

Structural Analysis of Frequently Used Legal Terms in Uzbek and English Newspapers

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Abstract: This study conducts a structural linguistic analysis of frequently used legal terms in The Law Society Gazette and Inson va Qonun, representing English and Uzbek legal newspapers respectively. The article explores the morphological, syntactic, and compound structures of legal terminology used in both languages, with a focus on newspaper discourse. Through corpus analysis and comparative methods, this research reveals that English legal terms predominantly feature complex nominal compounds and Latinate borrowings, while Uzbek legal terms rely heavily on analytic constructions and hybrid derivatives. The findings contribute to understanding how structural linguistic features shape legal communication and influence public accessibility of legal language.

Keywords: legal terminology, legal terminology, structural linguistics, Uzbek legal language, English legal terms, newspaper discourse, compound words, morphology.



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INTRODUCTION

Legal language, by its very nature, carries a high degree of structural complexity, formality, and precision. Newspapers such as the *Law Society Gazette* (UK) and *Inson va Qonun* (Uzbekistan) play a significant role in translating this specialized discourse into public communication. Despite shared communicative goals, the structure of legal terms in English and Uzbek exhibits notable differences shaped by historical, cultural, and linguistic factors. The structural study of legal terms, particularly in mass media, allows us to observe how legal lexicons evolve and interact with general language. This research is situated within the domain of structural linguistics and legal lexicography and aims to analyze the morphological and syntactic structures of frequently used legal terms in both English and Uzbek legal newspapers.

METHODOLOGY

To ensure a representative and balanced comparative analysis of legal terminology structures in English and Uzbek, two specialized corpora were developed. These corpora were drawn from two prominent legal newspapers: the *Law Society Gazette* in the United Kingdom and *Inson va Qonun*

in Uzbekistan. The selection of these newspapers was based on their authoritative legal reporting, institutional credibility, and consistent publication of legal and judicial content.

The **English corpus** consists of 100 legal news articles published between 2023 and 2024 in the *Law Society Gazette*, a key publication of the Law Society of England and Wales. This period was selected to ensure relevance and contemporaneity, allowing the analysis of currently used legal terms reflecting recent legal reforms, court judgments, regulatory discussions, and public interest cases. The selected articles span diverse legal topics such as criminal justice, human rights, civil litigation, legal education, and professional conduct. Articles were chosen to include both hard news reports (e.g., court decisions, legal policy announcements) and opinion or feature pieces (e.g., commentary on legal reform or barrister training), thereby capturing a wide range of legal linguistic usage.

The **Uzbek corpus** similarly consists of 100 articles published in *Inson va Qonun* during the same 2023–2024 timeframe. As the official newspaper of Uzbekistan’s Ministry of Justice, this publication serves as a reliable reflection of legal language usage in Uzbek. The articles were selected to include content on criminal law, administrative procedures, public safety, judicial appointments, reforms in civil and commercial law, and explanatory texts about new legislative acts. The Uzbek corpus includes formal announcements, trial reporting, and educational articles aimed at raising public legal awareness. This diversity allowed for the analysis of both technical legal terminology and explanatory legal language intended for the general public.

Efforts were made to balance both corpora in terms of article length, topic diversity, and publication frequency to avoid sampling bias. All texts were collected in their original published form and compiled into two separate digital corpora using UTF-8 encoding. Non-legal sections such as advertisements, unrelated editorial comments, or visual captions were excluded to maintain linguistic focus.

Analytical Framework

The study employed a structural linguistic approach drawing on:

- ✓ Morphological analysis: *inflection, derivation, and compounding*
- ✓ Syntactic structure: *noun phrases and modifier placement*
- ✓ Lexical typology: *native vs borrowed terms, analytic vs synthetic forms*

The structural analysis in this study was conducted within the framework of structural linguistics, focusing on the internal organization of legal terms at the morphological and syntactic levels. Specifically, the research examined how legal meaning is constructed through processes of **inflection**, **derivation**, and **compounding**—all of which play a critical role in legal terminology formation in both languages. For example, in English, the transformation of a verb into a legal noun (*disqualify* → *disqualification*) involves a derivational process that significantly alters its function and meaning. Similarly, in Uzbek, suffixation such as *-lik* or *-chi* converts root words into abstract legal concepts or legal actors (e.g., *huquq* → *huquqshunos*). From a syntactic perspective, the study investigated the structure of noun phrases, including the use of pre-modifiers, post-modifiers, and genitive constructions. English legal terms often rely on dense nominal compounds (*judicial misconduct*, *statutory interpretation*), while Uzbek legal terms are frequently expressed as analytic multi-word phrases (*fuqarolik javobgarligi*, *sud qarori*), often joined by grammatical markers indicating case, possession, or definiteness. In terms of lexical typology, the study differentiated between native and borrowed terms, as well as between synthetic and analytic constructions.

English legal terminology shows a strong tendency toward Latinate and French-derived vocabulary, while Uzbek legal lexicon contains significant Russian and Arabic loanwords, often

adapted with native affixation. These typological features provide insight into the historical and structural evolution of legal language in both linguistic contexts. The theoretical underpinning of the analysis draws on foundational works in structural linguistics and legal terminology. Notable references include David Crystal's exploration of English lexical structures, Henry Widdowson's work on discourse and legal meaning, and leading Uzbek linguists such as S. Safarov and O. Alimov, whose research has illuminated the unique structural features of Uzbek legal language. These perspectives guided the interpretation of structural forms within a comparative framework that respects linguistic diversity while highlighting common legal communicative functions.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Morphological structures in English legal terms

The morphological structure of English legal terminology, as evidenced in the *Law Society Gazette*, is characterized by a strong reliance on synthetic compounding and the use of derivational affixes, particularly of Latinate origin. Legal terms frequently appear as dense nominal compounds that pack significant semantic content into concise forms. This is typical of legal English, which often favors brevity and precision through morphological complexity.

Examples include:

- ✓ "judicial review" – [adjective + noun]
- ✓ "contractual obligation" – [adjective (derived from noun) + noun]
- ✓ "misrepresentation" – [prefix + root + suffix]
- ✓ "disbarment", "reinstatement", "testimony" – Latinate origin

These terms often feature abstract suffixes like *-ment*, *-tion*, *-ity*, signaling legal concepts rather than physical entities. The term "*judicial review*" consists of an adjective-noun structure where "judicial" is derived from the noun "judge," modified by the suffix *-ial* to form an adjective, and "review" is a noun signifying re-examination. Similarly, "*contractual obligation*" uses a derived adjective from the noun "contract" with the suffix *-ual*, forming a legal term that denotes a duty arising from a formal agreement. Other terms such as "*misrepresentation*" are constructed using both a prefix (*mis-*) and a suffix (*-tion*), sandwiching the root verb (*represent*), resulting in a noun that signifies false or misleading representation within a legal context. English legal terms often employ abstract suffixes such as *-ment* (*disbarment*, *reinstatement*), *-tion* (*litigation*, *prosecution*), and *-ity* (*liability*, *legality*), which transform verbs or adjectives into abstract nouns. These morphological forms contribute to the conceptual and often non-physical nature of legal discourse. For example, "*testimony*" (from the Latin *testimonium*) illustrates the preference for Latinate vocabulary in legal contexts, reinforcing the formal register of legal English.

Structural pattern: The structural patterns in English legal terminology show a prevalence of synthetic word formation processes:

e.g., *disqualification* = *dis-* + *qualify* + *-ation* *counterclaim* = *counter-* + *claim*

Terms such as "*disqualification*" and "*counterclaim*" are formed by the combination of prefixes, root words, and suffixes in compact morphological units. *Disqualification* combines *dis-* (negation) + *qualify* + *-ation* (noun-forming suffix), resulting in a term indicating the state of being ineligible. Similarly, *counterclaim* combines the prefix *counter-* (opposition) with *claim*, indicating a legal demand made in response to another. These terms are semantically dense and compact, a trait that allows for efficiency in legal writing but may pose challenges for lay readers unfamiliar with legal jargon. The high frequency of such structures in English legal texts underscores the tendency of legal English to condense meaning through derivational morphology and nominal compounding. These features reflect a tradition of legal writing that emphasizes

formalism, abstractness, and terminological stability, often at the cost of accessibility to non-specialists.

Morphological structures in Uzbek legal terms

In contrast to English, the Uzbek legal terminology found in *Inson va Qonun* displays a distinct preference for analytic morphological structures, often composed of multi-word phrases that rely on attributive or possessive relationships. Rather than dense compounds, Uzbek legal terms are predominantly formed through combinations of base words, often nouns and adjectives, connected syntactically rather than morphologically.

Examples:

- ✓ "sud qarori" – [noun + noun: "court decision"]
- ✓ "jinoiy javobgarlik" – [adjective + noun: "criminal liability"]
- ✓ "fuqarolik ish yurituvi" – [compound phrase: "civil procedure"]

The term "sud qarori" (court decision) is a straightforward noun-noun combination where *sud* (court) modifies *qaror* (decision). Similarly, "jinoiy javobgarlik" (criminal liability) combines the adjective *jinoiy* (criminal) with the noun *javobgarlik* (liability), where the suffix *-lik* denotes an abstract quality or state. These terms are structurally analytic, as they do not involve the internal fusion of roots and affixes within a single lexical item but instead express legal concepts through a phrase. Another typical example is "fuqarolik ish yurituvi" (civil procedure), a compound phrase involving the noun *fuqarolik* (civil, with the suffix *-lik*), *ish* (case/work), and *yurituvi* (procedure or conduct), derived from the verb *yuritmoq* (to conduct/manage). The combination of native word roots and derived nouns illustrates the use of morphology to form technical legal expressions while maintaining syntactic transparency.

Structural pattern: Uzbek legal terms are formed predominantly through **analytic word combinations** and **noun phrases**, often using possessive or attributive constructions:

sud tizimi – "court system"

huquqiy hujjat – "legal document"

xizmat ko'rsatish shartnomasi – "service agreement"

Uzbek legal terminology also features loanwords from Russian and Arabic, such as *advokat* (lawyer), *prokuror* (prosecutor), *konstitutsiya* (constitution), and *sanksiya* (sanction). These borrowed terms are frequently adapted using native suffixes to create structurally consistent legal vocabulary within the Uzbek grammatical system. For example, *javobgarlik* (responsibility/liability) uses the suffix *-lik* to form an abstract noun, while *huquqshunos* (lawyer/legal scholar) combines the noun *huquq* (law) with the agentive suffix *-shunos*, meaning "expert in." Other productive suffixes include *-chi* (denoting occupation, e.g., *prokurorchi* for prosecutor), and *-dor* (denoting bearer or holder, e.g., *majburiyatdor* meaning obligated party).

The morphological tendencies of Uzbek legal terminology reveal a linguistic preference for clarity and descriptive transparency, especially in public-oriented legal writing. The structures are often more accessible to a general readership compared to the compressed compounds of English legalese, although this comes at the cost of brevity. The use of multi-word phrases instead of fused forms reflects broader typological features of Turkic languages, which favor agglutinative and analytic morphology over inflectional synthesis.

Compound and Phrase Structures: A Comparison

Feature	English (<i>Law Society Gazette</i>)	Uzbek (<i>Inson va Qonun</i>)
Typical structure	Synthetic compounds	Analytic phrases
Derivational suffix usage	High (e.g., <i>-ment</i> , <i>-tion</i>)	Moderate (e.g., <i>-lik</i> , <i>-chi</i>)
Borrowed terms	Latin/French origin	Russian/Arabic origin
Examples	<i>liability</i> , <i>injunction</i>	<i>ma'muriy javobgarlik</i> , <i>sud qarori</i>
Phrase complexity	Compact compound nouns	Multi-word noun phrases

The structural comparison between English and Uzbek legal terminology reveals fundamental typological differences. English legal discourse, as seen in the *Law Society Gazette*, heavily relies on synthetic compounds, where complex legal concepts are condensed into single, multi-morphemic words such as “*liability*,” “*injunction*,” or “*counterclaim*.” These terms often originate from Latin or French and are morphologically dense, enabling concise expression but often requiring specialized knowledge for interpretation. Derivational suffixes like *-ment*, *-tion*, and *-ity* are used extensively to form abstract legal nouns.

In contrast, Uzbek legal language in *Inson va Qonun* prefers analytic phrase structures, where legal meanings are built from combinations of simpler, separate words. Examples include “*ma'muriy javobgarlik*” (administrative liability) or “*sud qarori*” (court decision), which rely on clear syntactic relations and Turkic derivational suffixes such as *-lik* and *-chi*.

Borrowed terms from Russian and Arabic are also frequently integrated into Uzbek legal lexicon with native affixes, maintaining structural harmony.

DISCUSSION

The contrast in structural preferences between English and Uzbek legal terminology highlights fundamental differences in their linguistic systems and legal writing traditions. English, as reflected in sources like the *Law Society Gazette*, tends to employ synthetic compounding and derivation to condense legal meaning into compact lexical items. This structural tendency aligns with English's analytical grammatical typology, where syntax rather than morphology carries the bulk of grammatical meaning. As a result, English legal texts favor the use of nominalizations (e.g., *adjudication*, *disbarment*, *noncompliance*) and abstract compounds (e.g., *contractual obligation*, *judicial authority*), allowing dense, formal expressions that are suited for legal precision and brevity. However, such compactness often comes at the cost of transparency, making legal English difficult for lay readers to understand without specialized training. By contrast, Uzbek, as seen in *Inson va Qonun*, favors an analytic and agglutinative structure, constructing legal meaning through sequences of morphologically simple but syntactically transparent elements. Legal terms such as “*fuqarolik mas'uliyati*” (civil responsibility) or “*jinoyat sodir etgan shaxs*” (a person who committed a crime) demonstrate the tendency to rely on multi-word expressions that clearly outline the relationship between components. This structural preference enhances readability and accessibility, especially in public-facing legal texts, though it can make legal documents longer and less concise. These contrasting preferences reflect broader typological tendencies: English, with its morphologically sparse but syntactically complex system, emphasizes linguistic economy through compounding and nominalization. Uzbek, being morphologically rich and agglutinative, tends toward semantic clarity and functional transparency. This balance between precision and accessibility shapes the legal communication strategies in both languages and reflects their respective legal and linguistic cultures.

CONCLUSION

The structural analysis of legal terms in English and Uzbek newspapers reveals marked contrasts in morphology, compounding, and phrase structure. English legal terms are structurally dense and compact, favoring derivation and compounding. Uzbek legal terms are structurally transparent,

relying on analytic constructions and native suffixation. These differences highlight not only linguistic divergence but also legal-cultural variations in expressing legal meaning.

Understanding these structural nuances is critical for translators, legal scholars, and educators working in bilingual or multilingual legal contexts. Future research could extend this comparative approach to digital legal texts, legal judgments, or machine-translated legal corpora to deepen insights into structural adaptation across languages.

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