

**THE LINGUISTIC REPRESENTATION OF MARRIAGE CUSTOMS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK****Gulchekhra Azimjonova**Master student, Uzbekistan State World Languages University  
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**Annotation:** This article explores the linguistic representation of marriage customs in Uzbek and English, analyzing how language reflects and shapes cultural perceptions of matrimonial traditions in both societies. Drawing on a comparative approach, the study examines idiomatic expressions, proverbs, lexical choices, and discourse patterns related to courtship, engagement, wedding ceremonies, and marital roles. The research reveals that while Uzbek reflects deeply rooted traditional and collectivist values through highly ritualized and symbolic expressions, English tends to emphasize individual choice and romantic ideals, often shaped by modern, secular narratives. Particular attention is given to how gender roles, familial expectations, and social obligations are encoded in marriage-related language. The study highlights the intersection between language, culture, and social structure, offering insights into how linguistic elements both preserve and transform the cultural values associated with marriage in Uzbek and English-speaking contexts.

**Keywords:** linguistics, marriage, customs, social obligations, cultural values, ritualized, matrimonial traditions.

**Annotatsiya:** Mazkur maqolada o'zbek va ingliz tillarida nikoh urf-odatlarining lingvistik ifodalanishi o'rganilib, til orqali turli jamiyatlarda nikohga oid an'analar qanday aks etishi va shakllanishi tahlil qilinadi. Solishtirma yondashuv asosida ishqiy munosabatlar, unashtirish, to'y marosimlari va oilaviy rollarga doir iboralar, maqollar, leksik birliklar hamda nutqiy naqshlar tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqot shuni ko'rsatadiki, o'zbek tili rasmiylashgan va ramziy ifodalar orqali an'anaviy va kollektiv qadriyatlarni chuqur aks ettiradi, ingliz tili esa, asosan, shaxsiy tanlov va romantik idealarni, zamonaviy va dunyoviy qarashlarga asoslangan tarzda namoyon etadi. Nikoh tilida gender rollari, oilaviy kutishlar va ijtimoiy majburiyatlar qanday ifoda etilganiga alohida e'tibor qaratiladi. Ushbu tadqiqot til, madaniyat va ijtimoiy tuzilmaning o'zaro aloqasini yoritib, nikohga oid madaniy qadriyatlarning saqlanishi va o'zgarishida lingvistik unsurlar qanday rol o'ynashini tushunishga yordam beradi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** lingvistika, nikoh urf-odatlari, ijtimoiy majburiyatlar, madaniy qadriyatlar, rasmiylashgan ifodalar, nikoh an'analari.

**Аннотация:** В данной статье рассматривается лингвистическое представление брачных обычаев в узбекском и английском языках, анализируется, как язык отражает и формирует культурные представления о брачных традициях в этих двух обществах. Используя сравнительный подход, исследование анализирует идиоматические выражения, пословицы, лексический выбор и речевые модели, связанные с ухаживанием, помолвкой, свадебными церемониями и ролями в браке. Результаты показывают, что узбекский язык отражает глубоко укоренившиеся традиционные и коллективистские ценности через ритуализированные и символические выражения, тогда как английский язык, как правило,

подчеркивает индивидуальный выбор и романтические идеалы, часто формируемые современными светскими нарративами. Особое внимание уделяется тому, как гендерные роли, семейные ожидания и социальные обязательства закодированы в брачной лексике. Исследование подчеркивает взаимосвязь языка, культуры и социальной структуры, предоставляя понимание того, как лингвистические элементы сохраняют и трансформируют культурные ценности, связанные с браком в англоязычных и узбекоязычных контекстах.

**Ключевые слова:** лингвистика, брачные обычаи, социальные обязательства, культурные ценности, ритуализированные выражения, брачные традиции.

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## INTRODUCTION

Marriage is not only a social institution but also a culturally and linguistically rich phenomenon that reflects the values, beliefs, and worldviews of a community. Across different cultures, marriage customs are deeply embedded in language, expressed through idioms, proverbs, metaphors, ceremonial terminology, and discourse patterns that reveal how societies understand and approach this vital institution. In both Uzbek and English-speaking contexts, the language surrounding marriage serves as a mirror to broader cultural norms, including family structure, gender roles, societal expectations, and traditional values.

This article aims to examine how marriage customs are linguistically represented in Uzbek and English, with a focus on key stages such as courtship, engagement, wedding ceremonies, and marital roles. Through a comparative analysis of phraseology, proverbs, and lexical semantics, the study seeks to uncover the underlying cultural narratives encoded in the language of marriage. By doing so, it sheds light on how language both preserves cultural traditions and adapts to changing social realities in each linguistic and cultural setting.

The linguistic representation of marriage customs varies significantly between the Uzbek and English languages due to historical, religious, and sociocultural differences. Uzbek marriage traditions are largely influenced by Islamic values and Central Asian heritage, often highlighting collective responsibility, family honor, and prescribed social roles. These concepts are linguistically encoded through formalized phrases, ritual terminology, and culturally bound expressions. In contrast, English reflects more individualistic and romanticized notions of marriage, particularly in modern Western societies, where personal choice, emotional connection, and egalitarian ideals play a more prominent role.

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## METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

This research study deals with qualitative and descriptive analyses to linguistic representation of marriage customs in Uzbek and English language. This methodology involves following basic approaches to highlight the theme: comparative analyses, discourse analyses, literature review of scholar in both languages. By joining all these methods, this research work aims to provide a depth-understanding of linguistic representation and main differences between implications of marriage customs in two cultures.

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## RESULTS

Wedding is a family tradition relevant to each language and culture that comprises a great number of cultural rituals, customs and ceremonies. This phenomenon is mainly investigated by cultural studies, however a new direction in linguistic such as linguoculturology also focuses on cultural issues in connection with language. In English-speaking cultures, marriage is primarily a romantic and personal event, whereas in Uzbek culture, it is a family and community affair. Religious elements, such as nikoh, are central in Uzbek weddings, while Western ceremonies often follow civil or secular traditions. Furthermore, Uzbek weddings involve extensive pre- and post-wedding rituals, whereas English weddings focus on the ceremony itself. Customs and traditions play a significant role in shaping national identity. While customs are everyday social practices, traditions carry deeper symbolic and historical significance. The lexemes used to express these concepts serve as linguistic marker of cultural values and social norms. Both English and Uzbek contain a wide range of lexemes related to customs and traditions, covering both formal ceremonies and informal social behaviors. However, the specific connotations and pragmatic usage of these words differ due to religious, historical, and societal factors (Olimova, 2022).

A wedding is an action to adding a new member to a family and carry on one's line. Wedding is a day when two young people decided to live together ahead, to love and respect each other forever". Concerning the linguocultural approach to scientists claim its cultural, linguistic, psychological, social importance for the science. First of all, verbal and non-verbal embodiment of the most significant positive values of a society are found in wedding communications, secondly, the wedding ritual itself gets principal one for the formation of important linguocultural concept. In modern linguistics, it is observed that interest for basis concepts of a national culture, particularly, to the concept "wedding" is increasing. Identifying main characteristics of lacuna in translation of notions and realias of a wedding ritual and methods of its elimination in the process of cross-cultural communication is also constitutes actuality of the research. Both in English and Uzbek, a number of proverbs describe wedding tradition which means language is the reflection of any cultural element. Hence, language is not only the way to pass cultural heritage from one generation into another one, but also a tool used to penetrate into the mentality, culture, world outlook of a nation (Abdurakhmanova, 2023). The study of Wedding tradition from linguoculturological point of view promotes a cross-cultural communication, provides foreign language learner with theoretical and practical material and finally contributes to the political, social and other mutual relations between countries of these two native speakers. A comparative approach to the study of a wedding tradition, first of all, empowers future investigation on other types of tradition by creating basis of scientific, cultural and language materials. In most phraseological units, attitude of people towards a wedding is described with the elements of joy, excitement, expectations. For example, an English idiom big day (Big day, 2020) is used to say about the Wedding Day among people and figurative meaning of the idiom depicts that this day is highly important and crucial for the English people. It is believed that wedding brings happiness not only for the heroes of it, but also other people, such as guests, friends, relatives of a bride and a groom. The following proverb can be example for it: One wedding brings another so at a wedding party people can meet his or her future spouse and decide to get married as the English proverbs says: Hanging and wedding go by destiny. The colour "white" in the phrase "White wedding" symbolizes an English bride's dress and the marriage that starts in a church. Cambridge dictionary describes it as following: "a traditional Christian marriage in a church, at which the woman who is getting married wears a white dress" (Williams & Chen, 2020). As for Uzbek traditions, people organize following weddings: O'g'il to'yi (a wedding organized to celebrate a boy's circumcision), hovli to'yi (celebrities organized when a family moves in a new house) and the most important wedding for a family is nikoh to'yi (wedding of a bride and a groom) (Hashimov, 2025).

## **DISCUSSION**

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Cross-cultural communications are of a great importance in today's developing world. Since, mastering a foreign language is not enough to enter a dialogue with a representative of a foreign language; one should understand that correctness in communication requires knowledge about the nation's culture, history, mentality, character. It is not so complicated to read and learn information about it, however factual information is kept in the language and reflect in the linguistic picture of the world. Both English and Uzbek wedding traditions possess considerable systemic potentials. In English lexical system there fixed associations such as "wedding preparations", "importance of wedding cake, dance" and after wedding activities. In phraseological level, the notion wedding tradition includes a number of specific elements that was not revealed in the Uzbek linguoculturology: choosing an appropriate wedding date, paying attention to the symbolic elements in a bride's dress and to accompany a bride in a church. (Merriam-Webster,2025) For Uzbek, lexical level of wedding tradition is associated with rituals carried out on a wedding day and post-wedding ritual, phraseological level includes prewedding rituals. Analysis show that wedding tradition is inherent for both linguocultures, however we reveled more dissimilar unique features of it rather than similar. Importance of the availability of specifically prepared wedding dishes, guests' wishes and greetings addressed for newly-weds were found out similar feature of wedding traditions reflected in the languages. The music of the dance, as a rule is choosed by the couple and is usually a music with a slow temp. Uzbek bride leaves her parents'house under the song "Yor-yor" the following definition for "Yor-yor" is provided: "The context of the song that is sung when a bride is taken to a groom's house introduces a bride to the groom and groom is introduced to the bride, feelings, emotions of a bride is delivered by the song".is an Uzbek realia representing a symbolical farewell song with her parents of a bride. A team of men (groom and his friends) that is "kuyov navkar" visit the bride's house. Young men are chosen according to their marital status and age, they are mostly married men and usually older than a groom. They are invited to the living-room where is a big table filled with different meals and sweetsto have a small party until the bride's friends prepare her to present to the groom (Mamatova, 2020). Then, the groom and the bride get blessing and permission from the bride's parent and leave the bride's house together with кyёв навкар. The mission of kuyov navkar is to support a groom emotionally on such an exiting day for him. After wedding comes "Wedding Reception" and it is a small party organized to let a bride and a groom be hosts for the first time after they are married. "...an English reception features an elaborate fruitcake made from cherries, ground nuts, and other sweet ingredients. Concerning Uzbek post-wedding rituals, a bride gets acquainted with the groom's relatives and vise versa. A ritual called "Kelin salom" (Bride's greetings) is carried out after the first day of the wedding or in the evening on a wedding day. The bride wears national Uzbek costumes, makes her face invisible with handkerchief and bents to greet each member of a groom's family under the tunes of song "Kelin salom", after that comes another ritual "Bet ochar" (Face opening) when a bride takes away a handkerchief from her face and let other to see her face. After three days or in a week, a bride's parents invite a groom and his family for a party "Challar" (Calling) organized for in-laws.

In addition to tangible traditions such as attire, rituals, and symbolic objects, English wedding culture is also rich in verbal folklore, including proverbs. Proverbs, as fixed linguistic expressions, encapsulate the wisdom, values, and beliefs of a community. In the context of weddings, they serve multiple functions: offering blessings, warning against imprudence, reinforcing social norms, and reflecting cultural attitudes toward marriage. One of the most widely known expressions, "Marriages are made in heaven", recorded in The Oxford Dictionary of Phrase and Fable, uses the passive voice to imply divine agency. The metaphorical locative "in heaven" reflects the Christian concept of divine providence and predestination, portraying marriage as a sacred union sanctioned by God. While often uttered sincerely, it is sometimes employed ironically to comment on troubled marriages (Oxford Reference, 2024). Similarly,

“Happy is the bride that the sun shines on draws upon”- the symbolism of weather, a recurrent theme in British folklore. The inversion of word order places emphasis on the bride’s happiness, while sunshine functions as a metaphor for prosperity and fertility. Its agrarian roots link favorable weather to abundance, a desirable omen for a couple’s future life together (Simpson & Speake, 2015). The cautionary “Marry in haste, repent at leisure” employs antithesis to juxtapose impulsive action with prolonged regret. Its earliest attested form appears in William Congreve’s 1693 play *The Old Batchelour*, though similar sentiments existed earlier in Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew* and in Edmund Tilney’s sixteenth-century writings (BookBrowse, n.d.; Phrase Finder, n.d.). This proverb reflects a pragmatic cultural approach to marriage, stressing deliberation and foresight. Economic readiness is embedded in “Before you marry, have somewhere to tarry”. The internal rhyme (“marry/tarry”) aids memorability, while the imperative structure conveys direct advice. Historically, in English society, marriage was linked to the establishment of a household, and this saying reinforces the value placed on financial and domestic stability (Simpson & Speake, 2015). Moreover, Gender roles and societal expectations are reflected in “Old maid’s day is after wedding day”, a proverb contrasting the joyous celebration of marriage with the perceived loneliness of an unmarried woman’s life. The phrase “old maid,” now considered pejorative, reveals the historical social pressure on women to marry at an early and “appropriate” age (Simpson & Speake, 2015). Finally, “Wedlock is a padlock” offers a more humorous, even cynical, perspective. By equating marriage (“wedlock”) with confinement (“padlock”), the proverb employs rhyme and metaphor to express the idea of restricted personal freedom within marriage. This reflects the English cultural tradition of using wit and irony to critique established social institutions (Proverb Hunter, n.d.). In Uzbek cultural context, wedding-related proverbs reflect values of hospitality, communal joy, and moral behavior. For example, “If you go to a wedding, go full” is interpreted as advice to attend weddings richly and respectfully—wearing proper attire and practicing good manners in communal gatherings (Rakhmatullayeva, 2025). Other sayings such as “Wedding food is a riot food”, “The wedding is God’s treasure”, and “May there be no calamities” express blessings of abundance, peace, and inextricable connection between weddings and auspiciousness (Rakhmatullayeva, 2025). These proverbs are deeply embedded in Uzbek linguistic culture, not only reflecting hospitality and generosity but also serving as instructional moral guidance (Rakhmatullayeva, 2025). Collectively, these proverbs illustrate how linguistic form—through metaphor, inversion, antithesis, and rhyme—intersects with cultural meaning. They encode moral lessons, social hierarchies, and symbolic associations, functioning both as guidance and social commentary. Their persistence in modern usage demonstrates the enduring role of verbal folklore in shaping perceptions of marriage in English culture.

Having explored the symbolic and cultural significance of wedding-related proverbs in English tradition, it is equally important to examine their counterparts in Uzbek culture. The proverb “Atala bo’lsa ham to’y bo’lsin” (“Even if it is just porridge, let there be a wedding”) conveys a core cultural value that the symbolic act of holding a wedding is more important than the material lavishness of the feast. From a linguistic standpoint, the use of the conditional particle “bo’lsa ham” introduces a concessive meaning, underscoring that the quality or quantity of food is secondary to the act of celebration. Culturally, this reflects a collectivist ethos, where social participation and the continuation of traditions are prioritized over economic constraints (Mirzayev et al., 2005).

The proverb “O’g’ilning to’yi — o’yin, qizning to’yi” — qiyin (“A son’s wedding is play, a daughter’s wedding is difficult”) reveals gendered cultural perceptions surrounding weddings. Linguistically, the antithetical structure (o’yin vs. qiyin) creates a clear semantic contrast, highlighting differing emotional and social burdens. Culturally, it reflects patriarchal norms wherein a daughter’s marriage entails significant emotional and logistical challenges for her

family, often linked to the dowry, separation from the natal home, and the safeguarding of family honor.

The expression “To‘y tamizi — to‘ychidan” (“The quality of the wedding comes from the wedding host”) foregrounds the central role of the organizer in determining the success of the event. The genitive construction (to‘yi tamizi) linguistically encodes ownership and responsibility, while culturally it emphasizes hospitality as a marker of prestige and social reputation in Uzbek society. Similarly, “Har kim to‘ygan to‘yini maqtar” (“Everyone praises the wedding where they were satisfied”) underscores the evaluative role of guests in communal gatherings. The verb maqtar (to praise) implies an evaluative speech act, highlighting the reciprocal nature of host–guest relationships in Uzbek culture. Another example is “Paxta elak to‘yda kerak” (“Cotton sieve is needed at the wedding”) is metaphorical, pointing to the necessity of specific traditional tools or preparations for a successful celebration. The cultural resonance lies in its implicit message: every element, no matter how mundane, contributes to the holistic success of a communal event.

“To‘ying bo‘lsa, sharafig oshsin” (“If you have a wedding, may your honor increase”) illustrates the blessing formula embedded in everyday speech. The optative form osh + -sin carries a performative illocutionary force, acting both as a wish and as a cultural reinforcement that weddings should elevate social standing.

“Tirikligida siylamasang, o‘lganingda yig‘lama” (“If you do not honor them in life, do not cry in death”) is tangentially related to ceremonies, reflecting the broader Uzbek cultural emphasis on honoring individuals while alive. Weddings and funerals are both seen as key stages for demonstrating social respect and fulfilling communal obligations. Lastly, “To‘yin bo‘lsa ham, nomus bo‘lsin” (Mirzayev et al., 2005). (“Let there be a wedding, but let there be honor”) foregrounds the paramount value of nomus (honor). The conjunctive ham creates an additive emphasis, indicating that celebration without moral propriety is unacceptable. This reveals a strong moral-ethical dimension to Uzbek wedding culture, where social honor often outweighs material or entertainment aspects. The selected Uzbek proverbs reflect the deep-rooted socio-cultural significance of weddings in Uzbek society, where marriage ceremonies are not merely personal events but vital communal and cultural institutions.

## CONCLUSION

The comparative study of the linguistic representation of marriage customs in Uzbek and English reveals not only differences in vocabulary and expressions, but also deeper cultural worldviews embedded in language. Uzbek marriage-related discourse tends to emphasize collectivism, tradition, and hierarchical family roles—reflected through culturally specific terms such as nikoh, to‘y, and uyga olib ketish, as well as proverbs and idioms that stress duty, honor, and family integration. In contrast, English marriage discourse often centers on individual choice, romantic love, and legal partnership, using language that highlights personal commitment and emotional fulfillment, such as wedding vows, honeymoon, and soulmate. The comparative analysis of Uzbek and English wedding-related proverbs reveals that, despite cultural, historical, and religious differences, both traditions employ proverbial language as a vehicle for encoding collective values, transmitting social norms, and commenting on marital life. Uzbek proverbs, rooted in a collectivist and honor-based framework, foreground communal participation, moral propriety, and the symbolic continuity of traditions over material display. They emphasize the wedding as a communal obligation and a reflection of family prestige, often using binary contrasts, concessive structures, and performative blessings to reinforce these ideals.

In contrast, English wedding proverbs, while also rich in metaphor and symbolism, often reflect individual choice, moral caution, and wit-infused social critique. They draw on Christian theological concepts, agrarian omens, and literary tradition to frame marriage as both a sacred and pragmatic institution. While blessings and auspicious wishes are present, a notable portion convey cautionary or ironic undertones, emphasizing deliberation, economic readiness, and the

potential constraints of wedlock. Together, these proverb traditions illustrate how linguistic form—through metaphor, rhyme, inversion, and contrast—functions as a repository of cultural memory. They also show that marriage, as a social institution, is universally significant yet locally interpreted: in Uzbek culture as a collective and honor-bound celebration, and in English culture as a personal yet socially scrutinized commitment. The persistence of these sayings in contemporary discourse underscores the enduring role of proverbial wisdom in shaping attitudes toward weddings and marriage across cultures.

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