



THE LEXICAL ANALYSES OF PRAYERS AND BLESSINGS IN UZBEK LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT: This thesis explores the role of prayers and blessings in Uzbek national literature, including folklore, epics, legends, and modern literary works. It examines their linguacultural meanings, ethical and communicative functions, and their aesthetic role in character development. Prayers and blessings are analyzed as tools reflecting national values and enriching literary expression.

Keywords: prayer, blessing, Uzbek literature, oral folklore, linguaculture, national values, ethical teaching, character, communicative function.

INTRODUCTION

Prayers and blessings have held a significant place in the cultural, spiritual, and literary traditions of the Uzbek people for centuries. These expressions are deeply rooted in the moral and religious worldview of the nation and serve as powerful communicative tools in both everyday life and artistic expression. In Uzbek literature, especially in folk epics, legends, and modern prose, prayers (duo) and blessings (tilak) are not only expressions of religious faith or well-wishing but are also stylistic devices that reflect character emotions, cultural identity, and collective values. This thesis explores the linguistic, cultural, and literary functions of prayers and blessings in selected examples of Uzbek national literature.

From a linguacultural perspective, prayers and blessings are formulaic expressions that encapsulate deep cultural meanings. A prayer is a verbal act directed toward a divine entity, usually in the form of a request or invocation. A blessing, on the other hand, is a wish or a spoken formula intended to bring goodness, success, or protection to others. In Uzbek society, both expressions are often used in highly ritualized ways – during weddings, childbirth, funerals, travel, or even everyday greetings.

Linguistically, these expressions are concise but meaningful. For instance, "Omad yo'ldoshing bo'lsin" ("May luck be your companion") or "Yuzing yorug' bo'lsin!" ("May light shine from your face") are commonly used forms of blessings that convey respect, care, and emotional support. Culturally, such expressions serve to maintain social harmony, reinforce familial and communal bonds, and transmit moral values. Prayers and blessings are especially prevalent in Uzbek folk literature, such as epics, fairy tales, and oral storytelling traditions. In classic epics like "Alpomish" or "Gorogly", characters often utter blessings before embarking on a journey, entering a battle, or leaving their loved ones. These moments are not merely cultural reflections, but also narrative tools that enhance the emotional intensity of the scenes. For example, in "Alpomish", a mother's blessing to her son before he departs is filled with protective and encouraging language:

"May your path be clear, my son, and may no harm come to your bright face."

This type of blessing highlights the deep maternal love and concern, as well as the spiritual reliance on divine protection.

In folktales, blessings are also used to reward virtuous characters or to mark turning points in the plot. These expressions function to distinguish between good and evil, wisdom and foolishness, with blessings often bestowed on the humble, the brave, or the kind. Modern Uzbek literature continues this tradition, incorporating prayers and blessings in novels, short stories, and plays. Writers such as Pirimqul Qodirov, Abdulla Qodiriy, and Said Ahmad often include such expressions to maintain the authenticity of dialogue and to reflect the inner worlds of their characters. In "Stars in the Night" (Yulduzli tunlar) by Pirimqul Qodirov, the mother's farewell prayer to her son symbolizes both personal attachment and patriotic hope. The blessing not only serves as a heartfelt goodbye but also elevates the son's journey into a sacred mission. Similarly, in Odil Yoqubov's works, characters often exchange blessings in scenes of hardship or joy, highlighting resilience, family ties, and national pride.

These prayers and blessings function as more than emotional or aesthetic devices – they convey collective values such as patience, gratitude, humility, and respect for elders. They also reflect a distinctly Uzbek worldview in which the divine is present in every aspect of human life, including literature. The ethical function of prayers and blessings is evident in the moral messages they convey. Many of these expressions serve as indirect advice, encouraging good behavior or offering gentle moral guidance. For instance, when someone says "Ko'ngling doim pok bo'lsin" ("May your heart always remain pure"), it is both a blessing and a reminder of ethical conduct.

Communicatively, these expressions function as tools of social interaction. They are used in various social settings to establish rapport, express solidarity, or demonstrate empathy. At weddings, one might hear, "Baxtli bo'linglar!" ("May you be happy!"), and at funerals, "Oxirati obod bo'lsin" ("May their afterlife be blessed!"). These utterances are not merely polite; they are performative acts that fulfill a social function and carry emotional weight.

In literature, such expressions help readers connect with the characters' cultural reality and emotional struggles. They provide authenticity and help to frame the psychological and spiritual dimensions of a character's experience. Prayers and blessings in Uzbek national literature are more than religious or emotional utterances; they are profound cultural symbols that reflect the nation's values, traditions, and worldview. Whether in the form of protective invocations in folk epics or heartfelt wishes in modern prose, these expressions enrich literary works with emotional depth and cultural resonance.

Their presence in literature serves multiple functions: narratively, they enhance character development and emotional impact; linguistically, they preserve traditional formulas; and culturally, they act as vessels of moral teaching and spiritual heritage. Studying their use in literature offers valuable insight into the Uzbek linguistic mindset and the enduring power of language in shaping and reflecting culture.

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