

# On the Formation of Transport Logistics Terminology in Modern Chinese Language

Sultanova Lola Akmalovna

Doctor of Philosophy in Philological Sciences (PhD), Associate Professor, Tashkent State University of Oriental Studies, School of Advanced Chinese Studies, Uzbekistan

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**Abstract:** This scientific article examines the principles and mechanisms of term formation in the field of transport logistics in modern Chinese. It analyzes the linguistic and structural features of the most commonly used terms in this field, paying special attention to their word formation models, sources of borrowing, and semantic adaptation. The study highlights the active role of internationalization and the influence of English on the formation of Chinese logistics terminology, as well as the importance of standardization and unification in professional communication.

**Keywords:** Transport logistics, terminology, modern Chinese, word formation, borrowing, international terms, linguistic adaptation.

**Introduction:** In Uzbek Sinology, scholarly research has been devoted to the study of methods for forming terminological concepts and identifying their semantic equivalents. Among the contributors to this field are A.A. Karimov [1], S.A. Nasirova [2], S.A. Khashimova [3], S.T. Mustafaeva [4], L.A. Sultanova [5], and others. According to A.A. Karimov, “a term as a unit of language follows the phonetic and grammatical rules of that language,” and “the structural and semantic features of a term are revealed in the field of word formation, where certain formatives become specialized, particularly in terminological models” [6].

S.A. Nasirova notes that term formation in the Chinese language is also characterized by such methods as compounding, affixation, and abbreviation, in addition to the aforementioned techniques. These conclusions were drawn from the analysis of socio-political terminology [7].

Nevertheless, despite the existing research, to date there are no studies devoted to the comprehensive investigation of terminology in the field of transport logistics. The absence of a unified terminological base—primarily due to the polysemy of Chinese characters and the metaphorical nature of the terms—significantly complicates the search for semantic

equivalents in logistics terminology. This indicates that the topic selected for our study remains underexplored.

Transport logistics is a field that encompasses a wide range of disciplines, including logistics itself, economics, politics, and others. When translating specialized business texts, such as documents related to the transportation of goods, special attention must be paid to the use and translation of terms.

For this research, both authentic shipping documents and sample documents found online and on logistics companies' websites were used. In this article, we briefly describe the main types of shipping documents, including supply contracts, bills of lading, customs declarations, waybills, and others.

Translation from Chinese into Russian has its own specific features. A translator must convey the meaning of a Chinese scientific or business text using the means of the Russian language. According to O.S. Akhmanova, a translator must have a deep understanding not only of Chinese vocabulary but also of its morphology and word formation mechanisms to ensure maximum accuracy and adequacy of translation [8].

A.L. Semenas identifies the following methods of word formation: compounding, affixation, abbreviation, and

borrowing from other languages [9]. The word-formation structure of lexical units is characterized by their grammatical properties and the type of connection between their components.

The components of compound words may be nouns, verbs, or adjectives in their grammatical nature. Lexical complexes (compound words) are formed through five main types of grammatical relationships between components:

1. Attributive: the first component defines the second by indicating its category or type.
2. Copulative: the components are equal in status and denote the same concept.
3. Verb-object: the first component denotes an action directed toward the second component, which functions as the object.
4. Verb-result: the second component indicates the result of the action expressed by the first.
5. Subject-predicate: the first component acts as the subject, and the second denotes its action or state.

A.L. Semenas classifies the types of grammatical connections in lexical complexes (compound words) based on the nature of semantic relationships between the components:

- Equal (copulative) relationships: the components hold equal meaning and denote a single concept.
- Unequal relationships (attributive, verb-object, verb-result, and subject-predicate): one component dominates the other and defines its meaning.

#### 1. Noun Formation Models

Most Chinese nouns are formed by combining two nouns, which corresponds to the attributive type of connection. This model is considered the most productive in the word formation of nouns in the Chinese language. Moreover, Chinese terminology is mainly formed in the same way.

Model: Noun + Noun = Noun Examples:

- 航 “plane, to fly” + 线 “line” = 航线 – “airline”;
- 条 “item” + 件 “document” = 条件 – “condition”;
- 规 “norm” + 格 “standard” = 规格 – “specification”.

An adjective combined with a noun within an attributive relationship forms a new noun: Model: Adjective + Noun = Noun

Examples:

- 载货 “freight” + 清单 “list” = 载货清单 –

“cargo declaration”;

- 重 “heavy” + 量 “quantity” = 重量 – “weight”.

Combining a verb and a noun using a verb-object relationship results in a noun: Model: Verb + Noun = Noun

Example:

- 签 “to sign” + 名 “name” = 签名 – “signature”.

A noun can also be formed by joining two adjectives using a copulative connection: Model: Adjective + Adjective = Noun

Example:

- 快 “fast” + 速 “rapid” = 快速 – “speed”.

Two verbs connected using a copulative relationship also form a noun:

Model: Verb + Verb = Noun

Example:

- 买 “to buy” + 卖 “to sell” = 买卖 – “trade”.

#### 2. Logistics Terms Formed by Combining Two Verbal Roots

The copulative connection of two verbs forms a new verb:

Model: Verb + Verb = Verb This is the most common type of compound verbs,

where the verbal components are often synonymous. Example:

- 运 “to transport” + 输 “to convey” = 运输 – “to transport”.

Compound verbs formed by the attributive connection are less common. The combination of a verb component with a noun, adjective, or another verb can lead to the formation of a verb:

Models:

- Noun + Verb = Verb
- Adjective + Verb = Verb
- Verb + Verb = Verb

Another frequent model is the verb-object connection:

Model: Verb + Noun = Verb Example:

- 付 “to pay” + 款 “money, sum” = 付款 – “to pay”.

#### 3. Logistics Terms Formed by Combining Two Adjectives

Combining two adjectives with a copulative connection results in a new adjective.

In this case, synonymous or semantically related adjectives are combined:

Model: Adjective + Adjective = Adjective Example:

- 准确 “correct” + 准 “accurate” = 确 – “true”.

The combination of a noun and an adjective in a subject-predicate relationship creates a new adjective:

Model: Noun + Adjective = Adjective Example:

- 天然 “natural” + 磨料 “abrasive” = 天然磨料 – “natural abrasive”.

The combination of a noun, adjective, or verb with an adjective through an attributive connection forms a new adjective:

Models:

- Noun + Adjective = Adjective
- Adjective + Adjective = Adjective
- Verb + Adjective = Adjective

Example:

- 贵 “expensive” + 重 “heavy” = 贵重 – “valuable”.

### Affixation in Chinese Terminology

Numerous analyses of Chinese vocabulary show that copulative compounding is widespread across all subsystems of Chinese vocabulary.

Another morphological feature of the Chinese language to consider in translation is affixation. Both Chinese and domestic linguists distinguish between suffixes and semi-suffixes, though they can be difficult to differentiate.

This article provides several examples formed by adding the suffixes or semi-suffixes 员, 家, and 人. These mainly refer to people engaged in specific activities or involved in drafting or signing transportation documentation.

Examples:

- 进出口业务高级专家 – “import and export specialist”;
- 代理人 – “agent”;
- 驾驶员 – “driver”.

Other suffixes often found in supporting documents include 性, 式, 率. These are used to form terms describing properties, forms, or standards of various objects or phenomena.

Examples:

- 真 “real” + 实 “fact” + 性 “property” = 真实性 – “authenticity”; Here, the suffix 性 turns the word into an adjective describing the object's quality.

- 准 “accurate” + 确 “true” + 性 “property” = 准确性 – “accuracy”;

- 费 “fee” + 率 “rate, tariff” + 性 “property” = 费率 – “tariff”.

- 箱式 – a type of container; here 式 “type, form” is a generic morpheme indicating form, design, or category.

Thus, in translation, the presence of suffixes significantly simplifies the process and saves time in recognizing the original term. Knowing the translation or category of a suffix enables a specialist to perform the translation easily.

### Abbreviations in Transport Documentation

Abbreviated terms are also common in transport documents. They vary in structure due to different methods of compression. A.L. Semenas defines compound abbreviations as “shortened forms of full names that result from dropping some elements of a word, phrase, or more complex linguistic unit.”

Abbreviations fall into two types:

1. 简称 – simple abbreviations
2. 合成 – compound abbreviations

Examples in transport documents:

- “海运” (marine transportation) is a shortened term from “海洋上的运输” by combining the initial morphemes 海洋 (ocean) and 运输 (transport).

- “货名” in the term “货名及规格” (product name and specification) is short for “货品名字” – “product name”.

Special attention is required for abbreviations of organizations, regions, countries, cities, and routes. These usually belong to the compound abbreviation type (合成).

Researchers note that multi-component terms are the largest group of Chinese terms. Their components include content morphemes and borrowings from other languages.

This article examined 83 logistics terms from modern Chinese used in transportation documents like contracts, waybills, invoices, bills of lading, and packing lists.

After identifying major word formation features, all selected logistics terms were divided into:

- Simple terms
- Compound terms
- Terminological combinations

Simple terms are one-word terms whose stem equals the root and cannot be split into semantically meaningful morphemes.

Examples: 件 – “piece” (classifier), 数 – “quantity”, 色 – “color”, 净 – “net”, 毛 – “gross”.

Only 15 of the 83 terms analyzed are simple terms.

Compound terms include two or more root morphemes.

Examples:

- 进口税 – “import duty”,
- 消费税 – “sales tax”.

As seen from the examples, most transport documentation terms are borrowed from the primary language of international trade – English.

This large number of borrowings explains the widespread use of calquing (loan translation).

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