

Investigation of Legal Terms in Modern English and Uzbek

Umarova Diyoraxon Fazliddin Qizi

*Andijan state foreign languages institute, student of the Faculty of Andijan state foreign languages
KF Korean 24-1 group*

Pazilova Nasibaxon Muxammadkasimovna

Scientific supervisor, Andijan state foreign languages institute

Abstract. *This article discusses the investigation of terms and its specific features in Modern English. It also studies peculiarities of legal terms and usage of them in different texts.*

Key words: *legal terms, terminology, words, lexical features.*

Legal terminology constitutes the core vocabulary of legal language. Words and terms employed in legislation, refined over time and evolving with Uzbekistan's independence, are characterized by their formal tone. This extensive vocabulary stands as a testament to the nation's significant values and the existence of Uzbek statehood and legal rights.

The quality of legal advancements and the effectiveness of laws are significantly influenced by the skillful use of linguistic tools, particularly legal terms. As Uzbekistan undertakes practical measures to improve its legal democratic society, including reforms focused on human rights, the rule of law, and state administration, addressing the language and style of laws, legal terminology, and terminological and orthographical aspects of legal disciplines is paramount. The creation of "new generation" explanatory dictionaries, encyclopedias, and manuals is an urgent and critical task.

The development of our independent nation and the enactment of numerous laws related to human rights has led to the emergence of thousands of new legal terms, as the emergence of any new concept or phenomenon in society enriches the terminology that reflects it. However, these new legal concepts, as they are expressed in language as words or terms, must be formed according to the rules of the Uzbek language. It is important to ask: Do the legal terms being chosen and used in everyday communication accurately represent the events, features, and concepts they describe? Do the Uzbek equivalents of terms borrowed from other languages adhere to the standards of literary Uzbek? These questions require careful consideration and collaborative solutions from legal professionals and philologists. Lawmakers must study statehood, legislation, and jurisprudence using the state language, with a deep understanding of its specific laws, methodology, and terminology.

Since Uzbekistan's independence, approximately 400 laws have been enacted, which is a positive development as each law aims to improve human well-being and societal progress. While most of these laws are drafted according to literary language standards, some articles require further linguistic refinement and editing.

The language of the law is an integral part of the literary language, representing a specific form with its own distinct lexical, terminological, grammatical, and methodological standards.

Within legal texts, even a single misused word, term, or punctuation mark can introduce stylistic errors and create ambiguity. Therefore, every law approved by parliament, and each of its articles,

must adhere strictly to literary language standards. This is critical because human well-being and outcomes depend on the accuracy and clarity of these legal provisions.

A persistent issue is the inconsistent use of multiple terms to represent the same concept across different legal sources (laws, decrees, textbooks, training manuals, pamphlets, legal journals, and dictionaries). Examples include “administration/authority,” “suspect/accused,” “instruction/indication,” “joint-stock company/joint-stock company,” “criminal case/criminal case,” “parties/parties,” “upper house/senate,” and “lower house/legislature.” This inconsistency stems from a lack of understanding among legal professionals regarding the requirements of a proper term and the norms of the literary language. Terms should be official words with clearly defined meanings, approved by state authorities before being introduced into common usage. Universally recognized principles in linguistics dictate that a term performs a nominative function, with its meaning precisely equivalent to the concept it represents. Within a terminological system, a term should be single-meaning, or monosemantic, ensuring that its meaning is consistently aligned with its corresponding concept. Essentially, terms are specialized and formal words designed to express a single, unambiguous meaning.

Ideally, the number of legal terms should correspond precisely to the number of legal concepts within the language. Synonyms and doublets are unacceptable within a unified terminological system. Therefore, the standardization and uniformity of legal terms are pressing concerns today. Publishing orthographic and explanatory dictionaries of legal terms, or comprehensive bilingual and encyclopedic dictionaries for each branch of jurisprudence, would effectively address this issue.

Some articles of the law contain errors and misinterpretations in the use of even basic terms. For example, Article 40 of the Code of Administrative Responsibility defines “Defamation” as “knowingly spreading falsehoods that embarrass another person...” The use of the word “embarrass” in this article is stylistically inappropriate. It appears the author of the law did not consult the existing “Explanatory Dictionary of the Uzbek Language” during drafting. According to the dictionary, “slander” is defined as “an unfounded claim, slander made with the purpose of accusing or defaming someone.” (O’TIL, Volume II, p. 241)

While there are approximately 3,000 languages worldwide, no language exists in complete isolation. Language acquisition, through communication and interaction, inevitably leads to borrowing. The Uzbek language, like others, incorporates a layer of words borrowed from other languages (specifically, those not related to Uzbek) in addition to its native vocabulary. However, some borrowed words and terms deviate from the standards and criteria of literary Uzbek due to uncritical copying from Russian and, subsequently, other European languages. This results in the emergence of awkward legal terms. For example, the term “Criminal Code” is a flawed translation from the Russian “Ugolovnyy kodeks.” A more appropriate rendering, consistent with the norms of literary Uzbek, would be “Collection of Laws on Crime and Punishment” or “Crime and Punishment Code.” The existing term, derived from Russian, incorrectly implies a code (or set of laws) somehow *related to* crime. Similarly, the term “Criminal Law” is stylistically illogical; a literal understanding suggests a “right” belonging to crime. From an Uzbek linguistic perspective, “Law on Crime and Punishment” or “Principles of Crime and Punishment” would be more accurate. Finally, the translation of the Russian term “deputatskoe rassledovanie” as “deputy inspection” violates literary language norms. The Russian word for *audit* is “revision” (revisiya).

Translating “deputatskoe rassledovanie” as a “deputy’s investigation” aligns with Uzbek literary language standards and conveys a complete, logical thought.

A particularly egregious error, resulting in an absurd situation, is the mistranslation of “Criminal executive law” into Uzbek. This phrase, if analyzed literally, implies “the *right* to commit crimes.” To conform to the standards of literary Uzbek, this term should be rendered as “The Right to Execute Punishment” or “Execution of Punishment.” These incorrect translations, originating from Russian, were introduced into the field long ago and have unfortunately become commonplace. This underscores a lack of linguistic proficiency among legal experts and is a result of simple illiteracy. As the wise say, “Ignorance of the rules of language is the supreme punishment of fate.”

Therefore, when adopting words from other languages into Uzbek, it is crucial to first exhaust all possibilities of finding a suitable alternative within the Uzbek language itself. If a direct Uzbek equivalent cannot be found, the translation should prioritize conveying the *spirit* or intended meaning of the word rather than attempting a literal word-for-word substitution.

A key characteristic of legal terms is their interconnectedness, meaning their evolution is closely tied to advancements in legal theory and legal regulation. In recent years, terms such as “rule of law,” “social state,” and “human rights” have gained widespread use in legal documents alongside the strengthening of domestic statehood and the democratization of society. Naturally, solidifying the constitutional position of these concepts requires a firm scientific and theoretical basis, which, in turn, drives the development of legal science as a whole. Legal terms should be considered not merely as technical tools, but also as essential categories within legal scholarship.

Therefore, legal terminology and the concepts they define are inextricably linked. However, fundamental differences between them can sometimes arise. Legal terminology is regarded as a vital instrument of legal technique, while its conceptual aspect serves as a means of describing the law scientifically and theoretically.

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