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**CONCEPTUALIZATION  
OF TIME IN KAZAKH IDIOMS**

The present research aims at identifying the concepts that structure the category of time in Kazakh idioms, which have a reference to temporality, to parameters of duration, speed, age, and events. A linguistic analysis of Kazakh idioms showed that time is conceptualized as a cyclical process where days turn into nights, and autumns turn into winters, etc. Also, a life span is traditionally divided into three phases: birth, life, and death; moreover, the analysis showed that concepts of time are represented through temporally situated events, which are culturally motivated, and also through the parameters of age which are ethnographically stipulated.

**Key words:** time, concepts, idioms, the Kazakh language.

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**Қазақ тіліндегі идиомалардың мерзімдік концептіленуі**

Бұл зерттеудің мақсаты уақытқа бағдарлы, әрекеттің созылмалы параметрлеріне, жылдамдыққа, жастық және оқиғалық көрсеткіштерге қатысты қазақ тіліндегі идиомалардың мерзімдік категориясын анықтау. Талдау көрсеткендей, табиғи құбылыстағы циклды үдеріс сияқты адамзат өмірінде де уақыт концептіленеді. Сол сияқты қазақ идиомаларында мерзімдік концептің мәдени және этнографиялық негізделуі талдаудан байқалды.

**Түйін сөздер:** уақыт, концептер, идиомалар, қазақ тілі.

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**Концептуализация времени в идиомах казахского языка**

Целью данного исследования является разработка концептов, которые определяют категорию времени в идиомах казахского языка, имеющих отношение к временной ориентации, параметрам длительности действия, скоростным, возрастным и событийным показателям. Анализ показал, что время концептуализируется как циклический процесс как в природных явлениях, так и в человеческой жизни, а также анализ показал культурную и этнографическую мотивированность концепта времени в казахских идиомах.

**Ключевые слова:** время, концепты, идиомы, казахский язык.

**Introduction**

The category of time is considered to be one of the universal ones in cognition of the surrounding world by people and determination of their place

there. Jaszczolt claims that time is not a basic concept – it is «supervenient on the concept of epistemic detachment» (2009: 5). Meanwhile, time plays an important role in the life of people, it is invisibly present in their everyday activities, and its assigned

secondary role does not undermine its importance in the way people categorize and conceptualize the world.

A notion of time at ancient Turks was investigated on the basis of historical texts of old manuscripts through the analysis of description of real facts and lives of real people. Klyastornji (1964) emphasizes the cyclical nature of time in Turkic culture. Shaimerdinova (2007) defines the concepts of epic time, of clan time, and heroic deeds of Kul-Tegin. Both authors note a close connection of Turks' worldview with nature. They identified themselves with the nature, and their life, as well as nature, was considered to be eternal both from temporal and spatial perspectives.

The initial categorization of the world by Kazakhs bears an anthropomorphic character; one and the same terms are used to denote parts of the body and temporal denominations: *бас* [bas] is 'the head' and 'the beginning', *аяқ* [ayaq] is 'the leg' and 'the end'. Another special characteristics of Kazakhs is that they, especially elderly people, still keep using a 12-year cyclical calendar where each year is assigned an animal; when people determine their year of birth, they refer to the name of a definite animal: a horse year, a sheep year.

In Kazakh the concept of time is highly lexicalized; there are certain words that define a definite age of the human beings assigned to them, the so called «lexical concepts», for example: *Нәресте* [næreste] – a child from 1 to 2; *Сәби* [sæbi] – a child from 3 to 7; *Бөбек* [böbek] – a child from 8 to 9, etc. On the whole, Bekturov (2006) gives 13 examples of names starting from a newborn to a male above 70. Age determination refers not only to people, but also to domestic animals. In Kazakh culture, horses played a big role; they have been a means of transportation and a source of food, they have been also treated as mates and a subject of steppe philosophy. Gerold Belger (2015) gives seven names in relation to the age of horses, for example: *құлын*, *құлыншақ* [qulīn, qulmshaq] – a colt; *жабағы* [žabağı] – a foal from more than six months till one year; *май* [tay] – a foal of one year; etc.

The present research aims at identifying the concepts that structure the category of time in Kazakh idioms, which have a reference to temporality, to parameters of duration, speed, age, and events. The object of research is Kazakh idioms which have been selected from the existing dictionaries of the Kazakh language. The idioms are chosen as an object of the present research because they are considered to be a source for investigation of 'original' perception of

the surrounding world by ancestors of the Kazakh nation.

## Literature Review

Time though being an abstract notion can be investigated from different perspectives. In her doctoral thesis Duffy (2015) reviews and discusses theoretical, methodological, and practical issues of studies on time with a special focus on personality, lifestyle and behavioral differences in perception of time. Ellen (2016) distinguishes different modes of cognizing and experiencing time, such as geophysical, organic, social, and somatic ones. Time is ephemeral; at the same time it can be recognized «in terms of points, lines, paths, spaces, and objects» (Janda, 2002: 3), and some of these terms are understood to be cyclical ones, such as processes in nature.

Time has been an object of numerous studies beginning from the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It refers to different types of relationship and it is traditionally conceptualized in connection to space; both of them are found to be fundamental in people's lives. By present, the notion of time has been extensively investigated, and some papers revealed interesting facts about time perception and time conceptualization in different languages. Clark (1973) recognizes deictic reference to time when the relationship between past and future is considered. Time either approaches people (e.g., *Fall is coming.*), or, vice versa, people gradually move towards some event/ deadline, e.g., *We are approaching the Fall semester*; correspondingly, time is classified as Moving Time (MT) and Moving Ego (ME). Both Ego-Moving and Time-moving models are relevant to most world languages; meanwhile, a direction of the movement may vary depending on extra-linguistic and cognitive factors of language speakers. In English and related languages, the movement may be from behind-past to forward-future; in Chinese – from above-past to below-future (Fuhrman et al., 2011). In Aymara, there are indications that Time and Ego do not move; they are static, and location of future is behind, and past is in front (Nunez & Sweetser, 2006). The same aspect of future-behind and past-front has been found in Vietnamese; the only difference from Aymara is that it is dynamic, it is Ego-Moving model (Sullivan & Bui, 2016). Moore (2000; 2006) distinguishes sequential reference when the relationship between earlier and later events is estimated, e.g. *Our conference is taking place before the Fall semester*. Lastly, Kranjec (2006) identifies extrinsic reference when time is

defined as a matrix, e.g. *Time runs*. In this case, Ego is absent; consequently, the concepts of past and future are not present.

A big contribution to research on time conceptualization was made by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) by their Conceptual Metaphor Theory; the metaphor TIME PASSING IS MOTION THROUGH SPACE, elaborated by them, demonstrates the connection between the abstract domain of time and concrete domain of space. A linguistic link between time and space was developed and found its confirmation in many other studies (Boroditsky 2000; 2001; Evans, 2013): «abstract domains such as time are shaped by metaphorical mappings from more concrete and experiential domains such as space» (Boroditsky, 2000: 1).

In Kazakh linguistics the concept of time has become an object of research comparatively recently. The paradigm of time was investigated by Janabekova (2012); she classifies time as mythical, ecological, biological, social, and psychological one. Kerimbekova (2016) examined the concept of time in Kazakh poetry; she analyzed the connotational difference in the semantics of two words in Kazakh denoting the notion of time: *zaman* ‘period’ and *uaqit* ‘time’, and concluded that in poetry *zaman* is more often negatively evaluated rather than positively in comparison to *uaqit*. Dmitryuk (2001) investigated the concept of time in three languages – Russian, Kazakh, and English – and he claims that in Russian and Kazakh time has a cyclical character, whereas in English it is mostly linear.

Kulmanov, Abduova and Ashenova (2016) examined linguistic database from fiction, mass media, and dictionaries, and elaborated concepts of time by the Kazakhs. They state that Kazakh people referred to time to mark events that had significant value, implication, and change in their lives, such as, for example, joining tsarist Russia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a dramatic famine in the 1930s when more than 2 million people are claimed to die, etc. It is notable to mention their inference that Kazakhs used the domed top of yurts to serve as a clock – when the crown (the roof wheel) was opened, it let the air in and provided an observation of the sky and reflected the position of the sun through shadows inside the premise. So, Kazakhs, without clocks and watches, could accurately define the hour and duration of time in relation to everyday activities and traditional rituals, as well as seasonal and natural transformations, like, for example, sunrise and sunset. Based on numerous examples, the authors conclude that perception and worldview by Kazakhs found their reflection in linguistic means, and time is conceptual-

alized as DECEPTIVE and CRUEL, as HOPE and A DOCTOR, as FALLING STARS and WATER.

There are few studies which focus on time denomination in idioms. Zhaparbekova (2004) studied Kazakh, Russian, and English idioms related to time and came to the conclusion that the notion of time have a universal character in idioms of all three languages, and it is based on chronological, calendar, and solar cycles. Zharkynbekova (2004) notes a close connection between color denominations and calendar and seasonal circulations, for example, қоңыр күз [qonir küz] – late autumn *lit.* a brown autumn, сары күз [sari küz] – long autumn *lit.* a yellow autumn, қара күз [qara küz] *lit.* a black autumn *fig.* cold autumn. According to her, colors symbolize different periods of the day: morning is defined by white, sunset by red, and evening by black. Also, the white color represents the antimony of BEGINNING and END, the BIRTH and the DEATH.

### Methodology

The aim of the present research is to identify the concepts that structure the category of time in Kazakh idioms. The object of the study is idioms that have a reference to time. On the whole, 118 idioms have been selected from three dictionaries: the dictionary of phraselogical units by Kenesbayev (1977), the Kazakh-Russian phraseological dictionary by Kozhakhmetova, Zhaissakova and Kozhakhmetova (1988), and the dictionary of Kazakh literary language (2011). The selected idioms were analyzed and classified into categories according to their conceptual nomination. Totally, the following categories have been elaborated:

CYCLICAL PROCESS where more reference is given to dawn, twilights, and the winter;

LIFE SPAN – with the dominance of the topic of Death;

PARAMETERS OF AGE – the emphasis is on maturity and old age;

SPEED INDICATION – the emphasis is on quick performance of an action;

PASSAGE OF TIME – it is mostly based on natural processes and everyday activities;

EVENTS – they have an ethnographic character and refer to certain periods of time.

**Results.** A linguistic analysis of Kazakh idioms showed that time is conceptualized as a **cyclical process** where days turn into nights. The cycle starts with the dawn (*Таң қылан бергенде* [tañ qılan ber-gende] *lit.* when the morning gives rise *fig.* at dawn), then turns to the noon (*Шаңқай түс/ шаңқай түсте* [şañkay tüste] *lit.* a white afternoon *fig.* at

noon), and, finally, ends with dawn (*Жети қараңғы түн/ жети түн* [žeti (qaraŋǵı) tün] *lit.* seven dark nights *fig.* deep night).

Dawn

(1) *Таң рауандағанда/ таң рауандап атқанда* [taŋ rauandaǵanda/ taŋ rauandap atqanda] *lit.* when the sun rises; when the morning rushes to start *fig.* at dawn

(2) *Таң сибірлегенде/ таң сибірлегенше* [taŋ sibirlegende/ taŋ sibirlegenše] *lit.* when the morning turns gray *fig.* before dawn

Noon

(3) *Тапа (тападай, тайда) тал түсте* [tapa (tapaday, tayda) tal tüste] *lit.* a genuine, true afternoon *fig.* in daylight

(4) *Шалқар түс* [šalqar tüste] *lit.* a big afternoon *fig.* afternoon

Sunset/ Evening/ Night

(5) *Көз байлану / көз байлағанда* [köz baylanu/köz baylaǵanda] *lit.* to blindfold eyes, when eyes are blindfolded *fig.* in the twilight

(6) *Ел [жұрт, кісі] аяғы басылғанда* [el [žürt, kisi] ayaǵı basılǵanda] *lit.* when people's legs calm down *fig.* in the evening

Cyclical process also refers to **seasons** when autumns turn into winters and winters to springs, etc.

Spring

(7) *Жер аяғы кеңу* [žer ayaǵı keŋu] *lit.* when the earth widens *fig.* about the spring time when the snow already melted and the earth got dry

Autumn

(8) *Қоңыр күз* [qoŋır küz] *lit.* a brown autumn *fig.* Indian summer

(9) *Қара күз* [qara küz] *lit.* a black autumn *fig.* late fall

Winter

(10) *Қылышың сүйреп қыс келер* [qılıšın süyrep qıs keler] *lit.* winter will come pulling its sword *fig.* it is spoken about winter

Another category of idioms that have a reference to time relate to a **life span** which is traditionally divided into three phases: birth, life, and death; moreover, the latter is the mostly conceptualized notion.

Birth

(11) *Дүние есігін ашу* [dünie esigin ašu] *lit.* to open the door to the world *fig.* to be born

Life

(12) *Жалған дүние* [žalǵan dünie] *lit.* a false world *fig.* a perishable world

(13) *Айдың күнің аманында* [aydıŋ küniŋ amanında] *lit.* when the sun and the moon are fine *fig.* in peacetime

(14) *Сын сағатта* [sın saǵatta] *lit.* at testing hour *fig.* at the critical moment

Death

(15) *Жан тасыру* [žan tapsıru] *lit.* to give the soul *fig.* to die

(16) *Сүйегіне қына шығу* [süyegine qına šıǵu] *lit.* when the henna appears on the bone *fig.* to die

A certain number of idioms refer to **parameters of age**; three basic periods could be identified: time when a child was born, then – got mature, and, finally, when a person became old. It should be noted that most of idioms relate to the elderly period of people's life.

Infancy

(17) *Шүкі өкпе* [šyiki ökpe] *lit.* a raw lung *fig.* a toddler

(18) *Қызыл қарын, жас бала* [qızıl qarın žas bala] *lit.* a child with a red abdomen *fig.* a child

Youth

(19) *Беті ашылмаған* [beti ašılmaǵan] *lit.* his/her face has not been opened *fig.* about a unmarried, inexperienced, young person

(20) *Бұғанасы қату* [buǵanası qatu] *lit.* the ribs get stronger at the collarbone *fig.* to grow, to mature

Aging

(21) *Жамбасы жерге тигенше* [žambası žerge tigenše] *lit.* until the pelvic bone touches the ground *fig.* to the death

(22) *Кәрі қойдың жасындай жасы қалу* [kæri qoydıŋ žasındaı žası qalu] *lit.* in the age of an old sheep *fig.* an old man

There is a group of idioms which emphasize the **speed** of action; only one idiom describes a slow action, all other idioms refer to 'rapidity of motion' (Evans, 2013), its quickness and agility.

(23) *Табан ауызында/ табан астында* [taban auzında/ taban astında] *lit.* under the sole *fig.* in a moment; very quickly

(24) *Кірпік қаққанша* [kirpik qaqqanša] *lit.* till one blinks *fig.* about an instant action

(25) *Өгіз аяң* [ögiz ayan] *lit.* an ox' pace *fig.* very slowly; at a snail's pace

The **passage of time** was measured via the duration of everyday activities, like preparation of food or milking the mare, etc. Another measure of time was done by the linguistic means denoting solar cycles or anthropomorphic dimensions. Example (28) is anthropologically motivated.

(26) *Ертеңен қара кешке дейін* [erteŋen qara keške deyin] *lit.* from early time to late evening *fig.* from morning to evening

(27) *Өмір бақи/ бойы* [ömir baqi/ boyı] *lit.* during the whole life *fig.* for all time; for ever and ever

(28) *Бастан аяқ* [bastan ayaq] *lit.* from the head to the foot *fig.* from the beginning to the end



The analysis showed that concepts of time are represented through temporally situated **events**, which are culturally motivated, and also through the parameters of age which are ethnographically stipulated. Idioms refer to the most significant events in human life related to birth, marriage, and death, e.g., *отыз күн ойын, қырық түн (күн) тойын қылу* [otız kün oyın, qırıq tün (kün) toyın qılu] *lit.* to feast on the wedding for 30 days and 40 nights *fig.* to arrange the wedding.

(29) *Бет ашау* [bet ašar] *lit.* a ceremony of opening the face *fig.* a rite/ a ceremony of expressing good wishes to a bride-to-be by people; the first step

(30) *Ас беру* [as беру] *lit.* to give food *fig.* to arrange a wake on the anniversary of death

As it was mentioned above, in poetic works the word *zaman* ‘time’ was found to be having a negative connotation (Kerimbekova, 2016). In idioms *zaman* has both positive and negative meaning. The negative meaning is found in idioms where the word refers to an indefinite period of time, which cannot be clearly defined and accurately identified. It could be noted that the meaning of *zaman* in such cases has a generalized and abstract notion of time:

(31) *Ақыр заман* [aqır zaman] *lit.* the end of time *fig.* doomsday

(32) *Кер заман* [ker zaman] *lit.* gloomy time *fig.* stagnant time; time characterized by stagnation, decline, and absence of any activity

(33) *Қу заман* [qu zaman] *lit.* dried-up time *fig.* hard times

Opposing to the negative meaning, the positive one is found in idioms where the word *zaman* ‘time’ refers to the period of time which is specified by additional characteristics. It should be noted that the given details appear to be familiar to native speakers because they relate to everyday activities and/or natural events:

(34) *Қой үстіне бозторғай жұмыртқалаған [ұялаған] заман* [qoy üstine boztorgay žumırtqalağan [uyalağan] zaman] *lit.* time when a skylark lays eggs on the sheep *fig.* peaceful time; prosperous life

(35) *Ит басын іркіт төгілген заман* [it basın irkit tögilgen zaman] *lit.* time when sour milk is spilled on the dog’s head *fig.* abundance; land of milk and honey

Table 1 shows the categories elaborated from the idioms related to time with examples and numbers. As it is seen from it, the biggest number of idioms was found to be denoting cycles and parameters of age (26 each); another group is represented by the category of life span (23), followed by idioms referring to passage of time (15), speed (12), and social events (6.)

The table does not include idioms with the word *заман* [zaman] ‘a period of time’ (6), idioms that relate to deictic reference of time (2), and idioms (2) that are given as examples of a link to space (see below).

**Table 1** – Categorization of concepts of time in Kazakh idioms

Concepts	Number of idioms	Basic characteristic	Example
Cycles	26	Idioms refer to the dawn (7), to the noon (5), to the twilights (6), and the night (1). Idioms refer to winter (4), to spring (1) and autumn (2).	<i>Ала көбен</i> [ala köben] at dawn <i>Ала көлеңке</i> [ala köleñke] twilight
Life span	23	Majority of idioms relate to the issue of death (16), others – to life (6) and birth (1).	<i>Қарасы өшу</i> [qarası öšu] to die
Parameters of age	26	Idioms relate to infancy (1) and childhood (2), youth (12), and to the old age (8). Three idioms denote age in comparison to another one.	<i>Көген көз</i> [kögen köz] young, inexperienced <i>Сүт кенже</i> [süt kenže] the last child in the family
Speed	12	11 idioms denote a fast action, one idiom relates to a slow one.	<i>Ә дегенше</i> [æ degenše] very fast
Passage of time	15	From/ since ... (2) From ... to ... (3) During ... (5) Till/ until ... (5)	<i>Ала қыстай</i> [ala qıstay] during the winter
Events	6	Idioms refer to rituals related to child’s first steps (2), wedding (2) and funeral ceremonies (2).	<i>Жылын беру/ өткізу</i> [jılın беру/ ötkizu] to arrange a wake on the anniversary of death

## Discussion

The present research also showed that time in Kazakh is lexically linked to space (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Boroditsky, 2000; 2001), for example, *өлі ара* [öli ara] *lit.* dead distance *fig.* at the end of month; *аяқ алыс* [ayaq alıs] *lit.* the length of the foot *fig.* the beginning of any activity, the first step. In the former example, the abstract domain of time (the end of the month) and concrete domain of space (the period when moon phase changes) are closely connected with each other; in the latter idiom the abstract domain of the beginning of an action is linked to the concrete domain of the legs' step. Both examples also demonstrate an anthropological background and natural character of their concrete domains. Actually, the idioms in Kazakh that refer to cyclical processes demonstrate the link between time and space as well.

Time in Kazakh idioms is presented as a deictic reference from the Moving Time perspective (Clark, 1973), when time is moving forward towards Ego, for example, *толайы келу* [tolayı keli] *lit.* to come full *fig.* time came, it is time for doing something; *күн туу* [kün tuu] *lit.* the sun/ the day is born *fig.* time/ a day when an opportunity to act freely, live, etc. has emerged. Though the latter example implies more a creative action rather than a motion; I found it possible to unite them into one category due to the fact that both of them refer to the ego's location. Moving Time metaphors could be explained by the general perception of time by Turks; time for them is fluid and endless, and it is dynamic in nature (Ayupov, 2012). Then, time moves, arrives, and creates while an individual just lives and fulfills his/ her everyday activities, i.e., keeps his/ her traditional way of living.

The present study confirmed the provision about the cyclical nature of time made by scholars who studied Turkic languages. According to L'vova et al. (1989), the cyclical feature of temporal reference can be explained by the belief of ancient Turks that there are no irreversible and finalized events; they are, in fact, repetitive, and nothing new happens in the world. This periodicity helps people to escape a feeling of hopelessness, and endues them with a sense of eternity and optimism. There is no explicit opposition of life to death; life is perceived as a state of being which is a continuation of non-being, after life a human returns to his initial state – to non-being; thus, life and death turn out to be just two manifestations of life – evident and non-evident ones.

The analysis of idioms also showed that Kazakhs distinguished certain periods in their life due

to their importance – infancy, youth, and old age – this could be also justified by the cyclical character of world perception. As L'vova et al. state, «the non-dual character of worldview stipulated a perception of all significant processes as cyclical» (1989: 51). As Table 1 shows, the biggest prominence is given to the period of youth (12 idioms); moreover, young people were classified to those who became mature (6 idioms) and those who did not (6 idioms), for example, *мәйегі аузынан* [аузы-мұрнынан] шығып отыр/ тұр [mæyegi auzınan auzi murnınan šigip otır tur] *lit.* the abomasum is out of one's mouth/ mouth and nose *fig.* a very young and inexperienced person; *ат жалын тартып міну* [at žalın tartıp minu] *lit.* to get onto a horse by seizing the mane *fig.* to mature. Thus, such distinction between inexperienced and experienced young people shows how important it was for Kazakhs to get mature, to support their families, and to become full members of their communities.

The analysis of idioms showed a reference of time to certain events in the life of Kazakhs, which take place in definite periods; prominent events are inextricably linked to seven days, forty days, and one year. When a child is born, a special holiday is arranged on the seventh day to celebrate the event of placing the child into the cradle – *бесик той* [besik toy] *fig.* a cradle holiday. On the 40<sup>th</sup> day another ritual takes place – *қырқынан шығару* [qırqınan šığaru] *fig.* to take out of 40 days – bathing the baby in the water where 40 drops of water from a silver tablespoon are added, and the first cut of hair and nails is performed. When the child starts walking (and it usually happens when he reaches one year), the ceremony of *тұсауын кесу* [tusauın kesu] *lit.* to cut fetters on the legs *fig.* a tradition to cut the fetters on a toddler's legs takes place – when his legs are tied with a thin lace, which is then cut by an honorable person. A certain sequence of events (on the seventh day, on the 40<sup>th</sup> day, and one year) is arranged when a person dies. Such perception of the world counts for existence of certain rituals in the life of Kazakhs and their commitment to observe them throughout the ages. Time exists as a kind of quality attributed to a subject whose life being is limited and predetermined by the Tengri; this awareness puts an order into the Turks' life and sets stability and calmness, traditionalism and repetitiveness.

As the analysis of idioms showed, the passage of time is stipulated by certain natural processes and everyday activities, for example, *шай қайнатым уақыт ішінде/ арасында* [šay қаунатім уақит ішінде/ арасында] *lit.* time until tea begins to boil *fig.* a short period of time. Also, in Kazakh there are

idioms related to horse breeding – *бие сауымдай уақыт/ мезет* [biye sauım uaqıt/ mezet] time between regular milking of a mare (appr. 30-40 minutes) *fig.* soon). The horse played a big role in the life of Kazakhs as a means of transportation and a source of food, and the activities related to horse breeding found their reflection in time denominations.

At the same time, in Kazakh time is not exactly defined; consequently, it has an approximated value. As it was noted by Kulmanov, Abduova and Ashenova, «Kazakhs had no concept of «pure time» beyond the sensual value of time and beyond the natural and social process» (2016: 2267). The beginning or the end of any action has an indefinite status which obeys certain rituals of everyday activities: *жылқы жұсар кез* [žilkı žusar kez] time for feeding horses in the morning; *бийе байлар кез* [biye baylar kez] *fig.* time to tie up the mare – time for giving special food and care to mares to receive more horse milk in spring, usually in May (two latter examples are taken from Sarbassova, 2015). The Kazakhs themselves do not perceive time measurement as an indefinite one; because of cyclicity, repetitiveness, and traditionalism of their activities, they intuitively set up the time for performing them. For them time has a stable and calm pace, and its certain periods are inextricably connected to their activities. A reference to an indefinite period of time bore a comic character, for example, the following expression was used as a joke – *ешкінің құйрығы көкке жеткенде, түйенің құйрығы жерге жеткенде* [eškiniñ quyrıǵı kökke žetkende tüyeniñ quyrıǵı žerge žetkende] *lit.* when the goat's tail reaches the sky, when the camel's tail reaches the earth *fig.* about an indefinite period of time which will never come.

As the analysis also showed, there is a positive connotation of the fast speed of an action; in its indirect estimation the approving assessment is revealed in some idioms, which can be explained by the fact that Kazakhs appreciated agility – the skill and ability to execute actions fast, e.g., *көзді ашып жұмғаниша* [közdi aşıp jumǵanışa] *lit.* till one opens and closes eyes *fig.* in an instant, instantly. In the same way, Kazakhs appraised the quick reaction and wit demonstrated by performers (*akıns*) in a contest of improvising performers (*aitys*) singing under the accompaniment of a national musical instrument (*dombıra*).

The application of the word *заман* [zaman] 'period of time, epoch' bears both positive and negative meaning; the word denotes a prolonged period of time with certain connotational characteristics. Again, as the previous examples show, the outstand-

ingness of the event in relation to everyday life activities – here, the unusualness of a certain period of time, even epoch – found its reflection in the marked representation by lexical means. As it was mentioned above, in idioms with a negative connotation *заман* [zaman] has an abstract, generalized notion of time period, and, vice versa, it has more concretized version in idioms with a positive meaning.

## Conclusion

In the present research idioms, which have reference to time, were analyzed. A linguistic analysis of Kazakh idioms showed that time is conceptualized as a cyclical process where days turn into nights, and autumns turn into winters, etc. Also, a life span is traditionally divided into three phases: birth, life, and death; moreover, the latter is the mostly conceptualized notion. A perception of life as a cyclical process brought to the notion that events are predetermined, and the breaks in the chain of events were specifically paid attention to as salient ones. The analysis showed that concepts of time are represented through temporally situated events, which are culturally motivated, and also through the parameters of age which are ethnographically stipulated. Kazakhs marked certain moments that outstood from the routine of their life.

The analysis showed that there is a linguistic link between time and space, and that such metaphors originate from anthropological and natural background. The belief in Tengri (the God/ the Heavens) and worship of nature at Turks determine their way of perception of the surrounding world and the way their perception found its reflection in their languages. The given examples also indicate the presence of a deictic reference (Clark, 1973) in Kazakh idioms, when Time moves towards Ego, and not vice versa.

On the whole, it could be stated that Time in Kazakh idioms is conceptualized as a geophysical, organic, social, and, somatic phenomenon:

1. The abstract domain of time in Kazakh is linked to the concrete domain of space.
2. There is a specific attention to certain periods of time (e.g. maturity and death, dawn and twilights).
3. Time in Kazakh idioms is conceptualized as CYCLICAL PROCESS, LIFE SPAN, PARAMETERS OF AGE, SPEED INDICATION, PASSAGE OF TIME, and SOCIAL EVENTS.

The present research is an initial attempt to study the issue of time conceptualization in the Kazakh language, and further research is needed to get its deeper understanding.

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