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## LINGUOCULTURAL FEATURES OF UNITS DENOTING ISLAMIC RITUAL NAMES IN UZBEK AND ARABIC

**Abstract.** *This article examines the linguocultural features of units denoting Islamic ritual names in Uzbek and Arabic. Drawing on the theoretical frameworks of Telia (1996), Maslova (2001), Humboldt, Sapir, Whorf, and Uzbek scholars including Usmonova (2019) and Mahmudov, the study analyzes the semantic, pragmatic, and cultural layers of ritual designations such as aqiqa, janoza, nikoh, sunnat to 'yi, ta'ziya, and qurbon. The article demonstrates that these units function not merely as nominative linguistic elements but as cultural codes encoding a people's historical experience, religious values, and social relations. A comparative analysis of the two traditions reveals zones of shared origin rooted in Islamic Arabic sources alongside culturally specific adaptations in Uzbek, where Arabic ritual terms have acquired additional pragmatic and semantic layers through integration with local customs, kinship relations, and national mentality. The findings are relevant for descriptive linguistics, cultural studies, ethnolinguistics, and pragmalinguistics.*

**Keywords:** *linguoculturology; Islamic ritual names; Uzbek; Arabic; aqiqa; janoza; culturally non-equivalent lexis; lacuna; semantic layer; cultural code.*

### INTRODUCTION

In the age of globalization, the study of the relationship between language and culture has become one of the most pressing directions in linguistics. The study of the linguocultural features of religious-ritual units in particular serves as an important scholarly source for illuminating a people's national mentality, values, and historical-cultural experience (Maslova, 2001:34). Since the Uzbek and Arab peoples have lived for centuries within the framework of Islamic civilization, ritual names in both languages have taken shape not only as linguistic elements but also as cultural-semantic layers.

Linguoculturology emerged as an independent scholarly direction in the 1990s and is associated with scholars of the Moscow Phraseological School led by V. N. Telia including Yu. S. Stepanov, A. D. Arutyunova, V. V. Vorobyev, V. Shaklein, and V. A. Maslova (Telia, 1996:12; Maslova, 2001:7). This direction investigates the mutual influence of language and culture and how a people's worldview is reflected in language. The principal subject of linguoculturology is the organic relationship between language and culture. Questions of ethnolinguistics and linguoculturology were developed through the works of Humboldt, Boas, Sapir, and Whorf; in Russian linguistics, scholars such as D. K. Zelenin, A. A. Potebnya, and A. N. Afanasyev investigated the relationship between folk mentality and language (Sapir, 1921; Whorf, 1956).

In Uzbek linguistics, scholars including Sh. Usmonova, N. Mahmudov, D. Khudoyberganova, and A. Nurmonov have studied the theoretical and applied aspects of linguoculturology. In particular, Usmonova's work "Linguoculturology" provides extensive coverage of culturally non-equivalent lexis, lacunae, and national-cultural units (Usmonova, 2019:45–48).

However, the comparative linguocultural analysis of Islamic ritual names in Uzbek and Arabic has not yet been studied in a sufficiently comprehensive and systematic manner. In particular, the semantic, pragmatic, and cultural layers of such units as *aqiqa*, *janoza*, *mavlid*, *amri ma'ruf*, and *nikoh* require specialized investigation within the framework of both languages. Today, the preservation of the unity of language and culture has been elevated to the level of state policy. From this perspective, the linguocultural investigation of religious-ritual units holds significant importance for understanding national values, revealing the expression of religious thought in language, and developing intercultural communication.

The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, emphasizing the interconnection of language and culture, has stated: "We see the development of the state language in connection with the development of the language and culture of representatives of other nationalities" (Gazeta.uz, 2023, October 21). This remark demonstrates that language is not merely a communicative tool but a phenomenon that preserves the cultural memory of a people. Ritual names are linguocultural units that reflect a people's beliefs, customs, mentality, and social relations; their comparative study on the basis of Uzbek and Arabic materials therefore constitutes one of the pressing tasks of contemporary linguistics (Maslova, 2001:62).

## METHODS

This study employs a comparative-linguocultural analysis method, drawing on the theoretical frameworks of linguoculturology, semantic component analysis, and ethnolinguistic comparison. The analytical approach identifies, for each ritual unit, the layers of denotative meaning, connotative meaning, cultural-pragmatic functions, and zones of correspondence and non-correspondence between Uzbek and Arabic usage patterns. The principal sources include: the theoretical works of Telia (1996) and Maslova (2001) for the linguocultural framework; the scholarship of Usmonova (2019) for Uzbek linguoculturology; the typological and linguistic-anthropological frameworks of Humboldt, Sapir (1921), and Whorf (1956); and classical Arabic lexicographical and religious sources for the etymological analysis of ritual terms. The analysis proceeds from individual unit analysis (*aqiqa*, *janoza*) through a comparative structural analysis of shared and culture-specific features of Islamic ritual naming across both traditions.

## RESULTS

1. *The aqiqa ritual.* *Aqiqa* (Arabic: عقيقة) is derived from Arabic and denotes the religious ritual performed on the occasion of a newborn child. This unit entered the Uzbek language through the religious-cultural layer and has become an integral component of national culture. From a linguocultural perspective, *aqiqa* embeds several semantic layers: the introduction of the child to society; a symbol of family blessing and benevolence; the concept of sacrifice and generosity; and the transmission of religious values from generation to generation (Maslova, 2001:78).

In Arab culture, *aqiqa* is interpreted primarily as a *sunnah*-practical ritual, while among the Uzbek people it has become a tradition that reinforces kinship, neighborly relations, and social solidarity. In Uzbek, collocations such as *aqiqa oshi* ('the feast of *aqiqa*') and *aqiqa qilmoq* ('to perform *aqiqa*') are found, demonstrating that the unit has acquired not only religious but also national-domestic content (Usmonova, 2019:52). This unit is also characteristic as culturally non-equivalent lexis: in other languages, a fully culturally equivalent translation of *aqiqa* does not exist, and it is therefore most often rendered through transliteration.

2. *The janoza ritual.* *Janoza* (Arabic: جنازة) is taken from Arabic and denotes the religious ritual associated with the burial of the deceased. This unit possesses deep

cultural and spiritual semantics in Uzbek. From a linguocultural standpoint, janoza expresses the following cultural concepts: the transience of human life; the principle of social compassion; religious duty and the conception of the afterlife; and collective solidarity (Telia, 1996:98).

In Arabic, salat al-janazah is employed as the name of a religious act of worship; in Uzbek, the word janoza carries a broader pragmatic meaning, encompassing all the customs associated with accompanying the deceased. Examples: janoza o‘qildi (‘the funeral prayer was performed’), janozaga chiqmoq (‘to attend a funeral’), janoza marosimi (‘the funeral ceremony’). In the Uzbek people’s discourse, proverbial sayings such as “A person who has come to a funeral does not leave without having been welcomed” are also found. The janoza ritual is a linguocultural phenomenon that encodes the people’s mourning culture, the concept of patient endurance (sabr), and religious views (Usmonova, 2019:55–57).

3. *Shared features of ritual names.* Islamic ritual names in Uzbek and Arabic share a common root in Arabic religious sources. In the domain of religious-social rituals: terms and practices such as nikoh (Arabic: nikāḥ family formation) and sunnat to‘yi (observance of Islamic sunnah) have been borrowed directly from Arabic religious sources. In the domain of mourning rituals: names such as janoza, ta‘ziya (condolence visit), qirq marosimi (the fortieth-day ceremony), and xatmi Qur’on are Arabic words that have been integrated with the Islamic worldview of the Uzbek people. In the domain of aqiqa and sacrifice: rituals such as aqiqa (performed at a child’s birth) and qurbon hayiti bear identical names in both cultures and are performed in an equivalent manner (Maslova, 2001:84; Usmonova, 2019:60).

4. *Cultural-religious functions.* The ritual names and the prayers contained within them call people to spiritual purity, patient endurance (sabr-toqat), and benevolent generosity functioning as a means of spiritual purification. The rituals ensure the cohesion of the mahalla or community (Arabic: jama‘at). For example, the recitation of the Qur’an and the giving of alms (ehson) in memory of the deceased bring people closer together, expressing the principle of social solidarity. The ritual names are transmitted from generation to generation, ensuring the preservation of values: pre-Islamic values merged with Islamic ritual names to form a distinctive national-religious profile (Telia, 1996:102).

## DISCUSSION

The analysis of Islamic ritual names in Uzbek and Arabic demonstrates a pattern that is theoretically significant for linguoculturology: the Uzbek people did not merely adopt Arabic religious-ritual names but enriched them with their own national customs, mentality, and centuries-old values. These terms not only augmented the lexical wealth of the Uzbek language but also define the cultural closeness of the two peoples (Maslova, 2001:86).

Several Arabic religious units that entered the Uzbek language have acquired new pragmatic and semantic features under the influence of national culture. The comparative analysis of *aqiqa* and *janoza* reveals this divergence clearly: while in Arabic both terms remain primarily within the domain of religious practice and theological discourse, in Uzbek they have expanded into the domain of social relations, kinship networks, and neighborhood solidarity, developing collocational patterns (*aqiqa oshi*, *janozaga chiqmoq*) that have no direct parallel in Arabic (Usmonova, 2019:57–60; Telia, 1996:100).

This finding is consistent with the theoretical framework of Sapir (1921) and Whorf (1956), who argued that the linguistic categories available to a speech community shape the conceptual categories through which its members perceive and organize experience. The integration of Arabic Islamic ritual terminology into Uzbek has not been a neutral borrowing but a creative cultural-linguistic act through which the receiving language community reshaped the borrowed units to encode locally significant social and moral values alongside the original religious meanings. The status of these units as culturally non-equivalent lexis requiring transliteration rather than translation when rendered into other languages further confirms their deep embeddedness in the linguistic-cultural system of both peoples (Usmonova, 2019:52).

## CONCLUSION

Islamic ritual names in Uzbek and Arabic are important linguocultural units that reflect the religious mentality, cultural memory, and national worldview of both peoples. The analysis of the units *aqiqa* and *janoza* demonstrates that these ritual names function not merely as nominative units but as cultural codes that embody a people's historical experience, religious values, and social relations (Telia, 1996; Maslova, 2001).

In the cultures of the Uzbek and Arab peoples, religious-ritual names grounded in Islamic tradition share common roots Arabic religious terminology while exhibiting culturally specific adaptations. In Uzbek, these terms have been enriched through integration with national customs, kinship structures, neighborhood relations, and centuries of historical experience, generating distinctive pragmatic and semantic extensions absent in Arabic usage. The linguocultural study of religious-ritual names therefore holds scholarly significance not only for linguistics but also for cultural studies, ethnolinguistics, and pragmalinguistics (Usmonova, 2019; Sapir, 1921; Whorf, 1956).

Future research should extend this analysis to a broader set of Islamic ritual terms in both languages, employing corpus-based methods to document the full range of collocational patterns, pragmatic contexts, and semantic extensions of these units in contemporary usage. Comparative analysis extended to other Turkic languages with significant Islamic heritage would further illuminate the mechanisms through which Arabic Islamic terminology is adapted within different cultural-linguistic environments.

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