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**Linguiscultural aspects of  
the research of the concepts  
*marriage and family***

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**Неке және отбасы  
концептілерін зерттеудің  
лингвомәдени аспектісі**

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**Лингвокультурные аспекты  
исследования концептов  
*брак и семья***

The article deals with the concepts of MARRIAGE and FAMILY in the Kazakh and English languages. The study of these concepts is of interest because they are basic in the system of social relations, and largely determine the functioning of society, and the institution of marriage and family is one of the integral elements of culture. In the course of the research, various definitions of the notion of "concept" have been considered, including those given from the position of linguoculturology, the significance of which is due to the expansion of international relations and globalization and the need to take into account the specific features of culture and language of different nations. The linguocultural aspect of the research can help to identify the universal and national-specific features of these concepts, which is to a large extent explained by their ability to reflect and fix in the language the manifestations of the culture of a particular nation.

**Key words:** cultural linguistics, concept, value, language, basic unit, structure.

Берілген мақала ағылшын, қазақ тілдеріндегі НЕКЕ және ОТБАСЫ концептілерін қарастырады. Аталған концептілер әлеуметтік қатынас пен қоғамның қызметін анықтаушы негізгі фактор болғандықтан қызығушылық тудыруда, ал неке және отбасы институты мәдениеттің ажырамас құрамдас бөлшегі болып саналады. Зерттеу барысында «концепт» ұғымының әртүрлі анықтамалары қарастырылды, соның ішінде лингвомәдениет тұрғысынан халықаралық байланыстың кеңеюі, жаһандану және әрбір халықтың тілдік, мәдени ерекшеліктерін ескере отырып зерделенді. Лингвомәдени аспектісі негізіндегі зерттеу аталған концептілердің әмбебап және ұлттық-спецификалық ерекшеліктерін анықтауға, халықтың тілінде мәдениеттің қаншалықты көрініс табатын анықтауға көмектеседі.

**Түйін сөздер:** лингвокультурология (лингвомәдениет), концепт, құндылық, тіл, базалық бірлік, құрылым.

В статье рассматриваются концепты БРАК и СЕМЬЯ в казахском и английском языках. Изучение данных концептов представляет интерес в силу того, что они являются базовыми в системе социальных отношений, во многом определяющими функционирование общества, а институт брака и семьи является одним из неотъемлемых элементов культуры. В ходе исследования рассмотрены различные определения понятия «концепт», в том числе с позиции лингвокультурологии, значимость которой обусловлена расширением международных связей и глобализацией и необходимостью учитывать особенности культуры и языка каждого народа. Лингвокультурологический аспект исследования может способствовать выявлению универсальных и национально-специфических особенностей данных концептов, что в немалой степени обусловлено их способностью отражать и фиксировать в языке проявления культуры того или иного народа.

**Ключевые слова:** лингвокультурология, концепт, ценность, язык, базовая единица, структура.

**LINGUISTICULTURAL  
ASPECTS OF THE  
RESEARCH OF THE  
CONCEPTS MARRIAGE  
AND FAMILY**

It is well-known that the spiritual world includes certain norms of behavior, a system of rules of relationships. In different parts of the world life is infinitely diverse. The mentality and cultural values of people can vary greatly, and even be the exactly opposite. Each ethnic group lives in the world made up of customs and traditions, which find expression in the peculiarities of behavior, religion, social and cultural values and norms. People relate differently to each other, there is no person with the same lifestyle as everyone perceives the world differently: such notions as experience, failure, success, happiness, hatred, love, money, hospitality, beauty, anger, friendship, knowledge, memory, honesty, etc. are perceived and understood by people very specifically and individually. Due to certain circumstances and factors, the existing stereotypes contribute to the formation of the unique private world, unique form of consciousness by every particular individual. It is this personal space and general patterns of social relations that constitute the culture of the people.

Concept as a universal category plays a very important role in the culture of each nation; concepts in all languages reflect not only universal notions, but also completely different meanings and properties of the objective world, which explains their different manifestation in the language. Culturally colored picture of the world affects humans and shapes their linguistic consciousness, and with it, their cultural and national identity. The impact of cultural and human factors on the formation and functioning of different linguistic units (lexemes, free and non-free word-combinations or idioms, and even texts), the culturally marked content of which is embodied in the national cultural connotations.

Language is the natural form of manifestation and expression of the material and spiritual culture of the nation. It shapes the picture of the world, which is the reflection of the national ways of representation of extralinguistic reality. Language is a unique gift for humans, and when we study it, we are partially discovering what makes us human, critically looking at the human nature. As we find out the differences between languages and their speakers, we see that human natures can be different too, depending on the languages spoken. However, language and culture are two related but different social imperatives. Linguoculturology is that branch

of science that studies the relations and connections of culture and language in their functioning. The notion of concept is central in linguoculturology. It should be mentioned that the notion of concept constitutes (covers) the subject matter not only of linguoculturology, but also that of cognitive psychology, cognitive linguistics and it is classified by S.G. Vorkachev as the so called «umbrella term» [1].

In «The Oxford Concise Dictionary of Linguistics» concept is defined as «a mental construct seen as mediating between a word and whatever it denotes or is used to refer to [2, 71]. According to the views of Ye.S. Kubryakova, the concept is an operative, meaningful unit of the memory, mental lexicon, conceptual system and lingua mentalis, of the whole picture of the world as it is reflected in the human psyche [3, 90-93]. Concepts are also characterized as mental formations that represent meaningful consciously typified fragments of experience stored in the memory of a person. Typification of these units fixes representations in the form of different stereotypes, and their awareness provides an opportunity to convey information about them to other people [4]. Babushkin A.P. considers the notion of concept as a discrete mental unit that reflects the object of the real or imaginative world and is kept in the national memory of native speakers in the verbalized form [5].

Irrespective of the diversity of views on the nature of the concept, all researchers believe that it is the concept that performs the role of a mediator between cultures, language, and individuals. In this respect the notion of linguacultural concept is of considerable importance. Linguists define linguacultural concepts as constituting units of the ethnic mentality, its «supporting points», the totality of which forms the lingua-concept sphere as the language picture of the world, fragments of which they represent [6].

Currently scholars pay much attention to investigating different linguacultural concepts based on the material of two or more languages as such kind of research contributes not only to the discovery of the ethno-cultural features of their linguistic manifestation in different linguacultures, but also to a deeper penetration into the structure of universal representation of the inner and spiritual world of a man. In connection with the above mentioned the investigation of the concepts of *HEKE/ MARRIAGE* and *ОТБАСЫ/FAMILY* on the material of the Kazakh and English languages presents considerable interest because they are

regarded as basic and universal concepts which serve as the foundation for shaping national cultural values of any nation. They represent the key orientations of the behavior of people in society.

The concepts *HEKE / MARRIAGE* and *ОТБАСЫ / FAMILY* are characterized by a system of structural and substantive ties with other linguacultural concepts in corresponding target languages (for example, *LOVE, WEDDING, BRIDE, BRIDEGROOM, GROOM, DIVORCE, COMMITMENT, LOYALTY, HAPPINESS, PARENT, KINSHIP, CHILD/CHILDREN*, etc.).

The target concepts have the status of a universal mental model, which is manifested in two aspects: general human aspect (premarital behavior, engagement, wedding, conclusion of marriage, divorce) and cultural aspect where one can observe the main differences between the two language communities. In the structures of the concept of *HEKE / MARRIAGE* and *ОТБАСЫ / FAMILY* as a basic foundation we can reveal a very significant common and universal feature: the so called ‘conjugal union’ and a phenomenon which has qualitative, quantitative and spatial-temporal characteristics.

The research on the value and features of different linguistic units can objectify the concepts of *MARRIAGE* and *FAMILY*, there can be revealed the inner content of these concepts which constitute the language pictures of the target cultures and the national image of the world. It will establish their structure-specific content, then in different cultures the concepts will be compared and analyzed and it can prove that these notions can be categorized as concepts – elements of language consciousness, actualized in speech activity. The peculiarities of the concepts of *MARRIAGE* and *FAMILY* are largely due to their representation by certain lexemes, free word combinations, set expressions, proverbs and sayings and their semantic features.

A linguocultural study of the paremiological composition of such unrelated languages as Kazakh and English belonging to different structural types and different language families makes it possible to identify the universal and cultural-national elements in their semantics. The main direction of the proverbs analysis is to compare proverbs connected with the target concepts which most vividly preserve, reflect and reproduce the nations’ vision of the world, their mentality and culture.

On the one hand, this will give meaning and sense to the languages we use to communicate and appreciate different cultural approaches from

a universal point of view. Despite having varied cultural beliefs, people will be united by a common interest such as language, which will be a prolific contributor to the international relations at an extended scope. On the other hand, if no difference is established between culture and language, an extended appreciation will be given to these social elements in societies around the globe. Such studies are of theoretical as well as of practical significance, since the full use of language as a means of intercultural communication is a prerequisite of mutual understanding between the bearers of different linguacultures. They contribute also to understanding of language as a cultural heritage that is part of the identity people sharing one and the same language.

There are very interesting examples of the English and Kazakh proverbs which give a very vivid and bright representation of the notions of marriage and family relations in the languages and ground the necessity of the further detailed investigation of the target concepts.

For instance, Kazakh proverbs denote the following notions:

- Family and relatives symbolize a safe place where you can always find love and support of close people (*Ағайын бір өліде, бір тіріде керек. Ағайын тату болса, ат көп, Абысын тату болса, ас көп; Күйеу жүз жылдық, құда мың жылдық*);

- Negative influence of a woman's bad temper on her husband the family brings troubles and misfortunes and vice versa (*Ердің атын не аты шығарар не жары шығарар. Жақсы әйел теңі жоқ жолдас, түбі жоқ сырлас*);

- It is the woman who is the keeper of the hearth (*Әйел – үйдің көркі, еркек – тездің көркі*);

- Polygamy may bring some troubles and problems (*Екі қатын алғанның – құлағы тынбас, есекке мінгеннің – аяғы тынбас*);

- After the wedding, the spouse becomes closer than the parents (*Ата-анадан жар жақын*);

English proverbs may denote the following:

- The importance of peace and the necessity to seek reconciliation in order to preserve marriage (*Leave a poem on her kitchen table after a quarrel; similarity, put a love note in his lunch box*);

- The skill to forgive each other's mistakes (*You can love and be angry at the same time, wink at her after the quarrel. No one is perfect; forget each other's*);

- Fight for the sake of happiness in marriage (*How to be happily married can never be fully taught, but only be learnt. It takes two to make a marriage a success and only one for failure*);

- The importance of parentage and descent (*Blood is thicker than water. Blood will tell. A tree is known by its fruit*).

Even a very brief contrastive analysis of Kazakh and English proverbs shows that the content of the linguacultural concepts of *HEKE / MARRIAGE* and *ОТБАСЫ / FAMILY* in the Kazakh and English languages and in the consciousness of the representatives of their cultural communities has both positive and negative emotive-evaluative connotations, it is based on metaphors, and characterized by age-differentiation, dependence on family status.

The study of the paremiological representation of concepts also requires the necessity to apply qualitative methods of collecting data that mainly involves direct interaction with the respondents on a one-to-one basis or in a group setting. According to the authors of “The Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide”, they are very flexible because they allow greater spontaneity and adaptation of the interaction between the researcher and the study participant. The respondents have an opportunity to respond more elaborately and in greater detail [7].

The preliminary stage of the research has been carried out through formal interviews and focus groups that involved 70 native speakers of the Kazakh language, 65 native speakers of the American variant of the English language. It should be mentioned that 70 native speakers of the Russian language (mostly residents of the Republic of Kazakhstan) took part in the experiment. Most of the subjects were students of primary courses aged 19-20 who were at that time students of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. However, the experiment involved also people of the older generation. The main requirement concerning respondents' identity was to remain anonymous because of confidentiality issues related to ethics. It is planned to extend the number of study participants up to 200 hundred respondents for each of the target languages.

It is very relevant that future data analysis connected with the in-deep investigation of the concepts *HEKE / MARRIAGE* and *ОТБАСЫ / FAMILY* in the Kazakh and English languages should be taking into consideration the information obtained by means of inductive method, conceptual analysis, contextual analysis and the data interpreted in relation with culture and language. As scholars say, contextual analysis is simply an analysis of a text (in whatever medium, including multi-media) that helps us to assess that text within the context of its historical and cultural setting, but also in terms

of its textuality – or the qualities that characterize the text as a text [8]. Everett D.L. insists that the inductive method of analysis condenses textual data into a summary format and clearly establishes links between research and evaluation objectives. It is also useful for developing a framework of the underlying experiences and processes from the text to be analyzed [9].

The experimental study should also include

free association experiments and the survey which contribute to model the structure and content of the concepts of *HEKE / MARRIAGE* and *ОТБАСЫ / FAMILY*.

The research findings are important for the theory and practice of intercultural communication, one of the main objectives of which is to compare and the study of the specificity of languages and cultures in order to optimize intercultural interaction.

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