

## A COMPARATIVE LINGUOCULTURAL ANALYSIS OF MARRIAGE-RELATED LEXICAL UNITS IN UZBEK AND GERMAN

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**Annotation.** *This article investigates marriage-related lexical units in Uzbek and German from a comparative linguocultural perspective. Marriage is considered as a culturally marked concept reflected in vocabulary, ritual discourse, symbols and social norms. Special attention is paid to the Uzbek lexeme nikoh and the German lexeme Ehe, their etymology, semantic structure and cultural associations. The analysis shows that Uzbek marriage vocabulary is strongly connected with religious values, family traditions and collective responsibility, whereas German marriage vocabulary more clearly reflects legal regulation, individual choice and modern social change. At the same time, both languages express universal ideas such as loyalty, continuity, family formation and social recognition.*

**Key words:** *marriage, lexical unit, Uzbek language, German language, linguoculturology, comparative analysis, semantics, tradition.*

### INTRODUCTION

Marriage is one of the oldest and most significant social institutions in human history. It is not limited to the private union of two individuals; rather, it represents a complex cultural, legal, religious and moral phenomenon. Every society develops its own understanding of marriage according to its historical experience, worldview, social norms and spiritual values.

Therefore, the vocabulary connected with marriage is an important object of linguistic research because it stores information about national culture, family relations, gender roles, social expectations and traditional rituals.

In linguistics, marriage-related lexical units are studied within several interconnected directions, including sociolinguistics, ethnolinguistics, semantics, pragmatics and linguoculturology. These approaches make it possible to explain how words related to marriage function in speech, what meanings they carry and how they reflect cultural identity. In particular, linguoculturology studies the relationship between language and culture and shows how national values are verbalized through lexical units. From this perspective, marriage terminology is a valuable source for understanding the mentality and cultural memory of a nation.

The Uzbek and German languages provide productive material for comparative analysis because they represent different historical, religious and cultural traditions. In Uzbek, the word nikoh is an Arabic borrowing that entered the language through Islamic culture and is closely associated with religious legitimacy, family responsibility and social recognition. In German, the concept of marriage is mainly expressed by the word Ehe, which is historically connected with the idea of continuity and a stable union.

Other German terms such as Hochzeit, Heirat, Trauung and Ehevertrag describe different ritual, social and legal aspects of marriage.

The relevance of the topic is determined by the need to study marriage vocabulary as a reflection of both universal and nationally specific values. Although marriage exists in almost all societies, its linguistic representation is not identical. In Uzbek culture, marriage is often understood as a socially expected stage of life and is accompanied by collective rituals and traditional obligations. In German culture, marriage is also socially important, but it is more strongly connected with individual decision-making, legal rights and personal autonomy. These differences become visible through lexical meanings, phraseological expressions and cultural symbols.

The aim of this article is to analyze marriage-related lexical units in Uzbek and German and to identify their common and distinctive linguocultural features. The objectives of the study are to describe the theoretical basis for studying marriage vocabulary, to explain the semantic and etymological features of key lexemes, to compare their cultural associations and to interpret the results from a linguocultural point of view.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This research is based on a qualitative design and follows the IMRAD structure. The material of the study consists of Uzbek and German lexical units connected with marriage, family formation, wedding rituals and legal or religious recognition of marital relations. The main Uzbek units include *nikoh*, *to‘y*, *kelin*, *kuyov*, *nikoh guvoynomasi*, *oq libos* and other expressions connected with wedding customs. The German material includes *Ehe*, *Hochzeit*, *Heirat*, *Trauung*, *Ehevertrag*, *weißes Kleid* and related terms.

Three main methods were used in the research. First, semantic analysis was applied to determine the basic and additional meanings of marriage-related lexemes. This method helped to show how the words denote legal union, religious ceremony, family responsibility, loyalty and continuity. Secondly, comparative analysis was used to identify similarities and differences between Uzbek and German lexical units. Through comparison, it became possible to see which meanings are universal and which meanings are culturally specific. Thirdly, the linguocultural method was used to interpret lexical units as verbal signs of cultural values, traditions and social norms.

Etymological information was also considered where it was relevant. The Uzbek word *nikoh* is connected with Arabic *nikāḥ*, which originally refers to marriage or the act of entering into marriage. Its use in Uzbek demonstrates the influence of Islamic legal and religious terminology. The German word *Ehe* goes back to older Germanic forms and is associated with stability, duration and social regulation. These etymological features show that the inner form of a word can preserve important cultural ideas.

The theoretical framework of the article relies on sociolinguistic, ethnolinguistic and linguocultural views. Sociolinguistics helps to explain the social function of marriage vocabulary, ethnolinguistics focuses on the connection between language and national customs, and linguoculturology reveals the cultural meanings hidden behind lexical units. In addition, the ideas of Roman Jakobson about the poetic function of language and Claude Lévi-Strauss about marriage as part of social structure are used to explain symbolic and metaphorical aspects of marriage vocabulary.

### **RESULTS**

The analysis shows that Uzbek and German marriage vocabulary share several universal semantic components. In both languages, marriage is associated with family creation, loyalty, continuity, social responsibility and public recognition.

The Uzbek word *nikoh* and the German word *Ehe* both denote an officially accepted union between partners. They also carry positive cultural associations connected with stability, respect and responsibility. This proves that the concept of marriage has a common human basis, even though it is expressed differently in particular cultures.

At the same time, the study revealed important differences. In Uzbek, the lexeme *nikoh* has a strong religious and traditional coloring. It is often connected with Islamic norms, moral responsibility and family honor. The phrase *nikoh o'qitish* refers to the religious ceremony of marriage and shows that spiritual approval is an essential element of marital union in Uzbek culture. In everyday speech, *nikoh* can also imply social legitimacy, because a relationship becomes fully accepted by the community after the marriage ceremony and wedding rituals.

German marriage vocabulary, by contrast, more clearly distinguishes between legal, social and ritual aspects. The word *Ehe* usually denotes the legal and social institution of marriage. *Hochzeit* refers to the wedding celebration, *Heirat* means the act of getting married, and *Trauung* indicates the marriage ceremony, which may be civil or religious depending on the context. The term *Ehevertrag*, meaning marriage contract, reflects the legal and economic dimension of marital relations. This lexical differentiation demonstrates the importance of formal legal regulation in German society.

The symbolic vocabulary of marriage also reveals cultural similarities and differences. In Uzbek culture, expressions connected with *oq libos*, *kelin salom*, *sovchilik* and *to'y* represent purity, respect, family agreement and collective celebration. These units are not only linguistic signs but also cultural markers. They express the idea that marriage is a family and community event. In German culture, *weißes Kleid*, *Ring*, *Standesamt* and *Hochzeitstag* are important lexical and symbolic units. They show that marriage is connected with personal choice, legal confirmation, romantic symbolism and individual celebration.

The results also demonstrate that metaphor and symbolism play an important role in both languages.

Marriage is often conceptualized as a road, bond, circle or lifelong journey. The ring symbolizes endless connection and loyalty because of its circular form. The white dress symbolizes purity, a new beginning and ceremonial beauty. Such symbols support Roman Jakobson's idea that language has a poetic function: words do not only transmit information, but also create emotional and aesthetic meanings.

Marriage vocabulary therefore functions both as a practical means of communication and as a symbolic system.

The comparison further shows that Uzbek marriage vocabulary is more strongly connected with collective social expectations, while German vocabulary is more associated with individual rights and institutional procedures. In Uzbek, wedding-related words often include the participation of parents, relatives and the local community. In German, lexical units more often point to the couple's personal decision, the civil registration process and legal consequences. However, both languages show that marriage remains a culturally significant concept.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of the study confirm that marriage vocabulary cannot be fully understood without considering cultural context. A purely dictionary-based explanation of words such as *nikoh* and *Ehe* would be insufficient because these lexemes include historical, religious, legal and emotional meanings. In Uzbek, *nikoh* is not only a term for marriage; it is also a sign of religious approval, family honor and social acceptance.

In German, Ehe is not only a union between two people; it is also a legal status that provides rights, duties and institutional protection.

From a linguocultural perspective, the Uzbek system of marriage vocabulary reflects the importance of tradition and collective life. Words connected with wedding rituals show that marriage is usually understood as a union of families, not only as a union of individuals. The terms *kelin*, *kuyov*, *sovchilik* and *to'y* are surrounded by cultural expectations and ceremonial actions. They reflect respect for elders, public celebration and continuity of family values. This explains why Uzbek marriage vocabulary is rich in ritual expressions and culturally loaded terms.

The German lexical system, however, demonstrates a more differentiated institutional structure. The existence of several terms such as *Ehe*, *Heirat*, *Hochzeit*, *Trauung* and *Ehevertrag* shows that the German language separates the legal state, the action of marrying, the ceremony and the celebration. This distinction corresponds to the modern legal and social organization of marriage in German-speaking societies. It also reflects the tendency to interpret marriage as a personal decision protected and regulated by law.

The theoretical views of Claude Lévi-Strauss help to explain marriage as part of social organization.

In many cultures, marriage establishes relations not only between individuals but also between families and social groups. This idea is especially visible in Uzbek wedding customs, where relatives, neighbors and the broader community participate actively. In German culture, social participation also exists, but the official and legal aspect is more visible in the vocabulary.

Therefore, the contrast between the two languages can be interpreted as a contrast between ritual-collective and legal-individual emphasis.

Roman Jakobson's theory of the poetic function of language is also useful for understanding marriage-related expressions. Wedding discourse often uses emotionally rich and symbolic language.

Phrases connected with a new life, a common road, loyalty, blessing and happiness create an elevated style.

In both Uzbek and German, marriage is frequently represented through metaphors of unity and continuity. These metaphors make the concept more expressive and help society transmit moral values from one generation to another.

It should also be noted that modern social changes influence marriage vocabulary. In Germany, discussions about *Ehe für alle*, or marriage for all, have expanded the semantic and political meaning of *Ehe*. This phrase shows how language participates in debates about equality, gender and legal rights. In Uzbek society, modernization also affects wedding discourse, but traditional and religious expressions still remain very strong. Thus, marriage vocabulary is dynamic: it preserves old cultural meanings while adapting to new social realities.

The comparison of Uzbek and German lexical units proves that universal human concepts are always realized through national linguistic forms. Both cultures value loyalty, family and responsibility, but they verbalize these values differently. The Uzbek language emphasizes religious legitimacy, family participation and ceremonial tradition. The German language emphasizes legal status, individual choice and institutional clarity. These differences do not mean opposition; rather, they demonstrate the richness of linguistic and cultural diversity.

## CONCLUSION

The study of marriage-related lexical units in Uzbek and German shows that language is closely connected with culture, history and social life. Marriage vocabulary reflects not only the meaning of a legal or religious union, but also the values that a society attaches to family, loyalty, responsibility and social recognition. The Uzbek lexeme *nikoh* and the German lexeme *Ehe* have similar general meanings, yet they differ in their cultural associations and pragmatic use.

In Uzbek, marriage vocabulary is strongly linked with Islamic tradition, family honor, collective participation and ceremonial customs. In German, marriage vocabulary more clearly reflects legal regulation, personal autonomy and institutional differentiation. The comparison of these two languages demonstrates that marriage is a universal institution, but its linguistic representation depends on the cultural and social experience of each people.

The article also shows that symbolic and metaphorical units are important in the expression of marriage. Words and expressions related to rings, white dresses, wedding ceremonies and family rituals carry emotional and aesthetic meanings. They help speakers understand marriage as a bond, a new beginning and a lifelong path. For this reason, the analysis of marriage vocabulary is important not only for lexicology but also for linguoculturology, translation studies and intercultural communication.

Further research may focus on phraseological units, proverbs, wedding songs and modern media discourse connected with marriage in Uzbek and German. Such studies would provide a deeper understanding of how traditional and modern values coexist in language and how social changes influence the semantic development of marriage-related vocabulary.

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