

LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL REPRESENTATION OF THE CONCEPT “WOMAN” IN UZBEK

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Abstract. This article explores the concept of “woman” in the Uzbek linguistic worldview as a culturally embedded and cognitively structured phenomenon. Drawing on approaches from linguoculturology, cognitive linguistics, and sociolinguistics, the study examines how language reflects and constructs gender roles, social expectations, and cultural values in Uzbek society. Special attention is given to lexical, relational, and phraseological representations of the concept, highlighting the central role of family, morality, and social hierarchy. The analysis demonstrates that, unlike individualistic Western models, the Uzbek conceptualization of “woman” is predominantly relational and collectivist, emphasizing roles such as mother, daughter, and wife. Proverbs and idioms further reveal both positive evaluations and traditional gender stereotypes embedded in the language. The study concludes that the concept of “woman” in Uzbek is dynamic and evolving, reflecting ongoing social changes while preserving deeply rooted cultural norms.

Keywords: concept of woman; Uzbek linguistic worldview; linguoculturology; gender linguistics; cognitive linguistics; gender stereotypes; phraseology; Uzbek culture; family roles; language and culture

The concept of “woman” in the Uzbek linguistic worldview represents a complex and culturally embedded phenomenon that reflects the historical, social, and moral values of Uzbek society. Within the framework of linguoculturology and cognitive linguistics, language is viewed as a repository of national consciousness, and therefore, the linguistic representation of women provides insight into how Uzbek culture conceptualizes gender roles, identity, and social expectations. Unlike Western linguistic traditions, where individual identity often dominates conceptual structures, the Uzbek linguistic worldview is characterized by a **collectivist orientation**, where social roles, family relations, and moral values play a central role. As a result, the concept of “woman” in Uzbek is primarily constructed through relational, ethical, and cultural dimensions rather than purely biological or individualistic categories [5:35].

1. Core lexical representation of the concept “woman” in uzbek. At the lexical level, the concept “woman” is represented by several key units, each reflecting specific semantic and cultural nuances:

- **ayol** – the primary neutral term denoting an adult female
- **xotin** – often used in the sense of “wife,” but may carry informal or context-dependent connotations
- **qiz** – girl, unmarried female, often associated with youth and purity
- **opa / singil** – sister (elder/younger), reflecting relational identity
- **ona** – mother, one of the most culturally significant roles

The lexeme **ayol** functions as the core of the conceptual field, similar to “woman” in English. However, its semantic scope is strongly influenced by cultural expectations related to modesty, morality, and social responsibility.

The term **xotin**, while commonly used in everyday speech, demonstrates semantic variability. In some contexts, it simply denotes a married woman, while in others it may carry colloquial or even slightly depreciative оттенки, depending on tone and usage. This highlights the importance of **pragmatic context** in Uzbek lexical representation [4: 47].

2. Relational and Family-Based Conceptualization. A defining feature of the Uzbek linguistic worldview is the strong emphasis on **family and kinship relations**. The concept of “woman” is predominantly understood through her roles within the family structure.

Key lexical representations include:

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- **ona (mother)** – symbol of care, sacrifice, and moral authority
- **kelin (daughter-in-law)** – culturally significant role associated with adaptation and respect
- **turmush o'rtog'i (spouse)** – neutral, formal term for marital partner

The concept of **motherhood** occupies a central position in Uzbek culture. The word *ona* carries not only biological meaning but also deep emotional and symbolic significance. It is often associated with:

- unconditional love
- patience and endurance
- moral guidance

This reflects a cultural model in which a woman's identity is closely tied to her role as a mother and caregiver [3:87].

3. Cultural Values Embedded in Lexical Units. The Uzbek linguistic representation of women is deeply influenced by traditional values such as:

- **modesty (kamtarlik)**
- **honor (or-nomus)**
- **respect (hurmat)**
- **family loyalty**

These values are encoded in both lexical choices and usage patterns. For example, respectful forms of address and avoidance of direct naming in certain contexts reflect cultural norms of politeness and hierarchy.

The concept of **or-nomus (honor)** is particularly important, as it is often associated with women's behavior and reputation. Linguistic expressions related to honor frequently emphasize the role of women as carriers of family dignity.

4. Phraseological Representation (Idioms and Proverbs). Phraseological units in Uzbek provide rich material for understanding cultural attitudes toward women. Proverbs and idioms often reflect traditional gender roles and moral expectations.

4.1. Positive Representations

- *Ayol – oila ustuni* ("A woman is the pillar of the family")
- *Onaning duosi – oltindan qimmat* ("A mother's blessing is more valuable than gold")

These expressions highlight the importance of women in maintaining family stability and moral values.

4.2. Stereotypical and Traditional Views

- *Ayolning sochi uzun, aqli qisqa* ("A woman's hair is long, her mind is short")
- *Qiz bola – uyga mehmon* ("A girl is a guest in her own home")

Such proverbs reflect traditional stereotypes, emphasizing dependency, limited autonomy, and the expectation of eventual marriage.

4.3. Moral and Behavioral Expectations

- *Yaxshi ayol – uy barakasi* ("A good woman brings prosperity to the home")

This type of expression reinforces the idea that a woman's value is measured by her contribution to family well-being.

The linguistic and cultural representation of the concept "woman" in Uzbek reflects a deeply rooted system of values, social roles, and cultural norms. Lexical and phraseological means encode not only the biological category of womanhood but also its social, moral, and symbolic dimensions.

While traditional models emphasize family roles and moral responsibility, modern developments are gradually expanding the conceptual field to include professional and individual identities. This results in a dynamic and evolving representation that combines continuity and change. Thus, the concept "woman" in the

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Uzbek linguistic worldview is a complex, multi-layered construct that reveals the intricate relationship between language, culture, and cognition.

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