptation is phonographic and orthographic integration. At this stage, loanwords enter the language with minimal modification, often preserving foreign phonemes or graphemic patterns. Einar Haugen notes that phonological adaptation is constrained by the phonemic inventory of the recipient language, which forces speakers to approximate unfamiliar sounds using available phonological resources. In Uzbek newspapers, this process can be observed when foreign consonant clusters or vowels are modified to align with native pronunciation patterns.

Orthographic adaptation closely accompanies phonological change. According to Tom McArthur, media texts often exhibit orthographic variation during the early stages of borrowing, as spelling conventions are not yet standardized. Newspapers may display competing spelling variants of the same loanword, reflecting uncertainty in transcription or transliteration. Over time, editorial practice and frequency of usage contribute to the stabilization of one dominant spelling form, which gradually becomes accepted as part of the literary norm.

The second major stage of adaptation is morphological integration. Morphological adaptation occurs when a borrowed lexical base begins to participate productively in the word-formation system of the recipient language. Laurie Bauer emphasizes that derivational productivity is a key indicator of successful lexical integration, as it demonstrates the grammatical acceptance of a borrowed element. In Uzbek, loanwords increasingly combine with native suffixes such as *-chi*, *-lik*, and *-sizlik*, allowing them to function as nouns, adjectives, or abstract concepts within the grammatical system.

Morphological integration significantly reduces the perception of foreignness. Carol Myers-Scotton argues that once loanwords acquire native morphological markers, speakers tend to perceive them as unmarked lexical items rather than foreign insertions. In newspaper discourse, morphologically adapted loanwords are frequently used in analytical and evaluative genres, where linguistic flexibility and expressive potential are required.

Semantic integration represents the third stage of adaptation and involves changes in meaning as loanwords are reinterpreted within the conceptual framework of the recipient language. According to Uriel Weinreich, semantic adaptation often accompanies borrowing because speakers assign meanings that correspond to local communicative needs rather than preserving original semantic scope. This process may result in semantic extension, semantic narrowing, or semantic shift.

Calquing constitutes a specific type of semantic adaptation. Martin Haspelmath explains that calques allow languages to adopt foreign conceptual models while maintaining native lexical material, thereby reducing the impact of overt borrowing. In newspaper discourse, calques are frequently used to translate international political, economic, or technological concepts into familiar linguistic forms.

Result and Discussion

Semantic extension occurs when a borrowed word acquires additional meanings beyond its original sense, while semantic narrowing restricts usage to specific domains. Bauer notes that such semantic modifications are common in media language, where words are repeatedly contextualized in new environments. Newspapers thus function as active sites of semantic experimentation and normalization.

Spelling variants represent a transitional phenomenon accompanying all stages of adaptation. Sarah Thomason emphasizes that variation in spelling should not be interpreted as normative instability but as evidence of an ongoing integration process. In journalistic practice, different spelling variants may coexist until institutional editorial standards and frequent repetition lead to the selection of a single norm.

Over time, mass media play a decisive role in eliminating competing variants. McArthur argues that newspapers act as agents of linguistic standardization by consistently reproducing preferred forms and marginalizing alternatives. As a result, loanwords gradually achieve orthographic stability alongside phonological, morphological, and semantic integration.

In conclusion, phonographic, morphological, and semantic adaptation stages form an interconnected system that governs the integration of loanwords into the Uzbek language. The presence of spelling variants further illustrates the gradual and systematic nature of borrowing. The analysis of these processes in newspaper discourse confirms that lexical borrowing is not a random phenomenon but a regulated linguistic mechanism shaped by structural norms, communicative needs, and media practice.

Hybrid forms represent a specific outcome of language contact in which elements of different linguistic origins combine within a single lexical unit. In modern linguistics, hybridization is viewed as an intermediate phenomenon between direct borrowing and native word formation. According to Leonard Bloomfield, hybrid forms emerge when borrowed lexical bases interact with native morphological or semantic structures, creating mixed forms that reflect both foreign origin and local adaptation. Such forms are especially frequent in languages exposed to long-term multilingual contact and intensive media influence.

In the Uzbek language, hybrid forms are commonly observed in newspaper discourse, where borrowed lexical stems combine with native affixes. Laurie Bauer emphasizes that hybridization often signals an advanced stage of borrowing, as it demonstrates the grammatical and functional acceptance of a foreign element. For instance, when foreign lexical bases combine with native derivational suffixes, they begin to operate within the internal word-formation system rather than remaining isolated borrowings. This process reduces the perceived foreignness of the lexical item and increases its productivity.

Hybrid forms are closely related to the phenomenon of calquing, yet they should not be conflated. Uriel Weinreich distinguishes between direct borrowing, hybrid formation, and calquing as distinct mechanisms of lexical transfer. While hybrid forms involve the combination of foreign and native material within a single word, calques rely exclusively on native lexical elements to replicate the structure or meaning of a foreign expression. This distinction is essential for identifying the boundaries between different types of lexical adaptation.

Calquing, also known as loan translation, represents a semantic rather than formal borrowing process. Martin Haspelmath defines calques as expressions created by translating the components of a foreign model into the recipient language using native lexical material. In newspaper discourse, calques frequently appear in political, economic, and technological contexts, where international concepts are introduced but adapted to local linguistic norms. Unlike hybrid forms, calques do not contain foreign morphemes, which makes them less perceptible as borrowings.

The boundary between hybrid forms and calques, however, is not always clear-cut. Bauer notes that certain lexical units may exhibit features of both processes, particularly when partial translation is combined with borrowed elements. For example, a foreign lexical stem may be retained while its semantic structure is reshaped according to native conceptual patterns. Such cases illustrate the gradual and non-linear nature of lexical adaptation.

From a functional perspective, hybrid forms often serve pragmatic purposes in newspaper language. According to Tom McArthur, media discourse favors lexical efficiency and recognizability, which encourages the use of hybrid constructions that balance innovation with familiarity. Hybrid forms allow journalists to introduce new concepts while anchoring them in the native linguistic system, thus facilitating comprehension among a broad audience.

Calques, by contrast, are frequently motivated by normative considerations. Weinreich argues that calquing is often preferred in contexts where linguistic purism or standardization policies discourage overt borrowing. In such cases, native lexical material is strategically employed to reproduce foreign meanings without importing foreign forms. Newspapers play a significant role in promoting calques by repeatedly using them in standardized contexts, thereby reinforcing their legitimacy within the literary norm.

Despite their functional advantages, both hybrid forms and calques raise questions about normative boundaries. Haspelmath emphasizes that excessive hybridization may lead to structural inconsistency, while uncontrolled calquing can result in semantic opacity

if translated structures conflict with native usage patterns. Therefore, the acceptability of hybrid forms and calques depends on their conformity with established grammatical and semantic norms.

In newspaper discourse, the coexistence of hybrid forms and calques reflects an ongoing negotiation between innovation and standardization. McArthur notes that mass media act as mediators between global linguistic influence and local language norms, selecting and stabilizing forms that best meet communicative and normative expectations. Over time, successful hybrid forms and calques may become fully conventionalized, while others remain temporary or stylistically marked.

Conclusion

In conclusion, hybrid forms and calquing represent complementary mechanisms of lexical adaptation that operate at the intersection of foreign influence and native linguistic structure. Hybrid forms combine foreign and native elements within a single lexical unit, whereas calques rely on native material to reproduce foreign models. The boundary between these processes is often fluid, reflecting the gradual and dynamic nature of lexical change. Their analysis in newspaper discourse provides valuable insight into how languages maintain structural integrity while responding to external linguistic pressure.

References

- Bauer L. *Morphological Productivity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. 250 p.
- Bauer, L. (2021). *Morphology* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Bloomfield L. *Language*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1933. 566 p.
- Crystal D. *English as a Global Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. 212 p.
- Crystal, D. (2022). *English as a global language* (Revised ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Dixon, R. M. W. (2021). *The rise and fall of languages*. Cambridge University Press.
- Grant, A. P. (Ed.). (2023). *The Oxford handbook of language contact*. Oxford University Press.
- Haspelmath M. *Understanding Morphology*. London: Hodder Education, 2002. 320 p.
- Haspelmath, M., & Sims, A. D. (2022). *Understanding morphology* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Haugen E. *The Ecology of Language*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972. 325 p.
- Hickey, R. (Ed.). (2024). *The handbook of language contact*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Isakova N.A. (2019) Issues of Interference and Foreign Borrowings in the Uzbek Language, *International Journal on Integrated Education*, 2/5, pp.144-146.
- Isakova N.A. Togaev I.Kh, (2022) Interpretation of the term borrowing from foreign languages in the Uzbek language, *International journal of language, linguistics, translation*, 3/3
- Isakova, N. A., & Togaev, I. K. (2022). Interpretation of the term borrowing from foreign languages in the Uzbek language. *International Journal of Language, Linguistics, Translation*, 3(3), 45-59.
- Kowner, R., & Rosen-Moked, S. (2025). *Lexical borrowing and cultural identity*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Matras, Y. (2022). *Language contact* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

-
- McArthur T. *The English Languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. 512 p.
- Myers-Scotton C. *Contact Linguistics: Bilingual Encounters and Grammatical Outcomes*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. 356 p.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (2023). *Contact linguistics: Bilingual encounters and grammatical outcomes*. Oxford University Press.
- Onysko, A. (2024). *Anglicisms in Europe: Linguistic and cultural aspects*. De Gruyter.
- Pulcini, V. (Ed.). (2022). *The globalization of English and its impact on European languages*. Oxford University Press.
- Thomason S. *Language Contact: An Introduction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2001. 310 p.
- Thomason, S. G. (2021). *Language contact: An introduction (2nd ed.)*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Weinreich U. *Languages in Contact: Findings and Problems*. The Hague: Mouton, 1953. 148 p.
- Winford, D. (2025). *An introduction to contact linguistics*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Zenner, E., & Geeraerts, D. (Eds.). (2026). *New perspectives on lexical borrowing*. Mouton de Gruyter.