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## THE ARTISTIC CONCEPT “НЕФТЯНКА” (OIL BUSINESS) IN O. ARUKENOVA’S NOVEL “THE RULES OF THE NEFTYANKA”

Contemporary Kazakh prose is marked by the use and interaction of cultural codes, national and artistic concepts, and the personal biographies of authors. This article examines the artistic concept “нефтянка,” which forms the artistic integrity of O. Arukenova’s book “The Rules of the Neftyanka”. The purpose of this study is to characterize the concept not only as a category in cognitive literary studies, which involves the study of literary texts as a special form of cognition and mental activity, but also to identify the ethnic and cultural uniqueness of this concept. The article aims to examine the cognitive features of the concept “нефтянка” and the ways in which it is represented through conceptual metaphors.

Methodologically, we analyze metaphors and cognitive features of the concept presented in the figurative series identified in the artistic text, reflecting the main poetic elements of this story, such as the images of specialists from foreign companies and the location of oil companies. Through figurative relationships based on the hierarchy of boss/subordinate, local/foreign, cognitive signs appear that reflect the social aspects of life in modern society. The artistic concept “нефтянка” under consideration allows us to reveal the individual author’s picture of the world, the functioning of intertext, irony, and simulacra images, and allows us to examine this text more deeply, because each author not only interprets the concept in his/her own way but also supplements and enriches its content with individual meanings. In this context, the concept “нефтянка” becomes not only the theme of the narrative but also a cognitive mechanism that organizes the perception of the text.

**Keywords:** cognitive literary studies, artistic concept, national identity, conceptual metaphor.

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### О. Арукенованың «Правила нефтянки» әңгімесіндегі «нефтянка» көркемдік концептісі

Қазіргі заманғы қазақстандық проза мәдени кодтардың, ұлттық және көркемдік концепті, сондай-ақ авторлардың жеке өмірбаяндарының қолданылуымен және өзара әрекеттесуімен сипатталады. Бұл мақалада О. Арукенованың «Правила нефтянки» әңгімесінің көркемдік тұтастығын құрайтын «нефтянка» көркемдік концепті қарастырылады. Бұл зерттеудің негізгі мақсаты – бұл ұғымды тек танымдық әдебиеттанудағы санат ретінде сипаттау ғана емес, ол әдеби мәтінді таным мен ақыл-ой әрекетінің ерекше түрі ретінде зерттеуді қамтиды, сонымен қатар бұл ұғымның ұлттық және мәдени ерекшелігін анықтау. Мақалада «нефтянка» ұғымының когнитивтік сипаттамалары және оның концептуалды метафоралар арқылы бейнелену жолдары зерттеледі. Әдістемелік талдауда әдеби мәтінде кездесетін бейнелермен бейнеленген ұғымның концептуалды метафоралары мен когнитивтік атрибуттары қолданылады. Бұлар әңгіме поэтикасының негізгі элементтерін, мысалы, шетелдік компаниялардың мамандарының бейнелері мен мұнай кәсіпорындарының орналасқан жерін көрсетеді. Сондай-ақ, жоғары/бағынышты және жергілікті/бөтен иерархиясына негізделген бейнелі қатынастар арқылы қазіргі қоғамның әлеуметтік-экономикалық аспектілерін көрсететін когнитивтік қасиеттер ашылады. Қарастырылып отырған «нефтянка» әдеби тұжырымдамасы автордың жеке дүниетанымын, интертексттің, иронияның және симулякр бейнелерінің жұмыс істеуін анықтауға мүмкіндік береді. Бұл бізге мәтінді тереңірек зерттеуге мүмкіндік береді, өйткені әрбір автор ұғымды өзінің ерекше тәсілімен түсіндіріп қана қоймай, сонымен қатар оның мазмұнын, мағынаның жеке өсімдерімен толықтырады және байытады. Осы тұрғыда «нефтянка» ұғымы ерекше маңызға ие болады: ол тек баяндаудың тақырыбы ғана емес, сонымен қатар мәтінді қабылдауды ұйымдастыратын когнитивтік механизмге айналады.

**Түйін сөздер:** когнитивті әдебиеттану, көркемдік концепт, ұлттық бірегейлік, концептуалды метафора.

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**Художественный концепт «нефтянка»  
в повести О. Арукеновой «Правила нефтянки»**

Современная казахстанская проза характеризуется использованием и взаимодействием культурных кодов, национальных и художественных концептов, личных биографии авторов. В данной статье рассматривается художественный концепт «нефтянка», который составляет художественное целое в повести О. Арукеновой «Правила нефтянки». Основная цель данного исследования – охарактеризовать концепт не только как категорию в когнитивном литературоведении, которая предполагает изучение литературного текста как особой формы познания и ментальной деятельности, но и обозначить национальное и культурное своеобразие данного концепта. В статье предполагается рассмотреть когнитивные признаки концепта «нефтянка» и способы его репрезентации через концептуальные метафоры. Методологически используется анализ концептуальных метафор и когнитивных признаков концепта, представленных образными рядами, выявленных в художественном тексте, которые отражают основные элементы поэтики данной повести, такие, как образы специалистов иностранных компаний, место сосредоточения нефтяных концерн. Также через образные взаимоотношения, построенных на иерархии начальника/подчиненный, местный/иностраный проявляются когнитивные признаки, которые отражают общественно-социальные аспекты жизни современного общества. Рассматриваемый художественный концепт «нефтянка» позволяет выявить индивидуально-авторскую картину мира, функционирование интертекста, иронии, образов-симулякров, позволяет рассмотреть данный текст глубже, ибо каждый автор не только по-своему интерпретирует концепт, но и дополняет, обогащает его содержание индивидуальными приращениями смысла. В этом контексте концепт «нефтянка» приобретает особую значимость: он становится не только темой повествования, но и когнитивным механизмом, организующим восприятие текста.

**Ключевые слова:** когнитивное литературоведение, художественный концепт, национальное своеобразие, концептуальная метафора.

## Introduction

Cognitive literary studies, as a new direction in philology, examine a specific type of mental activity in literature and find its main task in researching the representation of knowledge and the processing of information in artistic texts. Contemporary literary texts are one of the sources for studying and researching the mechanisms of thinking and worldview of a particular group or community of people, with texts being viewed not only as aesthetic and stylistic integrities but also as objects of information. Contemporary literary texts are multifaceted, going beyond the boundaries of the text itself and touching on national mentality and collective experience.

The results of cognitive activity can be linked to the formation of a system of meanings (concepts) related to information about the actual or possible state of affairs in the world, that is, to what an individual knows, assumes, thinks, or imagines about objects of reality and possible worlds, and what is included in a person's conceptual system. According to M. Turner (1996: 27), one of the leading figures in cognitive literary studies, “creative abilities appear before rational

abilities”. According to J. Lakoff and M. Johnson (1989: 18), cognitive metaphor underlies all human thought processes as a way of understanding the world and conceptualizing it (“Our conceptual system is largely metaphorical”), that is, studying the specifics of thinking when perceiving a literary text helps to understand the fundamental abilities of consciousness.

One of the main tasks of cognitive literary studies is to study the phenomenon of text generation, which involves cognitive processes and their mechanisms, as well as the semantic units that arise in the process. As V. Krasnykh (1988: 43) notes: “When generating a text, the starting point is the concept, on which the semantic, cognitive, and compositional structure of the text depends. It is the concept, reflecting the author's intentions, that sets the cognitive and communicative direction of the text, conceptually embodying the ‘linguistic taste of the era’, the atmosphere and ‘breath’ of the time as a linguistic picture of the world”.

The purpose of this article is to examine the concept “нефтянка” in the context of a literary work. The object of study in this article is a book “Правила нефтянки” (Rules of The Neftyanka) by Kazakhstan writer O. Arukenova.

Oral Arukenova is a writer, poet, literary scholar, and translator. She writes in Kazakh and Russian. Arukenova's work has been published in online and paper journals and anthologies in Kazakhstan, Russia, Germany, Italy and USA. Her 2018 debut book, «Правила нефтянки» (Rules of The Neftyanka) was named the Literary Debut of the Year by the independent literary contest Altyn Qalam (2018). Her poem “Secretly I go to the park” translated by Shelley Fairweather-Vega entered the Great Works of Literature II manifold of City University of New York (CUNY). She is a finalist of MECENAT.KZ – literary award for the best novel about Kazakhstan (2022). Arukenova is a winner of the III Republican Contest for the Best Work for Children and Teenagers (2023). She is the author of four prose books “Rules of the Neftyanka” (2019), “Akpan” (2024), “Alma Mater” (2024), and “Kopir” (2024). She is also an author of the poetry collection “Abonoment” (2025). Her works have been translated into German, English, and Italian, which underscores her international significance in the literary world.

O. Arukenova's book of short stories, “The Rules of the Neftyanka,” describes the development of the oil industry in Kazakhstan at the end of the 20th century, which was largely dependent on foreign technologies and their investments, as well as the rules and procedures characteristic of the oil industry. It explores the contradictory reality of modern life associated with the oil industry. This work raises questions such as how the oil industry affects our society, what role people play in it, and how it affects our environment. It also reveals the personal experiences of characters working in the oil industry. In this book, the author presents the world of a modern oil company with its rules, which may be harsh for some, but for others, as the author puts it, a “true paradise.” The author also reflects on the profound social, cultural, and environmental issues associated with the oil industry.

The uniqueness of the author's individual worldview and the functioning of intertextuality, irony, and simulacra images in this work allow us to examine the concept “нефтянка” more deeply, as it becomes a symbol of both wealth and loss. Through this concept the author attempts to convey the uniqueness of her idea, which gives the story multi-layeredness and universality. The relevance of this article lies in its analysis of the concept as a reflection of national identity and authorial intention. The significance of this study lies in its examination of the concept under investigation through the prism

of cognitive literary studies, as well as in its integrative, interdisciplinary approach, which combines cognitive literary studies with cognitive linguistics.

Thus, the study addresses the following objectives:

- to identify the cognitive features of the concept “нефтянка” and its representatives;
- analyze several cognitive features of the concept “нефтянка”;
- show how the representatives of the concept “нефтянка” reflect the social aspects of society.

### Materials and methods

The concept as a plan for the content of a linguistic sign includes, in addition to its referential meaning, all significant cognitive and communicative information. An extremely important component of the semantics of an artistic concept is cognitive meaning and cognitive-imaginative representation, especially as a semantic characteristic of a linguistic sign that is not only related to the lexical-semantic system of language but also acts precisely as a notion, as a concept.

By the term “concept,” we mean not only units of cognitive activity, implying the existence of not only general cultural, basic concepts, but also individual concepts. Conceptual analysis allows us to look not only at the reflection of the social intelligence of a particular nation but also to reconstruct personal and authorial concepts, which, in turn, can serve as the basis for an artistic concept.

The examination of the lexeme “нефтянка” should begin with the etymology of this word to identify the initial motivating feature underlying the structure of the concept. Modern explanatory dictionaries show that this word originally came from Arabic via other languages. Dahl's Explanatory Dictionary (Dahl, 1994). indicates such meanings of this lexeme as raw materials for the oil refining and petrochemical industries, the location of oil deposits, and that oil is an expensive raw material. Thus, based on the information in this dictionary, it can be concluded that the lexeme “oil” has a number of meanings: mineral resource, raw material for the oil refining industry, expensive raw material, oil deposits.

For example, in S.I. Ozhegov's explanatory dictionary of the Russian language, the word “нефть” (oil), from which the lexeme “нефтянка” (neftyanka) derives, and its morphological property are characterized as follows:

I. A mineral liquid fuel used as a raw material to produce jet fuel, diesel fuel, gasoline, kerosene, and

fuel oil. Oil deposits. White oil (specialized) – a fuel produced from gas condensate.

II. Adjective: oil-related, as in oil derrick, oil field (Ozhegov, 1999). In our opinion, the characteristic described in the dictionary as “oil field” is more suitable for the structure of the concept “oil industry.”

### Literature review

Since the early 1990s, the term “concept” has appeared in various fields of literary studies and linguistics. It has become widely used in the conceptual apparatus of semantics, cognitive science, linguacultural, linguistics, intercultural communication, and cognitive literary studies. The concept is considered not only as a cognitive category but also as a deep mental sense that reflects both individual and national-collective ideas.

The theoretical and methodological basis of the study was provided by the works of many researchers. In the field of cognitive linguistics, we can point to the works of scientists studying the theories of conceptualization and categorization by Z.D. Popov, I.A. Sternin, E.S. Kubryakova and Yu.S. Stepanov; the sphere of concepts of the national language by D.S. Likhachev; and the linguistic-cultural concept by V.I. Karasik. Contemporary cognitive literary studies consider the concept as the basic meaning-forming category of a literary text. In this vein, the methodological basis is formed by the works of E.V. Lozinskaya, N.V. Volodina, L.G. Babenko, L.N. Churilina, O.S. Aketina, Yu.A. Karasyova and Zh.N. Maslova, as well as the artistic concept of T.V. Tarasova.

Research by scientists on the theory of conceptual metaphors, mind, and narrative in the field of cognitive poetics is presented in the works of G. Lakoff, M. Johnson, M. Turner, G. Faulconer, R. Tzur, P. Stockwell, J. Gavins, L. Zunshine, J. Gavins, G. Steen, M. Fludernik, M. Caracciolo, G. Bolens, M. Harter, R. Schneider, S. Riaz, D. Bourou, E. Plaza, M. Schorlemmer.

Lingua-cultural studies, linguistic and cognitive studies of the concept, and conceptual analysis are examined by V.I. Gromova, I.V. Kononova, A.A. Kolesnikova, A.M. Danilets, V.I. Karasik, L.N. Churilina, and Sh.N. Saminzhonova. Kazakh scientists researching cognitive processes and cognitive poetics include L.V. Safronova, A.S. Kalieva, G.K. Toishibaeva, and A.S. Bakytzhanova.

The most representative work in our study includes:

S.A. Askoldov, who was one of the first in world linguistics to turn to the study of concepts (“Concept and Word,” 1928). He believed that the most essential function of concepts as cognitive tools is their function of substitution and stated the need to study literary texts through the prism of concepts. “A concept is a mental construct that replaces an indefinite set of objects of the same kind in the process of thinking” (Askoldov, 1997).

L.V. Miller defines an artistic concept as “a complex mental formation belonging not only to individual consciousness, but also to the psychomental sphere of a particular ethnocultural community,” as “a universal artistic experience recorded in cultural memory and capable of contributing to the formation of new artistic meanings” (Miller, 2000).

According to I.A. Tarasova, “We believe that in the field of artistic text research, one such interdisciplinary term could be “artistic concept” (Tarasova, 2010).

The emergence of literary concepts also depends on the writer’s reading experience, because the artist’s knowledge of the world includes at least two main sources: reality and literature. It is often through literature that the writer discovers structures and phenomena in the spiritual and material world, similarities and analogies which he/she finds in the past and present. Influenced by fundamental cultural concepts, writers themselves can “initiate” their creation. In this case, thanks to literature, certain phenomena of the spiritual, material, and social life of society can acquire the significance of concepts in the public consciousness. Later, these concepts return to literature, already incorporating the experience of their previous interpretation and acquiring new ones.

Understanding the artistic concept as a component of the sphere of concepts of an artistic text includes those mental characteristics and phenomena that are reflected in the consciousness of the people and are cognitively and pragmatically significant within the framework of the plot line of the work set by the author.

A review of recent scholarly work on cognitive poetics and cognitive linguistics that considers the artistic concept as a category put forward different points of view.

I.V. Kononova suggests that when identifying the structure of artistic concepts, one should first consider the imaginative, associative, and value components, as they are the most mobile and reflect the uniqueness of concepts (Kononova, 2023).



V.I. Gromova's work is devoted to studying the role of conceptual analysis based on methods of the linguacultural approach. Conceptual analysis opens new horizons for studying texts (Gromova, 2024).

As A.M. Danilets notes, the construction of a literary text involves the use of certain linguistic units that verbalize the conceptual picture of the writer's world as a representative of a particular culture, which allows for a more effective interpretation of the author's vision (Danilets, 2024).

In A.A. Kolesnikova's study, the concept is associated with the linguistic representation of mental attitudes inherent in speakers of the same language, representatives of the same linguistic culture. The concept is inextricably linked to the logic and systematization of knowledge and social experience (Kolesnikova, 2023).

According to E.A. Ogneva, text is a complex, holistic, linear cognitive-discursive formation that represents the writer's communicative intention in the form of a text sphere of concepts with a unified, hierarchically organized structure within which artistic concepts are deployed (Ogneva, 2019).

Kazakh researchers working in the field of cognitive poetics examine the category of concepts from different perspectives of cognitive analysis.

In her article, scholar Safronova L.V. examines the postmodern novel at different levels of its poetics, starting with left-brain writing techniques relevant to the postmodern worldview, as well as mythological time, flat representation of space, collage composition, plotlessness, and the simulacralization of imagery, which is a feature of the author's position and its realization in the artistic text (Safronova, 2016).

In her work, author A.S. Kalieva examines the transformation of literary consciousness in creative works, using examples from contemporary Kazakh literature, which is influenced by information technology on human reality, worldview, and spiritual world. This undoubtedly means that contemporary literary works are distinguished by the technogenic nature of the author's consciousness (Kalieva, 2021).

The research of the next author, G.K. Toishibaeva, is the definition of the place of the concept in the writer's sphere of concepts, the description of the individual features of its content structure and linguistic means of expression, as well as the factors contributing to the individualization of the concept's content (Toishibaeva, 2023).

Thus, the central category of artistic text analysis in cognitive poetics remains the image of the author

and his linguistic personality. However, the application of the methodological apparatus of cognitive linguistics in the description of poetic concepts that form the individual author's sphere of concepts allows us to obtain additional information about the cognitive mechanisms that generate the hidden, deeper meaning of a literary text.

## Results and discussion

Let us define the scope of cognitive features of the artistic concept “нефтянка” in O. Arukenova's book “The Rules of the Neftyanka,” as well as the individual author's additions to this concept. In O. Arukenova's book, the concept “нефтянка” is actualized by several series of cognitive features. Thus, if we define the ideological and thematic orientation of the work in terms of concepts, we see a multi-meaning semantic concept that encompasses, first and foremost, various social, daily, and artistic-conceptual images. The first series consists of features related to the location of oil deposits: the country, city, and company or corporation location (and simultaneously the space). The story emphasizes that cities such as Atyrau and Aktau are oil capitals that have changed their appearance thanks to the oil industry.

*Город представлял собой сложное смешение несовместимых стилей. Типовая советская архитектура соседствовала с новомодным хай-теком* (Arukenova, 2019: 6).

(The city had a complex mixture of incompatible styles. Typical soviet architecture coexisted with newfangled high-tech designs.)

The city described by the author appears to us in two realities. Located at the junction of Europe and Asia, the city seems to be divided not only by the Ural River but also by different types of architectural buildings.

*Здание компании заметно отличалось от серых «совковых» пятиэтажек на левом берегу Урала» и на правом берегу: «Высотное, из красного кирпича и стекла, словно доставленное из Амстердама или Антверпена, оно манило благополучием»* (Arukenova, 2019: 6).

(The company's building stood out from the gray Soviet-style five-story buildings on the left bank of the Ural River and on the right bank: “Tall, made of red brick and glass, as if delivered from Amsterdam or Antwerp, it exuded prosperity”).

Here, the author uses parallels to heighten the contrast, showing how much the arrival of oil companies from Europe has changed the city's appearance.

The success of an oil company is determined by its location and the impressive size of its corporate headquarters.

*Рядом с офисом – ирландский бар, будто перемещенный из Дублина. Новенькие сверкающие автомобили на стоянке подчеркивали статус обитателей оазиса (Arukenova, 2019: 7).*

*...она повела его по офисам десятиэтажного подразделения транснациональной нефтяной корпорации (Arukenova, 2019: 14).*

(Next to the office was an Irish bar, as if transported from Dublin. Brand new shiny cars in the parking lot emphasized the status of the inhabitants of this oasis.

*...she led him through the offices of the ten-story division of a multinational oil corporation.)*

The mention of foreign cities and countries in the novel indicates the oil industry's dependence on them, due to expats coming to work in the oil industry or the relocation of employees.

*Стив приглашал его в Лондон на месяц – познакомиться с командой, с отчетностью, очертить круг обязанностей.*

*Оформишь красиво и отправишь местным шефам, в Астану, Лондон, Амстердам, Милан, Нью-Йорк (Arukenova, 2019: 17).*

(Steve invited him to London for a month to meet the team, familiarize himself with the reporting system, and outline his responsibilities.

You'll make it look nice and send it to the local bosses in Astana, to London, to Amsterdam, to Milan, and New York.)

The second row consists of the characteristics of this concept – work, place of work, departments, and positions held in the company. These characteristics of the concept can be interpreted in many ways – they include the daily routine of human existence, social opportunities, career prospects, certain skills and knowledge, and, finally, personal connections that help people obtain high-paying positions at work.

*Но, в конце концов, удача улыбнулась и Малику. После окончания физкультурного института по большому благу он устроился на работу в нефтянку и не куда-нибудь, а в закупки (Arukenova, 2019: 24).*

*Вот напротив села девушка, заметно, что недавно в нефтянке, глаза восторженные, носик вздернут (Arukenova, 2019: 41).*

*Когда геологоразведчики обнаружили, что нефти гораздо больше, чем ожидалось, и расположена она не так глубоко, компания начала разрастаться как на дрожжах. Ержан с Лерой*

*первыми устанавливали связи между местной властью и приезжими нефтяными операторами. Так и повелось с тех пор, что важные решения согласуются непременно с их участием (Arukenova, 2019: 56).*

(But, in the end, Malik got lucky. After graduating from the physical education university thanks to his connections, he got a job in the neftyanika, and not just anywhere, but in procurement.

Opposite him sat a girl, clearly new to the oil industry, her eyes shining with enthusiasm, her nose turned up.

When geologists discovered that there was much more oil than expected and it was not located very deep, the company began to grow rapidly. Yerzhan and Lera were the first to establish ties between the local authorities and the visiting oil operators. Since then, it has become common practice for important decisions to be made with their participation.)

It is also worth noting the place of residence of people who came to work in the oil industry, which is divided according to a boss-subordinate hierarchy.

*Вахтовый лагерь в маленьком городке на западе страны. На огороженной территории – сборные домики двух видов: побольше и поосновательнее для экспатов и местных топ-менеджеров, обычные бараки для остальных. И что-то среднее между ними – гостевой дом для командировочных (Arukenova, 2019: 61).*

(A shift camp in a small town in the west of the country. On the fenced-off territory, there are two types of prefabricated houses: larger and more solid ones for expats and local top managers, and ordinary cabins for the rest. And something in between – a guest house for business travelers.)

The characters in the story are different people, but they are united by one thing – the desire to work in the oil industry.

*Криса пригласили консультантом по подбору высококвалифицированных иностранных специалистов в самый перспективный нефтяной проект после одного-единственного ужина с высокопоставленным чиновником. У нефтяника столько перспектив, а жениться он еще успеет (Arukenova, 2019: 36).*

*«Срочная вакансия в нефтянке», – важно сказала по телефону рекрутер Дарига. Дана помчалась в агентство (Arukenova, 2019: 60).*

*– А я уже и забыла, как комфортно быть топ-менеджером в нефтянке (Arukenova, 2019: 74).*

*Повезло, что ты в нашу породу! Выбирай богатых мужчин из нефтянки и не пропадешь* (Arukenova, 2019: 78).

*Мать не одобряла этот поступок при Радике, но он слышал, как она хвасталась по телефону своим подругам, что сын стал начальником не где-нибудь, а в нефтянке.* (Arukenova, 2019: 116).

*Петя терпеливо ждал достойной вакансии в нефтянке, отмахиваясь от незначительных, на его взгляд, предложений.*

*Сразу два, и оба предлагали рассмотреть вакансии в нефтянке. Наконец что-то засветилось* (Arukenova, 2019: 133).

(Kris was invited as a consultant on the recruitment of highly qualified foreign specialists for the most promising oil project after a single dinner with a high-ranking official.

The oilman has so many prospects, and he will still have time to get married.

“Urgent opening in the oil industry,” a recruiter Dariga said importantly on the phone. Dana rushed to the agency.

“And I had already forgotten how comfortable it is to be a top manager in the oil industry.”

You’re lucky to be one of us! Choose rich men from the oil industry and you won’t lose yourself.

His mother did not approve of this move in front of Radik, but he heard her bragging to her friends on the phone that her son had become a boss not just anywhere, but in the oil industry.

Petya patiently waited for a decent job in the oil industry, dismissing offers that he considered insignificant.

Two at once, and both offered to consider jobs in the oil industry. Finally, something lit up.)

The subsequent cognitive features of the concept are arranged in figurative rows that reflect the main elements of the poetics of this story, such as the images of specialists from foreign companies who oversee oil fields, foreign specialists who hold key positions and manage firms, and the so-called expats. According to the author of the story, even foreigners without specific skills and abilities, without special education, can become bosses if they have the support of local bosses.

*В подчинении у экспатов – сплошь дипломированные местные специалисты, так что им остается только руководить* (Arukenova, 2019: 37).

*– У меня а-ме-ри-кан-ский пас-порт! – выговаривала она по слогам на еженедельном совещании* (Arukenova, 2019: 104).

*Она – эмоциональная, натравим на отдел контрактов, а те пусть американцам пожалуются, это весомый аргумент, чтобы контракт не продлевать* (Arukenova, 2019: 108).

*Генеральным директором оказался мужчина средних лет по имени Паскаль де Фонтэн, он говорил на английском с красивым французским акцентом* (Arukenova, 2019: 142).

(The expats’ subordinates are all certified local specialists, so all they have to do is supervise.

“I have an Ame-ri-can passport!” – She pronounced syllable by syllable at the weekly meeting.

She is emotional; let’s set the contracts department on her, and they can complain to the Americans, which is a strong argument for not renewing the contract.

The CEO turned out to be a middle-aged man named Pascal de Fontaine, who spoke English with a lovely French accent.)

**Table 1** – The cognitive features of representing the concept “нефтянка”

No	<i>The cognitive characteristics</i>	<i>Ways of representation</i>	<i>Examples from the text</i>
1	Attributes that point to where oil deposits are located	country, city, location of oil deposits location of a company or corporation (architecture, style, building)	Atyrau; Aktau. oil platform in the Caspian Sea. incompatible style; Soviet architecture; trendy high-tech; the company’s building is tall, made of red brick and glass, and exudes prosperity.
2	Attributes that indicate the potential to work in an oil company	prospectivity of the oil sector Personal connections divisions	The company began to grow rapidly, establishing connections between local authorities and visiting oil operators. getting a job in the oil industry through connections; eyes full of enthusiasm, clearly new to the oil industry;

Continuation of the table

No	<i>The cognitive characteristics</i>	<i>Ways of representation</i>	<i>Examples from the text</i>
3	Attributes associated with the place of residence and cultural pastimes of oil workers	housing for managers housing for subordinates	a shift camp in the west of the country; larger prefabricated houses for expats and top managers; ordinary huts for the rest; a guest house for business travelers;
4.	Attributes related to specialized education, profession, knowledge, and skills	certified specialists, key positions, managers	All certified local specialists; American passport; renew contract; speak English

The concept “нефтянка” is represented through such concept increments as “newcomers,” “old-timers,” and “rules and procedures.”

O. Arukenova, through the binary parallels of the lexemes “newcomers” and “old-timers,” emphasizes the regularity of the foundations and rules of a modern oil company, where the rules are dictated by the old-timers, who, thanks to their resourcefulness and loyalty to their superiors, remain at work and do not allow undesirable ‘newcomers’ to “settle in” to the company. Thus, the working atmosphere in oil companies is built on a hierarchy of old/new, boss/subordinate, and foreign/local:

*...все решают местные, здесь идут сначала к агашке на поклон и только потом – на прием самому главному экспату (Arukenova, 2019: 16).*

*Только с новенькой не заладилось с самого начала. Как-то Агзам услышал на совещании, что одного человека из производственного отдела надо грамотно убрать (Arukenova, 2019: 48).*

*Нет, я в такие игры не играю, и не надо меня в это втягивать, – изменила тон новенькая (Arukenova, 2019: 49).*

*Курбана долго обрабатывать не пришлось, он настолько ненавидел новенькую, что сразу согласился с планом Кири (Arukenova, 2019: 45).*

*Ержан и Лера работают в проекте с самого начала, вот уже лет двадцать, и сразу могут распознать новичка.*

*Другой парень, американец чешского происхождения, продержался в пять раз дольше срока, десять лет вместо двух, отведенных ему местными старожилками (Arukenova, 2019: 55).*

(...everything is decided by the locals; here, they first go to the boss to pay their respects and only then to the most important expat.

Things went wrong with the new girl from the very beginning. Once, Agzam heard at a meeting that somebody from the production department needed to be discreetly removed.

“No, I don’t play those games, and don’t drag me into it,” the new girl changed her tone.

It didn’t take long to persuade Kurban; he hated the new girl so much that he immediately agreed to Kira’s plan.

Yerzhan and Lera have been working on the project since the beginning, for twenty years now, and can immediately recognize newcomers.

Another guy, an American of Czech descent, lasted five times longer than expected, ten years instead of the two allotted to him by the local old-timers.)

The cognitive metaphor “procedures attached” refers to a set of all necessary requirements and nomenclatures relating to regular employees and contingent workers in the oil industry, as well as their stay at the “oil field.” The Anglicisms used in the novel, such as “Klondike,” “expat,” “high-tech,” and “HR,” emphasize the modern realities of the oil refining sector in the country, which is dependent on foreign capital.

*Казахстанская нефтянка – клондайк для любого экспата, а для консультанта – настоящий рай (Arukenova, 2019: 25).*

(Kazakhstan’s oil industry is a Klondike for any expat, and a real paradise for consultants.)

Further, while researching the artistic concept “oil industry” we identified the following cognitive metaphors, representing the concept “neftyanka” which reflect the socio-cultural aspects of modern society. The author uses the metaphors “oil vein,” “heart of the company,” “black liquid,” “oil money,” and “living off oil,” which are lexical representations of the concept “neftyanka.”

*В Атырау, в нефтянке, уже пять лет работал его друг Ербол. Через неделю Петю отправили на экскурсию, на нефтяную платформу на Каспии, туда, где бьется сердце компании – нефтяная жила (Arukenova, 2019: 14).*

– Зюзя обнаружил в своем огороде нефтяную скважину, умыл лицо черной жидкостью как положено, а потом всему миру и соседу Гришке нагло показал фигу... (Arukenova, 2019: 76).



*Первым делом надо устроиться в нефтянку. Все завидуют тем, кто работает в нефтянке. Высокомерные северяне, хитрые южане, даже иностранцы рады работать в ее родном городе за нефтяные деньги (Arukenova, 2019: 79).*

*Вся страна живет за счет нас, за счет нефти, ... (Arukenova, 2019: 81).*

(His friend Yerbol had been working in Atyrau, in the oil industry, for five years. A week later, Petya was sent on an excursion to an oil platform in the Caspian Sea, where the heart of the company beat the oil vein.

“Zyuzuza discovered an oil well in his garden, washed his face with black liquid as required, and then brazenly showed the whole world and his neighbor Grishka the finger...”.

The first thing to do is to get a job in the oil industry. Everyone envies those who work in the oil industry. Arrogant northerners, cunning Southerners, even foreigners are happy to work in its hometown for oil money.

The whole country lives off us, off oil...)

In conclusion, based on the above excerpts of the representative features of the concept “нефтянка,” we can state:

1. These cognitive representatives reveal the social aspects of the concept “нефтянка” as an opportunity to improve one’s social status and get a job by working in the oil industry. High salaries, social benefits, opportunities to train abroad, and lucrative connections are all possible thanks to the opportunity to work in the “нефтянка”. The text uses the metaphor “agashka,” (uncle) which has an ethnic connotation, as it is characteristic of Kazakh linguistic culture. For the Kazakh mentality, having an “agashka” in the oil industry literally means having a good protector who can change your life by getting you a job in the oil industry, even without a special education. Social stratification is revealed, which is possible thanks to “oil money,” the struggle for a better position, to be at the top of the hierarchy: boss, top manager, ordinary shift worker.

2. Through the artistic concept “нефтянка” the interaction between humans and nature, economic opportunities and environmental consequences, the destructive impact of the oil industry on the environment described in the text, and the possibility of solving the problem of emissions for foreign companies in another way, by providing high-ranking positions in the company to loyal people, are emphasized.

– *Короче, мажор этот – сын главного эко-*

*лога страны и известный раздолбай. Нашим нужен, чтобы разводить косяки по выбросам.*

*Пете все время что-то выдавали и предохраняли от недоброжелательное окружающей среды, от опасностей на рабочем месте и производстве ... (Arukenova, 2019: 15).*

*На следующий его вызвал сам, генеральный директор, Франческо Мартинелли. Угостил кофе и рассказал о плачевной ситуации по экологическим выбросам на Каспии.*

(– In short, this rich kid is the son of the country’s chief ecologist and a notorious slacker. We need him to solve problems with emissions.

They always gave Petya something and protected him from a hostile environment, from dangers at work and in production. ...

The next day, he was summoned by the CEO himself, Francesco Martinelli. He treated him to coffee and told him about the deplorable situation with environmental emissions in the Caspian region).

3. Personal relationships and conflicts among employees of oil companies, whose lives and work relate to the “нефтянка”, run through the entire story. The concept “нефтянка” is revealed through ethical, emotional, interpersonal, individual, and collective components and is verbalized by key words expressing the author’s value system or specific worldview. It is expressed through binary lexical units such as friendship-betrayal, success-bad luck, loyalty-infidelity/deception. Money and power can change a person, which is possible in the oil industry.

*Второй год в нефтянке стал для Малика триумфальным. Только вернулся из отпуска, как его назначили закупищиком, а Ербола – начальником отдела (Arukenova, 2019: 18).*

(Malik’s second year in the oil industry was a triumphant one. He had just returned from vacation when he was appointed purchasing agent, and Erbol was appointed head of department).

Based on the above, we can conclude that conceptual analysis of a literary text can broadly interpret its ideological and thematic orientation. Conceptual analysis helps to establish both the author’s worldview and intent, as well as potential, semantically significant subtexts that:

- are characteristic of both individuals and society;
- are cognitive in nature and represent the conceptual level of a given literary text;
- have generalizing power and relate to all other categories of the author’s thinking and his creative thinking in the presented text;

- find their material embodiment in words-terms, symbols, metaphors, and images of culture;
- can be repeated several times in the same text in the form of certain semantic units expressed by various means: a word, phrase, idiom, or metaphor.

## Conclusion

Thus, in the course of analyzing the content and functioning of the concept “нефтянка” in O. Arukenova’s novel, cognitive relevant features were identified, as well as an individual authorial feature of the artistic concept, indicating not only “the place, the sphere of industry, and the place where an individual acquires material wealth,” but also the author’s ethnical-philosophical views and the uniqueness of his mentality.

We proceed from the premise that an artistic concept, encompassing both individual authorial attributes and meanings and significances belong-

ing to the national aesthetic tradition, is realized through a series of contextual characteristics that reveal its essence. For this reason, methods for explicating the semantic content of an artistic concept should not only be considered, borrowed from literary studies, linguistics, and methods for studying intratextual semantic and stylistic elements, but also a cognitive analysis of the “increments” of meanings and significances belonging to the national conceptual sphere.

The concept “нефтянка” in Oral Arukenova’s story appears in a multi-layered way, combining social, environmental, and personal aspects. Conceptual analysis of the artistic concept “нефтянка” revealed the ideological and thematic orientation and integrity of this work, while research into the concept based on cognitive characteristics allowed us to identify the national uniqueness of the artistic concept as part of the individual concept, the author’s intention, and the sphere of concepts in this work.

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