

Semantic Classification and Description of Neologisms in Publicistic Texts of the Early 20th Century

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the sociolinguistic classification and semantic characteristics of neologisms in early 20th-century Uzbek publicistic texts, specifically focusing on the works of Jadid enlighteners such as M. Behbudi, M. Abdurashidkhanov, and H. Muin. The main objective is to identify the social drivers behind lexical innovation and analyze the mechanisms of language change during a period of intense political and cultural transformation. Methodologically, a comparative-historical and sociolinguistic approach was applied to classify neologisms into semantic categories and examine internal word-formation alongside foreign borrowings. The results indicate that external borrowings – predominantly from or via Russian – outnumbered internal coinages, reflecting the profound impact of colonial administration, political restructuring, and socio-economic modernization. The study concludes that neologisms served not merely as lexical additions but as vital sociolinguistic indicators reflecting ideological, administrative, and cultural shifts in early 20th-century Central Asia.

Keywords: Neologisms, sociolinguistics, Jadid journalism, lexical borrowings, word-formation, language contacts

1. INTRODUCTION

Neologisms (Greek *neos* – “new,” *logos* – “word”) are new words, expressions, or novel semantic meanings of existing terms

that emerge under the influence of socio-political, scientific, and cultural developments within a society. In linguistic literature, neologisms are defined as lexical units created to name new concepts, objects, and phenomena. They function to fulfill communicative needs and adapt the language to evolving realities. While individual speech innovations (nonce words) occur initially at the personal level, mainstream linguistics primarily investigates general language neologisms once they gain social acceptance.

In the early 20th century, Turkestan experienced rapid social, political, and cultural transformations. Mass media and press outlets played a pivotal role as primary vehicles for disseminating new vocabulary. The emergence of neologisms during this period was closely intertwined with sociolinguistic processes, as language directly mirrored societal shifts.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The primary source material for this study comprises publicistic articles and journalistic essays authored by prominent Jadid figures, including Mahmudkhoja Behbudi, Munavvarqori Abdurashidkhanov, and Hoji Muin. A sociolinguistic and contextual analysis was conducted on the extracted lexical data. Neologisms were categorized into specific thematic groups (socio-political, economic, cultural-educational, and religious) and analyzed based on their derivational patterns and language contact mechanisms. Both qualitative semantic interpretation and structural classification methods were employed to determine the internal and external origins of the terms.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The empirical analysis reveals that lexical renewal in early 20th-century Uzbek publicistics proceeded along two main channels: Internal Sources (word-formation via national linguistic resources) and External Sources (lexical borrowings).

Thus, as mentioned above, the formation of neologisms is undoubtedly influenced by social relations, which constitutes the

point of convergence with sociolinguistics. When a word exists for a certain period, is used in various contexts, and reaches a point where native speakers perceive it as “ordinary” it becomes integrated into the language. Therefore, in the formation of neologisms, new social phenomena, new technology, socio-economic, and cultural contacts – overall, any innovation in society – find their reflection in language. This is considered the main factor behind the emergence of neologisms. The use of neologisms in publicistic texts of the early 20th century arose as a result of the environment of that era, as well as the socio-political, cultural, and economic relations of society. Mass media, in turn, served as a vehicle for the widespread dissemination of neologisms.

The prominent linguist Sh. Rahmatullayev categorized the emergence of neologisms into the following groups:

1. By lexeme derivation: a) formation through new coining, b) formation through parallel derivation alongside an existing lexeme.
2. Through the semantic development of the lexeme's lexical meaning.
3. Through lexical borrowing.

In many sources, the formation of neologisms is outlined as follows:

1. neologisms formed through word-formation;
2. neologisms formed through semantic means;
3. neologisms formed through lexical borrowing.

From this, it is evident that the formation of neologisms mainly occurs through word-formation methods and foreign lexical borrowings.

In this research paper, through the analysis of publicistic articles by M. Behbudi, M. Abdurashidkhanov, and H. Muin, neologisms were analyzed from a sociolinguistic perspective by categorizing them into the following thematic groups:

1. Neologisms in the socio-political sphere.
2. Neologisms in the economic sphere.
3. Neologisms in the cultural and educational sphere.
4. Neologisms in the religious sphere.

3.1. *Neologisms in the socio-political sphere*

Neologisms in this sphere include: *teleg'rom* (telegram), *truyka* (troika), *zakun* (law), *konyak* (cognac), *komissar* (commissar), *general* (xeneral), *militsiya* (militia), *zobit* (officer), *shirkat* (company/partnership), *ijroqo'm* (executive committee), *manifest*, *volostnoyxona* (volost office), *telegrof* (teleg'rof) (telegraph), *kommunizm* (communism), *boshqarma* (administration/directorate), *bosmachilar* (basmachi/anti-Soviet insurgents), *jumhuriyat* (republic), *sho'ro* (council/soviet), *aksilharakatchilar* (reactionaries/counter-revolutionaries), *senzur* (censure/censorship), *sarkotib* (chief secretary), *komandirovka* (business trip/assignment), *menshevik*, *bolsheviknamo* (bolshevik-like), *byuro* (bureau), *burjuazniy* (bourgeois), *raddiya* (refutation), *tribunal*, *soldat* (soldier), *mahkama* (court/judiciary), *idora* (office/institution), *miting* (rally/meeting), *gubernatur* (*g'ubernatur*) (governor), *frunt'ga/frunt* (front), *mustabid* (*mustabida*) (despotic/tyrant), *turma* (prison), *firqa* (party), *komitet* (committee), *uezd* (county/district), *po'chta* (post/mail), *komissiya* (commission), *sho'ba* (department/section), *dumaxona* (duma building/office), *kommunist* (communist), *pulemut* (machine gun), *syezd* (congress), *missionerlik* (missionary work), *qadrshinoslik* (*kadrshinoslik*) (personnel/talent appreciation), *nomzod* (candidate), *vag'un* (wagon/railcar), *ayruplan* (airplane), *tayyora* (aircraft), *paroxud* (*paraxo'd*) (steamboat), *pristuf* (bailiff/pristav), *polisa* (police), *prutest* (protest), *olot* (tools/instruments), *partiya* (party), *impirotur* (emperor), *oblust* (oblast/region), *zemstvo* (local council), *kommirsant* (merchant/businessman), *fabrikant* (factory owner), *tilgirom* (telegram), *notsiyolizatsiya* (nationalization), *protokol* (protocol/minutes), *valasno'y* (volost official).

These units were introduced during the colonial and Soviet periods. Due to changes in state governance, the military structure, and the political system, old Turkic terminology proved

insufficient. They were actively used in the speech of officials, military personnel, and civil servants. Neologisms encountered in the socio-political sphere are lexical units that emerged in direct connection with the formation of state administration, political systems, military structures, and administrative institutions in the life of society are lexical units that emerged in direct connection with (the state administration, political system, military structures, and administrative institutions). Words belonging to this group, such as *general*, *militsiya* (militia), *gubernator* (governor), *komissar* (commissar), *komissiya* (commission), *tribunal*, *komitet* (committee), *kommunist* (communist), *bolshevik*, *menshevik*, *frunt* (front), *soldat* (soldier), *idora* (office), *mahkama* (court/judiciary), *manifest*, *zakon* (law), *volost*, *syezd* (congress), and *byuro* (bureau), are borrowings adopted into the Uzbek language primarily from Russian, as well as from European languages via Russian. Their emergence is not a random linguistic phenomenon, but rather the product of social necessity tied to specific historical and social conditions – namely, colonial rule and, subsequently, the Soviet statehood system.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, these neologisms entered the language through state institutions. In other words, these units were initially used in official documents, laws, military orders, administrative management systems, and the party apparatus, before gradually assimilating into everyday speech. Thus, they were borrowed not through natural oral folk speech, but through government authority and official discourse. This situation clearly demonstrates the social mechanisms of language change, particularly the connection between language and power. These neologisms were initially actively used in the speech of specific social strata – military personnel, officials, judicial staff, party activists, and civil servants. For instance, units such as “general,” *soldat*, and *frunt* were characteristic of military representatives, whereas words like *komissiya*, *tribunal*, *idora*, *gubernator*, and *mahkama* constituted the vocabulary of the administrative-legal apparatus. Meanwhile, units such as *kommunist*, *bolshevik*, *menshevik*, *syezd*, and *komitet* belonged to political discourse and represented a specific ideological system. Consequently, these

words served not only a nominative function, but also conveyed the speaker's social status, professional affiliation, and ideological position. That is to say, they possessed a social-functional character. Furthermore, certain units in this group carried an evaluative nature. For example, words such as *bosmachilar* (basmachi) and *aksilharakatchilar* (reactionaries/counter-revolutionaries) were used with the aim of positively or negatively evaluating a specific social group. Certain lexemes within this group are classified as individual neologisms. For instance, terms such as *aksilharakatchilar* (reactionaries/counter-revolutionaries), *insoniyatparvar* (humanitarian), *suizan* (suspicion/bad intent), *dumaxona* (duma building), *ishlikli* (worker-like), *volostnoyxona* (volost office), *bolsheviknamo* (bolshevik-like), *faqirlanmoq* (to become impoverished), *hukmfarmo* (ruler/commander), *ifrotparast* (extremist), and *qabohatnoma* (chronicle of atrocities) belong to authorial discourse and are termed individual neologisms in linguistics. Below, we elaborate on some of these neologisms.

***Sho'ro* (Council/Soviet)** – borrowed from the Arabic language, derived from the word *shura* (شورى). Its etymology conveys the meanings of “consultation,” “council” and “exchange of views.” In Arabic, this term signifies resolving religious or secular matters through mutual consultation. Beginning in 1917, this word came to be used as a designation for political authority. While it initially denoted a “council,” during the Soviet era it acquired the meanings of a state power system, the name of a political regime, and a new form of governance. In publicistic and official texts, this word was frequently used within phrases such as *sho'ro hukumati* (Soviet government) and *sho'ro hokimiyati* (Soviet power). Serving as a marker of distinction from the old regime, it also gave rise to derivative forms such as *sho'rochi* (pro-Soviet/Soviet supporter). This process illustrates the linguistic demarcation of social groups. In the official discourse of the Soviet era, this lexeme held a positive social connotation, interpreted as a symbol of equality, justice, and the new order. In subsequent periods, however, it began to acquire negative or neutral connotations.

Burjuazniy (Bourgeois) – originating from the French lexeme “bourgeois,” this word entered the Uzbek language via Russian (буржуазный). Initially, this term referred to the urban property-owning class. In the early 20th century, under the influence of Soviet ideology, it began to be actively used as a class-defining term. Thus, the meaning of the word narrowed, as it moved away from denoting simply an urban resident or a person engaged in trade starting from the 20th century under the Soviet regime. For instance, this word was used in a negative sense opposing the proletariat (working class) during the Soviet regime, reflecting a negative social connotation. As a neologism formed under the influence of Soviet ideology in the early 20th century, it served to express and reinforce class antagonism through language.

Mustabid (Despotic/Tyrant) – borrowed from Arabic, originating from the Arabic word *mustabidd* (مستبد), which means “acting on one's own authority,” “tyrant,” or “ruler.” In the Uzbek language, *mustabid* denotes a tyrannical ruler or regime that disregards the interests of the people. While this lexeme was historically used as a religious and moral evaluative unit, it began to be utilized in political discourse at the beginning of the 20th century. During this era, particularly in Jadid and Soviet publicism, it was employed to denote the Tsarist regime and exploitative systems. It was predominantly used in the speech of intellectuals, Jadid publicists, and politically active strata, whereas it entered everyday folk speech mainly through publicistic texts. From a sociolinguistic standpoint, along with naming authority, it expressed dissatisfaction toward it. It can be said that through this lexeme, language turned into a tool of political struggle.

Thus, socio-political neologisms were formed in connection with changes in state administration, the military system, and the ideological order in the early 20th century. They entered the language primarily through official discourse, serving the function of naming the new political reality. Alongside their nominative function, these units also performed an evaluative role.

3.2. Neologisms in the economic sphere

Fabrik (factory), *senzur* (censure/censorship), *partiya* (party), *buxg'altirlar* (accountants), *bayonot* (statement/declaration), *bank*, *xazinaxona* (treasury), *prosent* (percent), *moliya* (finance), *bonka* (jar/bank), *kredit* (credit), *tijoratxona* (commercial establishment/firm), *kassa* (cash desk/checkout), *foydxo'r* (usurer/profiteer), *veksel* (promissory note/bill of exchange), *notarius* (notary), *fabrikant* (factory owner). Due to the development of industrialization and market relations, new economic concepts emerged. A major portion of these words was borrowed from Russian, with some entering through Russian from European languages. Owing to the absence of equivalents in the local language, terms were borrowed from Russian and various world languages. They were mainly used in the speech of merchants, entrepreneurs, and workers. Among these units *xazinaxona* (treasury), *tijoratxona* (commercial house/establishment), and *foydxo'r* (usurer/profiteer) were formed through the word-formation method (stem + Persian affix).

Buxg'altir (buxgalter) (Accountant) – (this word was borrowed from the German language, formed by combining the words *Buch* (book) and *halten* (to hold, to keep), meaning “bookkeeper” (one who maintains account books)). During this period, the process of industrialization intensified, and factories alongside trade began to develop. Consequently, a written financial reporting system was established. From a sociolinguistic perspective, this unit designated a new social profession, reflecting the process of division of labor within society. Overall, the lexeme served as a linguistic expression of the economic processes that emerged in the early 20th century, manifesting as a neologism that reflected industrialization and the formation of the financial system.

“Bank” – (the word is derived from the Italian word *banca*, signifying “table” or “money changer's table”). This lexeme entered the language during the period when the financial system of the Soviet regime began operating in Turkestan. It was utilized in the speech of merchants, industrialists, state officials, and intellectuals, whereas it was initially rare in the speech of

ordinary peasants or rural populations. As mentioned above, while *xazinaxona* was a word based on a traditional model, bank represented the financial institution of the developing world. In summary, the lexeme bank was a neologism that entered the Uzbek language as a result of economic modernization in the early 20th century, reflecting financial practice exchange, urbanization, and the formation of capital relations. This unit is a linguistic reflection of urban economic life.

In the early 20th century, the radical transformation of economic relations in the territory of Turkestan was also reflected in the language system. As a result of the expansion of trade, the systematization of money circulation, and the establishment of financial institutions, a number of new economic terms entered the Uzbek language. In particular, units such as bank, *kredit* (credit), *prosent* (percent), *veksel* (promissory note), and *kassa* (cash desk) manifested as a linguistic reflection of economic growth during that era. These lexemes were borrowed from European languages via Russian, and their introduction was bound to external socio-economic factors rather than internal language development. This circumstance allows for explaining their formation as neologisms through social necessity. Their local equivalents were either non-existent or not actively used. These units expressed the intrinsic connection between changes in the economic system and the lexical system, marking the socially differentiated layer of the Uzbek language. In conclusion, it can be stated that neologisms in the economic sphere emerged as a result of industrialization, trade, and the formation of financial institutions. They served as linguistic expressions of economic processes and were mainly active in urban environments and in the speech of representatives of new professions. These units formed a new economic terminological layer within the lexical system of the Uzbek language.

3.3. Neologisms in the cultural and educational sphere

Karikatura (caricature), *maorifparvar* (educator/enlightener), *ruskiy-tuzemniy* (Russo-Native), *toshbosma* (lithography), *matbaa* (press/printing), *gimnaziya* (gymnasium), *tiyotru* (theater), *kurs* (*qurs*) (course), *gimnastik* (*gimnastika*)

(gymnastics), *dorilfunun* (university), *dorulmuallimin* (teachers' seminary), *jarida* (newspaper), *majalla* (journal/magazine), *duktur* (doctor), *filo'suf* (philosopher), *isxulostiki* (scholasticism), *maktabdorlik* (schoolkeeping/schoolmastery), *injiner* (engineer), *gimnaziya*, *qulub (klub)* (club), *tilgirom* (telegram), *jaridaxon* (newspaper reader), *paraxo'd* (steamboat), *dorulsanoat* (industrial school/technical institute), *tarbiyatxona* (orphanage/educational asylum). Neologisms in the cultural and educational sphere emerged during the enlightenment movement, the transition period from the old educational system to the new one, and were closely tied to the development of the press. They were widely used in the speech of intellectuals, teachers, and students. Below, we focus on the sociolinguistic analysis of selected lexemes from this group.

Maorifparvar (Educator/Enlightener) – this lexeme (borrowed from the Arabic language, derived from the Arabic *ma'arif*, denoting “information” “knowledge,” “being enlightened,” “disseminating knowledge” and “providing education”; Stem: *maorif* – Arabic, Affix: *-parvar* – Persian-Tajik) emerged in the early 20th century in connection with the Jadidism movement. During a period when the process of transitioning from the old school system to new-method education intensified in society emerged. It was actively used mainly in the speech of intellectuals, Jadids, and teachers. This word designated a social group that aimed to educate and serve the people. A new social movement was named through language.

Gimnaziya (Gymnasium) – (the word originates from Ancient Greek, tracing back to the word “gymnasion” (gymnasia). This term stems from the Greek *gymnos* – “naked” initially referring to a place in Ancient Greece where physical exercises were performed unclothed. It entered the Uzbek language via Russian) was introduced under the influence of the Russian Empire's educational system. Unlike traditional schools (*maktab*) and madrasas, it denoted a secular educational institution. Gymnasiums were primarily attended by urban residents and children of wealthy families; hence, this word was associated with social status. Through this borrowing, a new educational model entered the

language, semantically distinct from the concept of the traditional school. Likewise, *gimnaziya* served as a symbol of modernization and European-style education.

Dorilfunun (University) – (the word is borrowed from the Arabic language, originating from the Arabic phrase *daru-l-funun* [house/abode of sciences]) was used in the sense of a university. This term was employed in the national context as an equivalent to university, reflecting an attempt to preserve national identity and religious-cultural traditions. From a sociolinguistic perspective, while the word *dorilfunun* is considered to have been created on the basis of religious terminology, the word *universitet* is a lexeme based on the European model. In our view, the use of the unit *dorilfunun* in the early 20th century expressed an aspiration to preserve national identity.

Savodsizlik (Illiteracy) – (the word is derived from Arabic *savad* [سواد], denoting literacy, reading and writing ability, education, and knowledge in Uzbek). Initially expressing the meanings of “black matter” or “writing” this word was widely used during the enlightenment period, naming one of the primary issues in society. Frequently used in the press and publicism, it became a vehicle for social criticism. The illiterate and literate strata the distinction between [the illiterate and literate strata] was expressed through language. Why were the lexemes *savad* (literacy) and *savodsizlik* (illiteracy) so frequently used during this specific era? The reason lies in the social order, the intensification of interaction with other nations, and the special emphasis placed on acquiring knowledge.

Cultural and educational neologisms emerged in close connection with the Jadid movement, the new educational system, and the development of the press. They reflected the transition process from the old traditional educational model to a secular and modern educational system. These units were actively used in the speech of intellectuals and enlightened strata, expressing the cultural renewal of society.

3.4. Neologisms in the religious sphere

Xurofotchi (superstitious/obscu-rantist) and *eskiparast* (traditionalist/old-fashioned) expressed the struggle between

renewal and old ways in society, carrying a socially evaluative (negative) meaning. Neologisms are considered direct products of political, economic, and cultural transformations in society. They demonstrate the social nature of language, reflecting the needs of a specific historical period.

Units formed through word-formation. *Xurofotchi* (superstitious person), *baynalmilliy* (international), *maorifparvar* (educator/enlightener), *noxulq* (ill-mannered/immoral), *turklik* (Turkicness/Turkism), *savodzada* (literate), *maktabdorlik* (schoolmastery), *aksilharakatchilar* (reactionaries/counter-revolutionaries), *insoniyatparvar* (humanitarian), *dumaxona* (duma building), *ishlikli* (worker-like), *volostnoyxona* (volost office), *bolsheviknamo* (bolshevik-like), *faqirlanmoq* (to become impoverished), and similar forms. In this method, we observe instances where the stem is Turkic and the affix is also Turkic, or where a Turkic suffix is added to a Russian-international word. In certain cases, compound words based on the stem + stem structure (*aksilharakatchilar*, *volostnoyxona*, *baynalmilliy*, *toshbosma*) are also encountered. This, in turn, reflects the direct influence of the Russian language on societal life. For instance: *Xurofotchi*: *xurofot* – Arabic stem, *-chi* (noun-forming) Turkic affix; *Noxulq*: *no-* – Persian-Tajik prefix, *xulq* – Arabic stem; *Maktabdorlik*: *maktab* – Arabic stem, *-dor*, *-lik* (noun-forming) Turkic affixes; *Volostnoyxona*: *volostnoy-* – Russian stem, *-xona* – Turkic (originally borrowed from Persian-Tajik) affix, and so forth.

It is evident from these analyses that along with neologisms borrowed from Arabic and Persian-Tajik, Russian-international neologisms entered the Uzbek language as a demand and necessity of the era, as well as through socio-political transformations and cultural contacts.

Units formed through lexical borrowing. In the early 20th century, the social situation was such that a need arose not only for word borrowing, but also for accepting units entering via the Russian language. This manifested most clearly in the lexical layer of the language. In particular, extralinguistic factors caused the introduction of neologisms into the Uzbek language, such as: *zakun* (law), *konyak* (cognac), *komissar* (commissar), *xeneral*

(general), *militsiya* (militia/police), *zobit* (officer), *shirkat* (company/partnership), *manifest* (manifesto), *telegrof* (*teleg'rof*) (telegraph), *kommunizm* (communism), *sho'ro* (council/soviet), *senzur* (censorship), *komandirovka* (business trip), *menshevik* (menshevik), *byuro* (bureau), *burjuazniy* (bourgeois), *sarkotib* (chief secretary), *tribunal* (tribunal), *soldat* (soldier), *mahkama* (court/office), *idora* (office/department), *miting* (rally/meeting), *gubernatur* (governor/governorate), *frunt* (front), *mustabid* (*mustabida*) (tyrant/despotic), *turma* (prison), *firqa* (party), *komitet* (committee), *uezd* (county/uezd), *po'chta* (post/mail), *komissiya* (commission), *sho'ba* (department/section), *kommunist* (communist), *pulemut* (machine gun), *syezd* (congress), *missionerlik* (proselytism/missionary work), *vag'un* (wagon/railcar), *ayruplan* (airplane), *paroxud* (*paraxo'd*) (steamboat), *prisuf* (juror/assessor), *polisa* (policy/police), *prutest* (protest), *impirotur* (emperor), *oblust* (oblast/region), *zemstvo* (zemstvo), *kommirsant* (merchant), *fabrikant* (factory owner), *tilgirom* (telegram), *protokol* (protocol/minutes), *valasno'y* (volost administrator), *fabrik* (factory), *partiya* (party), *buxg'altir* (accountant), *bayonot* (statement), *bank*, *xazinaxona* (treasury), *prog'romi* (program), *prosent* (percent), *moliya* (finance), *bonka* (jar/bank), *kredit* (credit), *kassa* (cash desk), *veksel* (promissory note), *notarius* (notary), *karikatura* (caricature), *ruskiy-tuzemniy* (Russo-Native), *matbaa* (press/printing), *tiyotru* (theater), *kurs* (*qurs*) (course), *gimnastik* (*gimnastika*) (gymnastics), *dorilfunun* (university), *dorulmuallimin* (teachers' seminary), *duktur* (*do'qtur*) (doctor), *filo'suf* (philosopher), *isxulostiki* (scholasticism), *kuryer* (courier), *injinier* (engineer), *gimnaziya* (gymnasium), *qulub* (*klub*) (club), *kantur* (office/counter), and similar units. This inherently refutes the notion of language in and for itself.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The analyzed neologisms were mainly introduced through the Russian language, and a significant portion of them pertains to the political-administrative, military, and economic spheres. This demonstrates a direct link to the socio-political transformations,

the colonial administrative system, and modernization processes of the early 20th century. Meanwhile, the activation of units belonging to the educational and technical spheres indicates that the new educational model and industrial progress were reflected in the language system.

In summary, neologisms manifest not merely as lexical renewal, but as sociolinguistic indicators that reflect the ideological, economic, socio-political, and cultural transformations of the era. This serves as proof that extralinguistic (external) factors are consistently reflected in language. In particular, the changes in social life during the early 20th century inevitably left their mark on the language.

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