

LEXICOGRAPHIC CHALLENGES IN COMPILING A BILINGUAL ENGLISH-UZBEK DICTIONARY OF TRADE TERMINOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

The study examines the theoretical and practical problems of compiling a bilingual English-Uzbek dictionary of trade terminology. Trade terms, due to their international nature, rapid renewal, and polysemy, present significant challenges for lexicographers. In English and Uzbek, many trade-related lexical units either lack direct equivalents or demonstrate multiple translations depending on context, which complicates the task of ensuring accuracy and consistency. The research aims to identify these problems, analyze the principles of equivalence and non-equivalence, and propose practical solutions for bilingual lexicography. Particular attention is given to the semantic, stylistic, and pragmatic aspects of trade lexicon, as well as to methodological approaches such as corpus-based analysis, contextual usage, and systematic classification. By drawing on both international lexicographic theory and the contributions of Uzbek linguists, the article highlights the necessity of developing specialized bilingual dictionaries that support professional communication, economic research, and cross-cultural exchange. The findings contribute to the broader field of lexicography by offering insights into how linguistic and cultural factors shape the representation of specialized terminology across languages.

Key words and phrases: lexicography, specialized terminology and general vocabulary, dictionary compilation, degree of equivalence, full equivalence, partial equivalence, non-equivalence, semantic gaps, borrowings, set expressions and collocations, loan translations and calques, domain labels, script variation in Uzbek, terminological inconsistency, standardization of terminology.

Trade terminology occupies a central position in global communication, as it reflects the economic relations that shape international cooperation and development. In an era of globalization, a precise and standardized trade lexicon is indispensable for ensuring mutual understanding between specialists, translators, and policymakers. The complexity of this field lies in the fact that trade vocabulary is not static: it constantly expands through new concepts, borrowings, and semantic shifts, particularly in connection with digitalization and e-commerce.

English, as the dominant language of international commerce, contains a highly diversified system of trade-related terms that function across domains such as finance, logistics, retail, and taxation. Many of these lexical units are polysemous and context-dependent, which poses challenges for accurate equivalence in translation. Uzbek, by contrast, has a trade lexicon shaped by a long history of native development and multiple waves of borrowing – from Persian and Arabic in earlier periods to Russian and English in modern usage. This historical layering enriches the lexicon but also results in terminological inconsistencies, especially when multiple equivalents coexist for the same English term.

The compilation of a bilingual English-Uzbek dictionary of trade terms is necessary and scientifically significant. Such a resource would provide reliable reference for academic research, professional communication, and educational purposes. At the same time, the task presents substantial theoretical and practical problems: establishing cross-linguistic equivalence, addressing semantic gaps, integrating neologisms, and ensuring terminological consistency within a rapidly evolving lexical domain. Addressing these issues is a key objective for contemporary lexicography and contributes to the advancement of applied linguistics in the Uzbek context.

According to Atkins and Rundell, the primary task of lexicography is to record, systematize, and describe the lexical units of a language in a way that ensures both accuracy and accessibility. Traditionally, this involves defining words, explaining their meanings, and providing contextual information such as usage, collocations, and stylistic labels.¹ In bilingual lexicography, the task becomes more complex, as it requires the identification of reliable equivalents across languages while also accounting for cultural and semantic differences. A well-structured bilingual dictionary serves as a bridge, facilitating effective communication between speakers of different languages and supporting fields such as education, translation, and international trade. Trade terminology has distinctive characteristics that make it particularly challenging for lexicographers. First, it is international in nature, since many trade concepts are shared across languages and often enter national vocabularies as borrowings. For example, English terms such as *logistics*, *retail*, or *e-commerce* are now widely adopted in other languages, including Uzbek. Second, trade terminology is rapidly updated. The emergence of new economic models and technologies introduces neologisms such as *blockchain trade* or *dropshipping*, which dictionaries must incorporate promptly to remain relevant. Third, trade terms are often polysemous, functioning in both

¹ Atkins B. T. S., Rundell M. *The Oxford Guide to Practical Lexicography*. – Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. – P. 19-21.

specialized and general contexts. The English word *stock*, for instance, may denote “*shares in a company*” in finance, but also “*supply of goods*” in retail. Such multi-meaning structures complicate the task of selecting accurate equivalents in another language.

One of the central theoretical problems in bilingual lexicography is the issue of equivalence and non-equivalence. Equivalence refers to cases where a lexical unit in one language has a direct and precise counterpart in another. However, many terms demonstrate **partial equivalence**, where the translation covers some but not all of the semantic range. Others exhibit **non-equivalence**, where no direct counterpart exists, requiring descriptive translations or borrowing strategies.² These challenges illustrate why equivalence must be carefully evaluated at different levels: lexical, semantic, cultural, and pragmatic.

In this way, the theoretical framework of lexicography highlights the unique demands of compiling a bilingual dictionary of trade terms. It emphasizes the need for systematic strategies to handle polysemy, borrowings, and semantic gaps, while also ensuring the dictionary remains adaptable to the fast-changing nature of global trade discourse.

One of the most persistent difficulties in bilingual lexicography is **polysemy** – the phenomenon of a single word having multiple meanings. For example, the English word *trade* can denote:

- commercial exchange: *international trade* → *xalqaro savdo*,
- occupation or profession: *the building trade* → *qurilish kasbi*,
- barter or exchange: *to trade goods* → *tovarlarni ayirboshlamoq*.

In Uzbek, the equivalent *savdo* typically refers only to the first meaning, while *kasb* or *hunar* are used for the second, and *ayirboshlash* for the third. Thus, one English word requires several equivalents depending on context.

Another example is *stock*. In finance, it means *share* (*stock market* → *aksiyalar bozori*), but in retail it means *inventory* (*out of stock* → *zaxirada yo‘q*). Uzbek, in turn, uses different words (*aksiya* and *tovar zaxirasi*), showing that direct one-to-one correspondence is not always possible.

These mismatches lead to **semantic gaps**, where no concise equivalent exists. The English term *trade-off* (*a compromise between conflicting objectives*) must often be paraphrased in Uzbek as *murosa* or *maqsadlararo almashuv*, since no single established equivalent exists. Conversely, the Uzbek word *savdogar* has connotations of traditional market life that cannot be fully captured by the English *trader* or *merchant*, which sound either modern or archaic.

² Murphy M. L. *Lexical Meaning*. – Cambridge University Press, 2010. – 83 p.

Another problem arises from the blurred boundary between specialized terminology and general vocabulary. For instance, *margin* in general usage means “edge” (*the margin of a page* → *sahifa cheti*), while in trade and finance it refers to “profit percentage” (*profit margin* → *foyda marjasi*). Similarly, *capital* can mean “city” (*poytaxt*) or “financial assets” (*kapital*).

In Uzbek, *bozor* functions both as a general word for a physical trading place (*Chorsu bozori*), and as part of economic terms such as *bozor iqtisodiyoti*. Without clear labeling in a dictionary, these dual uses may confuse learners and translators.

Trade vocabulary is frequently embedded in **set expressions** and **collocations** that cannot be translated literally. English has terms such as:

trade union → *kasaba uyushmasi*

fair trade → *adolatli savdo*

trade secrets → *savdo sirlari*

trade sanctions → *savdo sanksiyalari*

Uzbek also has unique collocations that are not directly mirrored in English:

savdo markazi → *shopping center/mall*

savdo rastasi → literally *trade stall*, usually rendered as *market stall* or *vendor booth*

savdo majmuasi → *trading complex* (often approximated as *shopping complex*)

The challenge for a bilingual dictionary lies in presenting these multi-word expressions systematically, since their meaning often cannot be inferred from the individual components.

Globalization and digitalization constantly generate new trade terms. English has rapidly introduced words such as *e-commerce*, *dropshipping*, *checkout cart*, *cryptocurrency trade*, and *Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL)*. In Uzbek, many of these are borrowed directly (*e-commerce* → *elektron savdo*, *dropshipping* → *dropshipping yoki vositachisiz savdo*), while others are translated descriptively (*checkout cart* → *savdo savtchasi*).

Similarly, older Uzbek terms may lack exact English equivalents. For instance, *o'rik bozori* (*apricot market*) or *charm bozori* (*leather market*) denote traditional specialized bazaars, a cultural concept less common in English trade discourse.

Beyond semantic challenges, several practical issues complicate dictionary-making. First is the **script variation in Uzbek**: terms appear in both Latin (*savdo*, *bozor*) and Cyrillic (*савдо*, *бозор*) scripts, requiring normalization. Second, **loan translations** and **calques** from Russian, such as *внешняя торговля* → *tashqi savdo*, may coexist with English-inspired forms like *international trade*, raising consistency issues. Third, **terminological inconsistency** arises when multiple translations circulate for the same concept. For example, *retail* may be rendered as *chakana savdo* or simply *savdo*,

depending on context. These issues show that a bilingual trade dictionary must be more than a list of word pairs: it requires careful semantic analysis, domain labeling, and standardization to ensure reliability and clarity.

One of the most effective methods in modern lexicography is to base dictionary entries on authentic language data. By analyzing corpora of trade-related texts – such as business contracts, customs regulations, WTO documents, and e-commerce websites – lexicographers can identify how terms are actually used in practice. For example, corpus analysis may reveal that *retail* most often appears in contexts such as *retail price*, *retail market*, and *retail chain*. In Uzbek, the corresponding terms are *chakana narx*, *chakana bozor*, and *chakana savdo tarmog‘i*. By presenting collocations rather than isolated words, the dictionary better reflects real usage.

To resolve ambiguity between general and technical meanings, dictionaries should provide **domain labels**. For instance:

stock

- (*finance*) → *aksiya*
- (*retail*) → *tovar zaxirasi*

margin

- (*typography*) → *chegara*
- (*economics*) → *foyda marjasi*

In Uzbek, the word *bozor* may be labeled *traditional* when referring to physical marketplaces, and *economics* when referring to macroeconomic concepts (*bozor iqtisodiyoti* → *market economy*). This approach helps avoid confusion and guides users toward the correct translation for each context.

Since perfect one-to-one equivalence rarely exists, it is useful to indicate the **degree of equivalence**:

Full equivalence: *World Trade Organization (WTO)* → *Jahon savdo tashkiloti (JST)*

Partial equivalence: *trade-off* → *murosa / maqsadlararo almashuv* (no single Uzbek equivalent covers all uses)

Non-equivalence: *savdogar* → *traditional market merchant* has no direct English equivalent, requiring either *merchant* with a cultural note, or a descriptive phrase.

By signaling equivalence levels, the dictionary supports both accuracy and transparency.

Trade terminology is often realized in **set phrases**. Dictionaries should include common **collocations** and **multi-word terms**, such as:

fair trade → *adolatli savdo*

trade sanctions → *savdo sanksiyalari*

savdo markazi → *shopping mall*

savdo rastasi → *market stall*

Providing these in dictionary entries helps users recognize that meaning is shaped not only by individual words but also by the combinations they form. To maintain clarity, it is important to standardize terminology across domains. For example, *VAT* (*value added tax*) should always appear as *QQS* (*qo 'shilgan qiymat solig'i*) in Uzbek entries. Where terms lack direct equivalents, brief notes can explain cultural differences. For instance, *bazaar* in English often means an exotic marketplace, while in Uzbek *bozor* is a standard everyday term. Conversely, *trade fair* in English corresponds to *savdo yarmarkasi* in Uzbek, but in local culture it often carries broader social significance than its English counterpart. Adding such notes enhances not just linguistic but also intercultural understanding.

By combining corpus-based evidence, domain-specific labeling, equivalence scales, collocation patterns, and systematic integration of new terms, an English-Uzbek trade dictionary can overcome many of the theoretical and practical challenges of bilingual lexicography. Importantly, these strategies must be supported by standardization and cultural commentary, ensuring that the dictionary remains both accurate and adaptable to the rapidly changing world of global trade.

The compilation of a bilingual English-Uzbek dictionary of trade terminology is both a pressing need and a complex challenge. As international trade expands and economic relations intensify, accurate and consistent communication across languages becomes indispensable. Trade vocabulary, however, is not a static set of words: it is international in scope, rapidly evolving, and often polysemous. These features complicate the process of identifying precise equivalents between English and Uzbek, where semantic gaps, cultural differences, and terminological inconsistencies frequently arise.

The main problems identified include the difficulty of handling polysemy, distinguishing between general and technical meanings, integrating phraseological units, and keeping pace with the constant flow of neologisms in global commerce. In addition, practical issues such as script variation, loan translations, and inconsistent usage in Uzbek present further obstacles to standardization.

To address these challenges, lexicographers must apply modern strategies. A corpus-based approach ensures that dictionary entries reflect authentic usage. Domain labels and equivalence scales clarify context and degree of correspondence. Collocations, multi-word terms, and cultural notes enrich the dictionary's descriptive power. Finally, the regular inclusion of neologisms and the adoption of standardized frameworks guarantee both accuracy and adaptability.

Thus, the creation of a bilingual dictionary of trade terms is not only a linguistic project but also an economic and cultural one. It provides a vital tool for translators,

researchers, educators, and business professionals, while contributing to the development of lexicography in Uzbekistan. More broadly, it strengthens the role of the Uzbek language in global trade discourse and supports its integration into the rapidly changing lexicon of international commerce.

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