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## **A Linguistic-Cultural Analysis of the Altyn/Gold Concept**

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### **Abstract**

The article examined the cognitive and linguistic features of the “altyn/gold” concept in Kazakh and English paremiology. The importance of the analysis of paremiology in recognition of the concept is related to the fact that these proverbs provide the main value orientations of each people, and they appear as a type of condensed national cultural texts. As a result of the study, differences in phraseological units of the Kazakh and English languages in the interpretation of the concept of altyn/gold were revealed from the analysis of linguocreative, pragmatic, and linguocultural factors. The cognitive nature of culturally marked linguistic units, which determine the cultural character of the two nations in the linguistic image of the world, was determined by studying Kazakh linguistic and cultural knowledge and the “gold” component of the English national identity within the framework of the linguoconceptual paradigm of paremiology.

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## 1. Introduction

It is true that the anthropo-linguistic trend in the linguistics of the connection between language and thought in the last quarter of a century in Kazakh language education is due to this social need. Because of the change in society and the revival of consciousness associated with it, it is necessary to look at the previously established principles and scientific research results regarding the assessment of our values from the point of view of the interest of national knowledge (Mankeeva, 2014). Cognitive linguistics, which requires a comprehensive study of the function of language, serves to prove that our language is an indispensable tool that shows the superiority of the nation in the process of considering consciousness and nation as a whole in modern Kazakh society. In the space of the era of globalization, research in linguistics provides ample opportunity to study our cultural and spiritual treasure in the context of the continuity of culture and language (Pishghadam, 2013).

Proverbs, which are the epitome of wisdom and metaphors inherited from our forefathers over the centuries, clearly reflect the national identity of the Kazakh people. The discovery of the linguistic nature of paremias is equal to the recognition of the whole image of our people. Studying proverbs from linguistic and cultural points of view opens the way to getting to know 'people's life, philosophical understanding, heroic spirit, and customs. "Bitter truth in the form of a proverb not only shows a shortcoming but also helps the ethno-social environment to get rid of that shortcoming or not to repeat that shortcoming again. In this regard, it can be said that critical proverbs have the same effect as positive proverbs in improving order and social life. One of the positive trends that are seriously affecting human society is to avoid evil and rely on good (Seydimbek, 2008).

It is possible to get information about the way of life and lifestyle of those countries by comparing the languages of the two nations and studying the paremic language units. The abundance and variety of elements of the national vocabulary in Kazakh and English languages, which connect the mentality and culture of the ethnic groups, are considered a bridge between the two countries. However,

since the two nations have different languages, there is a meeting of paremies that have no equivalent, and the most interesting thing about paremies with equivalents is that if in one language it is conveyed through a lacuna, in another language, it is conveyed by the words used by the majority, and it is true that with scorn and derision depending on the mentality. When studying paremic language units across different languages, one must consider the challenge of matching proverbs from various cultures around the world. It is important to recognize that the ethical and geographic features of proverbs vary across different cultures. Therefore, we can define proverbs as linguistic expressions that reveal the meaning and depth of life situations (Permyakov, 1988).

The main purpose of this research article is to reveal the national-cultural and cognitive nature of the altyn/gold paremias in Kazakh and English linguistics. The relevance of the research article lies in the disclosure of the cognitive basis of positive and negative connotative linguistic units in the culture of the two countries in the process of revealing the cognitive nature of the altyn/gold paremias. The novelty of the research article lies in the fact that for the first time in the cognitive space, the altyn/gold paremias are studied in English and Kazakh. The article reveals the cognitive nature of the linguistic and cultural units of the cultural marker that determine the cultural character of the two nations in the linguistic picture of the world by studying the Kazakh linguoculturological research and the paradigm of linguoconceptology of the altyn/gold component of the paremia in the English national identity.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

Isaeva's (2007) dissertation work entitled "Paremiological Image of the World", studied proverbs in the Kazakh language from a cognitive point of view, examined the continuity of "language and knowledge" of Kazakh paremic language units, and revealed the conceptual core of the paremiological image of the world in paremias. Mirza (2007), in his dissertation work entitled "Paremiological System of Kazakh-Uyghur Proverbs", studying the ethnolinguistic and ethnocultural basis of the formation of proverbs, says that certain situations are the basis for the

formation of proverbs and the cultural traditions and customs of each ethnic group show their culture, geographic environment, religious belief and worldview, and psychology. In Kanapina's (2006) research "Cognitive Imagery of Proverbs in the Kazakh Language", the stylistic function of proverbs and the symbolic meaning of ethnocultural names in proverbs is studied and analyzed based on the works of Sabit Mukanov and Gabiden Mustafin.

A concept is an operational content unit of memory, mental lexicon, conceptual systems, and language of the brain; the entire picture of the world, reflected in the human psyche (Maslova, 2007). First of all, we include poets and writers among the creators of concepts in the national language (Likhachev, 1993). Among the domestic scientists, Koshanova, in her research, states that each of the actions taken to understand the nature of the concept reveals the existence of a number of concepts and terms bordering on each other. Concept consists primarily of concept and meaning. The term "concept" is derived from the Latin word *conceptus*, which came to linguistics from philosophy (Koshanova, 2009).

The reason for our choice of paremias in recognition of the concept is the fact that proverbs provide the main value orientations of each people; they appear as a type of condensed national-cultural texts (Elubay & Aldabek, 2022). In modern cognitive linguistics, in the process of comparing paremies of English and Kazakh nationalities, it is an urgent problem to determine the cognitive factors that cause similarities and differences in these two languages. It is clear that proverbs and sayings of a certain language are one of linguistic tools that depict a certain fragment of the national image of the world (Bayzakova & Duysekova, 2023). Proverbs of the Russian people cannot contain all the views expressed on life phenomena, and it is a real encyclopedia of human virtues and vices. Proverbs with lexemes "altyn" emphasize the social inequality between the rich and poor (Anikin, 1988). In Russian paremiology, paremias are defined as judgments, allusions, and enigmas, which are defined and circulated by the people (Bochina et al., 2021). Dahl (1862) compiled more than 30,000 proverbs on 178 topics in his work entitled "Proverbs of

the Russian People" and published them as a collection. His valuable work on proverbs in the literature and linguistics of the Russian people is considered the main step of Russian paremiology.

Culture, as a human activity and as a set of spiritual and material values, norms, ideals, and behavioral patterns, participates in the multifaceted process of structuring social space and creating society (Tektigul et al., 2023). Culture is the thoughts of people, as well as their actions and results. Beliefs, knowledge, and life values are part of culture. Culture is shared by all members of society and transmitted to subsequent generations; it has an internal logic, is symbolic, and helps people adapt to the environment, both natural and social (Perekhvalskaya, 2016). On the basis of the triad of "Language, Nation and Culture", we will reveal the linguistic, cultural, and semiotic aspects of linguistic expressions inherited from the ethnic groups in the paremiological fund of the nation. Language represents the originality of the people, national expressions, and national culture (Pishghadam et al., 2020).

By studying the importance of discourse markers in English and Azerbaijani languages in the dissemination of information, the difference between the discourse markers used in the two countries can be explained as follows: some discourse markers with modality semantics in the Azerbaijani language are formulated through sentence transformation, and case suffixes can also serve as discourse markers in this language (Allahverdiyeva, 2023). Studying the semantic and cognitive bases of paremiological language units on the topic of women and men in the Kazakh and English languages allows us to determine the linguistic and cultural features of the cultures of the two countries (Abdimaulen et al., 2022). In modern times, recognition of the difference between the cultures of the countries of the world and the characteristics that are revealed when the cultures come into contact with the life and culture which has been formed for centuries and characterizes the nation is an important branch of modern linguistics (Morley & Robins, 1995).

It is true that the semantic meaning of phraseological phrases with the "gold" component in the English language is virtue

and evil such as gold “as a means of liberation”, “a means of enslavement”, “as poison”, and “as medicine” (Batitskaya et al., 2019). The analysis of the contextual figurative meanings of the word “gold” allows us to describe the features of creating positive and negative connotations, redefine the diversity of presentation of color lexemes, and describe their symbolic meanings in general (Yanlei, 2023). Paremias are similar to the concept of metaphor; they are the psychological basis of cognition for each speech community (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Paremias often have eye-catching images and words that can adapt a person to life so that he can get the education necessary for it (Gotthardt & Varga, 2014). Proverbs are one of the most important genres of folklore, and they provide the unity and integrity of the nation, embodying the national identity (Aciobăniței, 2012).

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Materials

About 31 proverbs and sayings and about 20 linguistic units were used as research materials: stable phrases and metaphors reflecting the concept of altyn/gold in Kazakh and English paremiology. Language units reflecting the concept of altyn/gold in English and Kazakh languages are widely used in folk usage in the culture of the two countries. For this article, about 40 linguistic units were considered as a kind of communicative unit, and the cognitive reality of Kazakh and English proverbs and stable expressions representing the concept of altyn/gold was revealed. The following works were used for data collection: Proverbs (Mieder, 2004), Kazakh proverbs, the “Phraseological Dictionary of the Kazakh Language” (Kenesbaev, 2007), and Internet sources and sayings related to Kazakh and English proverbs.

#### 3.2. Procedure

##### 3.2.1. Data Collection

The data consisted of the comparative cognitive linguistics and cultural studies of national languages and national cultures as single linguistic structures in the unity of their linguistic and non-linguistic (cultural) content, their formation, and development through the prism of cognitive analysis of interaction and

communication processes. In this regard, the activity of paremias was huge for deepening the system of English and Kazakh national cultural values. Proverbs in two languages served to focus on the peculiarities of human thinking. Using proverbs with lexemes altyn/gold made it possible to explain the similarities and differences of lingo-cognitive categories and conceptualization features in English and Kazakh languages. In addition, it was valuable information that could give us material not only about the structure of the compared languages but also about the cultural and spiritual condition of peoples to further show the general picture of the world.

##### 3.2.2. Data Analysis

It paved the way for studying the processes of interaction and interconnection of national languages and national cultures as a whole through the methods of the fields of comparative cognitive linguistics and linguistic and cultural studies. Comparative cognitive linguocultural studies allow the formation of linguistic and extralinguistic (cultural) content on the basis of lingamental structures to describe the national identity of different cultures, paying attention to the national-cultural value system and features of human thinking through the prism of cognitive analysis. The comparative study of English and Kazakh cultures contributes to the expansion of international relations and the dialogue of cultures today. Thus, the analysis of the concept of “gold” within the framework of comparative cognitive linguocultural science allows identifying similarities and differences in linguocognitive categories and features. The study of paremias in the context of different cultures is the basis for recognizing the linguistic image of the world that reflects the cultural and spiritual condition of the people and the individual attitude of the nation.

It is known that since the middle of the 70s, the cognitive-semantic method has been used to describe the semantic structure of natural languages in a synchronous aspect (Plotnikov & Sentsov, 2015). In the course of our research article, we used this method to reveal the cognitive nature of conceptual structures in the culture of the two nations and to explore the semantic meanings of paremias in creating a linguistic image of the world. The method of cognitive-semantic analysis is used in the

linguocognitive process to access the cognitive bases of the concept, signs, and symbols by studying the content of their meanings. The method of semantic cognitive analysis is one of the most suitable cognitive methods for modeling concepts in the course of cognitive research in linguistics. The method of cognitive-semantic analysis is one of the most effective methods used to distinguish cultural values and spheres of the cultural world, as well as special components based on national identity. During the analysis of cultural features in different cultures, the method of cognitive-semantic analysis was used in the following steps: determining the associative series, revealing the features of the use of concepts, and revealing the cognitive nature of the culturally marked language of a certain national group.

#### 4. Results

Since the main material of our research article is proverbs with the lexeme “gold” in the Kazakh and English languages, we mostly considered paremias with similar semantic meanings in both languages. First of all, if the lexeme “gold” in the English language performs an evaluative function among types and colors, it is not difficult to see that a person can recognize the emotional state of a person expressing positive and negative moods. Emotion is traditionally considered as the potential for the subject to express feelings and emotions in relation to some reality phenomena. Along with this term, “emotional component” and “emotionality” are also used in linguistics. The rich metaphor of the concept of “gold” in folklore and literary tradition is connected with the peculiarities of its cultural-historical existence; behind it lies a distant historical-psychological view, accumulation of metaphors, comparisons, and information that conveys feelings from useful and desirable ideas based on the emotional state to divide the concept of beauty (Amichba, 2012).

As a result of our research, a large group of paremias in the English language are proverbs that were formed in connection with the holy book, the Bible, and originated from the work of poets and writers in the national language. The reason for this is that the vitality of the Holy Book of the Bible among the people and the paremias spoken by the poets-writers can

be explained by the integrity of meaning, thoroughness, and the fact that it is based on the worldview of the people. In addition, during the research, we noticed that proverbs in the Kazakh language arose from the needs of everyday life, while proverbs in English were imported from other languages, taken from holy books, or from the writings of famous poets and writers. In linguistics, the human feeling system, which relies on psychological factors and emotional and cognitive abilities, is of great importance in recognizing the world (Pishghadam et al., 2021). The concept of gold is the name of the golden shovel-wind, which is spoken in an emotional tone in our language and belongs to the group of emotional and expressive words which are spoken in connection with the good qualities of a person with a golden heart. Emotional abilities play an important role in concept recognition and enriching a person’s vocabulary (Jajarmi et al., 2021).

Mythological and folklore texts play an important role in recognizing the concepts of altyn/gold in Kazakh and English languages. The semantics and stylistic feature of the way of art and representation, such as the simile used for the words gold and silver in the depiction of the human image in the heroes’ songs and love songs, was revealed. In particular, constant similes in the description of female beauty are the most advanced examples of the way of expression in fiction as image constructions that are deeply embedded in the language. Mental models were shown by identifying conceptualists when the concepts of altyn/gold in Kazakh and English languages were revealed in phraseological phrases. Phraseologism concepts, which collect visual, conceptual, and value dimensions, have been identified in the interpretation of the concept of altyn/gold due to linguistic creative, pragmatic, and linguistic cultural factors.

*“Many words are silver, Few words are gold”* is a wonderful form of a folk simile. The English equivalent is *“Silence is golden”*. In general, among the English and Kazakh people, similes, stable phrases, and paremiological expressions with the words altyn/gold are based on the evaluative properties of these words. The fact that altyn/gold expressions are often used to emphasize the good qualities of a person is an indispensable tool to express the

image in a vivid way. In both languages, it is true that in addition to the fact that two-component proverbs with a double stem are particularly noticeable, they are quickly memorized and have a special melodiousness when spoken.

The main idea of the proverb *“All that glitters is not gold”* is that it is wrong to judge a person based on his appearance. It says that if you pay attention to the purity of a person’s soul and the spirituality of their inner world rather than their external beauty, there is a great possibility of human knowledge. Here lies a metaphorical idea that describes the behavior of the person.

The proverb *“Gold, gold, never loses its value”* (in Kazakh) is equivalent with *“What is gold is worth gold”* (in English). In the literal sense, it means that the person who collects gold will never lose, but in the alternative meaning, it shows that a person with a golden character, free of bad qualities in his personality, will not deviate from the human qualities and characteristic of his personality, regardless of the time limit.

The proverbs *“Don’t buy gold, get gratitude, gratitude is not gold”* (in English) and *“Good fame is better than gold, A drop of wisdom is better than a sea of gold”* show that thanksgiving and receiving blessings in the mentality of the two nations have a special meaning in Kazakh cultural knowledge. Or, in the experience of our ancestors who wished that the value of their service to humanity should be returned not with gold (material value), but with gratitude, the return of both receiving and giving thanks was only good. One of the main features of proverbs is the expression of appreciation. There is nothing in the world that cannot be appreciated, no phenomenon that cannot be valued. The evaluator is the assessment, attitude, and attitude of the speaker to the phenomenon and object, the name of the action (Prinz & Jesse, 2011).

In the English language, the semantic meaning of paremiias expressed by the lexeme *gold* is often combined with the phrase *“golden power”*. There are often proverbs about power and wealth. For example, *“Can Wisdom be put in a silver rod, or Love in a golden bowl?”* or *“Gold is proved with fire, friendship in need”*.

In the knowledge of the English nation, the concept of *gold* is a symbol of great power for humanity. The meaning of regular English phrases associated with the concept of *gold* is based on the concepts of wealth and power. However, intense lust for *gold* destroys values and therefore presents its own limited interval of love for gold. For example, *“Freedom; it cannot be bought with gold (money), Gold and goods may be lost; a good name endures forever”*.

In proverbs like *“Gold and goods may be lost; a good name endures forever”*, *“Gold is proven with fire, friendship in need”*, *“There is no better friend in misfortune than gold”*, and *“That is all well and good, but gold is better”*, what we can see is that the lexeme of gold means the creator of qualities that make a person forget spiritually. From the proverb *“Gold is a good doctor”*, it is not difficult to see that *gold* has meanings that are used as medicine in the sense of medicine that heals the human body.

In this article, which created an excellent example of folk pedagogy by equating the tool of a hardworking person to gold, which is suitable for work in the hands of a hardworking person, and thus doing important work, our people put a tailor, a poet-writer, a thinker-scientist in the forefront. For instance, *“The needle of the tailor is gold, the words of the genius are gold, the eye of the seer is gold”* and *“Chains of gold are stronger than chains of iron”*.

In Kazakh linguistic and cultural knowledge, our poets actively use the concept of gold when creating artistic reality because chromaticism has a certain metaphorical character due to the associative connections that appear in the process of transmission, not the similarity of the described objects or phenomena. Metaphor is the main component of the work of poets through the problem caused by the need for understanding in our life, the meaning of existence, features, perception, and representation of reality, and its methods (Hayrutdinova et al., 2021). For example, in the Kyz Zhibek poem, which is a symbol of love, the image of beautiful girls is very successfully derived from the phrases: *“Like the king’s golden robe. His words ring like the water of Apzamaz. The words from his mouth are like syllables of yellow gold”*

(Kazakh epics, 2006). The girl's eloquent speech is compared to "yellow gold" and increases the beauty of the poem "*Like a syllable of yellow gold - Her speech is like a syllable of yellow gold*" (Konyrov, 2007).

In the passage "*Golden bone Tolegen, God's humiliation, Dogs' violence, He fell from his horse when he was full*" (Kazakh epics, 2006), the impressiveness of the word gold in conveying Tolege's purity and heroism seems to have taken place in the hearts of the people. It is not difficult to see from these words that the word "*Golden*" has been raised to the status of the image in terms of meaning. The metaphorical meaning of the word golden used in the description of human character can be found in Asylbekova (2006). The word gold can be the reason for the creation of several newly derived words as a causal basis of word formation. The metallic properties of the precious stone 'gold' are yellowness, electrical conductivity, and other properties that are not taken into account when naming people. Only its rare quality creates the main meaning of the name (Asylbekova, 2006).

## 5. Discussion

It is not difficult to understand that in recognizing the linguistic image of the world, explaining the surrounding environmental phenomena, and evaluating the critical properties of an object, the concepts of altyn/gold overlap with the names of species and colors, giving an expressive and emotional tone to the speaker's language. In the conceptology of the Kazakh and English nations, paremiological language units are of great importance in showing the verbalization features of conceptual structures. By analyzing the linguistic image of the world in two languages, the meaning of paremias can be seen from the ability to use language units with a rich, figurative, and symbolic meaning. The worldview knowledge accumulated by the Kazakh and English peoples over the centuries is actively used as common language units and as a figurative description of proverbs in the comparison of the image with the voice of that nation. Translations of the words altyn/gold in popular knowledge are of great importance in developing the vocabulary of the language, and informing about the history and culture of the people. In conclusion, as a result of this research, the cultural connotation of the

concept of gold in poetic and artistic texts was determined. Concepts of *altyn/gold*, marked mentally and cognitively from the spiritual and material culture of the people, were studied as linguistic and cultural units defining the national cultural character in the linguistic image of the world. The lacunae describing the concepts of altyn/gold in the Kazakh and English languages were identified and analyzed from a linguistic and cultural point of view.

When we compared the names altyn/gold in the Kazakh and English languages, we made sure that their linguistic and cultural secrets were revealed. The national features, history, lifestyle, as well as ethnic and social differences of those peoples are clearly visible in the vocabulary of the Kazakh and English languages. This is characterized by the presence of cultural and ethnographic differences between these conflicting peoples.

The frequency of language units representing the concept of altyn/gold in paremias is a linguistic heritage that arose from the differences in the lifestyle, mentality, culture, and traditions of the two countries. In addition, if in one language a paremia is formed using a lacuna, in another language, it is possible to find its equivalent without a lacuna at all. Therefore, it is known that any nation on earth has similar features in addition to features unique to its language. This phenomenon is especially common in household names.

In the research work, paremias containing the concepts of altyn/gold were analyzed by comparing the Kazakh and English languages and culture. In the comparative analysis of paremias containing the concepts of altyn/gold in the Kazakh and English languages, which are genetically and typologically incompatible, we came to the following conclusions:

The concept of altyn/gold has different meanings according to English language culture, way of thinking, religion, and lifestyle. We noticed that it is used in describing the human character, in expressing colors in emotional relationships, in propagandizing wealth and power, in summarizing metaphorical thought, and in forming connotative meaning. Paremias, with the meaning of altyn/gold in Kazakh culture are the symbols of the nation's existence, outlook on the world, and spiritual

and cultural values. Kazakh people have been passing on their life experiences and thoughts accumulated for centuries through these proverbs from generation to generation. Therefore, it is one of the urgent problems of today to study the linguistic fund, where the truth formed in the human mind is preserved through the image of the world- and to discover the cognitive features and linguistic nature of proverbs. In Kazakh knowledge, the conceptual ceremony of altyn/gold is a clear sign of national culture.

Analyzing the concepts related to the minerals (gold, silver, stone, diamond, etc.) in Kazakh and English languages allows us to recognize cultural mechanisms between the two countries by studying the cognitive features of component paremias. Therefore, in the future, the study of the cognitive foundations of proverbs and sayings in Kazakh and English will be one of the most relevant topics. We know proverbs in the language as a key to the knowledge of culture and a mirror of the life of an ethnic group. Consequently, when recognizing the differences and similarities between the cultures of the two countries, the importance of studying the paremias that make up minerals increases. An in-depth study of the linguistic and cultural features of proverbs on the topic of gold, silver, stone, and diamond will be one of the main directions of our future dissertation work. It is also planned to publish research articles on the topics of “emotionality of paremias with mineral components”, “linguistic and cultural features of the concepts gold and silver” and “linguistic and cultural features of paremias with stone components”.

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