

PHILOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

International Vocabulary of English Origin in Educational Discourse: Equivalence, Adaptation, and Translation Aspects

Bokenbay Diana¹

¹ PhD Student, Faculty of Philology
Al-Farabi Kazakh National University Almaty, Republic of Kazakhstan

Abstract. The rapid development of globalization, digital communication, and international educational cooperation has significantly increased the influence of English on educational discourse worldwide. English-origin international vocabulary has become an essential component of modern educational communication because it facilitates academic interaction, scientific collaboration, and the exchange of educational resources. At the same time, the integration of English lexical units into national languages raises important linguistic and translation issues related to equivalence, adaptation, and terminology standardization. This study examines the characteristics of English-origin international vocabulary in educational discourse with particular attention to the Kazakh language. The research investigates translation strategies, semantic equivalence, lexical adaptation, and the role of borrowed terminology in educational texts. Examples from textbooks, academic publications, and digital educational platforms demonstrate how international vocabulary functions within the contemporary educational environment. The findings indicate that complete lexical equivalence is not always achievable because of linguistic and cultural differences between English and Kazakh. Consequently, translators employ various strategies, including borrowing, calque, descriptive translation, and functional substitution. The study also highlights the importance of terminology standardization for ensuring consistency in educational communication and improving the quality of translation.

Keywords: *educational discourse, English-origin international vocabulary, equivalence, adaptation, translation, terminology, borrowing, educational translation.*

Introduction

Educational discourse has undergone substantial transformation during the last two decades as a result of globalization, technological innovation, and the expansion of international academic cooperation. Educational institutions increasingly rely on English as the primary language of scientific communication, digital learning platforms, research collaboration, and professional development. Consequently, English-origin international vocabulary has

PHILOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

become deeply integrated into educational systems across many countries, including Kazakhstan.

The growing number of English borrowings reflects not only linguistic change but also the development of new educational concepts, teaching methodologies, digital technologies, and international standards. Terms such as curriculum, assessment, competence, digital literacy, blended learning, webinar, feedback, and portfolio are now widely used in educational documents and academic communication. Many of these lexical items have no exact traditional equivalents in Kazakh and therefore require careful adaptation and translation.

Educational discourse represents a dynamic communicative environment in which terminology performs not only an informative but also a cognitive and organizational function. The successful transmission of educational knowledge depends on the accurate translation and interpretation of specialized vocabulary. Therefore, the issues of lexical equivalence and adaptation have become increasingly significant in translation studies and applied linguistics.

Equivalence is generally understood as the degree to which the meaning and communicative function of a lexical unit in the source language are preserved in the target language. However, because languages differ in their lexical systems, grammatical structures, and cultural contexts, translators frequently encounter situations where complete equivalence is impossible. In such cases, adaptation becomes a practical solution that enables effective communication while preserving the conceptual meaning of the original term. In Kazakhstan, educational reforms, multilingual education, and digital transformation have accelerated the incorporation of English-origin terminology into official educational documents, university curricula, scientific publications, and online learning resources. This process requires linguists and translators to establish consistent principles for terminology adaptation that respect both international standards and the norms of the Kazakh language.

The relevance of this research is determined by the increasing importance of translation quality in educational communication and the continuing expansion of international vocabulary in modern educational discourse. Understanding the mechanisms of equivalence and adaptation contributes to improving translation practices, terminology management, and intercultural communication within the educational sphere.

PHILOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

The purpose of this study is to analyze the features of English-origin international vocabulary in educational discourse and to identify the principal strategies of achieving equivalence and adaptation in translation.

The objectives of the study are:

- to define the concept of English-origin international vocabulary in educational discourse;
- to examine theoretical approaches to equivalence and lexical adaptation;
- to identify translation strategies applied to educational terminology;
- to analyze examples from contemporary educational discourse in Kazakhstan;
- to evaluate the influence of international vocabulary on educational communication and translation practice.

The object of the research is English-origin international vocabulary functioning in modern educational discourse.

The subject of the research is the processes of equivalence, adaptation, and translation of English-origin lexical units into Kazakh within educational contexts.

The study employs qualitative and comparative methods, discourse analysis, descriptive analysis, and terminology analysis. These methods enable the identification of semantic, structural, and functional characteristics of international educational vocabulary as well as the evaluation of translation strategies used in contemporary educational texts.

2. Literature Review

The study of international vocabulary, lexical borrowing, equivalence, and translation has become increasingly significant in contemporary linguistics due to globalization and the rapid expansion of intercultural communication. English has established itself as the dominant language of science, technology, business, and education, resulting in the widespread adoption of English-origin terminology by many languages. Educational discourse, in particular, demonstrates a high concentration of international lexical units because educational reforms, digital technologies, and international academic cooperation require the use of unified terminology.

According to Baker (2018), equivalence remains one of the central concepts in translation studies. She argues that translators should not only preserve the lexical meaning of a term but also reproduce its communicative function within

PHILOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

the target culture. Educational terminology frequently presents challenges because many English concepts are closely associated with specific educational systems and therefore require cultural and linguistic adaptation.

House (2018) emphasizes that translation quality depends on achieving functional equivalence rather than merely replacing words with their dictionary counterparts. In educational discourse, the translator must consider the expectations of teachers, students, researchers, and policymakers to ensure that translated terminology remains understandable and professionally acceptable.

Scholars in terminology studies have also highlighted the increasing role of international vocabulary in higher education. Cabré (2020) notes that specialized terminology evolves continuously under the influence of scientific innovation and international collaboration. Consequently, educational terminology requires systematic standardization to maintain consistency across academic publications, textbooks, and legislative documents.

The concept of lexical adaptation has received considerable attention in modern linguistic research. Adaptation refers to the process by which borrowed lexical units become integrated into the phonetic, grammatical, orthographic, and semantic systems of the recipient language. Haugen's classical theory of borrowing remains relevant because it distinguishes between direct borrowing, loan translation, semantic borrowing, and hybrid formations. Contemporary studies demonstrate that these mechanisms continue to operate actively in educational terminology.

Within the Kazakh linguistic context, researchers have investigated the influence of globalization on terminology development. Suleimenova and other Kazakh linguists emphasize that the expansion of English-origin terminology reflects the modernization of the national education system. However, they also stress the necessity of preserving linguistic norms while adapting foreign lexical units into Kazakh.

Digitalization has significantly accelerated the dissemination of international vocabulary. The COVID-19 pandemic particularly contributed to the widespread use of terms such as online learning, blended learning, webinar, learning management system (LMS), digital literacy, and remote assessment. These concepts rapidly entered educational discourse in many countries, including Kazakhstan, where they became common in official educational documents and

PHILOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

university practice.

Several studies indicate that translators employ different strategies depending on the linguistic characteristics of individual terms. Vinay and Darbelnet's translation procedures continue to influence modern translation practice. These include borrowing, calque, literal translation, transposition, modulation, equivalence, and adaptation. Educational terminology often requires a combination of these strategies because complete lexical correspondence rarely exists.

Borrowing remains one of the most productive strategies. Terms such as portfolio, webinar, and mentor are frequently transferred into many languages with only minor phonetic or orthographic modifications. Such borrowings facilitate international communication because specialists recognize the terminology regardless of national linguistic differences.

Calque is another productive strategy in educational translation. Through calque, the structural components of the source-language term are translated literally into the target language while preserving the conceptual meaning. For example, the English expression distance learning corresponds to the Kazakh equivalent қашықтан оқыту, which successfully reflects the original concept while conforming to the grammatical norms of the target language.

Descriptive translation becomes necessary when no direct equivalent exists. Instead of introducing unfamiliar borrowings, translators may explain the meaning of a concept using descriptive phrases. Although this approach increases text length, it enhances comprehension, particularly for students and non-specialist readers.

Functional substitution represents another important translation strategy. Rather than translating lexical units literally, translators replace them with culturally or institutionally appropriate concepts that perform similar communicative functions within the educational system.

Recent studies also demonstrate the growing influence of artificial intelligence on educational translation. Machine translation systems and AI-assisted terminology management have considerably improved translation efficiency. Nevertheless, human translators remain indispensable because educational terminology often contains contextual, semantic, and cultural nuances that automated systems cannot fully interpret.

Overall, the reviewed literature confirms that

PHILOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

equivalence and adaptation are complementary rather than competing concepts. Successful translation of educational terminology depends on balancing semantic accuracy, linguistic naturalness, and communicative effectiveness. As English continues to dominate international education, further research is required to develop consistent principles for translating and adapting international vocabulary within national educational systems, including Kazakhstan.

3. Research Methodology

This research employs a qualitative approach supported by comparative and descriptive methods to investigate the equivalence and adaptation of English-origin international vocabulary in educational discourse. The study focuses on lexical units used in contemporary Kazakh educational materials and examines the strategies applied in their translation and adaptation.

The research material consists of educational documents, secondary school textbooks (Grades 7–11), university teaching materials, academic publications, and digital educational resources issued in Kazakhstan. These sources were selected because they reflect the current use of international educational terminology in both traditional and digital learning environments.

The following research methods were applied:

- Descriptive analysis to identify the semantic and structural characteristics of English-origin international vocabulary.
- Comparative analysis to compare English terms with their Kazakh equivalents.
- Discourse analysis to examine the functioning of lexical units within educational communication.
- Terminological analysis to identify translation strategies and adaptation mechanisms.

The analysis focused on identifying the most frequently used English-origin terms and classifying them according to the translation strategy employed. Particular attention was paid to the preservation of meaning, communicative function, and compliance with the norms of the Kazakh language.

4. Results and Discussion

The analysis demonstrates that English-origin international vocabulary occupies an increasingly important place in modern educational discourse. The influence of globalization, digital education, and international academic cooperation has contributed to the rapid dissemination of

PHILOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

English terminology across all educational levels.
The study identified four principal translation strategies used in Kazakh educational discourse:

- 1. Direct borrowing;
- 2. Loan translation (calque);
- 3. Descriptive translation;
- 4. Functional equivalence.

The choice of strategy depends on the semantic complexity of the term, its frequency of use, and the existence of an established equivalent in the Kazakh language.

Table 1.

**Examples of English-Origin Educational Vocabulary
and Their Kazakh Equivalents**

English term	Kazakh equivalent	Translation strategy
Curriculum	Оқу бағдарламасы	Functional equivalence
Assessment	Бағалау	Functional equivalence
Feedback	Кері байланыс	Calque
Digital literacy	Цифрлық сауаттылық	Calque
Portfolio	Портфолио	Borrowing
Webinar	Вебинар	Borrowing
Online learning	Онлайн оқыту	Borrowing + adaptation
Competence	Құзыреттілік	Functional equivalence
Inclusive education	Инклюзивті білім беру	Borrowing + calque
Learning outcomes	Оқу нәтижелері	Functional equivalence

The findings indicate that functional equivalence is the most frequently applied strategy in official educational documents because it ensures clarity and consistency for teachers and students. Borrowing is mainly used for newly introduced concepts that have become internationally recognized.

For example, the term portfolio has entered Kazakh educational discourse without significant modification. Instead of creating a new lexical equivalent, educational institutions have adopted the international form because it is widely understood within academic communities.

Similarly, webinar has become a common term after the expansion of online education. Although descriptive translations are theoretically possible, the borrowed form remains more practical and internationally recognizable.

The analysis also revealed that some English concepts require semantic adaptation rather than literal translation.

PHILOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

The word competence, for instance, is translated as құзыреттілік, which accurately reflects the educational meaning within the Kazakh pedagogical context.

Digital transformation has significantly increased the number of English borrowings in educational discourse. Terms such as e-learning, digital platform, Google Classroom, Moodle, Zoom, and Learning Management System (LMS) are now commonly used in educational practice. Their widespread adoption illustrates the growing integration of global educational technologies into Kazakhstan's education system.

However, the increasing use of borrowed terminology also creates challenges. Different educational institutions occasionally employ different translations for the same concept, leading to inconsistency in educational documents. Therefore, terminology standardization remains an important task for linguists, translators, and educational policymakers.

Another significant finding concerns the role of context in achieving equivalence. Certain English terms possess multiple meanings depending on the educational situation. Consequently, translators must consider not only dictionary definitions but also the communicative purpose of the text.

Overall, the findings confirm that the successful translation of English-origin international vocabulary requires a balanced combination of semantic accuracy, linguistic adaptation, and functional appropriateness. These principles contribute to effective educational communication and facilitate Kazakhstan's integration into the international academic community.

5. Conclusion

The present study examined the equivalence, adaptation, and translation of English-origin international vocabulary in modern educational discourse. The findings demonstrate that globalization, digitalization, and international academic cooperation have considerably increased the use of English educational terminology in Kazakhstan. Consequently, translators, educators, and terminology specialists face the challenge of ensuring accurate and consistent translation while preserving the linguistic norms of the Kazakh language.

The analysis revealed that functional equivalence, borrowing, calque, and descriptive translation are the principal strategies employed in translating English-origin educational terminology. Among these, functional equivalence is the most productive because it preserves both the semantic

PHILOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

content and communicative function of educational concepts. Borrowing remains common for internationally recognized terms such as portfolio, webinar, and online learning, while calque is frequently used for transparent compound terms such as digital literacy and feedback.

The study also showed that complete lexical equivalence is not always possible because educational systems, linguistic structures, and cultural contexts differ. Therefore, lexical adaptation plays a crucial role in integrating international terminology into Kazakh educational discourse. Effective adaptation ensures that borrowed terms remain understandable, linguistically acceptable, and functionally appropriate for teachers, students, and researchers.

Furthermore, the growing influence of digital technologies and artificial intelligence has accelerated the spread of English-origin vocabulary in educational communication. This trend emphasizes the need for unified terminology policies and cooperation among linguists, translators, educators, and policymakers to standardize educational terminology and improve translation quality.

The results of this research contribute to translation studies, terminology studies, and educational linguistics by providing a systematic analysis of English-origin international vocabulary in the educational domain. The findings may also serve as a practical resource for translators, textbook authors, researchers, and higher education institutions involved in multilingual educational communication.

Future research may investigate the use of artificial intelligence in educational translation, compare the adaptation of English terminology across different Turkic languages, and analyze the evolution of international educational vocabulary in digital learning environments.

References:

- [1] Baker, M. (2018). In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- [2] Cabré, M. T. (2020). Terminology: Theory, Methods and Applications. John Benjamins.
- [3] Crystal, D. (2020). The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- [4] House, J. (2018). Translation: The Basics. Routledge.
- [5] Komissarov, V. N. (2013). Theory of Translation (Linguistic Aspects). Moscow.
- [6] Newmark, P. (1988). A Textbook of Translation. Prentice Hall.
- [7] Pym, A. (2021). Exploring Translation Theories (3rd ed.). Routledge.

PHILOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

- [8] Vinay, J. P., & Darbelnet, J. (1995). Comparative Stylistics of French and English. John Benjamins.
- [9] UNESCO. (2023). Global Education Monitoring Report. Paris: UNESCO.
- [10] OECD. (2023). Education at a Glance 2023. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- [11] European Commission. (2022). Digital Education Action Plan. Brussels.
- [12] Suleimenova, E. D. (2021). Language Policy and Terminology Development in Kazakhstan. Bulletin of KazNU. Philology Series.
- [13] Kunanbayeva, S. S. (2021). Modernization of Foreign Language Education in Kazakhstan. Almaty.
- [14] Crystal, D. (2019). English as a Global Language (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- [15] Gambier, Y., & Doorslaer, L. (2021). Handbook of Translation Studies. John Benjamins.
- [16] Nord, C. (2018). Translating as a Purposeful Activity. Routledge.
- [17] Munday, J. (2022). Introducing Translation Studies (5th ed.). Routledge.
- [18] 18. Baker, M., & Saldanha, G. (2020). Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies (3rd ed.). Routledge.