

ISSUES OF TERMINOLOGY IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE JADID MOVEMENT



Keywords: jadid, enlightenment, literary language, colloquial language, term, loanwords, Arabic words, Persian words, dialect, suffix, word form, press.

**Azimov Inomjon
Mamasodiqovich**

Doctor of Philology, Associate Professor
Tashkent State University of Uzbek Language and Literature named after Alisher Navoi

Abstract

The Jadid movement, which began in Crimea at the beginning of the last century, also spread to Uzbekistan. Influenced by the progressive opinions of the Christian-tatar intellectuals, the heroes of the nation, who wrote their names on the pages of history, grew up. Having visited the countries of Europe, Tatarstan, and Turkey and seeing scientific and technical progress and economic and cultural developments there, they dreamed of building such a society. They realized that the first factor in this was to enlighten the people. To make the nation literate, they took the initiative of reforming education, opening new method schools, reforming the alphabet, which is an obstacle to quick and easy education, and developing national spelling rules. The field for the discussion of the alphabet and spelling was the press. The jadids expressed their opinions and suggestions through the press and at occasional meetings. The alphabet was thus reformed, laying the foundation for the creation of national orthography. One of the major issues was the nationalization of terms (terminology) that had entered or were entering the national literary language. Among the Jadid enlightenment thinkers, there were differing views on this matter. While some had a positive attitude toward the nationalization of terms, others believed that such words should be adopted in their original form. This study analyzes Jadids’s attitudes toward borrowed words and their views on the principles of adopting foreign terms.

INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the 20th century, a group of devoted intellectuals known as the **Jadids** dedicated themselves to the development and progress of the Uzbek language and culture. Their tireless efforts were so impactful that they were honored with titles such as **“Heroes of the Nation”** and **“Devoted Patriots of the Nation.”** As a result of their hard work, the national Uzbek press was established, modern-style schools were opened, textbooks and educational materials were written and published, and scholarly works and dictionaries focusing on the issues of language and literature were made available to a wide readership.

The Jadids believed that **education and enlightenment** were the keys to progress. They prioritized opening new types of schools, establishing modern universities, and spreading global knowledge among the people. They worked to awaken public awareness by developing the press, exposing social problems through theatre, and fostering national pride by encouraging talented youth to study at leading European universities. Unfortunately, during the Soviet era, the Jadids were labeled “enemies of the people,” their activities were suppressed, and their scientific and cultural contributions were left unstudied until Uzbekistan’s independence.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODS

After independence, special attention was given to studying the activities of the Jadids. However, although many prominent Jadid scholars have played a significant role in the development of the Uzbek literary language and the improvement of the alphabet, only a few of their works and contributions have been thoroughly researched. For example, M. Qurbonova and

Y. Sayidov studied Fitrat's contributions to linguistics and the lexicon in his literary works [2; 3; 4]. M. Yo'ldoshev and D. Ne'matova analyzed the works of Cho'lpon [5; 6], Sh. Bobomurodova focused on Elbek [7] and T. Tog'aev on Ashurali Zohiriy [8], whereas A. Boboniyozov, Z. Chorjeva, and L. Djalolova studied the creative and scholarly legacies of Abdulla Qodiriy [9; 10; 11]. Additionally, S. Normamatov explored the literary heritage and scholarly contributions of Abdulla Avloniy [12].

The main sources for this study were articles published in the press, which are preserved in the National Archives of Uzbekistan. The research employed various methods, including analysis, synthesis, description, classification, comparative-historical analysis, syntactic-semantic analysis, and stylistic-functional analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It is well known that, beginning in the 16th century, Uzbek people experienced significant sociopolitical, cultural, educational, and economic crises and stagnation. By the end of the 19th century, these challenges intensified. These societal problems inevitably impacted the Uzbek language as well. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Uzbek language had not yet developed to the level required for modern communication. Persians still hold their position as the primary language of instruction in education. This social situation deeply concerned the intellectuals of the time, particularly the leaders of the Jadid movement. They recognized that a **unified literary language** was essential for building a strong national identity. Therefore, they worked hard to revive the Uzbek language, elevate it from stagnation, and establish it as the foundation of a new Uzbek literary language by exploring its sources and creating a modern linguistic base [3: 29–30].

However, raising Uzbek to the level of a full-fledged literary language and making it the language of literature was a difficult task at the time. Persians continued to dominate literary works, and Arabic remained the primary language for scientific texts. Many regarded Uzbek as merely a spoken “vernacular,” and there was widespread skepticism about its potential to become a prestigious literary language. Furthermore, there was a strong trend in literary circles toward following the Ottoman Turkish literary tradition.

Vadud Mahmud wrote about this situation, stating:

“When we look at the dialectal distinctions among Uzbek Chagatai poets, we see that two main dialects were prevalent. One was the Eastern Turkic or Chagatai dialect, which was the main form used in our region and by poets such as Navoi, Babur, and Fuzuli. The other was the Western Turkic or Ottoman dialect, which spread through the influence of the famous lyrical poet Fuzuli. Many poets followed this trend. While the first dialect is inherently ours, the second, although borrowed, is not entirely foreign to us because it was widely read and appreciated” [14:115].

This phenomenon was not limited to the literature but also appeared in journalism and scientific writing. For example, a publication lamented:

“Their harmful work benefits the nation not at all, it leads to division rather than unity, and to hopelessness rather than insight. Therefore, we must always speak and act with reason and careful consideration. I repeat newspapers contain too many empty words” [15].

Another scholar described his linguistic observations from travels across Afghanistan, India, and Europe, stating the following:

“During my travels, I encountered languages that were used a hundred times more efficiently than ours. Inspired by these experiences, I set out to create a resource for learners and compiled this book over many years, eventually presenting it to the public. As it includes six languages, I titled it *Lug‘ati sittati alsina* (‘Dictionary of Six Languages’) and published it in two volumes” [16:12].

Fitrat also emphasized that many **Tatar language elements** heavily influence Uzbek press language. As a result, many intellectuals doubted whether Uzbeks, which had absorbed diverse elements from other languages, could ever reach the status of a true literary language. Fitrat summarized the prevailing attitudes as follows:

- “1) We strive to write in a ‘nonstandard’ form of Turkish, so we must avoid removing nonstandard Turkish words;
- 2) The Arabic and Persian words that have entered Turkish have no Turkish equivalents;
- 3) There are no Turkish terms for scientific concepts;
- 4) Trying to ‘Turkify’ scientific terminology is a waste of time;
- 5) If we want to study in Chagatai Turkish, we must wait 200 years;
- 6) Arabic is a scientific and literary language; therefore, we should not replace Arabic terms in our scientific texts with Turkish alternatives” [17:129].

Importantly, **Jadid scholars held differing views** on the issues of literary language and terminology. While the “Chagatai Group,” led by Fitrat, advocated removing all foreign words and creating new terms from within the Uzbek language, other intellectuals, such as Ashurali Zohiriy, Munavvar Qori, Behbudi, and Hoji Muin, opposed this idea.

Miyon Buzruk actively participated in these debates, expressing his views in his article “Literary Language and Terminology” published in *Sharq Haqiqati* [18]. In this article, he discussed the principles for forming a literary language, attitudes toward Arabic and Persian words (which make up a significant portion of the language), and how to integrate new words.

Miyon Buzruk believed that the foundation of a new literary language should be to **bring the literary language closer to the spoken language**. He stated that recognizing and accepting this approach meant acknowledging the disorder and lack of system that had existed in the past while also admitting that creating a unified language was a clear goal.

Ashurali Zohiriy also emphasized a similar point:

“The languages and literatures of more advanced nations have developed on the basis of the foundation of their people’s spoken language and folk literature. As we embark on building a new culture, our literary language must absolutely be based on the living language of the people” [19].

When bringing the literary language closer to the spoken language, two key points need special attention:

1. How to adapt the many Arabic and Persian words that had entered Uzbek into a national linguistic framework?
2. How to incorporate new words into the language in a suitable form?

The scholar’s views outlined above can be partially accepted; however, his suggestion that words such as *maktub* (letter), *kotib* (secretary), *rais* (chairperson), and *muharrir* (editor) should not be used in their original Arabic meanings and instead be replaced with equivalent Uzbek forms such as *yozilgan* (written), *yozuvchi* (writer), *boshlovchi* (initiator), and *tahrir qiluvchi* (editorial assistant) is debatable. Furthermore, requiring the general population to follow complex linguistic rules—such as understanding the etymology, original forms, and morphological patterns of words that have been part of the Uzbek language for over a thousand years—would be impractical, as most people do not have a strong command of Arabic. Therefore, imposing such complex requirements on foreign words is unnecessary. The fact that many of these borrowed words have long been integrated into Uzbek and are still commonly used in their original form, with their etymological origins known only to specialists, supports this argument.

On the Use of *Odots* (Grammatical Markers)

The term *adat* (or *odot*) originates from Arabic, where it means “belonging,” “component,” or “tool.” Ottoman Turkish linguists used the term *odot* to describe grammatical elements such as affixes, function words, and certain modal particles. In his work by *Bitim Yo’llari*, dedicated to Uzbek orthography, the scholar Fitrat adopted this term in the same way as the Ottoman linguists, using it to refer to case endings, question particles (e.g., *-mi*), and derivational suffixes (e.g., *-dek*, *-day*, *-cha*). Consequently, the term *qo’shimcha* (suffix/affix), which is still used today, is rooted in the Arabic *odor* meaning “component” or “structural element,” although from the 1930s onward, it has been commonly used in the sense of “affix” [8:31].

In the *Turkcha Qoida* (“Turkish Grammar”), the term *odot* is also defined as “words that do not have an independent meaning,” and this definition was directly adopted in *Bitim Yo‘llari*. In the 1920s, the term *odot* began to be replaced by *belgilar* (markers) [21:31].

Thus, *odot* was historically used to mean “affix.” Miyon Buzruk expressed a negative stance on the continued use of Arabic and Persian *odot* in Uzbek. He argued that affixes borrowed from Persian, such as *-bon*, *ham-*, *-dor*, *-mand*, *-gar*, *no-*, and *be-*, as well as those from Arabic, such as *-iy* and *g‘ayr-*, should largely be abandoned—except for *-iy*, which could remain in certain cases—since Uzbek already has suitable equivalents. For instance, the Persian *ham-* can be replaced by the Uzbek *-dosh*, *-dor* by *-li*, and *no-* and *be-* by *-siz*.

Discussing the Arabic prefix *g‘ayri-* (meaning “non” or “without”), Miyon Buzruk suggested that it should be replaced by auxiliary Uzbek words such as *emas* or *bo‘lmagan*. For example, instead of *g‘ayri ma‘lum* (“unknown”), he proposed *ma‘lum emas* or *ma‘lum bo‘lmagan*. While he supported retaining the *-iy* suffix in some cases, he cautioned that overusing it could disrupt the natural rhythm of the language and recommended using it moderately. He also argued that the suffixes *-xona* (e.g., *bolaxona* - attic) and *-noma* (e.g., *O‘g‘uznoma* - Book of Oghuz) could be preserved in established compound nouns but should not be used to form new words.

On *Tirkav* (Compounds and Phrases)

The term *tirkav* was used by Jadids to refer to compound words and word combinations [6:127]. In addition to personal names such as *Davlatxoja*, *Abdulla*, and *Abdulrahim*, compounds such as *nusratbaxsh* (victory-giver), *dilshikasta* (broken-hearted), and *zulfi yor* (beloved’s lock of hair) should be eliminated. He proposed that expressions such as *zulfi* be replaced by more natural Uzbek equivalents, such as *yorning zulfi* (the beloved’s hair) or *mahbubning ishq* (the beloved’s love), following Uzbek grammatical rules.

On Terminology (*Istiloh*)

The term *istiloh* is an Arabic word meaning “a word or phrase accepted by common agreement,” often referring to technical or specialized terms. Tatar linguists who worked on Turkifying terminology coined the term *atama* to mean “designated word” or “special term,” corresponding to *istiloh*. In Uzbek linguistics, *atama* has been used since 1922 [21:36].

Miyon Buzruk noted that while new words were introduced as terminology in Uzbek, there was still a great need for terms to express new concepts. However, the current process was disorganized, with each writer coining words individually without a systematic approach. He emphasized the need to regulate this process. He opposed both the wholesale replacement of

established terms with Uzbek equivalents (as attempted by the *Chig‘atay Gurungi*) and the indiscriminate borrowing of terms from Arabic, Persian, or European languages.

CONCLUSION

Although certain aspects of the Jadids' scholarly perspectives remain debatable, their views on literary language development—simplifying the language, bringing it closer to the spoken language of the people, and addressing the issue of foreign borrowings, as well as their ideas on *sig‘a* (morphological structures), *odot* (affixes), *tirkav* (compounds), and terminology—were highly relevant for their time.

It is essential for linguists today to study the scholarly heritage of the Jadid enlightenment thinkers in depth, provide an objective academic evaluation of their work, and define their contribution to the development of the Uzbek literary language, as well as to the advancement of orthography and spelling standards.

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