Relationship between Language, Religion, and Culture: A Close Look into The Functions of Haji and the Related Words in Persian

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Abstract

Considering the salient role of language in shaping and changing the religious and cultural beliefs of people, the current research is seeking to dissect and analyze the word –Haji- and its collocations (related words). To achieve this purpose, three hundred contexts in which this label was used, were recorded in natural situations, transcribed, and later analyzed. Hymes’ model of speaking was then applied, scrutinizing the aforementioned label. The functions of ‘Haji’ were divided into two groups of religious and non-religious, and also into psychological and social ones. Ultimately, the collocations of the labels were explored. The

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results of this study demonstrated that though ‘Haji’ was considered as a positive word in the past, it has undergone some metamorphosis and seems to be changed to a negative word. In the end, the probable causes of this change degradation and extension of meaning -such as media, society, different viewpoints of people - were examined and discussed in the context of Iran.

**Keywords:** labeling, religion, culture, language, haji, haj khanum