

# LINGUISTIC MARKERS OF ETHNIC IDENTITY: ANALYZING THE USE OF UZBEK DIALECTS AND CODE-SWITCHING IN EVERYDAY SPEECH

*Shoira Umarova Xolmurod qizi*

*shoiraumarova715@gmail.com*

*Master's degree student*

*Uzbekistan State World Languages University*

**Annotation:** *This article explores how linguistic variations, particularly dialects and code-switching practices among Uzbek-speaking communities, serve as markers of ethnic and cultural identity. By examining everyday speech patterns, the research highlights the role of language in expressing group affiliations and individual identities within diverse social contexts.\**

**Keywords:** *Uzbek dialects, code-switching, ethnic identity, sociolinguistics, language variation, cultural expression, linguistic markers, everyday speech.*

**Etnik o'zlikning lingvistik belgilar: O'zbek shevalari va kod-almashuvning kundalik nutqdagi tahlili**

*Shoira Umarova Xolmurod qizi*

*shoiraumarova715@gmail.com*

*Magistratura talabasi*

*O'zbekiston Davlat Jahon tillari universiteti*

**Annotatsiya:** *Ushbu maqolada o'zbek tilida so'zlashuvchi jamoalarda mavjud bo'lgan lingvistik tafovutlar, xususan, shevalar va kod-almashuv holatlari etnik va madaniy o'zlik belgisi sifatida qanday xizmat qilishi o'rganiladi. Kundalik nutq*

*namunalarini tahlil qilish orqali tilning ijtimoiy muhitda guruhga mansublik va shaxsiy o'zlikni ifodalashdagi o'rni yoritiladi.*

***Kalit so'zlar:*** O'zbek shevalari, kod-almashuv, etnik o'zlik, sotsiolingvistika, til tafovutlari, madaniy ifoda, lingvistik belgi, kundalik nutq

**Лингвистические маркеры этнической идентичности: Анализ использования узбекских диалектов и код-свитчинга в повседневной речи**

*Шоира Умарова Холмурод кызы*

*shoiraumarova715@gmail.com*

*Магистрант*

*Узбекский государственный университет мировых языков*

***Аннотация:*** В данной статье рассматриваются языковые вариации, в частности диалекты и практика код-свитчинга среди узбекоязычных сообществ, как маркеры этнической и культурной идентичности. Анализируя образцы повседневной речи, исследование подчеркивает роль языка в выражении групповой принадлежности и индивидуальной идентичности в различных социальных контекстах.

***Ключевые слова:*** Узбекские диалекты, код-свитчинг, этническая идентичность, социолингвистика, языковая вариативность, культурное выражение, лингвистические маркеры, повседневная речь

## Introduction

Language serves as a fundamental medium through which individuals express their identities and navigate social landscapes. In multilingual societies like Uzbekistan, linguistic practices such as dialect usage and code-switching are not merely communicative tools but also significant markers of ethnic and cultural identity.

This article examines how Uzbek dialects and code-switching behaviors function as indicators of ethnic identity among Uzbek-speaking communities.

### Uzbek Dialects and Ethnic Identity

Uzbekistan is characterized by a rich tapestry of dialects, each associated with specific regions and communities. Dialects such as Tashkent, Samarkand, and Khorezmian exhibit distinct phonological, lexical, and syntactic features. For instance, the Khorezmian dialect is noted for its unique vocabulary and pronunciation, which can be challenging for speakers of other Uzbek dialects to comprehend. This linguistic distinctiveness fosters a strong sense of regional identity among Khorezmian speakers, reinforcing intra-group solidarity and delineating boundaries from other Uzbek-speaking groups.

### Code-Switching in Everyday Speech

Code-switching, the practice of alternating between languages within a conversation, is prevalent in Uzbekistan, particularly between Uzbek and Russian. This phenomenon is influenced by various factors, including the speaker's age, education, social context, and the topic of discussion. Research indicates that code-switching serves multiple functions: it facilitates communication in multilingual settings, allows for the expression of nuanced meanings, and serves as a tool for identity negotiation. For example, younger generations may switch to Russian when discussing academic or technical subjects, reflecting the language's historical association with education and science.

### Sociolinguistic Implications

The interplay between dialect usage and code-switching in Uzbekistan reflects broader sociolinguistic dynamics. These linguistic practices are not random but are strategically employed to signal group membership, assert cultural identity, and navigate social hierarchies. In professional settings, code-switching to Russian may

convey formality and competence, while the use of regional dialects in informal contexts reinforces communal bonds and shared heritage.

## Conclusion

The use of Uzbek dialects and code-switching practices are integral to the construction and expression of ethnic identity among Uzbek-speaking communities. These linguistic behaviors are deeply embedded in the social fabric of Uzbekistan, reflecting historical influences, regional affiliations, and cultural values. Understanding these practices provides valuable insights into the complex ways language functions as a marker of identity in multilingual societies.

## References

- Auer, P. (1998). *\*Code-Switching in Conversation: Language, Interaction and Identity\**. Routledge.
- Gumperz, J. J. (1982). *\*Discourse Strategies\**. Cambridge University Press.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (1993). *\*Social Motivations for Codeswitching: Evidence from Africa\**. Oxford University Press.
- Nakamura, M. S. (2025). Beyond Bilingualism: A Discourse Analysis of Uzbek-Russian Code-Switching in Contemporary Uzbekistan. *\*Turkophone\**, 11(3), 118–137. <https://doi.org/10.55246/turkophone.1510270>
- I. (2024). Linguistic, Social, and Educational Implications of Code Switching and Code Mixing in Uzbekistan. *\*International Journal of Artificial Intelligence\**, 35–36.
- Usmanova, N. X. (2024). Sociolinguistic Factors in Code Switching. *\*American Journal of Interdisciplinary Research and Development\**, 29, 220–224.
- Mamatkulova, S. D. (2025). The Linguistics of Code-Switching: Navigating Multiple Dialects and Languages in Conversations. *\*Web of Teachers: Inderscience Research\**, 3(1), 114–118.



- Ubaydullayeva, M. (2024). The Impact of Code-Switching on Language Acquisition and Identity Formation. *\*Modern Education and Development\**, 9(1), 48–51.