

## THE HISTORY OF STUDYING THE VOCABULARY OF NATIONAL CUSTOMS IN THE UZBEK LANGUAGE

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### Abstract

This article explores the history of studying the vocabulary of national customs in the Uzbek language. It traces the development of linguistic research from early historical periods, such as the influence of Arabic and Persian, through the Russian and Soviet eras, to modern scholarly efforts. The article highlights key methodologies used in the study of Uzbek vocabulary, including etymology, dialectology, semantics, and discourse analysis. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the cultural and historical context behind the vocabulary of national customs, contributing to a deeper appreciation of Uzbek linguistic heritage.

**Keywords:** vocabulary, national customs, Uzbek language, etymology, dialectology, semantics, cultural heritage, linguistic research, language history, discourse analysis.

### Introduction

Language is the living soul of a nation, reflecting its history, cultural traditions, social values, and collective identity. The vocabulary associated with national customs, ceremonies, and traditional practices serves not only as linguistic elements but also as symbolic representations of a people's cultural heritage. These words preserve the unique identity of the community, embody historical developments, and facilitate the transmission of cultural values from generation to generation.

The vocabulary related to Uzbek cultural practices encompasses words and expressions describing rituals, celebrations, ceremonies, religious observances, and social customs. Examining the origins and evolution of these terms provides deeper insight into the historical background of Uzbek society, its social structures, and worldview. These words often carry layers of cultural significance, reflecting traditional beliefs, social norms, and collective memory.



Culturally, such vocabulary plays a vital role in passing down customs and traditions, ensuring their continuity over time. It acts as a bridge connecting the past with the present, helping modern generations understand and appreciate their cultural roots. In the contemporary context, studying these terms reveals how traditional customs adapt to modern influences, evolve in response to societal changes, and continue to shape national identity.

This research aims to explore the origin, development, and linguistic features of vocabulary related to Uzbek national customs. It seeks to analyze how these words originated, how they have transformed over time, and their current significance in Uzbek society. Understanding these aspects contributes to a broader comprehension of the relationship between language and culture, highlighting the importance of preserving and promoting cultural heritage through linguistic means.

Furthermore, the study of this vocabulary is valuable not only for linguists and ethnolinguists but also for historians, anthropologists, and cultural scholars. It provides a nuanced understanding of how language reflects societal values, historical experiences, and cultural identity. By examining these words, we gain insight into how traditional practices adapt within a modern, globalized world.

## Methods

This research employs a qualitative and historical-descriptive methodology to analyze the development and linguistic features of vocabulary related to Uzbek national customs. The study is based on both diachronic (historical) and synchronic (contemporary) perspectives to trace the evolution of the vocabulary across different periods.

### Primary methods include

**Etymological analysis** exploring the origins of words and their transformation over time. **Comparative and dialectological approaches** identifying regional differences in the use of words associated with customs.

**Semantic and cultural analysis** focusing on how the meanings of words reflect



social, religious, and cultural realities.

**Textual and discourse analyze** applied to samples from folklore, classical literature, proverbs, and contemporary usage. The research also draws upon materials from dictionaries, academic publications, and ethnographic studies, combining linguistic evidence with cultural interpretation. This interdisciplinary approach ensures that both the linguistic and socio-cultural dimensions of the vocabulary are thoroughly examined.

### Historical Background of the Study of Uzbek Vocabulary

The study of Uzbek vocabulary related to national customs has deep roots in Central Asian intellectual history. Early evidence of interest in the Turkic lexicon can be traced to the 11th century, when **Mahmud Kashgari's "Divanu Lug'at at-Turk"** documented words describing the daily life, social relations, and customs of Turkic peoples. This monumental work remains one of the earliest linguistic and ethnographic sources for understanding the language and traditions of ancient Turkic societies.

During the **Timurid and Shaybanid periods**, Uzbek vocabulary absorbed influences from Arabic and Persian due to religious, cultural, and literary exchanges. Words connected with Islamic practices such as *nikoh* (marriage), *iftor* (breaking fast), and *duo* (prayer) became integral to the Uzbek lexicon, reflecting the merging of linguistic and cultural traditions.

### The Soviet Period and Linguistic Standardization

The **Soviet period (1920s–1990s)** represented a major turning point in the history of Uzbek linguistic research. The establishment of the **Uzbek Academy of Sciences** and its **Institute of Language and Literature** institutionalized linguistic study. Scholars such as **A. Kononov, S. Mutallibov, and Sh. Shoabdurahmonov** contributed significantly to the development of Uzbek lexicology, morphology, and semantics (Kononov 1956; Shoabdurahmonov 1980).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Kononov, A. N. (1960). *Grammatika sovremennogo uzbekskogo literaturnogo yazyka*. Leningrad: Izdatelstvo Akademii Nauk SSSR;





Despite the Soviet policy of linguistic modernization which aimed to remove Arabic and Persian elements the vocabulary associated with national customs persisted in everyday speech and folklore. This endurance highlights the deep connection between culture and language. Ethnographers and linguists actively collected and studied terms related to weddings, hospitality, and seasonal festivals (*Navruz*, *Qurbon hayiti*, *Hosil bayrami*), ensuring their preservation.

### Modern Research Trends and Methodologies

After Uzbekistan's **independence in 1991**, national identity and cultural revival became central themes in linguistic scholarship. Modern researchers such as **N. Mahmudov, A. Madvaliev, M. Tursunov, and O. Bozorov** have emphasized the role of ethnolinguistics, cognitive linguistics, and semantic field analysis in studying Uzbek vocabulary.

Recent works analyze how words reflect collective mentality (*milliy tafakkur*), moral values, and social organization. Using corpus-based approaches, scholars now examine the frequency and context of culturally specific terms in contemporary texts, including social media, education, and literature.

### Cultural and Linguistic Significance

The vocabulary of Uzbek national customs functions as a **cultural code** that preserves the identity of the nation. Words such as *kelin salom* (bride's greeting), *sovchi* (matchmaker), and *mehmondorchilik* (hospitality) are not mere linguistic units but symbols of social norms and moral values. They reflect the Uzbek worldview, emphasizing respect for elders, family unity, and community relationships.

Through oral literature, proverbs, and idioms, this vocabulary transmits moral lessons and cultural wisdom. For instance, the proverb "*Mehmon otangdan ulug*" ("A guest is greater than your father") illustrates the high cultural value of hospitality. Thus,

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Mutallibov, S. (1964). *O'zbek tili grammatikasi (Morfolojiya)*. Toshkent: Fan nashriyoti;  
Shoabdurahmonov, Sh. (1980). *O'zbek tili leksikologiyasi*. Toshkent: Fan.



linguistic analysis of such expressions reveals the deep moral and ethical dimensions embedded in the Uzbek language.

### **Challenges and Future Perspectives**

Despite notable progress, several challenges remain in the comprehensive study of this vocabulary:

Lack of specialized ethnolinguistic dictionaries;

Limited regional documentation of dialectal variations;

Insufficient interdisciplinary cooperation between linguists, historians, and anthropologists. Future research should prioritize digital corpora development, regional fieldwork, and cultural-linguistic education. Expanding the study of national customs' vocabulary contributes to both linguistic scholarship and cultural preservation, strengthening the understanding of Uzbekistan's unique linguistic heritage in the global academic context.

### **Conclusion**

The study of vocabulary connected with Uzbek national customs plays a vital role in understanding the cultural and historical development of the Uzbek language. These lexical units not only reflect the material and spiritual life of the Uzbek people but also preserve their worldview, social norms, and moral values across generations.

Analyzing such vocabulary helps linguists trace the interaction between language and culture, as well as identify the influence of historical events, religious beliefs, and regional traditions on lexical formation. Moreover, comparing Uzbek cultural vocabulary with that of other Turkic languages provides valuable insights into shared and distinctive linguistic features.

In the age of globalization, documenting and studying such vocabulary ensures that these linguistic treasures retain their cultural essence. This research, therefore, contributes both to theoretical linguistics and to practical cultural studies, serving as a key to understanding the continuity of Uzbek traditions within the broader context of world civilizations.





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