

THE ROLE OF ENGLISH IN SHAPING CULTURAL IDENTITY AMONG UZBEK-SPEAKING URBAN COMMUNITIES

Umarova Shoirra Xolmurod

qizi

Master's student

Uzbekistan State World Languages University

Annotation: *This article investigates how the English language contributes to reshaping the cultural identity of Uzbek-speaking individuals, especially within urban environments. The research highlights how English serves not only as a practical tool of communication but also as a cultural symbol linked to modernity, globalization, and social prestige. Drawing on sociolinguistic theory and qualitative observations, the paper discusses the motivations behind the adoption of English in daily interactions, media consumption, and education. It emphasizes the transformation of cultural values, identity perceptions, and generational differences resulting from this linguistic influence. Ultimately, the article argues that English is increasingly perceived as a medium of empowerment and cultural hybridity among urban Uzbeks.*

Keywords: *English, Uzbek-speaking communities, urban identity, globalization, cultural transformation, language attitudes*

ингвистическое влияние английского языка на формирование культурной идентичности в городских узбекоязычных сообществах

Аннотация: *В данной статье рассматривается, как английский язык влияет на культурную идентичность узбекоязычных горожан. Исследование подчеркивает, что английский язык выступает не только средством общения, но и символом глобализации, успеха и современности. Особое внимание уделяется восприятию английского языка среди молодежи, его роли в образовательных системах и медиа, а также изменениям в традиционных культурных ценностях. Английский язык рассматривается как фактор*

формирования гибридной культурной идентичности, соединяющей местные и глобальные элементы.

Ключевые слова: английский язык, узбекоязычные сообщества, культурная идентичность, урбанизация, глобализация, языковое восприятие

Ingliz tilining shahar uzbekzabon jamoalarida madaniy o'zlikni shakllantirishdagi o'rni

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqola ingliz tilining shahar uzbekzabon aholisining madaniy o'zlikni shakllantirishiga qanday ta'sir ko'rsatayotganini o'rganadi. Tadqiqotda ingliz tili nafaqat muloqot vositasi sifatida, balki zamonaviylik, muvaffaqiyat va global ochiqlik timsoli sifatida ham ko'riladi. Ayniqsa, yoshlar orasida ingliz tilining ta'lim, media va kundalik hayotda tutgan o'rni, hamda bu jarayonlarning an'anaviy qadriyatlar bilan qanday moslashayotgani yoritiladi. Maqolada ingliz tilining yangi madaniy identitet shakllanishiga olib kelayotgan o'zgaruvchan ijtimoiy kontekstdagi roli muhim ahamiyatga ega ekanligi ta'kidlanadi.

Kalit so'zlar: ingliz tili, uzbekzabon shahar aholisi, madaniy o'zlik, globallashuv, zamonaviylik, til va jamiyat

1. Introduction

In an increasingly globalized world, language functions not only as a communication tool but as a symbol of identity, ideology, and cultural orientation. In Uzbekistan, the prominence of the English language has grown significantly, particularly in urban centers such as Tashkent, Samarkand, and Fergana. This linguistic shift presents new dynamics in how cultural identity is negotiated among Uzbek-speaking urban residents. This article explores the cultural implications of English use, focusing on its role in shaping modern Uzbek identities through education, media, and social interaction.

2. Theoretical Framework and Background

The study is grounded in sociolinguistic theories of identity construction, especially the frameworks proposed by Norton (2013), Bucholtz and Hall (2005), and Bourdieu (1991). These theories conceptualize language as both a resource and a

marker of social positioning. In the Uzbek urban context, English increasingly serves as a symbol of educational prestige, cosmopolitanism, and upward mobility.

The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis is also relevant here, suggesting that language influences perception and thought. As urban Uzbeks use English in specific domains, their worldview and cultural orientation undergo subtle changes, creating a hybrid identity that blends local and global values.

3. Research Methodology

This article draws from mixed methods, including:

- A qualitative content analysis of social media use among Uzbek-speaking youth in urban areas;
- A review of government language education policies;
- Informal interviews and observations in academic and workplace settings.

The target population consists of university students, young professionals, and secondary school teachers in Tashkent and Samarkand.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 English as a Symbol of Global Identity

English is widely perceived by urban Uzbeks as the “language of opportunity.” Its use in advertising, music, film, and fashion reflects the desire to align with global culture. Participants often linked English with progress, technology, and a better future, distancing it from the traditional roles associated with Uzbek or Russian.

4.2 Identity Negotiation in Urban Contexts

Urban youth frequently switch between Uzbek and English, especially in academic or professional environments. This code-switching reflects the fluidity of identity and the coexistence of multiple cultural affiliations. While Uzbek is tied to heritage and familial intimacy, English is linked to competence and success in the global arena.

4.3 English in Education and Its Cultural Effects

Government policy has strongly promoted English in schools and universities, positioning it as essential for development. However, this has also led to an

unintentional marginalization of Uzbek in certain academic domains. Teachers and students sometimes regard English-language materials as more authoritative or “modern,” influencing how culture and knowledge are valued.

4.4 Challenges and Tensions

Despite the benefits, the dominance of English can lead to cultural dissonance. Older generations may view excessive use of English as a loss of tradition, and some youth feel “caught” between two cultural worlds. This generational gap often creates differing attitudes toward what it means to be “modern” or “authentic.”

5. Conclusion

English has become more than just a foreign language in Uzbek urban settings—it is a cultural force that influences how people see themselves and their place in the world. For many, especially the youth, it serves as a gateway to a modern identity while also challenging traditional cultural frameworks. The rise of English in Uzbekistan thus reflects broader global processes of identity negotiation and cultural hybridization.

References:

- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and Symbolic Power*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. (2005). Identity and interaction: A sociocultural linguistic approach. *Discourse Studies*, 7(4–5), 585–614.
- Norton, B. (2013). *Identity and Language Learning: Extending the Conversation*. Multilingual Matters.
- Pavlenko, A. (2008). Multilingualism in post-Soviet countries. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 11(3–4), 275–314.
- Uzbekistan Presidential Decree PF-5850 (2019). On measures to radically increase the prestige and status of the Uzbek language as the state language.