Tracing the Tracks: The Linguistic Influence of Russian on Uzbek Railway Terminology

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ABSTRACT

This research delves into the intricate web of linguistic influence shaping Uzbek railway terminology, specifically focusing on the enduring impact of the Russian language. Through a meticulous examination of historical developments, a comparative analysis of railway terms across English, Russian, and Uzbek, and a nuanced exploration of linguistic dynamics, this study uncovers the depth of Russian influence on the Uzbek railway lexicon. Contrary to mere translation, this investigation unveils a complex interplay of direct borrowings, phonetic adaptations, and the preservation of native constructions. The findings not only shed light on the linguistic landscape of Uzbekistan's railway sector but also offer insights into broader processes of language contact, identity formation, and cultural preservation in post-colonial contexts.

Keywords: Railway terminology, linguistic borrowing, lexical adaptation, language contact, Russian terminological influence, Uzbek language, railway lexicon, terminology evolution, sociolinguistics, post-colonial language dynamics

1. INTRODUCTION

Brief history of railway development in Uzbekistan
The development of the railway system in Uzbekistan is closely tied to the expansionist policies of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union (Searight 1992). The construction of the Central Asian Railway began in the late 19th century, initiated by the Russian Empire to consolidate its control over the newly

conquered territories in Central Asia. The railway network was further expanded during the Soviet era, linking Uzbekistan with other parts of the Soviet Union and facilitating economic and military logistics. Key milestones included the completion of major lines connecting Tashkent, Samarkand, and the Fergana Valley, which played a crucial role in integrating the region into the broader Soviet economic system.

Importance of understanding linguistic influences
The terminology used in the railway sector reflects historical, cultural, and political influences. In the case of Uzbekistan, the heavy influence of the Russian language on railway terminology provides insights into the broader socio-political dynamics of the region during the Russian and Soviet periods. Understanding these linguistic influences is crucial for appreciating how historical events shape language and, consequently, identity and communication in technical and professional contexts.

To compare railway terminologies in English, Russian, and Uzbek
This study aims to systematically compare the railway terminologies used in English, Russian, and Uzbek to highlight differences and similarities. This comparison will shed light on the extent of linguistic borrowing and adaptation that has occurred in the Uzbek language.

To Trace the Impact of Russian on Uzbek Railway Language: The study seeks to trace how Russian, as the dominant language during the Russian Empire and Soviet Union periods, has influenced Uzbek railway terminology. By examining specific terms and their origins, we can better understand the mechanisms of linguistic influence and the persistence of borrowed terms in contemporary Uzbek.

2.   HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Russian empire's expansion and railway construction in the late 19th century
The construction of the Central Asian Railway began in the 1880s, driven by the Russian Empire's strategic and economic

interests in Central Asia. The railway was essential for maintaining control over vast territories, enabling the rapid movement of troops and resources. The first significant stretch, from Mikhailovsky Post to Mullakara, was completed in 1880. By 1885, the railway had reached Ashgabat, and by 1886, it extended to Merv, Chardzhou, and the Amu Darya River. The network continued to grow, connecting key cities like Samarkand by the late 19th century and eventually reaching the Fergana Valley and Tashkent by 1899 (Searight 1992).

Soviet-era expansions and developments
Under Soviet rule, the railway network in Central Asia was significantly expanded and modernized. New lines were constructed to improve connectivity and support economic development. During the 1920s and 1930s, several new routes were established, including the Amu Darya-Termez line (1925) and the Andijan-Tentaksoy line (1927). The network was crucial during World War II, providing a vital link between Central Asia and other parts of the Soviet Union. Post-war efforts continued to enhance the railway infrastructure, with major projects like the electrification of suburban lines around Tashkent beginning in 1971 and the completion of the Navoi-Uchkuduk-Sultanuvaystog-Nukus railway in the 1960s.

Role of Russian engineers and administrators
The construction and operation of the Central Asian Railway were primarily overseen by Russian engineers, administrators, and military personnel. These experts brought their technical knowledge and linguistic habits with them, resulting in the widespread use of Russian terminology within the railway sector. The technical and operational expertise required for railway construction and maintenance was transmitted through Russian, embedding Russian terms deeply into the fabric of the railway industry in Central Asia.

Establishment of Russian as the lingua franca for technical and operational purposes
During both the Russian Empire and Soviet Union periods, Russian was established as the lingua franca for all technical and

administrative matters (Agadjaniana & Nedoluzhko 2021) This was part of a broader policy of Russification, aimed at unifying the diverse peoples of the empire and later the Soviet Union under a single linguistic and cultural framework. In the railway sector, this meant that all official documentation, safety instructions, and communication protocols were standardized in Russian. As a result, many technical and operational terms in Uzbek railway vocabulary are borrowed directly from Russian.

The influence of the Russian language on Uzbek railway terminology remains significant despite ongoing efforts towards localization of terms. Since the establishment of Uzbekistan Railways on November 7, 1994, there has been a push to adopt Uzbek equivalents for railway terms. However, Russian terms continue to dominate the railway lexicon, reflecting historical ties and technical continuity inherited from the Soviet era. While Uzbekistan asserts its linguistic identity through initiatives like localization of terms, the prevalence of Russian terminology underscores the enduring legacy of Russian influence in the country's railway sector.

This scientific article investigates the influence of Russian railway terminology on Uzbek language railways terminology. It achieves this by analyzing the equivalents of the most common railway terms across English (the US and British), Russian, and Uzbek languages.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Railway terminology, as a subset of technical vocabulary, is a fascinating lens through which to explore the linguistic and cultural influences shaping communication in Uzbekistan's railway sector. This literature review delves into key studies that have contributed to understanding the interplay between Russian and Uzbek languages in railway terminology.

- **Monica Olivares (2019)**: emphasizes the importance of comprehensive glossaries in technical translation research. Her methodology aligns with the data collection approach outlined in this paper, underscoring the significance of authoritative sources in studying railway terminology.

- **Mona Baker (1995)**: Baker's study on technical documentation translation provides insights into the potential use of corpora employed in this research. By gathering information from railway operation manuals and regulatory documents, Baker's approach enhances the contextual understanding of railway terms, a crucial aspect of linguistic analysis.
- **Marin-Lacarta's (2023)** work on ethnographic methods informs the field research component of this study. By conducting observations at railway stations and interviewing professionals in the field, this research incorporates practical usage insights into the analysis of railway terminology, enriching the findings with real-world context.
- **Melo Mora's (2015)** emphasis on verification based on Means of Formal Concept Analysis aligns with the rigorous approach taken in this research. Cross-referencing data from multiple authoritative sources ensures the reliability and accuracy of the linguistic analysis, enhancing the credibility of the findings.
- **Farid Cerbah (2000)**: The categorization methodology outlined by Cerbah serves as a framework for organizing railway terms based on functional and semantic categories. This approach facilitates targeted analysis and comparison, enabling a comprehensive examination of the translation and adaptation processes.

These studies collectively provide a robust foundation for understanding the mechanisms of linguistic influence and adaptation in railway terminology. By building upon their methodologies and insights, this research contributes to the broader discourse on language contact, identity, and communication in technical domains, particularly within the context of post-Soviet Uzbekistan.

The methodology for this research paper involves a systematic analysis of the translation and adaptation of railway terminology from Russian into Uzbek. This process is divided into several key steps: data collection, categorization, linguistic analysis, and synthesis of findings. The goal is to understand the

mechanisms of direct borrowing, phonetic adaptation, and the use of native constructions in Uzbek railway terminology.

Data collection sources
Railway glossaries and technical dictionaries: Primary data were collected from specialized railway glossaries and technical dictionaries in both Russian and Uzbek, such as the Russian Railway Terminology Glossary and the Uzbek Technical Dictionary. The approach is supported by the methodology outlined by Monica Olivares (2019), who emphasizes the importance of comprehensive glossaries in technical translation research.

Industry-specific documents
Supplementary data were gathered from railway operation manuals, technical specifications, and regulatory documents available in both languages to provide context and usage examples for the terms, as highlighted by Mona Baker (1995) in her study on technical documentation translation.

Field research
Observational data were collected from railway stations, trains, and related infrastructure in Uzbekistan, where signage and communication often use the terms in question. Interviews with railway professionals provided additional insights into practical usage, following the ethnographic methods recommended by Marin-Lacarta & Yu (2023).

Verification
Each term was verified for accuracy and contextual appropriateness by cross-referencing multiple authoritative sources, including bilingual dictionaries and industry standards. This step ensures the reliability of the data used in the analysis, as suggested by Melo Mora & Toussaint (2015).

Categorization
- **Grouping**: The collected terms were categorized based on their functional and semantic categories, such as types of

vehicles (e.g., locomotives, wagons), roles (e.g., engineers, conductors), infrastructure components (e.g., stations, signals), and ticketing. This categorization facilitated targeted analysis and comparison, as described in the works of Cerbah (2000).

- **Frequency analysis**: The frequency of use and commonality of terms in both languages were analyzed to focus on the most relevant and widely used terms. This step involved reviewing industry reports and railway operation manuals to identify prevalent terms, in line with the methodology used by Church (1994).

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Linguistic analysis: Direct borrowing
- **Identification**: Terms that are direct borrowings from Russian with minimal phonetic or orthographic changes were identified. As Haspelmath (2009) claimed: "Loanword adaptation is sometimes indispensable for the word to be usable in the recipient language," some railway words are adopted from Russian into Uzbek according to thereplica language's linguistic system. Examples include *Вагон* (Vagon) in Russian and *Vagon* in Uzbek.
- **Analysis**: The analysis focused on the extent of phonetic similarity and orthographic consistency, reflecting the direct influence of Russian on Uzbek technical vocabulary.

Phonetic adaptation
Identification: Terms adapted to fit the phonetic and phonological rules of Uzbek were identified. For instance, "Маневровый локомотив" (Manevrovyy lokomotiv) becomes *Manevr lokomotivi* in Uzbek. Analysis: Changes in pronunciation and spelling were analyzed to highlight how Russian terms were modified to align with Uzbek phonetics.

Native constructions
- **Identification**: Native Uzbek terms used instead of direct borrowings were identified. Calque examples include *Temir*

yo'l" for "Железная дорога" (Zheleznaya doroga). This approach is supported by the research of Haziyeva (2020).

- **Analysis**: The etymology and construction of these native terms were analyzed to understand the preservation of linguistic identity alongside Russian influence, following the historical methods proposed by Haugen (1950).

Synthesis of findings

- **Comparative framework**: A comparative framework was developed to highlight the differences and similarities in the translation and adaptation processes. This framework categorized terms into direct borrowings, phonetic adaptations, and native constructions, providing a structured comparison, as illustrated by Majer (1981).
- **Contextual analysis**: The terms were placed within the context of their usage in the railway industry to examine how accurately and effectively the translations convey the original meanings and functions. This involved reviewing technical documents, industry communications, and public signage, following the contextual analysis approach of Scarpa (2019).
- **Linguistic and cultural insights**: The findings were synthesized to draw conclusions about the linguistic interplay and cultural dynamics shaping the adoption and adaptation of railway terminology in Uzbek. This included discussing the historical, political, and social factors influencing language use in technical fields, as discussed by Bolbanabad & Hanifi (2014).
- **Linguistic influence**: The research concluded that the influence of Russian on Uzbek railway terminology is significant, particularly in direct borrowings and phonetic adaptations. This reflects the historical and technical interactions between the two languages, as highlighted by Austin (1974).
- **Cultural dynamics**: The blend of native constructions alongside borrowed terms highlights the efforts to maintain linguistic identity in the face of foreign influence. This dynamic showcases the balance between adopting useful foreign terms and preserving the native linguistic heritage, as examined by Paradis and Lacharité.

Comparative analysis of railway terms from Russian into Uzbek:
This comparative analysis focuses on the translation of railway terminology from Russian into Uzbek, illustrating how terms are adapted, borrowed, or transformed to fit the linguistic and cultural context of Uzbek.

Key observations
- **Direct borrowing**: Many Uzbek railway terms are direct borrowings from the Russian language with minimal phonetic or orthographic changes, reflecting the influence of Russian on Uzbek, especially in technical domains.
- **Phonetic adaptation**: Some terms are adapted to fit the phonetic and phonological rules of Uzbek.
- **Native constructions**: Several terms use native Uzbek words, indicating a blend of preservation of linguistic identity alongside the influence of Russian.
- **Linguistic influences:**

American	British	Russian	Uzbek
Railroad	Railway	Железная дорога (Zheleznaya doroga)	Temir yo'l
Railroad worker	Railwayman	Железнодорожник (Zheleznadorognik)	Temir yo'lchi
Sleeper (railroad tie)	Sleeper	Шпала (Shpala)	Shpal
Shunting locomotive	Shunting locomotive	Маневровый локомотив (Manevrovyy lokomotiv)	Manevr lokomotivi
Bogie	Bogie	Тележка (Telezhka)	Kichik vagon
Engineer	Driver	Машинист (Mashinist)	Mashinist
Boxcar	Covered wagon	Крытый вагон (Krytyy vagon)	Yopiq vagon
Flatcar (Flat wagon)	Flat wagon	Платформа (Platforma)	Platforma
Tank car	Tank wagon	Цистерна (Tsisterna)	Sisternali vagon
Freight car	Goods wagon	Грузовой вагон (Gruzovoy vagon)	Yuk vagon
Refrigerator car	Refrigerator van	Рефрижератор (Refrigerator)	Sovutkich vagon
Conductor	Attendant	Проводник (Provodnik)	Konduktor
Baggage	Luggage	Багаж (Bagazh)	Yuk

Ticket office	Booking office	Билетная касса (Biletnaya kassa)	Bilet kassasi
Commuter train	Commuter train	Электричка (Elektrichka)	Elektr poyezd
Car	Carriage	Вагон (Vagon)	Vagon
Steam locomotive	Steam locomotive	Паровоз (Parovoz)	Paravoz
Points	Points	Стрелка (Strelka)	O'q
Guard	Controller	Контролёр (Kontroler)	Tekshiruvchi
Dining car	Restaurant carriage	Ресторанный вагон (Restorannyy vagon)	Restoran vagon
Round-trip ticket	Return ticket	Обратный билет (Obratnyy bilet)	Ikki tomonlama chipta
One-way ticket	Single ticket	Билет в один конец (Bilet v odin konets)	Bir tomonlama chipta
Signal	Signal	Сигнал (Signal)	Signal
Passenger	Passenger	Пассажир (Passazhir)	Yo'lovchi
Brake	Brake	Тормоз (Tormoz)	Tormoz
Station	Station	Станция (Stantsiya)	Stansiya
Car	Carriage	Вагон (Vagon)	Vagon
Train station	Railway station	Железнодорожная станция (Zheleznodorozhnaya stantsiya)	Temir yo'l stansiyasi
Rails	Rails	Рельсы (Rel'sy)	Relslar

Table 1. *The table presents certain railway terminology classified into 4 languages.*

Term-by-term analysis
Railroad/railway: Russian: Железная дорога (Zheleznaya doroga)   Uzbek: Temir yo'l   Analysis: "Temir yo'l" translates to "iron road," directly mirroring the Russian conceptualization but using Uzbek words.
Railroad worker/railwayman: Russian: Железнодорожник (Zheleznadorozhnik)   Uzbek: Temir yo'lchi   Analysis: Both terms are compound words. The Uzbek term breaks down into "temir" (iron) and "yo'lchi"   (worker/traveler), paralleling the Russian structure.
Sleeper (Railroad tie):   Russian: Шпала (Shpala)   Uzbek: Shpal   Analysis: "Shpal" in Uzbek is a direct borrowing from Russian, indicating a lack of a native equivalent term.

Shunting locomotive: Russian: Маневровый локомотив (Manevrovyy lokomotiv) Uzbek: Manevr lokomotivi Analysis: The Uzbek term is a direct translation, maintaining the original structure and meaning.
Bogie: Russian: Тележка (Telezhka) Uzbek: Kichik vagon Analysis: The term "Kichik vagon" is an adaptation, combining "Kichik" (small) with "vagon" (car), whereas the Russian "Telezhka" means a small cart.
Engineer/driver: Russian: Машинист (Mashinist) Uzbek: Mashinist Analysis: The term is borrowed directly without change, reflecting the specialized nature of the occupation.
Boxcar/covered wagon: Russian: Крытый вагон (Krytyy vagon) Uzbek: Yopiq vagon Analysis: "Yopiq vagon" translates directly as "covered wagon," similar to the Russian term.
Flatcar (Flat wagon): Russian: Платформа (Platforma) Uzbek: Platforma Analysis: The term is borrowed directly, indicating a shared technical vocabulary.
Tank car: Russian: Цистерна (Tsisterna) Uzbek: Sisternali vagon Analysis: The Uzbek term combines "sisterna" (tank) with "vagon" (car), providing a descriptive term similar to the Russian original.
Freight car: Russian: Грузовой вагон (Gruzovoy vagon) Uzbek: Yuk vagon Analysis: "Yuk vagon" translates directly as "freight wagon," mirroring the Russian term.
Refrigerator car: Russian: Рефрижератор (Refrigerator) Uzbek: Sovutkich vagon Analysis: The Uzbek term combines "sovutkich" (refrigerator) with "vagon," providing a descriptive term.
Hopper car: Russian: Хоппер (Hopper) Uzbek: Hopper vagon Analysis: The term is borrowed directly, reflecting the specialized nature of the equipment.

Conductor/attendant: Russian: Проводник (Provodnik) Uzbek: Konduktor Analysis: The term is borrowed directly with minor phonetic adaptation.
Baggage/luggage: Russian: Багаж (Bagazh) Uzbek: Yuk Analysis: The Uzbek term "yuk" is a native word meaning "load" or "baggage," differing from the borrowed Russian term.
Ticket office: Russian: Билетная касса (Biletnaya kassa) Uzbek: Bilet kassasi Analysis: The term is a direct translation, reflecting similar structures in both languages.
Commuter train: Russian: Электричка (Elektrichka) Uzbek: Elektor poyezd Analysis: "Elektr poyezd" means "electric train," a direct translation of the Russian term.
Car/carriage: Russian: Вагон (Vagon) Uzbek: Vagon Analysis: The term is borrowed directly, indicating common usage.
Steam locomotive: Russian: Паровоз (Parovoz) Uzbek: Paravoz Analysis: The term is borrowed directly, showing a shared concept.
Points: Russian: Стрелка (Strelka) Uzbek: O'q Analysis: The Uzbek "O'q" means "arrow" or "point," reflecting the shape and function, similar to the Russian term.
Guard/controller: Russian: Контролёр (Kontroler) Uzbek: Tekshiruvchi Analysis: The Uzbek "Tekshiruvchi" translates to "inspector," providing a functional description.
Dining car: Russian: Ресторанный вагон (Restorannyy vagon) Uzbek: Restoran vagon Analysis: The term is a direct translation, simplifying the possessive form in Russian.
Round-trip ticket: Russian: Обратный билет (Obratnyy bilet) Uzbek: Ikki tomonlama chipta

Analysis: "Ikki tomonlama chipt" translates as "two-way ticket," similar to the Russian term.
One-way ticket: Russian: Билет в один конец (Bilet v odin konets) Uzbek: Bir tomonlama chipt Analysis: "Bir tomonlama chipta" translates as "one-way ticket," mirroring the Russian term.
Signal: Russian: Сигнал (Signal) Uzbek: Signal Analysis: The term is borrowed directly, indicating common usage.
Passenger: Russian: Пассажир (Passazhir) Uzbek: Yo'lovchi Analysis: The Uzbek term "yo'lovchi" is a native word meaning "traveller" or "passenger."
Brake: Russian: Тормоз (Tormoz) Uzbek: Tormoz Analysis: The term is borrowed directly, showing a shared concept.
Station: Russian: Станция (Stantsiya) Uzbek: Stansiya Analysis: The term is borrowed directly, reflecting common usage.
Train station: Russian: Железнодорожная станция (Zheleznodorozhnaya stantsiya) Uzbek: Temir yo'l stansiyasi Analysis: The Uzbek term translates directly as "iron road station," similar to the Russian term.
Rails: Russian: Рельсы (Rel'sy) Uzbek: Relslar Analysis: The term is borrowed directly, indicating shared technical vocabulary.

The translation of railway terms from Russian into Uzbek shows a mixture of direct borrowings, phonetic adaptations, and native lexical constructions. This blend reflects both the influence of Russian on the technical vocabulary of Uzbek and the efforts to maintain linguistic identity through the use of native terms. The comparative analysis highlights the linguistic interplay and adaptation processes between these two languages.

5. CONCLUSION

- **Direct borrowing**: A significant number of Uzbek railway terms are directly borrowed from Russian with minimal phonetic or orthographic modifications. This phenomenon is especially evident in specialized technical terms where the need for precise and standardized communication favored the adoption of Russian terminology during the Soviet era. Examples include *vagon* (carriage), *paravoz* (steam locomotive), and *signal* (signal).
- **Phonetic adaptation**: Some Russian terms have been adapted phonetically to better fit Uzbek phonological rules. This adaptation ensures that the borrowed terms are more accessible and easier to pronounce for Uzbek speakers while retaining their original meanings. Terms like *manevr lokomotivi* (shunting locomotive) illustrate this adaptation process.
- **Native constructions**: Despite the dominance of borrowed terms, there are instances where native Uzbek constructions are used. These terms reflect a conscious effort to preserve linguistic identity and cultural heritage. For instance, *temir yo'l* (railway) and *yo'lovchi* (passenger) are purely Uzbek terms that encapsulate the same concepts as their Russian counterparts.

Linguistic and cultural dynamics
The linguistic landscape of Uzbek railway terminology is a testament to the enduring legacy of Russian influence. However, the blend of direct borrowings, phonetic adaptations, and native constructions also highlights Uzbekistan's efforts to assert its linguistic identity post-independence. The establishment of "Uzbekistan Railways" and subsequent localization initiatives underscore a nationalistic drive to promote the Uzbek language in all spheres, including technical and professional domains.

Implications for linguistic studies
The findings of this study have broader implications for understanding the processes of linguistic borrowing and

adaptation in post-colonial contexts. They illustrate how technical vocabularies in colonized or influenced regions can become hybridized, blending foreign and native elements. This hybridization reflects broader socio-political dynamics and can influence national identity, communication, and education policies.

Future research directions

Future research could extend this comparative framework to other technical fields in Uzbekistan, such as aviation, automotive, or information technology, to see if similar patterns of linguistic influence exist. Additionally, longitudinal studies could investigate how the balance between borrowed and native terms evolves as Uzbekistan continues to modernize and assert its linguistic independence.

The integration of Russian railway terminology into Uzbek reflects a complex interplay of historical legacies and contemporary efforts at linguistic and cultural reassertion. This study not only provides insights into the specific case of Uzbek railway terminology but also contributes to broader discussions on language contact, influence, and the politics of language in post-colonial settings.

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