

STRUCTURAL-SEMANTIC PATTERNS OF INNOVATIVE LEXICAL-TERMINOLOGICAL UNITS IN ENGLISH ECONOMIC DISCOURSE

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Abstract

The article investigates structural and semantic tendencies in innovative lexical-terminological units used in contemporary English economic discourse. The study treats innovation as both formal novelty and semantic renewal and therefore includes newly coined formations, abbreviations, clipped compounds, productive multiword terms, and established words that have acquired specialized meanings in digital and financial contexts. The empirical material consists of 40 units selected from international terminological and analytical resources issued by the Financial Stability Board, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, OECD, ILO, European Union, and Bank for International Settlements. Structural, componential, contextual, semantic-field, comparative, and elementary quantitative methods were applied. The findings demonstrate that compounds and multiword units form the most productive structural group, while digital finance and payments constitute the most active semantic field.

Keywords: Economic discourse, innovative terminology, structural-semantic analysis, FinTech, word formation, digital finance, neologism, specialized meaning.

Introduction

Contemporary economic communication is undergoing rapid lexical renewal because technological innovation continuously generates new products, institutions, processes, and regulatory practices. Digital finance, artificial intelligence, platform employment, crypto-assets, sustainable finance, and data-driven supervision have expanded the conceptual inventory of economics and, consequently, its terminological system. Terms such as FinTech, RegTech, SupTech, stablecoin, open banking, digital wallet, platform economy, and carbon pricing have become increasingly visible in institutional, academic, and professional discourse. The emergence of such units is not only a matter of vocabulary growth; it reflects the reorganization of specialized knowledge itself.

Classical terminology theory emphasizes the relationship between a concept and its designation. Sager views terms as instruments for organizing and transmitting specialized

knowledge [1], while Cabré argues that terminological units must be studied simultaneously as linguistic, cognitive, and communicative phenomena [2]. Later approaches further weaken the assumption that specialized meanings are always fixed and strictly monosemous. Temmerman shows that categorization, polysemy, and diachronic development are natural in specialized language [3], whereas frame-based terminology places individual terms within broader conceptual networks [4]. These perspectives are especially relevant to contemporary economic vocabulary because many new terms emerge by extending existing lexical resources into new technological or institutional frames.

The structural dimension of innovation is equally significant. English readily produces new lexical units through compounding, derivation, clipping, blending, abbreviation, and semantic specialization. Bauer identifies compounding and affixation as highly productive resources of English word formation [5], and Plag demonstrates that the productivity of complex-word formation is closely connected with usage, analogy, and morphological patterning [6]. Terminological standards also stress the systematic relation among objects, concepts, definitions, and designations [7; 8]. Consequently, innovative economic vocabulary should be examined not as an unordered list of fashionable words, but as a structured system whose formal patterns interact with conceptual fields.

FinTech provides a clear illustration. Arner, Barberis, and Buckley describe financial technology as technology-enabled financial solutions and relate its modern expansion to a distinct post-crisis stage of financial development [9]. Gomber, Koch, and Siering conceptualize digital finance through the interaction of business functions, technologies, and institutions [10]. The rise of data-intensive technology firms has also produced the term TechFin and other analogical formations, showing how economic naming practices follow shifts in market structure [11]. Official institutions similarly define FinTech in relation to technology-enabled innovation in financial services [12].

The purpose of this study is to identify the principal structural models and semantic fields of innovative lexical-terminological units in English economic discourse and to determine how linguistic economy, conceptual transparency, and semantic specialization interact in their formation. The research questions are: (1) Which structural models dominate the selected innovative units? (2) Which semantic fields are most active? (3) How do structural form and conceptual function interact? and (4) What tendencies can be inferred regarding the development of contemporary English economic terminology?

2. Materials

The empirical material consists of 40 lexical-terminological units selected purposively from authoritative international resources. The sources include Financial Stability Board reports on FinTech and RegTech/SupTech [12; 13], the World Bank glossary on digital finance [14], the IMF Digital Finance Lexicon [15], the OECD/ILO/European Union handbook on digital platform employment [16], the OECD study of gig-economy platforms [17], the OECD report on sustainable-finance definitions and taxonomies [18], the World

Bank report on carbon pricing [19], and the BIS Annual Economic Report addressing digital-money and stablecoin issues [20].

The sample includes the following units: digital wallet, digital currency, open banking, embedded finance, smart contract, cross-border payment, peer-to-peer lending, stablecoin, FinTech, e-money, e-payment, CBDC, DFS, tokenization, token, wallet, platform economy, gig economy, sharing economy, digital platform, e-commerce, BigTech, platform, regulatory sandbox, RegTech, SupTech, KYC, AML/CFT, macroprudential, nonbank, green finance, green bond, carbon pricing, decarbonization, sustainability, algorithmic trading, AI, API, interoperability, and mining. The sample is not intended to represent all innovative economic vocabulary. It is a controlled dataset designed to reveal recurrent structural and semantic patterns.

3. Methods

The analysis combines qualitative and elementary quantitative procedures. Structural analysis was used to identify the internal organization of each unit. Five structural classes were established: (1) compounds and multiword terms; (2) clipped or combining-form formations; (3) abbreviations and initialisms; (4) affixal derivatives; and (5) units based primarily on semantic specialization. Componential analysis was used to determine the contribution of individual elements such as digital, green, platform, tech, non-, and -ization to the meaning of the whole term.

Semantic-field analysis grouped the units according to the principal domains they designate: digital finance and payments; platform and labor economy; regulation and compliance; sustainable and green economy; and data, automation, and technological infrastructure. Contextual analysis was applied when a general-language form had acquired a specialized meaning. Thus, wallet, token, platform, and mining were interpreted through definitions and usage in institutional financial discourse rather than through their everyday meanings. Comparative analysis was then used to relate structural form to semantic function.

For the quantitative component, the number of items in each structural and semantic group was counted and converted into percentages using $P = n/N \times 100$, where n is the number of items in the group and N is the total number of units (40). The resulting percentages are descriptive indicators of the sample and are not treated as corpus-wide frequencies. Reliability was strengthened by selecting terms from multiple independent institutional sources and by checking ambiguous items against terminological definitions rather than relying on isolated web usage.

4. Results

The structural analysis shows that compounds and multiword terms constitute the largest group: 17 units, or 42.5% of the sample. Examples include digital wallet, digital currency, open banking, embedded finance, smart contract, cross-border payment, peer-to-peer

lending, platform economy, gig economy, green finance, green bond, carbon pricing, and algorithmic trading. This productivity is explained by the transparency of English noun phrases and compounds: a new conceptual feature can be attached to an established economic category without creating a fully new lexical root. For instance, digital identifies the technological mode in digital currency and digital wallet, while green adds an environmental-policy dimension to finance and bond.

Clipped and combining-form formations represent 17.5% of the sample. FinTech, RegTech, SupTech, BigTech, e-money, e-payment, and e-commerce illustrate a strong tendency toward compression. The productive element tech permits rapid analogical nomination: financial technology becomes FinTech, regulatory technology becomes RegTech, and supervisory technology becomes SupTech. The FSB distinguishes RegTech from SupTech according to institutional function: the former supports regulated institutions in compliance, while the latter supports supervisory authorities [13]. This demonstrates that formal analogy can coexist with precise semantic differentiation.

Abbreviations and initialisms account for 15% of the sample. AI, API, CBDC, DFS, KYC, and AML/CFT reduce complex technical or regulatory expressions to compact forms that are efficient in high-density professional communication. Their use, however, presupposes shared disciplinary knowledge. The World Bank glossary shows that API and open banking are conceptually linked because application programming interfaces enable controlled data exchange and service integration [14]. The same source treats digital financial services as a broad category, whereas CBDC is a more narrowly specified monetary concept.

Table 1 Structural distribution of the 40-unit sample

Structural model	Number	Share
Compounds / multiword terms	17	42.5%
Clipped / combining forms	7	17.5%
Abbreviations / initialisms	6	15.0%
Affixal derivatives	6	15.0%
Semantic specialization	4	10.0%

Affixal derivatives also make up 15% of the material. Tokenization, decarbonization, and related process nouns illustrate the productivity of -ization, while macroprudential and nonbank demonstrate the classificatory role of bound elements such as macro- and non-. These formations show how terminology expands conceptual families: token, tokenize, and tokenization may function as related designations within one knowledge frame. Such systematicity corresponds to the terminological principle that designations should be interpreted in relation to the concept system in which they operate [7].

The remaining 10% consists of units whose innovation is primarily semantic rather than formal: platform, token, wallet, and mining. The form wallet is old, but its specialized financial-technological sense has shifted from a physical container to software or an

application used to store or manage payment instruments and digital assets [14]. Token similarly develops a specialized sense as a digital representation of value or rights, while interoperability refers to the capacity of systems or platforms to connect and function together [15]. These examples confirm the sociocognitive observation that terminological meaning can evolve historically and contextually rather than remaining permanently fixed [3].

Semantic classification reveals that digital finance and payments form the largest field, with 16 units (40%). The second and third groups are platform/labor economy and regulation/compliance, each representing 17.5%. Sustainable and green economy accounts for 12.5%, while data, automation, and technological infrastructure constitute the remaining 12.5%. The concentration of items in digital finance reflects the institutionalization of new payment mechanisms, crypto-assets, data-sharing models, and technology-enabled financial services. The IMF's lexicon, for example, systematizes terms such as stablecoin, token, distributed ledger, and interoperability as part of an expanding digital-finance vocabulary [15].

Table 2 Semantic fields represented in the sample

Semantic field	Number	Share
Digital finance and payments	16	40.0%
Platform and labor economy	7	17.5%
Regulation and compliance	7	17.5%
Sustainable / green economy	5	12.5%
Data, automation and infrastructure	5	12.5%

The platform-economy group illustrates how lexical innovation responds to changes in labor and market intermediation. The OECD/ILO/European Union handbook emphasizes the need for operational definitions of digital platform employment because similar expressions may cover different statistical populations [16]. Schwellnus and colleagues similarly describe gig platforms as digital intermediaries matching workers with customers on a task basis [17]. Thus, platform economy, gig economy, and digital platform are structurally related but semantically non-identical.

Sustainable-finance vocabulary shows another mechanism of innovation: an established economic noun receives a new conceptual modifier. Green finance and green bond combine familiar financial categories with an environmental orientation, while carbon pricing names a policy mechanism that assigns an economic price to greenhouse-gas emissions. OECD work on sustainable-finance taxonomies demonstrates the importance of consistent definitions in this domain [18], and World Bank reporting shows that carbon pricing has developed into a distinct policy and market vocabulary [19]. The semantic productivity of

green and carbon therefore reflects the increasing integration of environmental objectives into economic discourse.

The analysis also confirms interaction between structure and meaning. Compactness is especially visible in rapidly institutionalized technological areas. FinTech, RegTech, SupTech, CBDC, API, and AI are economical forms suited to recurrent expert communication. By contrast, multiword terms tend to preserve greater conceptual transparency for readers outside a narrow specialist community. Stablecoin combines a transparent lexical base with a specialized technical definition, and current institutional discussions treat stablecoins as a distinct class of crypto-assets designed to maintain a relatively stable value [20]. Accordingly, formal brevity, semantic precision, and communicative accessibility operate as competing but complementary pressures in terminological development.

5. Discussion

The results support the view that innovative economic terminology develops through the interaction of linguistic productivity and changes in specialized knowledge. The dominance of compounds and multiword units can be explained by the capacity of English to create new designations from established words with relatively little morphological change. This pattern is consistent with general descriptions of English word formation [5; 6], but in economic discourse the process is intensified by institutional standardization. Once a term such as open banking, digital wallet, or green finance is adopted in policy and regulatory documents, its semantic range becomes more stable and its professional circulation increases.

At the same time, the findings challenge a simple equation between lexical novelty and formal novelty. Many important economic innovations are expressed through older words that acquire specialized meanings. Token, wallet, platform, and mining are examples of semantic refunctionalization. This confirms the relevance of context-sensitive terminology theories [2-4]. A purely morphological analysis would underestimate such innovation because the form of the word may remain unchanged even when the underlying concept is substantially transformed.

The data also reveal the role of analogy in the creation of terminological families. FinTech functions as a productive model for RegTech and SupTech, while tech also appears in BigTech and TechFin-related discourse. This process is not arbitrary: new forms become successful when they preserve a recognizable conceptual relation to an established pattern. The historical expansion of FinTech described by Arner and colleagues [9] and the broader research landscape identified by Gomber and co-authors [10] help explain why the element tech has become a productive marker of technologically transformed economic activity. Institutional context is particularly important for distinguishing formally similar units. RegTech and SupTech share the same combining element but refer to different actors and functions [13]. Likewise, platform economy, gig economy, and digital platform

employment overlap conceptually but are not interchangeable [16; 17]. This demonstrates why terminological analysis must move beyond surface form to include actor, process, function, and regulatory setting. The same principle applies to sustainable finance, where taxonomies are designed precisely to reduce ambiguity in expressions such as green, sustainable, transitional, and climate-related finance [18].

The study has several limitations. First, the 40-unit dataset is purposive rather than corpus-based; therefore, the percentages describe the sample but cannot be generalized statistically to all English economic discourse. Second, the analysis focuses on established or institutionally visible innovative terms rather than very recent ephemeral neologisms. Third, the study does not measure diachronic frequency change. Future research could expand the sample through large financial-news and institutional corpora, trace first attestations, compare British and American usage, and examine cross-linguistic transfer into Uzbek economic terminology.

6. CONCLUSION

The study identified clear structural and semantic tendencies in innovative lexical-terminological units of English economic discourse. Compounds and multiword terms were the dominant structural model, representing 42.5% of the sample, followed by clipped/combining forms, abbreviations, affixal derivatives, and semantically specialized general-language words. Semantically, digital finance and payments constituted the most active field, while platform labor, regulation, sustainable finance, and technological infrastructure formed additional productive domains.

The findings demonstrate that lexical innovation in economics is driven by several mechanisms simultaneously: productive word formation, abbreviation, analogy, metaphorical or specialized meaning, and institutional standardization. The most important conclusion is that formal structure alone does not explain terminological innovation. A reliable analysis must integrate linguistic form, conceptual content, communicative function, and institutional context. Such an approach provides a stronger basis for future comparative work on English and Uzbek economic terminology and for the development of specialized dictionaries, translation resources, and teaching materials.

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