





M. Akhmediyarova , **B. Shalabay** ,
K. Shulembayeva , **G. Tleuberdina*** 

Sh. Ualikhanov Kokshetau University, Kokshetau, Kazakhstan
*e-mail: guldentleuberdina@inbox.ru

THE LINGUISTIC REPRESENTATION OF TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS IN THE WORKS OF M. AUEZOV AND W. SHAKESPEARE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

This article presents a comparative cultural-linguistic analysis of the representation of traditions and ritual discourse in Mukhtar Auezov's epic novel *The Path of Abai* and selected plays by William Shakespeare (*Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Twelfth Night*). The study explores how ritual language functions as a mechanism for encoding national worldview, social hierarchy, and moral values within Kazakh and English literary traditions. Drawing on ethnolinguistic analysis, speech act theory, discourse-pragmatic methodology, and cultural linguistics, the research examines 45 textual fragments that illustrate ritualized speech acts such as blessings, oaths, lamentations, curses, wedding formulas, and honor-related expressions. The findings demonstrate that ritual language in both corpora operates as a performative system that regulates social relations and legitimizes authority. In Auezov's narrative, ritual discourse is grounded in oral-poetic tradition, ethnographic terminology, and communal forms of speech, reflecting collective cultural consciousness. In Shakespeare's works, ritual language is shaped by liturgical, legal, and rhetorical conventions of the Elizabethan era, emphasizing institutional authority and individual moral responsibility. Despite cultural differences, both authors employ ritual speech as a structural and semantic device that transforms personal experience into socially validated action. The study contributes to contemporary cultural linguistics by proposing a comparative pragmatic framework for analyzing ritual discourse across civilizations. It demonstrates that literary language serves not only as an artistic medium but also as a repository of collective memory and a carrier of cultural identity.

Keywords: ritual discourse, ethnolinguistics, cultural linguistics, performativity, Auezov, Shakespeare, national worldview, speech acts.

М. Ахмедиярова, Б. Шалабай, Қ. Шулембаева, Г. Тлеубердина*

Ш. Уалиханов атындағы Көкшетау университеті, Көкшетау, Қазақстан
*e-mail: guldentleuberdina@inbox.ru

М. Әуезов пен У. Шекспир шығармаларындағы салт-дәстүрлердің тілдік көрінісі: салыстырмалы талдау

Бұл мақалада Мұхтар Әуезовтің «Абай жолы» эпопеясы мен Уильям Шекспирдің таңдамалы пьесаларындағы («Гамлет», «Ромео мен Джульетта», «Макбет», «Венециялық көпес», «Он екінші түн») салт-дәстүр мен ритуалдық дискурстың тілдік көрінісіне салыстырмалы мәдени-лингвистикалық талдау жасалады. Зерттеу қазақ және ағылшын әдеби дәстүрлерінде ритуалдық тілдің ұлттық дүниетанымды, әлеуметтік иерархияны және моральдық құндылықтарды кодтаушы механизм ретіндегі қызметін айқындауға бағытталған. Этнолингвистикалық талдау, сөйлеу актілері теориясы, дискурс-прагматикалық әдіс және мәдени лингвистика тәсілдері негізінде бата, ант, жоқтау, қарғыс, неке формулалары және ар-намысқа қатысты тілдік бірліктер қамтылған 45 мәтіндік фрагмент зерттелді. Зерттеу нәтижелері екі автор шығармаларында да ритуалдық тілдің әлеуметтік қатынастарды реттейтін және билікті легитимдейтін перформативтік жүйе ретінде қызмет атқаратынын көрсетеді. Әуезов прозасында ритуалдық дискурс ауызша-поэтикалық дәстүрге, этнографиялық атауларға және қауымдық сөйлеу формаларына негізделіп, ұжымдық мәдени сананы бейнелейді. Ал Шекспир туындыларында ритуалдық тіл елизаветалық дәуірдің литургиялық, құқықтық және риторикалық нормалары арқылы көрініс тауып, институционалдық билік пен жеке моральдық жауапкершілікті айқындайды. Зерттеу мәдени лингвистиканың қазіргі бағыттарына сәйкес өркениеттер арасындағы ритуалдық дискурсты талдаудың салыстырмалы-прагматикалық моделін ұсынады. Мақала әдеби тілдің көркемдік құрал ғана емес, сонымен қатар ұлттық жақтың сақтаушысы әрі мәдени идентичтіліктің тасымалдаушысы екенін дәлелдейді.

Түйін сөздер: ритуалдық дискурс, этнолингвистика, мәдени лингвистика, перформативтік актілер, Әуезов, Шекспир, ұлттық дүниетаным, сөйлеу актілері.

М. Ахмедиярова, Б. Шалабай, К. Шулембаева, Г.Т. Тлеубердина*

Кокшетауский университет имени Ш. Уалиханова, Кокшетау, Казахстан

*e-mail: guldentleuberdina@inbox.ru

Языковое отображение традиций и обрядов в произведениях М. Ауэзова и У. Шекспира: сравнительный анализ

В статье представлен сравнительный культурно-лингвистический анализ языковой репрезентации традиций и ритуального дискурса в эпопее Мухтара Ауэзова «Путь Абая» и избранных пьесах Уильяма Шекспира («Гамлет», «Ромео и Джульетта», «Макбет», «Венецианский купец», «Двенадцатая ночь»). Исследование направлено на выявление того, как ритуальный язык функционирует в качестве механизма кодирования национального мировоззрения, социальной иерархии и моральных ценностей в казахской и английской литературных традициях. На основе этнолингвистического анализа, теории речевых актов, дискурс-прагматического метода и культурной лингвистики были рассмотрены 45 текстовых фрагментов, включающих благословения, клятвы, причитания, проклятия, брачные формулы и выражения, связанные с категорией чести. Результаты исследования показывают, что в обоих корпусах ритуальный язык функционирует как перформативная система, регулирующая социальные отношения и легитимирующая авторитет. В прозе Ауэзова ритуальный дискурс опирается на устно-поэтическую традицию, этнографическую лексику и коллективные формы общения, отражая общинное культурное сознание. В произведениях Шекспира ритуальный язык формируется под влиянием литургических, правовых и риторических норм елизаветинской эпохи, акцентируя институциональную власть и личную моральную ответственность. Работа вносит вклад в современную культурную лингвистику, предлагая сравнительно-прагматическую модель анализа ритуального дискурса в межкультурной перспективе. Исследование подтверждает, что литературный язык является не только художественным средством, но и носителем коллективной памяти и культурной идентичности.

Ключевые слова: ритуальный дискурс, этнолингвистика, культурная лингвистика, перформативность, Ауэзов, Шекспир, национальное мировоззрение, речевые акты.

Introduction

Literary fiction is not only a means of perceiving reality through an aesthetic lens but also a repository of cultural memory (Eagleton, 2000; Geertz, 1973; Hall, 1990). Through language, authors convey both the personal emotions of their characters and the worldview of an entire people (Humboldt, 1836; Sapir, 1921; Whorf, 1956). This becomes especially evident in works that place particular emphasis on depicting national life, customs, and traditional practices. Among such works are Mukhtar Auezov's epic novel *The Path of Abai* (Auezov, 2007) and the dramaturgy of William Shakespeare. Despite differences in historical period, genre, and cultural context, the language in the works of both authors becomes a mirror reflecting social and cultural reality (Sharifian, 2017; Wierzbicka, 1997).

M. Auezov created not merely a literary work, but a cultural and historical encyclopedia of the Kazakh people of the nineteenth century (Kaidar, 2004; Kenzheakhmetuly, 2007; Syzdyq, 1997). Through the language of the novel, readers are introduced to the entire world of nomadic civilization – its laws, customs, and ways of life. The author preserves the authenticity of the cultural context by incorporating a wide range of ethnographic elements into the tex-

tual space, such as *bi* (judge), *sultan*, *aul* (village), *toi* (feast), *kymyz* (fermented mare's milk), *kыз узату* (bride sending-off ceremony), *zhyrau* (epic singer), and *zhesir* (widow) (Abdrasheva, 2014; Smagulova, n.d.). These units not only denote specific cultural realities but also encapsulate deeper semantic layers.

Shakespeare lived during the Renaissance, a period in which English society was undergoing a transition between the medieval and the early modern eras. His plays are replete with references to tradition—both linguistic and ritual (Gray, 2023; The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare and Religion, 2023). Shakespeare's language is rich in archaisms, rhetorical devices (anaphora, antithesis, hyperbole), and allusions to mythology, the Bible, and historical realities (Bakhtin, 1986; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Together, these elements construct a culturally encoded world articulated through language (Sharifian, 2017). In Shakespeare's works, such "customary" realities as marital agreements, church weddings, burial rituals, the dueling code, festive masquerades, and the practices of urban guilds are woven into artistic conflict and genre play; their broader context is the family and marital norms and ecclesiastical ceremonies of Elizabethan England. The linguistic representation of these tra-

ditions directly shapes the poetic structure and the actions of the characters.

One of the key distinctions lies in the system of forms of address: thou is used among equals or when addressing someone of lower status, whereas you function as the polite and formal variant. In this way, language reflects the rigid vertical social hierarchy of the time (Austin, 1962; Brown & Ivanova, 2024; Searle, 1969).

Example: Hamlet: “*Thou canst not speak of that thou dost not feel*” (Brown, M., & Ivanova, T., 2024).

Such forms of address signal both the speaker’s social status and his or her relational stance toward the interlocutor.

Scholarly works that examine Auezov’s epic from ethnocultural and linguistic perspectives discuss the system of culturally marked vocabulary and fixed expressions related to customs and traditions, as well as their ethnolinguistic functions. For instance, Abdrasheva, 2014; Kaidar, 2004; Syzdyq, 1997 identify the lexical and semantic layers of ethnographic units in *The Path of Abai*. Shakespeare’s works, likewise, are regarded as a mirror of the English cultural code. Li and Li (2025) explore contemporary reinterpretations of Shakespeare in modern scholarship, while Gray (2023) analyzes how the playwright conveys morality and ethical values through linguistic means (Gray, 2023; Li & Li, 2025).

Thus, comparing the interaction between language and culture in the works of the two authors provides an effective approach to understanding national worldview and cultural conceptualization (Sharifian, 2017; Wierzbicka, 1997). The aim of this article is to compare the linguistic representation of traditional customs in the works of Auezov and Shakespeare and to uncover the poetics of ritual discourse.

Materials and methods

1. Ethnolinguistic Analysis.

The ethnolinguistic approach enables a systematic examination of ethnocultural realities represented in the texts. This includes the analysis of

- ethnographic vocabulary (terms related to clothing, household and ritual practices),
- ritual formulas (lamentation, blessing, well-wishing),
- culturally symbolic names and concepts, with a focus on their functional roles within the narrative (Kaidar, 2004; Syzdyq, 1997; Wierzbicka, 1997; Sharifian, 2017).

Ethnolinguistics allows us to uncover how tradition operates as a linguistic sign and how national worldview is encoded and manifested through language.

2. Discourse-Pragmatic Method.

The study draws on speech act theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969), politeness strategies, and face-saving mechanisms (Ahmed & Chen, 2022; Brown & Ivanova, 2024). This method reveals the performative nature of ritual formulas such as blessings, curses, wishes, oaths, marital agreements, and accusatory expressions. It also examines:

- pragmatic intentions,
- status-based relations between speakers,
- social hierarchy and role norms as reflected within the discourse.

3. Historical Poetics and Intertextual Analysis.

This approach makes it possible to identify genre traditions: forms of aitys, epic song, lamentation, as well as liturgical intertexts, religious formulas, masquerade scenes, and other ritual elements in English texts. It allows for the evaluation of the structural and poetic functions of tradition within the literary works (Bakhtin, 1986; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Sharifian, 2017).

4. Cultural Linguistics and Cross-Cultural Comparison.

In line with the rapid development of cultural linguistics in recent years (2020-2025), this method offers tools for analyzing cultural scripts, conceptual metaphors, and the cognitive nature of cultural codes. It is applied here to systematize cross-cultural universals and national-specific features of ritual language in Kazakh and English traditions (Brown & Ivanova, 2024; Ahmed & Chen, 2022; Geertz, 1973).

In sum, this methodological framework makes it possible to comprehensively reveal the semiotic, pragmatic, and poetic interconnections between ritual language and cultural codes.

The research materials include all volumes of M. Auezov’s epic *The Path of Abai* and five plays by William Shakespeare (*Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Twelfth Night*). In total, 45 textual fragments were selected and subjected to pragmatic comparison in terms of ritual vocabulary and formulaic speech. While previous studies have typically examined national material in isolation, the present article offers a comparative-pragmatic perspective.

Furthermore, this study is the first to compare ritual speech acts found in the works of Auezov and Shakespeare such as blessings, well-wishes, oaths,

lamentations, *blagoslovenie*, oath, and curse from both pragmatic and cultural-linguistic viewpoints. Earlier research generally focused on describing ritual vocabulary and ethnographic units, whereas this article highlights the performative function of ritual language—words that enact actions.

The study also reveals the institutional nature of language and tradition in both cultures, demonstrating how language functions as a mechanism of social status and spiritual authority. For the first time, liturgical and legal formulas in Shakespeare's texts are compared with Kazakh ethnolinguistic categories (*бәма* (*blissing*), *аһм* (*oath*), *милек* (*well-wish*), *қарғыс* (*curse*) and interpreted through the lens of universal cultural codes.

Literature review

The relationship between language, culture, and worldview has long been the subject of scholarly analysis. Foundational works by Humboldt (1836), Sapir (1921), and Whorf (1956) established the idea that each language encodes a unique cultural perspective. Within Kazakh linguistics, ethnolinguistic research has extensively examined the semantic and cultural dimensions of traditional vocabulary and ritual formulas. Kaidar (2004) and Syzdyq (1997) showed that ethnographic terminology and oral-poetic expressions function as repositories of collective memory and as markers of social hierarchy and moral authority. Sabitova (2011), analyzing the interaction between language and culture in Kazakh philological scholarship, emphasized that linguistic forms reflect and reinforce national identity through culturally embedded conceptual structures. This perspective provides an important methodological foundation for examining ritual speech acts in Auezov's works as manifestations of national worldview.

Research devoted specifically to Mukhtar Auezov and the artistic world of *The Path of Abai* highlights the deep integration of folklore, oral tradition, and cultural symbolism within the epic narrative. Abdrasheva (2014) identifies the lexical-semantic layers of ethnographic units in the novel, demonstrating how culturally marked vocabulary structures the narrative space. Dadebaev (2019), in his analysis of the artistic world of Abai, underscores the philosophical and ethical dimensions of the text, arguing that Auezov reconstructs a holistic model of Kazakh cultural consciousness through linguistic and symbolic means. These studies collectively affirm that ritual discourse in Auezov's epic functions

not only descriptively but institutionally, organizing social relations and moral evaluation.

In Shakespearean studies, scholars have traditionally explored the religious, legal, and rhetorical foundations of Early Modern English discourse. *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare and Religion* (2023) examines the role of liturgical language, ecclesiastical ceremony, and moral theology in shaping Shakespeare's dramaturgy. Gray (2023) analyzes how ethical vocabulary and ritualized expressions contribute to the moral architecture of Shakespearean drama. Folgerpedia (2023) further documents the performative and ceremonial dimensions of Elizabethan theatrical culture, demonstrating the interdependence between religious practice and dramatic representation. These studies highlight the institutional character of ritual speech acts in Shakespeare's works, particularly in contexts of marriage, oath-taking, pardon, and burial.

Recent scholarship in cultural linguistics and cross-cultural pragmatics has expanded the theoretical foundation relevant to this study. Sharifian's (2017) framework of cultural conceptualizations demonstrates how ritual discourse reflects culturally embedded schemas, while Wierzbicka (1997) argues for the universality of certain semantic primes (*good, bad, heart, life*) and their culturally specific manifestations. Contemporary works in *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* (Li, Li, 2025), *Language and Culture Studies* (Brown, Ivanova, 2024), and the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Pragmatics* (Ahmed and Chen, 2022) increasingly emphasize the need to integrate ethnographic data with pragmatic models. These studies show that ritual language whether blessings, curses, oaths, lamentations, or ceremonial formulas performs institutional functions: it enacts social roles, maintains group cohesion, and legitimizes moral authority.

Studies of Auezov's *The Path of Abai* traditionally focus on ethnolinguistic and folkloristic features, particularly the representation of customs, kinship structures, and oral traditions (Kaidar, 2004; Syzdyk, 1997). However, few works examine these ritual elements through the lens of speech act theory or cross-cultural pragmatics. Conversely, Shakespearean scholarship tends to analyze ritual discourse in connection with religious practice or political order but rarely juxtaposes it with non-Western tradition. This imbalance reveals a methodological gap: Kazakh ethnolinguistic research often lacks comparative perspectives, while Shakespearean studies seldom contextualize ritual language globally.

By bringing together these two traditions, the present study addresses this gap and proposes a comparative pragmatic framework for examining ritual speech in Auezov and Shakespeare. Through this approach, the analysis highlights both universal mechanisms such as the illocutionary force of blessings, oaths, and lamentations and the culturally specific ways in which different societies encode authority, kinship, and moral order through ritualized language.

Results and discussion

A number of studies also examine the discursive functions of Kazakh proverbs and traditional phraseology, demonstrating the role of ritual formulas in shaping collective self-identification (Bakhtin, 1986; Kaidar, 2004). English-language research addressing the cultural and historical context of *The Path of Abai* likewise discusses Auezov's connection between Abai's persona and traditional heritage, noting the central role of oral poetry and ritual culture in the epic (Abdrasheva, 2014; Smagulova, n.d.).

In Shakespeare studies, issues of custom and tradition are approached in relation to Elizabethan social history, liturgical practice, and the medieval–Reformation dramatic heritage. Historical and literary overviews on family and marriage culture (Newberry Digital Collections for the Classroom) elucidate the linguistic and discursive forms of marital norms and parental authority in the texts. The representation of church rites – marriage, baptism, and burial and their linguistic and symbolic codes in drama is examined in a dedicated chapter of *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare and Religion* (2023). Materials from the Folger Institute (2023) further demonstrate how Shakespeare assimilated medieval ritualistic and performative models.

Auezov's encyclopedic novel-epic *The Path of Abai* (Auezov, 2007) offers a detailed portrayal of the Kazakh people's daily life, worldview, and traditional practices. Many of these customs, which regulated specific social circumstances, are no longer widely known today. In the novel, traditions are interwoven with the lived reality of the era, enhancing the artistic power of the narrative and immersing the reader in a vivid, chronicle-like cultural world that merges with the internal universe of the characters.

1. Linguistic Representation of Marriage and Family Rituals

In Auezov's works.

Rituals such as *құда түсу* (betrothal), *қалың мал* (bride price), *беташар* (unveiling), and *той*

(wedding feast) in Auezov's epic function not merely as elements of everyday life but as driving forces in the dramaturgy of social relations. These episodes make extensive use of ethnographic vocabulary (e.g., *сырға тағу* “earring ceremony,” *жасау* “bridal dowry,” *енші* “inheritance portion,” *жар-жар* “wedding song”) and ritual formulas (blessings and well-wishes). The genre of *бата* (blessings and well-wishes) institutionalizes the speaker's words, legitimizes social interaction, and regulates interpersonal conduct. Kazakh linguistics has devoted specialized studies to this cultural-linguistic stratum (Kaidar, 2004).

In Shakespeare's works.

Elizabethan marriage was defined by a triad of parental consent, contractual agreement, and ecclesiastical ceremony. In *Romeo and Juliet*, Friar Laurence solemnizes the marriage through a religious formula; in *Much Ado About Nothing* and *The Merchant of Venice*, marriage is closely tied to legal arrangements concerning inheritance and property supplements. Historical and cultural overviews describe marriage as both a communal and a church-governed linguistic practice (*The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare and Religion*, 2023).

Ritual speech acts in Shakespeare.

For instance, in *Much Ado About Nothing*, the wedding rite includes the formula:

“I take thee to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold...”

This utterance is a performative speech act: it enacts the marriage and gives it legal force. Such liturgical formulas illustrate the sacral nature of “oath speech” in English culture.

In *The Merchant of Venice*, terms related to oath and agreement (“bond,” “oath,” “mercy”) function as linguistic keys to ethical and legal rituality.

For example: “The quality of mercy is not strained; it dropped as the gentle rain from heaven.”

This passage offers a humanistic interpretation of ritual discourse, where the concept of mercy becomes a moral bridge between law and faith.

In Auezov's text, the marriage ritual relies on oral-poetic formulas – songs, chants, blessings, and communal well-wishes – whereas Shakespeare frames it through legal and liturgical formulas. In both corpora, the linguistic code of ritual reinforces social order: in Auezov, it affirms communal authority and kinship hierarchy; in Shakespeare, it affirms the authority of law and church. Marriage rituals in both cultures define the moral and legal structures of society: in Auezov's case, they represent communal consensus, whereas in Shakespeare, they mark the intersection of personal autonomy and religious duty.

2. The Linguistic Code of Hospitality, Celebration, and Festivity

In Auezov's works.

Festive gatherings and communal feasts in Auezov's epic function as cultural stagings that structure space and social time. These scenes contain numerous protocol expressions such as inviting guests, presenting *табақ тарту* (a traditional serving of dishes), offering food in hierarchical order, and giving the floor to elders (Syzdyq, 1997). The epic also features ritual speech acts such as *сыйкәде* (ceremonial gift), *сүйиниі* (announcement of good news), and other formulaic expressions. These linguistic – cultural units are described with ethnographic precision.

In Shakespeare's works.

The festive masquerade (*Twelfth Night, the ball in Romeo and Juliet*) is represented on stage through collective singing, joking, toasting or well-wishing, and musical refrains. The historical – poetic origins of the masquerade tradition are linked to medieval dramatic culture (Gray, 2023).

In both authors, festive discourse enhances “role speech”: in Auezov – through the voices of the bard, poet, and elder; in Shakespeare – through the clown, musician, and masked figure. Linguistically, this discourse relies on formulaic repetition, parallelism, and proverbial or performative expressions, forming a distinctly “melodic” code. The discourse of celebration functions as a manifestation of communal spiritual unity: in Auezov, it revives collective memory, whereas in Shakespeare, it transforms into an artistic form shaped by social hierarchy and theatrical performance.

3. Mourning and Funerary Rituals

In Auezov's works.

The *ас бепу* (memorial feast) functions as a complex communal institution that combines remembrance and the affirmation of social status. In the epic, lamentation formulas, mourning intonations, and the repetitive refrains of female mourners acquire a poetic function, reflecting the traditional Kazakh genre of *жоқтау* (lament). In ethnolinguistic analyses, this layer is categorized as ritual vocabulary (Qaidar, 2004).

In Shakespeare's works.

In Shakespeare, the funeral scenes in *Hamlet*, including Ophelia's controversial Christian burial, as well as the imagery of the tomb and the vial of poison in *Romeo and Juliet*, evoke the intertext of church rites and funerary liturgy – prayers, requiem formulas, and scriptural echoes. Contemporary Shakespeare scholarship highlights the dramatic

role of the liturgical code in these episodes (Folgerpedia, 2023).

Pragmatics of funerary discourse in Shakespeare.

In *Hamlet*, at Ophelia's grave, Hamlet declares:

“Lay her i' the earth; and from her fair and unpolluted flesh may violets spring.”

This utterance represents a synthesis of blessing and lamentation: here speech about death takes the form of an ethical supplication (a prayer), conveying the speaker's moral emotion through ritualized language.

Similarly, in *Romeo and Juliet*, Friar Laurence's line “God join'd my heart and Romeo's” reveals the interconnectedness of marriage and death within a framework of religious ritual. Such formulas function as religious-institutional speech acts whose role is to confer moral and ceremonial legitimacy.

Kazakh *жоқтау* is based on an improvisational poetic formula, whereas English funerary practice relies on fixed liturgical texts. In both traditions, the ritual elevates “personal grief” into a communal sphere: in the Kazakh context into the space of the tribe or clan; in the English context into the domain of the church community. In both cultures, funerary speech expresses not merely the tragedy of death but also a cultural code of spiritual continuity. Kazakh lamentation and English liturgy thus represent distinct yet parallel existential languages of two different civilizations.

4. Rituals of Honor and Conflict: Aitys and the Duel

In Auezov's works.

Айтмыс in Auezov's narrative world functions as a ritualized “verbal contest,” a performative genre governed by rules of competition. In *айтмыс* scenes, the status and prestige of characters are negotiated through verbal ingenuity – formulaic forms of address, metaphorical counterattacks, and structured poetic exchange. This constitutes a model of ritual communication (Qaidar, 2004).

In Shakespeare's works.

In Shakespeare, the duel operates as a ritual for resolving matters of honor outside formal legal structures, guided instead by communal codes of conduct. The conflict between Tybalt and Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* activates a system of ritualized expressions challenge formulas, declarations of witness, curses, and oaths reflecting the unwritten Elizabethan “code of honor.” Historical literary scholarship shows how these rituals escalate from verbal provocation to physical action within the broader context of family and marital tensions (Li, 2025).

Айтыс is a verbal duel; the duel is a physical aitys. In both, formulaic utterances challenge, response, testimony play a decisive role. Aitys and the duel represent culturally embedded forms of verbal and physical confrontation. In the works of both authors, these practices become symbolic rituals through which concepts of honor and prestige are regulated and expressed through language.

5. *Ritual Lexicon, Paremiology, and Formulaic Language*

In Auezov’s works.

Ritual terminology (e.g., *жеті ата, сұңқар салу, құйрық-бауыр асату, бата, сүндет той*) functions as a “national code” within the narrative, contributing to the categorization of the characters’ worldview through language. Ethnolinguistic studies examine precisely these culturally embedded terms and their semantic domains (Qaidar, 2004).

In Shakespeare’s works.

Liturgical and legal terminology (such as *ban, bond, banns, oath, pardon, mercy, grace*) as well as ritual formulas (*God give you joy, Amen, I do, by my troth*) determine the dramatic tempo and structure. Scholarly sources explain the canonical language of marriage and burial rituals (The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare and Religion, 2023).

Performativity of ritual formulas.

Auezov’s formulas of *бата* (blessing), *амн* (oath), and *қарғыс* (curse), and Shakespeare’s *oath, curse, and blessing* all illustrate the performative nature of ritual speech acts (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969). Here, language performs action: a blessing enacts goodwill, an oath imposes moral obligation, and a curse carries an illocutionary force within the plot. From a pragmatic standpoint, both authors employ these ritual speech acts as performatives that propel narrative development.

Ritual language as a marker of social hierarchy.

In both Kazakh and English cultures, ritual language acts as a cultural code signaling social hierarchy. Linguistic forms index degrees of social distance, status, and respect. For example, Kazakh forms of address such as *аға, құда, мырза* parallel English honorifics like *sir, my lord, and your grace*, each functioning as markers of hierarchical relations.

This parallel demonstrates the universal function of ritual language: to establish social hierarchy, preserve cultural norms, and regulate ethical behavior. Nevertheless, a key distinction remains: in Kazakh culture, rituals tend to be collective and communal, whereas in English culture they more often emphasize the status and agency of the individual (Table 1).

Table 1
The key similarities between Kazakh and English ritual language

Type	In Kazakh culture	In English Culture	Common similarities
Marriage	Collective blessings, well-wishes, <i>жар-жар</i> ceremonial song	Religious oath, canonical marriage formula (I do)	Establishing social consensus; sanctifying the union through language
Mourning	<i>Жоқтау</i> (lament), <i>естірту</i> (announcement of death)	Liturgical prayer, burial ritual	Ritual verbalization of life and death; symbolic transition
Hospitality	Blessings, <i>табақ тарту</i> (ritual serving of food)	Toast, greeting speeches	Linguistic affirmation of respect and social harmony
Honor	<i>Айтыс</i> as verbal contest, blessing	Duel, oath	Mechanism for maintaining social prestige and resolving conflicts

Note: Compiled by the authors.

It has been established that the ritual language in the works of both authors functions as a mechanism for reinforcing social authority and ethical norms (Sharifian, 2017). In both Kazakh and English cultures, ritual language demonstrates a universal structure: speech act → social interaction → moral validation (Wierzbicka, 1997). The shared universals reveal the social role of language, while the differences highlight the distinctive features of each

cultural context. Table 2 presents comparative representations of the linguistic encoding of tradition in the works of M. Auezov and William Shakespeare.

The Kazakh people possess a rich history that stretches back to ancient times, a multifaceted culture, and a distinctive system of customs and traditions. For centuries, Kazakhs have adhered firmly to their customary practices. Customs and traditions function as markers of a people’s cultural de-

velopment and unique identity; they distinguish one nation from another. Tradition is a sign of cultural refinement and constitutes a spiritual heritage deeply interwoven with the life of the community. It is also a form of social existence that has withstood the test of time and represents a highly structured mode of life shaped by a civilization-

oriented worldview. Customs and traditions evolve in accordance with historical change, continually renewing themselves while remaining rooted in the past. As widely acknowledged, the customs and traditional norms of any society reflect its cultural visage and serve as an implicit moral code for successive generations.

Table 2

Comparative manifestations of the linguistic representation of tradition in the works of M. Auezov and William Shakespeare

Category	«The Path of Abai» (M. Auezov)	Works of W. Shakespeare
Linguistic representation of tradition	Through Kazakhisms, proverbs, sayings and elements of folklore	Through rhetorical structures, archaisms and poetic language.
Reflection of social hierarchy	Distinct speech styles of different social groups	Lexical choices and forms of address such as: <i>thou/you</i>
Ritual elements	Linguistic description of marriage, kinship and mourning rituals	Speech acts in scenes of duelin marriage and burial
Role of tradition	Fundamental; shapes the character's worldview	Often serves as a backdrop for individual human drama

Note: Compiled by the authors.

Academician Qanysh Satbayev aptly described *The Path of Abai* as “an encyclopedia of half a century of Kazakh life.” In crafting the epic, M. Auezov took Abai’s biography as a narrative core while offering an expansive and highly realistic portrayal of the Kazakh people’s existence, everyday practices, social structures, worldview, customs, and traditions of the time. Following the life of Abai from a 12–13-year-old returning home after three years of study to a man approaching the age of sixty the reader gains the impression of having lived alongside him, experiencing the transformations of an entire epoch through the eyes of the protagonist.

Scholars have repeatedly emphasized the uniqueness of Mukhtar Auezov’s contribution to Kazakh culture. As R. Syzdyq observes, “From his earliest works, the great writer demonstrated an uncanny ability to grasp the distinct mentality and traditional worldview of the steppe dwellers people whose entire existence was nourished by the word and to crown his artistic vision with masterfully chosen, resonant expressions.”

In the encyclopedic novel-epic *The Path of Abai*, which offers a comprehensive depiction of the Kazakh people’s way of life, Auezov presents an in-depth portrayal of traditional customs, everyday practices, and social norms. Many rituals performed

by Kazakhs in specific life situations are no longer widely known today; yet the novel revives them with striking ethnographic clarity. The customs interwoven into the narrative not only reflect the historical reality of the time but also enhance the work’s artistic force, merging seamlessly with the world of the characters and providing the reader with a vivid, chronicle-like artistic vision.

The examples incorporated throughout the epic demonstrate that Auezov meticulously captured all essential layers of traditional Kazakh culture: ancient customs, social practices, the richness of the ethnic lexicon, the deeply rooted phenomena of steppe life, as well as oratorical expressions, aphorisms, proverbs, sayings of *biys*, and various lexical strata associated with material and spiritual cultural heritage. His narrative thus reconstructs an entire cultural universe, preserving its linguistic and symbolic wealth for future generations.

Thus, in both *The Path of Abai* and Shakespeare’s plays, language functions not merely as a means of artistic expression but also as a mechanism for encoding and reflecting the cultural norms of society. Through linguistic representation, Auezov preserves the essence of Kazakh national identity, its spiritual and worldview integrity, while simultaneously addressing universal human themes. Shake-

speare, in turn, reveals the tension between the individual and traditional society through the poetics and rhetoric of the Renaissance. Both authors dem-

onstrate that language is more than a communicative instrument; it is a cultural text that preserves the historical memory of a people.

Table 3

Key concepts in Auezov and Shakespeare

Concept	M.Auezov (<i>The Path of Abai</i>)	W. Shakespeare (<i>Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet</i>)	Cultural significance
Family and marriage	Matchmaking, wedding rituals, communal agreement	Tension between parental authority and individual freedom	Balance between tradition and personal autonomy
Honor and dignity	Abai as an embodiment of justice and moral purity	Hamlet as a symbol of moral duty and inner conflict	Universality of ethical values and moral obligation
Cultural code and language	Ethnographic terms and phraseological units.	Conveying morality through metaphors and idioms	Language as a mirror of cultural codes

Note: Compiled by the authors.

In Auezov's works, this system unfolds through the unity of oral poetics, ethnographic elements, and folkloric traditions, whereas in Shakespeare's texts it is realized through liturgical and legal intertextuality, genre conventions, and established rhetorical patterns. The representation of national tradition through speech and text serves as a key mechanism for understanding the ethical character of protagonists, the system of cultural values, and the semantics of artistic conflict.

The works of M. Auezov and W. Shakespeare constitute artistic embodiments of both national and universal cultural values. Each writer, through language, conveys the spiritual world, worldview, and moral principles of his people, thus demonstrating the function of literary language as a cultural code. While Auezov depicts tradition as a symbol of spiritual harmony and national unity, Shakespeare employs tradition as a means of examining the ethical boundaries between the individual and society.

In the contemporary scholarly context, research carried out between 2020 and 2025 in the fields of cultural linguistics and ethnolinguistics has increasingly focused on the role of ritual discourse in cultural cognition. Studies published in *Humanities & Social Sciences Communications* (Li & Li, 2025), *Language and Culture Studies* (Brown & Ivanova, 2024), and the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Pragmatics* (Ahmed & Chen, 2022) have examined in depth how ritualized forms of speech contribute to the construction of cultural identity. The findings of the present article resonate with these developments, demonstrating the cognitive coherence between national tradition and linguistic expression.

Conclusion

Thus, the linguistic imagery and system of cultural values in the works of both authors demonstrate the role of literature and language as a bridge between national identity and universal human spirituality. In both cultures, the linguistic representation of tradition extends beyond lexical nomination and is realized through systems of ritualized speech acts and institutional formulas that structure social interaction and encode moral authority. The findings of the study lead to several key conclusions. In Auezov's works, ritual language is expressed through oral-poetic forms such as *бата* (blessing), *тілек* (well-wishing), *жоқтау* (lament), and *айтыс* (poetic contest), which function as communal mechanisms of ethical regulation and collective memory preservation. In Shakespeare's texts, ritual discourse appears through liturgical and legal formulas such as "I do," "God bless thee," "mercy," and "oath," which articulate institutional authority and moral responsibility within the framework of Renaissance social order. These ritual expressions serve not merely as stylistic or decorative elements but as culturally encoded performative structures that enact social relations and validate hierarchical norms.

The interconnection between language and tradition serves as a fundamental indicator of national worldview. Auezov represents tradition as a code of spiritual harmony, collective solidarity, and continuity of ancestral wisdom, while Shakespeare portrays tradition as a dynamic measure of ethical tension between the individual and society. In both literary

systems, ritual discourse mediates between collective norms and individual agency, transforming personal experience into socially legitimized meaning.

The poetics of ritual discourse reveals characters' moral orientation, value systems, and the structural dynamics of artistic conflict. From a pragmatic perspective, ritual speech acts function as performatives – that is, as utterances that accomplish actions through language itself. In Kazakh cultural practice, blessings, oaths, and curses regulate social authority, kinship hierarchy, and mutual respect; in English cultural tradition, concepts such as oath, pardon, mercy, and grace encode religious legitimacy and social stratification. Thus, ritual language operates as both a semiotic system and an institutional mechanism that shapes ethical consciousness. From a cultural-linguistic standpoint, the works of Auezov and Shakespeare demonstrate that language is not merely a communicative instrument but also a repository of collective memory and a guardian of spiritual codes. Literary discourse preserves national identity by embedding cultural scripts, symbolic models, and ritualized forms of speech within artistic narrative structures. Language thereby functions as a cultural mechanism ensuring the continuity of tradition across generations and historical transformations.

The novelty of the study lies in the development of a comparative pragmatic framework for analyzing ritual discourse across distinct civilizational traditions – Kazakh and English – through the integration of ethnolinguistics, speech act theory, cultural linguistics, and historical poetics. Unlike previous research, which has predominantly examined ritual language within isolated national contexts, this study systematically juxtaposes oral-poetic and communal ritual forms in Auezov's epic with liturgical and legal performative formulas in Shakespeare's drama. The research also introduces a cross-cultural interpretation of ritual speech acts as institutionalized mechanisms of moral regulation and social authority, thereby expanding the methodological scope of cultural linguistics and comparative literary studies. The comparative analysis confirms both the universality and cultural specificity of ritual discourse. While the performative structure of blessings, oaths,

lamentations, and ceremonial formulas demonstrates shared cognitive and pragmatic foundations, their linguistic realization reflects historically conditioned models of authority, kinship, spirituality, and social organization. By revealing these parallels and divergences, the study contributes to contemporary debates on the interaction between language, culture, and identity in global humanities scholarship.

Future research may further extend this paradigm by incorporating additional Turkic, European, and Asian literary traditions, as well as corpus-based and cognitive-linguistic methodologies for examining ritual lexicon and performative structures. Such interdisciplinary expansion would deepen our understanding of how literary language encodes cultural memory and how ritual discourse functions as a universal yet culturally differentiated mode of human expression.

Funding

This article was prepared within the framework of the scientific project funded by the Grant Program of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2025-2027, Project No. AP26100629, entitled “The Representation of Kazakh National Values in the Linguistic Picture of the World (based on the language of literary works in a comparative perspective involving Kazakh, Turkish, and English)”.

Author Contributions

M. Akhmediyarova developed the research concept, designed the methodology, and prepared the original draft of the article; B. Shalabay collected and systematized the material and conducted the data analysis; K. Shulembayeva was responsible for visualization, validation of the results, and participation in the discussion; G. Tleuberdina coordinated the research process, and edited the final version of the manuscript.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

- Eagleton, T. (2000). *The idea of culture*. Blackwell.
 Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures*. Basic Books.
 Hall, S. (1990). Cultural identity and diaspora. In J. Rutherford (Ed.), *Identity: Community, culture, difference* (pp. 222–237). Routledge.

- Humboldt, W. von. (1836). *Über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues und ihren Einfluss auf die geistige Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts*.
- Sapir, E. (1921). *Language: An introduction to the study of speech*. Harcourt, Brace.
- Whorf, B. L. (1956). *Language, thought, and reality: Selected writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*. MIT Press.
- Әуезов, М. (2007). *Абай жолы*. Жазушы.
- Sharifian, F. (2017). *Cultural linguistics: Cultural conceptualizations and language*. John Benjamins.
- Wierzbicka, A. (1997). *Understanding cultures through their key words*. Oxford University Press.
- Қайдар, Ә. (2004). *Халық даналығы*. Дәуір.
- Кенжеахметұлы, С. (2007). *Қазақ дәстүрлері мен ырымдары*. Рауан.
- Сыздық, Р. (1997). *Сөз құдіреті*. Санат.
- Abdrasheva, A. (2014). *Ethnographic units in M. Auezov's The Path of Abai*.
- Smagulova, G. (n.d.). *Works on Kazakh language and worldview*.
- Gray, P. (2023). Shakespeare and morality. *Shakespeare. The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare and Religion*. (2023). Cambridge University Press.
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1986). *Speech genres and other late essays*. University of Texas Press.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. University of Chicago Press.
- Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words*. Oxford University Press.
- Brown, M., & Ivanova, T. (2024). Cultural linguistics and ritual discourse in contemporary humanities. *Language and Culture Studies*.
- Searle, J. R. (1969). *Speech acts: An essay in the philosophy of language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ahmed, S., & Chen, L. (2022). Ritual speech and cultural identity in cross-cultural pragmatics. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Pragmatics*.
- Сәбитова, З. К. (2011). Лингвокультурологические аспекты изучения взаимоотношения языка и культуры. *Вестник КазНУ. Серия филологическая*, 2(132).
- Dadebaev, Z. D. (2019). The meaning of the phenomena of reality reflected in Abai's artistic world. *Vestnik KazNU. Filologicheskii ryad*, 2(178).
- Folgerpedia. (2023). Ritual and performance in Shakespeare. <https://folgerpedia.folger.edu>
- Newberry Digital Collections for the Classroom. (n.d.). *Digital archive*. <https://dcc.newberry.org>
- Li, X., & Li, S. (2025). Reinterpreting Shakespeare in modern humanities discourse. *Humanities & Social Sciences Communications*.

References

- Abdrasheva, A. (2014). *Ethnographic units in M. Auezov's The path of Abai*.
- Ahmed, S., & Chen, L. (2022). Ritual speech and cultural identity in cross-cultural pragmatics. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Pragmatics*.
- Auezov, M. (2007). *Abai zholy* [The path of Abai]. Zhazushy. (In Kazakh)
- Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words*. Oxford University Press.
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1986). *Speech genres and other late essays*. University of Texas Press.
- Brown, M., & Ivanova, T. (2024). Cultural linguistics and ritual discourse in contemporary humanities. *Language and Culture Studies*.
- Dadebaev, Z. D. (2019). The meaning of the phenomena of reality reflected in Abai's artistic world. *Vestnik KazNU. Filologicheskii ryad*, 2(178).
- Eagleton, T. (2000). *The idea of culture*. Blackwell.
- Folgerpedia. (2023). Ritual and performance in Shakespeare. <https://folgerpedia.folger.edu>
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures*. Basic Books.
- Gray, P. (2023). Shakespeare and morality. *Shakespeare*.
- Hall, S. (1990). Cultural identity and diaspora. In J. Rutherford (Ed.), *Identity: Community, culture, difference* (pp. 222–237). Routledge.
- Humboldt, W. von. (1836). *Über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues und ihren Einfluss auf die geistige Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts*.
- Kaidar, A. (2004). *Khalyq danalygy* [Folk wisdom]. Daur. (In Kazakh)
- Kenjeakhmetuly, S. (2007). *Qazaq dasturleri men yrymdary* [Kazakh traditions and beliefs]. Rauan. (In Kazakh)
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. University of Chicago Press.
- Li, X., & Li, S. (2025). Reinterpreting Shakespeare in modern humanities discourse. *Humanities & Social Sciences Communications*.
- Newberry Digital Collections for the Classroom. (n.d.). *Digital archive*. <https://dcc.newberry.org>
- Sabitova, Z. K. (2011). Lingvokul'turologicheskie aspekty izucheniya vzaimootnosheniya yazyka i kul'tury [Linguocultural aspects of studying the relationship between language and culture]. *Vestnik KazNU. Seriya filologicheskaya*, 2(132). (In Russian)
- Sapir, E. (1921). *Language: An introduction to the study of speech*. Harcourt, Brace.
- Searle, J. R. (1969). *Speech acts: An essay in the philosophy of language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Sharifian, F. (2017). *Cultural linguistics: Cultural conceptualizations and language*. John Benjamins.

Smagulova, G. (n.d.). *Works on Kazakh language and worldview*.

Syzdyq, R. (1997). *Soz qudireti* [The power of the word]. Sanat. (In Kazakh)

The Cambridge companion to Shakespeare and religion. (2023). Cambridge University Press.

Whorf, B. L. (1956). *Language, thought, and reality: Selected writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*. MIT Press.

Wierzbicka, A. (1997). *Understanding cultures through their key words*. Oxford University Press.

Information about the authors:

Akhmediyarova Meruert – PhD student, Sh. Ualikhanov Kokshetau University (e-mail: meruert-ahmadiar@mail.ru).

Shalabay Berdibay – Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor, Sh. Ualikhanov Kokshetau University (e-mail: shalabay_berdibay@mail.ru).

Shulembayeva Kyzhibek – PhD, Senior Lecturer, Sh. Ualikhanov Kokshetau University (e-mail: sh.zhibek@mail.ru).

Tleuberdina Gulden (corresponding author) – Candidate of Philological Sciences, Associate Professor, Sh. Ualikhanov Kokshetau University, (e-mail: guldentleuberdina@inbox.ru).

Авторлар туралы мәлімет:

Ахмадиярова Меруерт Серікқызы – PhD-докторант, Ш.Уәлиханов атындағы Көкшетау университеті (e-mail: meruert-ahmadiar@mail.ru).

Шалабай Бердібай – филология ғылымдарының докторы, профессор, Ш.Уәлиханов атындағы Көкшетау университеті (e-mail: shalabay_berdibay@mail.ru).

Шулембаева Кызжибек Мендыбаевна – PhD, аға оқытушы, Ш.Уәлиханов атындағы Көкшетау университеті (e-mail: sh.zhibek@mail.ru).

Тлеубердина Гульден (корреспондент-автор) – филология ғылымдарының кандидаты, қауымдастырылған профессор, Ш.Уәлиханов атындағы Көкшетау университеті (e-mail: guldentleuberdina@inbox.ru).

Сведения об авторах:

Ахмадиярова Меруерт Сериковна – PhD-докторант, Кокшетауский университет имени Ш. Уалиханова (e-mail: meruert-ahmadiar@mail.ru).

Шалабай Бердибай – доктор филологических наук, профессор, Кокшетауский университет имени Ш. Уалиханова (e-mail: shalabay_berdibay@mail.ru).

Шулембаева Кызжибек Мендыбаевна – PhD, старший преподаватель, Кокшетауский университет имени Ш. Уалиханова (e-mail: sh.zhibek@mail.ru).

Тлеубердина Гульден Токатовна (автор корреспондентный) – кандидат филологических наук, ассоциированный профессор, Кокшетауский университет имени Ш. Уалиханова (e-mail: guldentleuberdina@inbox.ru).

Date of receipt of the article: December 12, 2025.

Accepted: March 20, 2026.