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Linguacultural Analysis of Lexical Units of Wedding Traditions and Funeral Rites in English And Karakalpak Languages

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Abstract: This article presents a linguacultural analysis of lexical units related to wedding traditions and funeral rites in English and Karakalpak languages. In particular, it explores how ritual vocabulary reflects cultural values, social relations, and collective worldview. On the one hand, English lexical units demonstrate a tendency toward standardization, institutionalization, and relative semantic neutrality. On the other hand, Karakalpak ritual vocabulary preserves strong connections with folklore, kinship systems, and emotional expression. Furthermore, the study shows that such lexical units' function not only as nominative elements but also as carriers of symbolic meaning and cultural identity. Therefore, the findings confirm that ritual lexicon is both universal in function and culture-specific in meaning.

Keywords: linguoculturology, ritual lexicon, wedding traditions, funeral rites, cultural semantics, folklore, kinship relations, symbolic meaning.

Introduction: Language is not only a means of communication; rather, it serves as a repository of cultural memory, social norms, and collective experience. In this respect, lexical units connected with rituals, especially wedding traditions and funeral rites, occupy a particularly important place in the linguistic system of any people. These lexical items reflect not only the external structure of rituals but also the internal worldview, emotional attitudes, and value systems of a given culture. From a theoretical perspective, many scholars have emphasized the close relationship between language and culture. For instance, Anna Wierzbicka argues that words are "cultural key concepts" through which societies encode their most fundamental values and beliefs [9]. In other words, lexical units cannot be fully understood without reference to the cultural context in which they function. Similarly, Clifford Geertz, within the framework of interpretive anthropology, views culture as a system of meanings expressed through symbols, including language [1]. Therefore, ritual vocabulary can be interpreted as a symbolic system reflecting collective consciousness. Furthermore, Victor Turner and others highlight that rituals mark transitional stages in human life and are accompanied by specific linguistic expressions that reinforce social cohesion [7]. Consequently, lexical units related to weddings and funerals are not merely descriptive; rather, they function as performative elements within ritual action. In addition, Dell Hymes, representing ethnography of communication, emphasizes that speech forms must be analyzed within their social context, which is particularly relevant for ritual discourse such as wedding songs and funeral laments [2]. Moreover, Russian linguistic traditions also provide important insights into the study of culturally marked vocabulary. For example, V. V. Vinogradov emphasizes that lexical units are embedded within a broader cultural and stylistic system [8]. At the same time, E. S. Kubryakova highlights the cognitive nature of lexical meaning, arguing that words represent structured knowledge about the world [4]. Therefore, ritual lexicon can be viewed as a cognitive-cultural model reflecting socially significant experiences. Against this theoretical background, it becomes clear that wedding and funeral vocabulary belongs to one of the most culturally dense

layers of language. On the one hand, English ritual lexicon has developed under the influence of institutional religion, legal systems, and modernization, which has led to a certain degree of standardization. On the other hand, the Karakalpak language preserves a rich system of ritual vocabulary closely connected with folklore and traditional practices. As noted by Qazaqbaev, wedding and family-related customs such as úyleniw, quda túsiw, and qız uzatıw reflect deep-rooted social relations and cultural values that have been transmitted across generations [5]. Thus, the present study is grounded in linguocultural, anthropological, and cognitive approaches, and it aims to analyze how lexical units of wedding traditions and funeral rites function as carriers of cultural meaning in English and Karakalpak languages.

First of all, it should be emphasized that wedding and funeral vocabulary belongs to the most culturally marked layer of the lexicon. This is because such words are directly associated with key stages of human life: birth, marriage, and death. Consequently, their meanings extend far beyond simple nomination and include symbolic, emotional, and social dimensions. On the one hand, the English language demonstrates a tendency toward standardization and institutionalization in ritual vocabulary. Words such as wedding, bride, groom, vows, ceremony, and funeral are widely used in both formal and informal contexts. Moreover, many of these lexical units have become semantically neutral due to modernization and globalization. For example, the word wedding primarily denotes the event itself, while expressions like vows and reception emphasize the ceremonial and social aspects of marriage. On the other hand, the Karakalpak language preserves a much more culturally embedded and socially complex system of ritual vocabulary. In particular, the material shows that marriage is conceptualized not as a single event but as a multi-stage social process involving both families and the wider community. For instance, lexical units such as úyleniw, quda túsiw, qız uzatıw, besik quda, aqlay quda, qalıń mal, and neke qıyıw represent different stages and aspects of marriage traditions. Furthermore, these lexical units reveal that marriage in Karakalpak culture is deeply connected with kinship relations, social obligations, and traditional norms. For example, quda túsiw refers to the establishment of a relationship between two families, while qız uzatıw denotes the emotionally significant moment of sending the bride from her parental home. Thus, these terms encode not only actions but also cultural meanings such as respect, honor, and social continuity. In order to better illustrate the differences between English and Karakalpak wedding vocabulary, the comparative features can be summarized in the following table.

Table 1. Linguocultural Comparison of Wedding Lexical Units

Category	English	Karakalpak	Linguocultural Meaning
Core concept	Wedding	Úyleniw	Event vs social process
Pre-marital stage	Engagement	quda túsiw	Individual vs family alliance
Bride transition	Bride	qız uzatıw	Neutral vs emotional-cultural
Ritual validation	Vows	neke qıyıw	Legal vs religious-social
Economic element	dowry (limited)	qalıń mal	Weak vs culturally significant
Ritual discourse	Speeches	háwjar, sıńsıw	Formal vs folkloric

As can be seen from the table, English wedding vocabulary is largely centered on the ceremony itself, whereas Karakalpak lexical units reflect a broader social and cultural framework. In addition, Karakalpak ritual vocabulary includes specific terms that have no direct equivalents in English, which indicates a higher degree of cultural specificity.

Another important aspect of Karakalpak wedding lexicon is the presence of ritual songs such as háwjar, yar-yar, and sıńsıw. These lexical units function not only as names of genres but also as carriers of emotional and social meaning. In particular, the examples provided in the material demonstrate that these songs often express the inner feelings of the bride, including sorrow, anxiety, and even resistance to forced marriage. For instance, expressions describing emotional suffering and social pressure clearly show that ritual vocabulary can serve as a means of cultural expression and critique. Thus, while English wedding vocabulary tends to emphasize celebration and

individual choice, Karakalpak lexical units reveal a more complex interplay of joy, obligation, and emotional tension. At the same time, funeral-related vocabulary also demonstrates significant linguocultural differences. In English, lexical units such as funeral, burial, mourning, condolence, and cemetery are widely standardized and often used in formal contexts. Moreover, English frequently employs euphemisms such as pass away or departed, which soften the direct reference to death. In contrast, Karakalpak funeral lexicon is closely connected with religious practices and communal traditions. Words such as janaza, aza, and joqlaw reflect not only the process of burial but also the collective experience of mourning and remembrance. In particular, joqlaw represents a traditional lament, which highlights the emotional and performative nature of mourning in Karakalpak culture. These differences can be clearly observed in the following comparative table.

Table 2. Linguocultural Comparison of Funeral Lexical Units

Category	English	Karakalpak	Linguocultural Meaning
Core term	Funeral	Janaza	Institutional vs religious
Mourning	mourning	Aza	Individual vs collective
Expression	condolence	communal lament	Formal vs participatory
Discourse form	Obituary	Joqlaw	Written vs oral
Style	euphemistic	Expressive	Indirect vs emotional

As the table shows, English funeral vocabulary is more formalized and emotionally restrained, whereas Karakalpak lexical units emphasize collective participation and emotional expression. Therefore, the linguistic representation of death reflects broader cultural differences in attitudes toward grief and social interaction.

Furthermore, it should be noted that both languages demonstrate universal features in ritual vocabulary, since all cultures must address similar life events. However, the way these events are conceptualized and expressed linguistically varies significantly. English tends toward abstraction and neutrality, while Karakalpak preserves concrete imagery, emotional intensity, and strong cultural symbolism.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the analysis of lexical units related to wedding traditions and funeral rites in English and Karakalpak languages shows that language serves as a mirror of cultural identity. On the one hand, English ritual vocabulary reflects modernization, institutionalization, and individualism. On the other hand, Karakalpak lexical units preserve traditional values, collective experience, and emotional richness. Moreover, the inclusion of terms such as quda túsiw, qız uzatıw, and háwjar demonstrates that ritual vocabulary is not merely descriptive but also deeply symbolic and culturally significant. Therefore, it can be concluded that linguocultural analysis of ritual lexicon provides valuable insights into the worldview, social structure, and cultural heritage of different peoples. Future research may further explore other domains of ritual vocabulary or extend the comparison to additional languages.

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