

# Cross-Linguistic Perspectives On Military Terms: Uzbek, Russian, And English

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**Abstract:** This article explores key issues of semantic non-equivalence, polysemy, terminological borrowing, and culture-specific concepts that complicate the establishment of accurate cross-language correspondences. Special attention is given to the problem of definitional inconsistency in lexicographic sources, where the same term may possess varying scopes, connotations, or classifications in different languages. The article concludes by recommending approaches to improving terminological harmonization and enhancing the quality of lexicographic representation of military terminology in English, Russian, and Uzbek.

**Keywords:** Military terminology; translation equivalence; semantic non-equivalence; lexicography; term definition; English–Russian–Uzbek contrastive analysis; culture-specific concepts; terminological harmonization.

**Introduction:** Military terminology represents a highly specialized subsystem of language that reflects the structure, doctrine, and strategic concepts of national armed forces. Due to its strict semantic precision, functional restrictions, and close relationship with extralinguistic factors, military terminology is a complex object of linguistic and translation research. When comparing English, Russian, and Uzbek military terms, significant challenges arise because each language encodes military concepts through different historical, cultural, and geopolitical experiences. As a result, direct correspondences are often absent or only partially equivalent. This article examines the main linguistic challenges in translating and defining military terminology across English, Russian, and Uzbek, and outlines key difficulties that emerge in semantic interpretation and lexicographic representation.

One of the central problems in translating military terminology is semantic asymmetry. Many terms carry meanings that are shaped by national military doctrines and organizational structures. A term such as deterrence in English refers to a strategic concept rooted in nuclear policy, whereas its Russian and Uzbek equivalents tend to convey broader notions of

“prevention” or “warning”, lacking the same doctrinal specificity. Such conceptual gaps create partial equivalence rather than full semantic correspondence. In other cases, terms may share similar denotations but differ in connotations, usage contexts, or hierarchical reference, which leads to a semantic shift during translation.

Military vocabulary often encodes culturally specific practices, traditions, or institutional realities. For instance, the Russian *политрук* is historically tied to Soviet military organization and has no direct equivalent in English or Uzbek. Uzbek terms such as *safarbarlik* and *jangovar ruh* carry cultural and ideological nuance that is not fully captured by English equivalents “mobilization” and “combat spirit”. Such terms require descriptive or functional translation strategies to preserve pragmatic meaning. The cultural embeddedness of many military terms complicates lexicographic definition and calls for explanatory notes to avoid misinterpretation.

Cross-linguistic influence is another major source of complexity. Russian military terminology contains numerous borrowings from French and German, while modern Uzbek military vocabulary has absorbed

international English-based concepts through NATO and UN cooperation. Borrowed terms are often adapted differently in each language, creating terminological interference. For example, charter (Eng.), устав (Rus.), and ustav (Uz.) are historically linked, yet differ in semantic volume and functional usage. Calques may also distort meaning when borrowed structures do not align with native linguistic norms, which affects definitional clarity in dictionaries.

Many military terms are context-dependent and acquire specialized meanings in professional discourse. Polysemous terms such as engagement, operation, and mission exhibit broad semantic potential in English but

function as terminological units with restricted meaning in military contexts. Russian and Uzbek equivalents often segment the semantic field differently, resulting in multiple translation options. Homonymy further complicates interpretation, as identical lexical forms may exist in general and military language but differ significantly in meaning. Therefore, contextual analysis becomes essential for accurate translation and definition.

To illustrate the complexity of cross-language equivalence, several representative examples are outlined below:

English Term	Russian Equivalent	Uzbek Equivalent	Type of Challenge
<b>Rules of engagement</b>	правила ведения боя	jangovar qoida	Partial equivalence; pragmatic mismatch
<b>Deterrence</b>	сдерживание	to'sqinlik (strategik ma'noda emas)	Conceptual non-equivalence
<b>Regiment</b>	полк	polk / polk bo'linmasi	Structural mismatch in hierarchy
<b>Drill</b>	строевая подготовка	saf tayyorgarligi	Cultural-practice specificity
<b>Mission</b>	миссия / задание	topshiriq / missiya	Polysemy and context-dependence

These examples demonstrate that military terms frequently exhibit either partial or zero equivalence, requiring contextual interpretation and careful definitional formulation.

Improving the accuracy of translation and definition of military terminology requires a combination of linguistic, pragmatic, and lexicographic strategies. First, functional equivalence should be prioritized over literal translation to preserve operational meaning. Second, descriptive translation is recommended for culture-bound or doctrine-specific terms, accompanied by explanatory notes. Third, harmonization of terminological standards across the three languages would reduce inconsistencies in dictionaries and official documents. Finally, translators must possess interdisciplinary knowledge of military affairs, as purely linguistic competence is insufficient for precise interpretation of specialized terms.

The comparative analysis of English, Russian, and Uzbek military terminology reveals that significant challenges arise from semantic asymmetry, cultural specificity, borrowing patterns, and context-dependent variation. These factors complicate both translation

and lexicographic definition, often resulting in partial equivalence or semantic loss. The study demonstrates that accurate interpretation of military terminology requires deep understanding of military doctrine, institutional structures, and pragmatic usage within each linguistic community. Effective translation strategies should prioritize functional adequacy, contextual analysis, and descriptive commentary when direct equivalents are absent. Ensuring consistency in lexicographic representation and enhancing terminological harmonization across English, Russian, and Uzbek will contribute to more precise and reliable communication in military discourse and translation practice.

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