

## RITUAL WORDS IN THE TATAR LINGUISTIC WORLD-IMAGE

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### ABSTRACT

This article deals with the study of the thematic characteristics of the lexicon of the Tatar language connected with the rite of naming. One should focus particular attention on studying dialectal vocabulary associated with this phenomenon. The disclosure of the linguocultural potential of the lexico-thematic group of the vocabulary of the Tatar national language is heavily emphasized in this study. The lexical units associated with the ritual of naming are of profound content, comprising national and religious world views. The presence of a synonymous row of basic concepts is related to the antiquity and popularity of the ritual in various ethnic groups of the Tatars. Notwithstanding the fact that the Tatar people went through various historical events, they managed to preserve the value of the phenomenon up to date. When collecting and systematizing materials, the method of continuous sampling was applied, the lexical-semantic method was used to define thematic groups. The descriptive method, the methods of linguoculturological analysis were used to distinguish cognitive features of the functioning of linguistic units. In order to disclose the content of the ritual of naming on the basis of linguistic material, the matters of the explanatory, dialectological dictionaries were selected and analyzed.

**Keywords:** the Tatar language, linguistic world-image, ritual vocabulary, naming

### INTRODUCTION

The vocabulary of any language contains many units, when analyzing them, one can reveal the linguocultural potential of the language, the specificity of the national mentality, explain historical facts, etc. [1]. In this study, the authors analyze one of the thematic groups of the ritual vocabulary of the Tatar language - the vocabulary related to the ritual of naming the Tatars. As time goes by, the society's attitude to a particular rite has been changing, which is reflected in the activity of the use and diversity of ritual words. During the research it was revealed that for many centuries the Tatars have used the vocabulary of naming very actively. The occasion of it was the strong influence of Islamic ideology, the presence of a large number of children in each family, the role and mastery of the midwife in the process of delivering a child, the celebration of the birth of a child, etc. Urbanization and globalization, which has been intensified since the mid-twentieth century, led to the gradual loss of national values in the field of the ritual of naming. Only the return to religious canons in recent decades has ensured an increase in interest in the ritual. Proceeding from this, the purpose of this study is to determine the thematic classification of vocabulary connected with the rite of naming the Tatar people.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

The material for analyzing was lexical units that have some relation to the birth and naming of the child. The words were selected by means of a continuous sample from the Great Dialectological Dictionary of the Tatar Language, the Explanatory Dictionary of the Tatar Language.

The methodological basis of the research consists of general scientific and concrete linguistic methods. When collecting and systematizing materials, the method of continuous sampling was used, the thematic groups were determined with the help of the lexical-semantic method. The descriptive method, the methods of linguoculturological, component and semantic analyses were used to highlight the cognitive features of the functioning of language units. During the work, the methods such as the observation of linguistic material, the analysis and synthesis, the classification were used. From the standpoint of the theory of scientific research, the chosen methods are the best.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the course of research it turned out that for many centuries the vocabulary of naming had been used among the Tatars very actively. The reason for this was the observance of the canons of Islam, according to which the birth of a child was closely connected with *nikkah* - a lawful matrimony. After the birth of a child, the mullah (clergyman) was to conduct the ceremony of naming and enter the newborn to the special record book [2]. The fact there was a large number of children in each family ensured the vocabulary of the thematic group of naming being extensive. The birth of a child in marriage was always considered to be a great joy, and childlessness was the greatest grief and punishment from on high. An important role was given to *кендекэби* (midwife). The people knew that the timely and correct aid of the midwife could save the lives of the mother and the child. In addition, the ritual of naming is closely related to the rituals of food that were generously presented to the house where the baby was born. There were dishes that were prepared precisely on the occasion of the child birth [3].

The process of urbanization and globalization since the mid-twentieth century led to a gradual loss of national values in the rite of naming. Today, a medical institution is increasingly responsible for the health of the child, the parents have a chance to call an ambulance if necessary, to resort to highly qualified specialists. Modern society is Western-centric, oriented towards individualism, which contradicts the traditional, by the highest standards collective way of life of the Tatars.

It should be noted that the tendency of the passive using of the vocabulary of naming began to be observed even in the 1960s-1970s of the last century. The first of the main reasons was the struggle against religion, even in rural areas, where traditional forms of everyday life are more stable, the religious rite of naming by the name - *исем кушу* - has become non-extensive [4]. Naturally, in urban areas, the rituals connected with the newborn are even less general. The second reason was the rapid urbanization, when young people, having scarcely fledged and graduated from school, precipitated either to giant construction projects, or to enter institutes. Thus, girls and boys left villages in large numbers, and having constituted their own families in the conditions of the urban society, forgot rituals and customs very quickly.

After having analyzed the selected ritual vocabulary connected with the ceremony of giving names to the Tatars, we can distinguish the following lexical-thematic groups: the vocabulary that designates the ritual actions; the vocabulary that designates the participants in the ceremony; the vocabulary denoting the ritual objects.

1. The vocabulary denoting ritual actions is presented by the words *балатуу* (childbirth) and its dialectal variants *балаасрай* (to raise a child), *исем сайлау* (the choice of name), *исем кушу* (naming), *исем алыштыру* (name exchange), *бэби ашы* (the feast in honour of birth of a child), *бэби тэтие юу* (the ablution of baby's feet). The dialects contained the customs, aimed at maintaining the health of the newborn and protecting from the effects of "dark forces", as evidenced by the very first ritual *авызландыру* (smearing the mouth of the newborn with honey or butter). In the Tatar language there is the expression *бэбэй майы* (*baby oil*), according to which guests are invited and treated with oil in honour of the newborn. There were other things on the table, but oil was considered to be essential. Such ritual had a sacral significance and ascended to paganism. It is believed that Umai and Aza are struggling near the newborn, Umai tries to save the child, and Aza - to kill it. To give strength to Umai, the ritual dishes with oil were prepared [5]. *Бэби саклау* (protection of the newborn) is an important ritual to be meant to save the child from an evil spirit. For this ritual, after *бэбэй майы* (baby oil), the girls were invited in the evening, they played, exhilarated, it was believed that, in so doing, evil spirits could not approach the child. Such a religious attention to the child is due to the fact that the first 40 days were considered especially dangerous period for the child's life. Within these days, they tried not to leave it alone without looking after, in case of extremity, leaving the house, they put an iron object (often a knife) as an amulet next to the child.

*Исем сайлау* (*the choice of a name*) can occur long before the birth of a child, but it is after the birth that the parents, after all things considered, must arrive at a common opinion and be certain in the name choice.

The word *исем кушу* (namegiving) has a number of synonyms. For example, depending on the context, it can be substituted by the words that are close in their meaning: *исем биру* / *исемләү* / *атау* / *ат биру* / *ат кушу* / *исем кую* / *ат кою* / *ат атау* / *ат кыцкырту* (give a name). The child is carried out on a pillow to the mullah, who puts the child's feet in the direction of the Kaaba and asks the parents about the chosen name. Then he reads a prayer, pronounces the child's name three times in a whisper. The ritual of giving a name to the child is being held for a week or on the seventh day. Depending on the terrain, the Tatars considered that the child should be given a name within the first three, seven or forty days from its birth, because the child who has received the name is less uneasy, it is saved by angels, and if the child is without a name for a long time, evil spirits can take the child away. Usually the mullah asks the elders what name they want to give to the child if they lived together with the young. If the young and the elders found it difficult to choose a name, then the mullah offered the most characteristic name for the child. The Tatars, as before, and now, has been trying not to give the names of deceased relatives to the child.

*Исем алыштыру* (the name exchange) can take place in the event that the name given originally "has not fit", that is, the child often cries, gets sick. Upon attainment of majority, a person can change his or her name reasoning from personal considerations.

*Бәби ашы* (literally *food for the child*) is a treat presented to the parents of the newborn by the guests invited to the feast in honour of the birth of the child. In the dialects, there is *сөөнчә чәе* (a tea-party of joy) - a modest feast, held so far right after discharge from the hospital, *исем ашы* (entertaining arranged in honour of the child's name in the Menselin dialect), *кечтинә* (in the dialect of Kazanian Kryashens, meal cooked in honour of a newborn baby). In the Astrakhan dialect, a feast in honour of giving the name to the child is called *аткушар туй*. They serve up *бәби мае* (baby oil). In some dialects, the expression *бәбәй үстөрү* (greeting the newborn with presents and treats) is used. Where there is a possibility, they stoke up the bath - *бәби мунчасы* (baby bath). Sometimes a specially invited experienced woman helps a woman in childbirth to bathe it in the bath, which is still called *кендек әбие* (midwife). *Бәби тәниә ю* also means a feast, but it is accompanied with taking strong drinks. This ritual contradicts the canons of the religion of Islam, but it is very common among the people.

2. The vocabulary designating the participants of the ritual includes the words *кендек әби* / *кентек инә* / *кентекчә* / *авыл әбие* / *кендекәй* / *түти әби* / *инәкә әби* / *кендек әни* / *бала түрәтүчә әби* / *бәбәй әбисе* (midwife), *мулла* (the representative of the clergy), *ата* / *атай* (father), *ана* / *нәнә* / *анай* (mother), *ата бала* (in the Tumen region, a boy who was given a name of his father). *Кендекәби* (midwife) - a very experienced woman could take responsibility for taking birth at home. In addition to childbirth, she stayed for several days with a woman who had recently confined, helping her in baby-minding and psychological recovering, was the most welcome guest in the process of the ritual of naming.

Mullah (the representative of the clergy) ritualized the name giving, when necessary, said the prayers. A certain part of the Tatars are baptized, in the rituals of the name giving to the baptized Tatars *изге атакай* (holy father), *исем анасы* / *оло инә* (godmother), *һәм исем атасы* (godfather) participate.

3. The vocabulary for ritual objects is represented by lexical units *бәби мае* (baby oil), *тура* / *корт* (curd sweetened product for tea), *бәбәй ашы* (a pie, that the relatives bring), *бәлеш* (a high pie with different meat or sweet fillings), *кәлчә* (flat cakes), *кыстыбый* (a dish from unleavened dough with potato or millet filling), *коймак* (pancakes), *сөтлә аш* (milk soup), *йомырка* (eggs), *бәби боткасы* (pap), *әлбә* (sweet farinaceous foods from melted butter, flour and sugar) and other names of foods, traditionally prepared especially on occasion of childbirth. Such meals were brought to the home by the relatives, friends and neighbours. It was believed that the more women came with refreshments, a suckling mother had much milk. This thematic group also contains the lexical units such as *мендәр* (pillow), *көмеш тәңкә* (silver coin), *кашык* (spoon), *морҗа* (flue), *ат бишек* (a cradle, used when giving the name to a child). The lexeme *морҗа* (chimney) has a sacral meaning. In the ritual of renaming the flue had an important role: for example, the Siberian Tatars put a sick or a child with birthmarks on the stove and shouted his new name into the chimney [6].

From the etymological viewpoint, the analyzed vocabulary is divided into primordial and borrowed. The data of our study show that most units of ritual vocabulary are of Turkic origin. For example, *am* (name), *ama* (father), *ана* (mother, female), *аш* (soup, food; field of grain, bread, barley), *кендек әбие* (*midwife*), etc. The Tatars have also the borrowed words related to the name giving. As is well known, language is a dynamic, moving system, which is characterized not only by internal interrelations, but also by external ones, that connect it with other similar systems. The processes of exerting influence of languages on each other take place in the most diverse forms, and the social, linguistic and ethnic conditions of their course can be rather diverse. There is a small group of lexical units that is traced back to the Russian language: *кечтинә* (*christenings*), etc. The minimal amount of borrowed vocabulary proves the ritual of naming the Tatars to be ancient.

### SUMMARY

It should be noted that the ritual of naming is the centuries-old tradition of the Tatar people. Extensive lexical material reveals the subtle points and complexity of the process of naming the child. A careful attitude and honours to the child and its mother, a feast with abundance of food, the invitation of relatives and immediate relatives to a family holiday are indicative of the importance of this phenomenon in the daily life of the people. Educational potential, observance of age-old traditions and active use of lexical units with the content of national outlook enable to analyze the national image of the world of the Tatars as a unique phenomenon that has resulted from the fusion of the sacral and day-to-day.

In its essence, the lexical-thematic classification of the words related to the ceremony of name giving is not complex, it includes three groups with a certain number of lexemes in each of them. The analysis of dialectal variants, along with literary ones, allows one to evaluate dialect language as a reliable, objective material for history-oriented research in linguistics (research in the field of historical lexicology, historical dialectology) and as a source of the national linguistic world image. Dialects reflect the centuries-old history, the culture of the people [7-8]. Unfortunately, at present, this wealth of the national language has been lost. The reason for this is globalization, influence of the literary language, universal education, dissemination of the media. Proceeding from this, it becomes necessary to study the speech continuum of the province.

### CONCLUSION

The study of the vocabulary that denotes naming based on the material of the Tatar national language makes it possible to clarify its diversity. The special richness of the ritual vocabulary in the province indicate the people's religious attention to the ritual of naming, considering it to be a sacral mystery that determines the man's future and his personal qualities.

It can be seen from the materials that dialectal variants of ritual words are represented by a relatively large number of lexemes. In the course of the analysis, the linguocultural potential of the Tatar lexicon of naming was revealed. The presence of a rich synonymous row also proves the importance of the concepts in the world outlook of the people. The Turkic language origin of the most lexemes emphasizes the ancientness of the concepts and the fact that they constitute a part of the basic vocabulary. The presence of a certain number of borrowings and terminology, formed by means of calquing or transliteration from the Russian language, is evidence of intercultural contacts of the Tatars.

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