

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF DISTANCE EDUCATION TERMINOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIVE FORMS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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ANNOTATION

The article offers a comparative analysis of the terminological lexicon and the communicative forms of distance education in English and Uzbek. On the material of academic publications, online learning platforms, university websites and specialised glossaries, five types of linguistic units are distinguished — terminolexis, terminological collocations, collocations, interface commands and communicative formulas — which together form a lexical-pragmatic continuum. The study establishes systematic structural and pragmatic asymmetries between the two languages, above all the correspondence between the English bare imperative and the Uzbek verbal noun in -(i)sh in interface commands, and records a high degree of synonymic variation in Uzbek terminology. The findings are applicable to terminology standardisation, bilingual lexicography and the localisation of digital educational resources.

KEY WORDS

distance education, terminology, terminolexis, terminological collocation, comparative linguistics, English language, Uzbek language, digital educational discourse, interface commands, communicative formulas, borrowing, calquing, semantic adaptation, terminology standardisation.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technologies has transformed modern education. The integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) into teaching and learning has changed not only educational methods but also the language used in academic environments. For this reason, distance education has become an important area of research: it has developed its own specialised terminology and its own communicative practices.

Distance education is now an essential component of contemporary educational systems[1]. The use of online learning platforms has introduced numerous new terms, such as Learning Management System (LMS), webinar, virtual classroom, breakout room, screen sharing and asynchronous learning. These units have become part of the everyday professional vocabulary of teachers, students, researchers and educational institutions. At the same time, online learning has generated new communicative forms, including virtual classroom instructions, digital feedback, chat-based interaction and platform-specific communication strategies[2].

[1] Moore M. G., Kearsley G. Distance Education: A Systems View of Online Learning. – 3rd ed. – Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2012. – 361 p.

[2] Herring S. C. (ed.) Computer-Mediated Communication: Linguistic, Social and Cross-Cultural Perspectives. – Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1996. – 324 p.

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According to contemporary terminology studies, terminology should be understood as a conceptual system that reflects the organised knowledge of a particular professional field[3]. It follows that the study of educational terminology must also take into account the communicative context in which terms are used. Distance education provides an appropriate environment for such an analysis, since both its terminology and its communicative practices are still actively developing.

Although distance learning has been extensively researched, comparatively few studies have examined its linguistic aspects. Existing research focuses primarily on pedagogical practices, technological innovation and learning outcomes, while limited attention has been paid to the comparative analysis of distance education terminology and communicative forms. This gap is particularly evident in Uzbek linguistics, where many English distance education terms have entered the language through borrowing, translation and semantic adaptation, yet their structural, semantic, pragmatic and communicative features have not been examined systematically in an English–Uzbek perspective.

To address this gap, the present research conducts a comparative analysis of the terminological lexicon and the communicative forms used in distance education in English and Uzbek. By examining their interaction within digital educational discourse, the study identifies the principal linguistic similarities and differences between the two languages. It thereby contributes to comparative linguistics, terminology studies and digital discourse analysis, while offering practical implications for terminology standardisation, bilingual lexicography, translation and the development of digital educational resources.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

The study adopts a qualitative comparative research design in order to analyse the terminological lexicon and the communicative forms of distance education in English and Uzbek. The research integrates terminology studies, comparative linguistics and discourse analysis in order to investigate the formation, meaning and communicative use of terminological units in digital educational settings. A qualitative approach was selected because it permits a detailed examination of linguistic phenomena within their authentic communicative context.

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of the study rests on terminology studies and comparative linguistics. In the general theory of terminology formulated by E. Wüster, terms function as standardised units representing clearly defined concepts within a specialised field[4]; this principle provides the basis for examining the accuracy and consistency of distance education terminology in the two languages. The framework is complemented by the communicative theory of terminology[5] and by the sociocognitive approach[6], which treat terminological units as elements that acquire their value in concrete discourse rather than in isolation. Comparative and discourse-oriented methods are used in order to identify both linguistic similarities and differences and to analyse the communicative roles of terminological units in digital learning contexts.

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[3] Cabré M. T. Terminology: Theory, Methods and Applications. – Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1999. – 248 p.

[4] Wüster E. Einführung in die allgemeine Terminologielehre und terminologische Lexikographie. – Wien; New York: Springer, 1979. – Teil 1–2.

[5] Cabré M. T. Theories of Terminology: Their Description, Prescription and Explanation // Terminology. – 2003. – Vol. 9, No. 2. – P. 163–199.

[6] Temmerman R. Towards New Ways of Terminology Description: The Sociocognitive Approach. – Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2000. – 258 p.

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Data collection

The research data were collected from English and Uzbek academic publications, online learning platforms, university websites, educational regulations, digital learning resources and specialised glossaries related to distance education. The corpus was compiled in accordance with the principles of working with specialised language material[7] and consists of authentic terminological units and communicative expressions frequently used in distance learning. The selected materials represent the contemporary language of digital education and provide reliable data for comparative analysis.

Data analysis

The collected data were analysed by means of comparative, descriptive, semantic, discourse and contextual analysis. Comparative analysis was employed in order to identify similarities and differences between English and Uzbek terminological units and communicative forms. Descriptive and semantic analyses were applied in order to explain their structural and conceptual characteristics, while discourse and contextual analyses examined how these units function in authentic online educational communication. The integration of these methods ensured a systematic investigation of the linguistic and communicative features of distance education discourse in both languages.

RESULTS

1. A typology of linguistic units in distance education discourse

The analysis demonstrated that the language of distance education cannot be described through terminological units alone. Five types of units were distinguished, which together form a single lexical-pragmatic continuum:

terminolexis — single-word and compound terms designating concepts of the field (webinar, platform, module; vebinar, modul, elektron kurs, masofaviy ta'lim);

terminological collocations — stable multi-component units with a fixed conceptual meaning (learning management system, virtual classroom, asynchronous learning; o'quv jarayonini boshqarish tizimi, virtual sinfxona, asinxron ta'lim);

collocations — recurrent and semantically transparent combinations that have not acquired full terminological status (upload a file, join a session; faylni yuklash, darsga ulanish);

interface commands — units embedded in the interface of learning platforms (Join, Submit, Enroll, Download, Share screen; Qo'shilish, Yuborish, Ro'yxatdan o'tish, Yuklab olish, Ekranni ulashish);

communicative formulas — conventionalised expressions performing pragmatic functions in online interaction (You are muted; Can everyone see my screen?; Ovozingiz o'chirilgan; Ekranim ko'rinyaptimi?).

Movement along this continuum proceeds from maximum conceptual density and minimum context dependence (terminolexis) to minimum conceptual density and maximum context dependence (communicative formulas). Interface commands occupy an intermediate position: they retain terminological content but function pragmatically, as directives addressed to the user.

2. Structural characteristics

In English, the terminology of distance education is formed predominantly through compounding (screen sharing, breakout room, coursework), abbreviation and acronymy (LMS, MOOC, VLE, ICT), affixation (asynchronous, interactivity, digitalisation) and conversion — that is, through the term-

[7] Bowker L., Pearson J. Working with Specialized Language: A Practical Guide to Using Corpora. – London; New York: Routledge, 2002. – 242 p.

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formation mechanisms characteristic of specialised languages in general[8]. In Uzbek, the corresponding units arise through three principal channels: direct borrowing (webinar > vebinar, platform > platforma, modul), calquing (virtual classroom > virtual sinfxona, learning management system > o‘quv jarayonini boshqarish tizimi) and descriptive analytical constructions built on genitive chains. As a consequence, English units are as a rule more compact, whereas their Uzbek equivalents are longer and multi-component, which affects both interface design and the readability of instructional materials.

[Quantitative confirmation to be inserted: of the ___ units examined, ___ % are direct borrowings, ___ % calques and ___ % descriptive constructions.]

3. Semantic characteristics

The comparison revealed a marked difference in the degree of semantic stability. English terminology in this field is comparatively codified: the majority of units possess a single accepted form and a definition fixed in glossaries and standards. Uzbek terminology, by contrast, is characterised by pronounced synonymic variation, with several forms competing for the same concept (masofaviy ta’lim / masofadan o‘qitish / distansion ta’lim; onlayn dars / masofaviy mashg‘ulot). Such variation is observable within a single institution and occasionally within a single document, which indicates the absence of a codified national standard for the terminology of digital education.

4. Grammatical asymmetry in interface commands

The most systematic contrastive finding concerns interface commands. English employs the bare imperative almost without exception (Join, Submit, Enroll, Download, Share), whereas Uzbek localisations employ nominalised forms — the verbal noun in -(i)sh (Qo‘shilish, Yuborish, Ro‘yxatdan o‘tish, Yuklab olish, Ulashish). This is not an incidental translation decision but a reflection of differing pragmatic conventions. English construes the interface as direct address to the user, while Uzbek presents it as the naming of an action, which is perceived as more neutral and more polite. Where a direct imperative does appear in Uzbek interfaces, it regularly takes the polite plural marker -(i)ng (Yuboring, Kiring, Tanlang), since the bare stem would be interpreted as impolite. The asymmetry is therefore simultaneously typological — analytic English against agglutinative Uzbek — and pragmatic, being grounded in the norms of politeness of the two speech cultures.

5. Communicative forms

At the level of communicative forms the two languages likewise diverge. English digital educational discourse has developed a stable repertoire of brief formulas for managing online interaction — for turn-taking, for technical difficulties, for feedback — in keeping with the general conventions of internet-mediated communication[9]. In Uzbek, these functions are frequently realised through fuller, syntactically expanded constructions, or through code-switching, in which the English formula is retained in its original form even within an otherwise Uzbek utterance. Chat-based interaction proved to be the environment in which such code-switching is most frequent.

DISCUSSION

The results obtained have a number of theoretical implications. First, the five-member continuum established in the study calls into question the strict boundary between terminological and non-terminological units postulated by the general theory of terminology. Wüster’s principle of univocity[10] retains its value as a normative ideal for standardisation work, yet the authentic material of digital

[8] Sager J. C. A Practical Course in Terminology Processing. – Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1990. – 254 p.
[9] Crystal D. Language and the Internet. – 2nd ed. – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. – 316 p.
[10] Wüster E. Op. cit.

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educational discourse corresponds more closely to the communicative and cognitive approaches, in which the terminological status of a unit is activated in discourse rather than being given in advance[11]. Interface commands are especially indicative here: outside the interface they are ordinary lexical units, whereas within it they acquire both terminological and directive value simultaneously.

Second, the grammatical asymmetry identified between English imperatives and Uzbek nominalised forms shows that the localisation of educational platforms cannot be reduced to lexical translation[12]. The choice between Qo‘shilish and Qo‘shiling is a pragmatic choice, and inconsistency in this respect — readily observable in existing Uzbek-language interfaces — impairs the coherence of the user experience. The recommendation that follows from this is that the nominalised form should be adopted as the norm for button labels and menu items, and the polite imperative for system messages addressed directly to the user.

Third, the synonymic variation recorded in Uzbek terminology constitutes a practical obstacle to the development of national digital education. Where a single concept is designated by three or four competing forms, the compilation of teaching materials, the indexing of resources and the automated processing of texts are all impeded. This finding argues for the compilation of a normative English–Uzbek dictionary of distance education terminology, drawn up on the established principles of terminology management[13] and adopted at the level of the relevant ministry.

It is necessary to indicate the limitations of the study. The corpus was assembled from written and interface sources; oral communication in virtual classrooms was not included, although it is precisely there that communicative formulas function most intensively. In addition, the qualitative design does not permit conclusions to be drawn as to the frequency of the phenomena described. Subsequent research would benefit from a corpus-based quantitative analysis and from the involvement of data on the perception of terminology by teachers and students.

CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis of distance education terminology and communicative forms in English and Uzbek permits the following conclusions.

The language of distance education is organised not as a closed terminological system but as a lexical-pragmatic continuum comprising terminolexis, terminological collocations, collocations, interface commands and communicative formulas. An adequate description of this field therefore requires the combination of terminological and discourse-analytical methods.

English and Uzbek exhibit systematic structural divergences: English favours compactness, compounding and abbreviation, while Uzbek relies on borrowing, calquing and multi-component descriptive constructions. The principal grammatical asymmetry lies in interface commands, where the English bare imperative regularly corresponds to the Uzbek verbal noun in -(i)sh, a correspondence conditioned by the typology of the two languages and by their norms of politeness.

Uzbek terminology in this domain is at a stage of formation and is characterised by considerable synonymic variation and the absence of codification. The results of the study may be applied in the

[11] Faber P. (ed.) A Cognitive Linguistics View of Terminology and Specialized Language. – Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 2012. – 307 p.; L’Homme M.-C. Lexical Semantics for Terminology: An Introduction. – Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2020. – 263 p.

[12] Anderson T. (ed.) The Theory and Practice of Online Learning. – 2nd ed. – Edmonton: AU Press, 2008. – 472 p.

[13] Wright S. E., Budin G. (eds.) Handbook of Terminology Management. Vol. 1–2. – Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1997.

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compilation of a normative bilingual terminological dictionary, in the localisation of learning platforms, in the training of translators and in the further development of the theory of terminology in relation to digital discourse.

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14. [Uzbek-language source to be inserted — a monograph or article on Uzbek terminology. Format: Author's surname and initials. Title. – City: Publisher, year. – number of pages.]
15. [Uzbek-language source to be inserted — a study of the terminology of education or of information technology in Uzbek.]
16. [Normative document to be inserted — e.g. the regulation of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the organisation of distance learning, with its number and date.]

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