

Typology and Methodological Framework of Kazakh Linguocultural Units

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Abstract—This article examines the typology of linguocultural units—one of the key objects of linguoculturology—and the methods used to study them, within the framework of the interrelation between language and culture. The main focus of the study is the formation of culturally salient units in linguistic consciousness (including phraseological units, concepts, symbols, nationally marked vocabulary, and precedent units), as well as the mechanisms of their semantic, pragmatic, and cognitive interaction. The study systematizes definitions of linguocultural units, clarifies their status at the interface of language and culture, and outlines the principles underlying their classification. The relevance of the topic is determined by the need to explain how linguocultural units are organized in linguistic consciousness in contemporary multicultural and multilingual societies, which semantic links become dominant, and through which mechanisms the interaction between language and culture is realized. In addition, the paper describes the potential of comparative, cognitive, semantic, discourse, and ethnolinguistic methods in the study of linguocultural units and demonstrates their effectiveness for culturally oriented interpretation of linguistic data. The results contribute to the development of linguoculturological theory, support culturally informed analysis of linguistic evidence, and may also be applied in language teaching and intercultural communication.

Index Terms—linguoculturology, linguocultural units, typology, concept, language, culture

I. INTRODUCTION

Contemporary trends in linguistics require viewing language not only as a means of communication but also as a complex sociocultural phenomenon inseparably connected with national culture, public consciousness, and historical experience. Within the anthropocentric paradigm, language is interpreted as a space where cultural memory and ethnos-specific ways of cognizing the world are fixed; therefore, *linguoculturology*, as a relatively young yet rapidly developing field, focuses on identifying the spiritual, axiological, and worldview foundations reflected in linguistic data. In this context, language functions as one of the key mechanisms for accumulating, preserving, and transmitting cultural experience across generations, while the analysis of culturally marked linguistic phenomena becomes especially important for describing the national worldview.

The relevance of addressing *linguocultural units* is reinforced by the fact that scholarly tradition treats them as carriers of culturally significant information embedded in the meaning and functioning of linguistic forms. Thus, the linguoculturological approach emphasizes that the cultural component is not an external “addition” but an integral part of the semantics and pragmatics of a linguistic unit, shaping its interpretation in national consciousness (Maslova, 2001). In the analysis of fixed expressions and figurative constructions, special attention is paid to their capacity to encode cultural stereotypes and collective experience, thereby ensuring intergenerational transmission of values and norms (Teliia, 1996).

In a broader cultural-semantic perspective, it is also noted that the symbolic and evaluative planes of meaning create a specific cultural depth of a linguistic unit and become manifest through associative links sustained by tradition (Arutiunova, 1999). Consequently, the study of linguocultural units is significant not only for semantic theory but also for describing the mechanisms through which culture is reflected in language.

At the same time, the research field shows a clear methodological gap: despite extensive studies of linguocultural units, their structure, and functioning, a consistent typology with explicit classification criteria is still lacking. This issue is especially acute in Kazakh linguistics, where a systematic, nationally grounded description is needed. The absence of unified approaches often limits typology to isolated examples or partial observations, hindering cross-level comparison and the identification of common bases of cultural markedness. In addition, the boundaries between types of linguocultural units and the integration of their semantic, pragmatic, and functional features into a single model remain unclear. Consequently, the question of which parameters should underpin typology and how they should align with analytical methods across different classes of culturally significant forms remains open.

The aim of the present study is to identify the main types of linguocultural units, substantiate the methodological foundations for their investigation, and analyze their functioning on concrete linguistic data. To achieve this aim, the following objectives are set: to define the theoretical bases for typologizing linguocultural units; to justify the scholarly criteria used in constructing the typology; to illustrate each type with examples from the Kazakh language and conduct linguoculturological analysis; and to demonstrate the applicability of research methods to the study of linguocultural units.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundations and Classification Parameters of Linguocultural Units

The concept of *linguocultural units* emerged in the late twentieth to early twenty-first century, and the scholarly literature offers diverse definitions. Maslova (2001) interprets *linguocultural units* as linguistic signs that preserve and transmit cultural content; this view stresses that linguistic meaning is not limited to the nominative level and includes cultural-cognitive layers. Teliia (1996) foregrounds their role in representing national consciousness and cultural stereotypes. In Kazakh ethnolinguistics, Kaidar (2013), drawing on ethnolinguistic data, demonstrates the inseparability of language and culture, highlighting the relevance of studying national cognition through language and the possibility of understanding an ethnos through linguistic facts; in this perspective, the decisive role of language in revealing national cultural content is emphasized (Kaidar, 2013). Syzdyq (2005), examining literary texts, shows how national-cultural information becomes visible in the aesthetic and cognitive functions of language.

Within this approach, *linguocultural units* are treated as signs that represent, through language, the cultural experience, value system, and worldview of a particular people. Stepanov (2004) characterizes concepts as stable semantic cores of culture, which makes typological description not a formal listing but a way to establish functions, structure, and the degree of cultural-information transmission. Accordingly, typology construction relies on theoretical principles, since *linguocultural units* are not only linguistic structures but also a linguistic form through which culture, national consciousness, and historical memory are manifested.

We proceed to the principles:

1. The principle of *embedding cultural information* into a linguistic unit treats cultural information as the main defining feature of a *linguocultural unit*. Maslova (2001) argues that a linguocultural characteristic arises when cultural information becomes part of meaning, while Teliia (1996) adds that such information may enter semantic structure implicitly. Therefore, a *linguocultural unit* functions not merely as a label but as a carrier of cultural knowledge; in this sense, for example, *shañyraq* (the crown of a yurt; a symbol of family/lineage) is not only a structural element of a yurt but also a cultural symbol of family, clan, and continuity: in expressions such as *shañyrağy biik* (lit. “the shanyraq is high,” meaning a strong or esteemed family) and *shañyraq köteru* (“to raise a shanyraq,” meaning to establish a family/household), the unit operates in a social and spiritual dimension.
2. The principle of *connection with a national worldview* rests on the idea that *linguocultural units* correlate with a national system of thinking. Stepanov (2004) defines a concept as the semantic core of culture manifested through language, while Mankeeva (2008) describes Kazakh-language concepts as cognitive structures reflecting a national worldview. Therefore, a unit that is not connected with a nationally specific way of perceiving and evaluating the world cannot be considered *linguocultural*; an illustrative case is the concept *namys* (honor/dignity): expressions such as *namysyna tiuu* (to offend someone’s honor), *namysyn qorğau* (to defend one’s honor), and *namysty qoldan bermeu* (not to give up one’s honor) indicate that this notion relates not only to the individual but also to the honor of clan, people, and society.
3. The principle of semantic complexity follows from the fact that the semantics of linguocultural units is often multilayered: Arutiunova (1999) distinguishes symbolic and evaluative levels of meaning, and Wierzbicka (1997) notes that cultural differences become especially visible in semantic structure. If a word or expression carries implicit meaning and evokes culturally conditioned associations, it functions as a *symbol-type linguocultural unit*; thus, *aq* (white; purity/honesty/sacrality) conveys purity, honesty, and sacrality, and in *aq jol* (good journey; blessing for the road), *aq bata* (blessing), and *aq niet* (pure intention), it is used predominantly in a symbolic sense.

4. The principle of usage stability is crucial for identifying phraseological units: Teliia (1996) interprets phraseologisms as a stable form of cultural experience, while Vereshchagin and Kostomarov (2005) emphasize their capacity to preserve cultural information over long periods. Stable expressions accumulate cultural meaning and transmit it intergenerationally; for example, *attyń jaly, tüiendiń qomy* (lit. “the horse’s mane, the camel’s pack-saddle,” meaning hard, turbulent times), rooted in nomadic life, denotes a difficult and unsettled period and cannot be fully understood without historical-cultural knowledge.

On the basis of these principles, *linguocultural units* are typologized according to the mode of cultural-information transmission, their connection with a national worldview, and their semantic organization. *Realia-type linguocultural units* include names directly connected with the material or social culture of an ethnos; in Maslova (2001) and in Vereshchagin and Kostomarov (2005), realia are described as units that directly transmit national-cultural information. Their features include reference to a concrete object/phenomenon, an explicit cultural component, and limited transparency outside the national environment; examples include *kiiz ui* (felt yurt), *bosağa* (threshold/doorframe; culturally a boundary of the household), *qymyz* (fermented mare’s milk), and *asyq* (knucklebone used in traditional games), with *bosağa* functioning not only as a house component but also as a symbol of family space in expressions such as *tabaldyryq attau* (to cross the threshold; culturally: entering a household/starting rite-related transitions) and *bosağanı berik bolsyn* (may your threshold be strong; meaning household stability).

Concept-type linguocultural units are linked to mental structures that form the core of national consciousness; Stepanov (2004) treats concepts as supporting units of culture, and Mankeeva (2008) stresses their role in revealing the national picture of the world. Such units express abstract value meanings and are realized through lexis and phraseology: *ar* (moral integrity), *uyat* (shame/modesty), *qonaqzhalyq* (hospitality), *berke* (abundance/blessing), and others. The concept *qonaqzhalyq* is reflected in *qonaq kelse — qut* (“a guest brings blessing”) and *qonaq kade* (guest ritual/gift), while the cultural norm of hospitality presupposes the obligation to receive a traveler and offer food; refusal is viewed as disgrace not only for the host but also for the entire clan, which explains the persistence of the notion *qudaiy qonaq* (“God-sent guest”) and the belief that *qut* (blessing/fortune) arrives together with the guest.

Symbol-type linguocultural units convey cultural information figuratively and contextually: Arutiunova (1999) emphasizes the dependence of symbolic meaning on context, and Wierzbicka (1997) treats symbolism as an instrument for identifying cultural differences. Their features include indirect meaning, reliance on culturally conditioned association, and context-based interpretation; examples include *aq* (white), *qara* (black), *ot* (fire), and *jol* (road/way). *Aq* symbolizes honesty and purity, while *ot* symbolizes life, the hearth, and lineage continuity in *otyń öshpesin* (“may your fire not go out,” meaning family continuity). In culturally shared understandings, the hearth is sacralized: damaging the hearth or extinguishing fire is conceptualized as a grave violation; the cult of *Umai* is associated with fire and the image *Ot-ana* (“Mother Fire”); and fire performs a purifying function (passing livestock and loaded camels between fires when leaving winter quarters, fumigating winter quarters with smoke upon return, cleansing the cradle with fire), alongside prohibitions against stepping over fire, standing on the hearth place, and extinguishing fire with water.

Phraseological linguocultural units generalize national experience and worldview in stable formulas; Teliia (1996) defines them as a ready-made formula of cultural information. Their features include semantic integrity, non-additivity of components, and the need for historical-cultural knowledge; examples include *qoi üstine boz torğai jumyrtqalağan* (lit. “a lark laid an egg on a sheep’s back,” meaning idyllic peace and prosperity) and *töbesi kökke zhetu* (“to reach the sky with one’s head,” meaning to be overjoyed).

The study of *linguocultural units* requires interdisciplinary methods. The comparative method enables cross-language comparison of culturally saturated units and identification of national specificity; Arutiunova (1999) emphasizes that direct transfer of meaning is impossible because cultures rely on different associative systems. The cognitive method targets the structure of concepts and their mental images, revealing features of world perception and value organization (Stepanov, 2004; Mankeeva, 2008). Semantic analysis differentiates denotative, connotative, and cultural components, whereas the discourse method reveals functional activation in real communicative environments. Recent work in the journal also shows that linguocultural interpretation gains reliability when anchored in observable lexical-semantic regularities and culturally salient concept/phraseology configurations, which strengthens the methodological logic of combining comparative, semantic, and interpretive procedures (Kaidarova, 2023; Abdimaulen & Sagidolda, 2023). Syzdyq (2005) demonstrates its productivity in literary material, where cultural code appears in composition and imagery. Taken together, the methods complement one another: the comparative approach identifies national specificity, the cognitive approach shows how meaning is organized in consciousness, semantic analysis uncovers the structure of meaning, and discourse analysis captures functional realization in speech—thereby strengthening the scholarly groundedness of linguocultural analysis (Arutiunova, 1999; Syzdyq, 2005).

For a compact alignment of typologization principles, unit types, and the most relevant methods for their description, a summary scheme is used (see Table 1).

TABLE 1
CORRELATION OF TYPOLOGIZATION PRINCIPLES, TYPES OF *LINGUOCULTURAL UNITS*, AND METHODS OF ANALYSIS

Principle (criterion)	Types in which the principle is most clearly manifested	Methods most relevant for description	Illustrations from the material
<i>Embedding cultural information</i> (Maslova, 2001; Teliia, 1996)	<i>Realia-type</i> ; partly <i>symbol-type</i>	Semantic; discourse	<i>shanyraq</i> (the crown of a yurt; a symbol of family/lineage)
<i>Connection with a worldview</i> (Stepanov, 2004; Mankeeva, 2008)	<i>Concept-type</i> ; partly <i>phraseological</i>	Cognitive; discourse	<i>namys</i> (honor/dignity; value category)
<i>Semantic complexity</i> (Arutyunova, 1999; Wierzbicka, 1997)	<i>Symbol-type</i> ; partly <i>concept-type</i>	Semantic; comparative	<i>aq in aq jol / aq bata / aq niet</i> (white → purity/blessing)
<i>Usage stability</i> (Teliia, 1996; Vereshchagin & Kostomarov, 2005)	<i>Phraseological</i> ; partly <i>realia-type</i>	Discourse; comparative	<i>attyn zhaly, tuyendin qomy</i> (hard, turbulent times)

The data in *Table 1* show that the principles of typologization perform both diagnostic and explanatory functions: they indicate where cultural meaning is expressed explicitly (for example, in *realia-type units*), where it is structured through value-based cognitive formations (*concept-type units*), where it is realized through symbolization and context (*symbol-type units*), and where it is maintained in stable formulas of cultural experience (*phraseological units*). Accordingly, the selection of analytical methods is not arbitrary: it is determined by the nature of cultural meaning and by the mode of its linguistic representation, which enables an integrated account of language–culture interaction (Maslova, 2001; Teliia, 1996; Kaidar, 2013; Syzdyq, 2005; Stepanov, 2004; Arutyunova, 1999; Wierzbicka, 1997; Vereshchagin & Kostomarov, 2005).

Corpus-Oriented and Computational Approaches to Describing Linguocultural Meaning

Recent scholarship increasingly shows that a robust description of linguocultural meaning requires not only qualitative interpretation but also a representative empirical base—corpora, large text collections, and replicable sampling procedures. In corpus-oriented studies, linguocultural specificity is identified through contextual profiles, collocational fields, and the distribution of usages across discourse types, which makes it possible to separate “dictionary” meaning from cultural-pragmatic accretions and recurrent usage scripts (Bednarek et al., 2024a; Bednarek, 2024b; Gries, 2025; Ivanova & Medvedeva, 2023; Römer-Barron & Cunningham, 2024). A distinct line of work integrates corpus linguistics with discourse analysis: here, outcomes are defined not only by frequencies but also by interpretable patterns—how exactly and in which communicative situations cultural semantics is activated—something especially visible in corpus-assisted research on critical discourse and topic modelling (Bednarek et al., 2024a; Bednarek, 2024b). At the same time, the principle of evidentiality is maintained: cultural interpretation is supported by recurring contexts, statistically stable associations, and cross-register comparison.

In a second group of studies, the focus shifts toward the operationalization of cultural semantics—how cultural meanings can be “measured” through observable linguistic behavior. Corpus semantics and collocation analysis demonstrate that semantic complexity and cultural connotations become visible through a word’s immediate environment (typical adjectives/verbs, metaphorical patterns, evaluative cues, and causal scripts), as well as through the ways different discourses pull the unit in different directions (Ivanova & Medvedeva, 2023). In parallel, a line of research develops in which cultural meanings are revealed via “keywords” and comparative keyness across language varieties/corpora; in this way, cultural specificity is described as differences in distribution and discourse entrenchment (Gries, 2025). Within the same logic, it is noteworthy that in a number of TPLS studies, corpus techniques function not as auxiliary tools but as the research framework itself—from corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis to corpus-based examination of recurrent formulas and paroemias (Suhaili et al., 2024; Al-Khawaldeh & Al-Yasin, 2023; Ormanova et al., 2025).

Finally, the “corpus + applied interpretation” linkage has particular methodological value, where corpus tools are used to refine “ordinary” usage, normative nuances, and pragmatic implications in institutional texts. Although this line is actively discussed in legal corpus linguistics, its methodological conclusions are readily transferable to linguocultural material: transparency of selection procedures, corpus comparability, and the testability of interpretation through recurring contexts are crucial (Römer-Barron & Cunningham, 2024; Bednarek et al., 2024a; Bednarek, 2024b). As a result, corpus approaches allow linguocultural units to be described as dynamic structures: they are not stored statically in language but become entrenched through recurrent usage scenarios across genres and discourses, making typologization more rigorous and more comparable within international scholarly communication (Gries, 2025; Ivanova & Medvedeva, 2023; Suhaili et al., 2024).

Psycholinguistic and Sociocultural Foundations of Linguocultural Units: Language Consciousness, Naming, Sacred Lexicon

In current literature, linguocultural issues are increasingly linked to how cultural knowledge is organized in language consciousness and how it manifests in experimental data. Studies employing associative methodologies show that the cultural salience of units is captured not only in texts but also in speakers’ typical reactions: associative fields reflect stable value links, dominant scenarios, and culturally conditioned evaluations (Isajeva & Vasiljeva, 2021; Nagovitsyna, 2021). In Kazakhstani-based research, a distinct line focuses on sacred vocabulary and culturally salient nominations in youth consciousness: findings demonstrate reproducible links between the “sacred” lexicon, value oppositions, and social practices, as well as the sensitivity of associations to discourse context (Akhmetova & Yespekova, 2024; Akhmetova et al., 2025a; Akhmetova et al., 2025b). These data are important for linguocultural typology because they help refine the

boundaries of cultural semantics—what belongs to the “core” (stable responses) and what should be treated as “periphery” (context-driven fluctuations).

Another rapidly developing area concerns research on naming and onomastic identity, where names are treated as socially entrenched cultural markers. In contemporary socio-onomastic approaches, personal names and naming practices are described as resources for expressing belonging, memory, ideology, and local identity; at the same time, the cultural semantics of a name is uncovered through motivations, discursive frames, and social configurations (Mukosi et al., 2025; Waldispühl, 2024). Against this background, studies of ethnocultural names in the language consciousness of Kazakh youth make it possible to connect onomastic material with linguocultural typology: a name functions not only as a referent but also as a “node” of cultural associations, social norms, and value expectations (Akhmetova et al., 2025b). This perspective methodologically strengthens the literature review: linguocultural units receive support in two planes simultaneously—textual (usage) and psycholinguistic.

Finally, the field has expanded noticeably in studies where linguocultural units are described in conjunction with conceptual models and phraseology, especially in a comparative perspective. For typology, it is important that cultural specificity is identified not only in individual words but also in stable formulaic structures and phraseological models that “package” cultural scenarios into compact linguistic forms (Bakytzhanova et al., 2025a). In particular, an analysis of the concept “memory” based on Kazakh–Russian–English phraseological material shows that typologization can be built both on semantic parameters and on cultural profiles of meaning expression (Bakytzhanova et al., 2025a). Additionally, a line of institutional discourse research is relevant, where cultural-conceptual parameters interact with norm and interpretive strategies; this makes it possible to discuss linguocultural typology not only as a “cultural lexicon” but also as a mechanism of meaning-making in socially significant communication (Bakytzhanova et al., 2025b; Römer-Barron & Cunningham, 2024). Overall, psycholinguistic and socio-onomastic data provide typology with criteria of verifiability: cultural meaning is supported either by the stability of associations, by the stability of discursive patterns, or by their convergence.

III. MATERIAL AND METHODS

Materials of the Study

The research materials comprised, first, theoretical and methodological works in *linguoculturology* and *ethnolinguistics* that articulate definitions of *linguocultural units*, principles for their identification, and approaches to typologization. In the review component, the discussion relies on the idea of cultural embeddedness of meaning in a linguistic unit and on the role of cultural knowledge in the semantics and usage of linguistic signs (Maslova, 2001; Teliia, 1996); on the interpretation of the concept as the semantic core of culture and its linguistic representation (Stepanov, 2004; Mankeeva, 2008); and on the view that symbolic and evaluative planes of meaning are central to culturally marked semantics (Arutiunova, 1999; Wierzbicka, 1997). For the Kazakh-language material, ethnolinguistic theses on the inseparability of language and culture and on the possibility of reconstructing an ethnic worldview through linguistic facts were essential (Kaidar, 2013), as were observations on how national-cultural information manifests in literary texts and how meaning is organized discursively (Syzydyq, 2005). In describing fixed expressions, the analysis also considered conclusions about phraseology as a form of consolidating cultural experience and of long-term storage of cultural information (Teliia, 1996; Vereshchagin & Kostomarov, 2005).

Second, the empirical dataset included a selection of Kazakh *linguocultural units* chosen as representative for typologization and for demonstrating the proposed principles: realia-based nominations such as *kiiz ui* (yurt), *qymyz* (fermented mare’s milk), *asyq* (knucklebone game piece), and *bosağa* (doorstep; threshold); conceptually salient value-domain units such as *ar* (honor), *uyat* (shame; modesty), *namys* (dignity; honor), *qonaqzhailyq* (hospitality), and *bereke* (abundance; prosperity; blessing); symbolically loaded words and formulae such as *aq* (white; purity), *qara* (black), *ot* (fire), and *jol* (road; path); as well as phraseological expressions requiring historical-cultural knowledge for interpretation, including *qoi üstine boz torgai jumyrtqalağan* (a time of peace and prosperity; lit. “a gray sparrow laid eggs on a sheep”), *töbesi kökke zhetu* (to be overjoyed; lit. “to reach the sky”), and *attyñ jaly, tüiendiñ qomy* (hard times; lit. “the horse’s mane, the camel’s hump”). In addition, units from the sacred-cultural layer and traditional practices were incorporated—*bata* (blessing), *qudayy as* (charitable memorial feast), *sadaqa* (alms), *quran oqytu* (Quran recitation), and *täube* (repentance)—because they demonstrate intersections of religious, ethical, and social meanings in language.

Third, to enhance cultural-semantic representativeness, the material was grouped by broad cultural domains (by analogy with typological solutions proposed in a related tradition (Evstigneev & Sysoev, 2007)). On this basis, *linguocultural units* were examined within eight thematic “fields”: geographic (*Saryarqa* (Saryarka steppe region), *Zhetisu* (Seven Rivers region), *Altai* (Altai), *Ulytau* (Ulytau); *zhailau* (summer pasture), *qystau* (wintering ground), *kökteu* (spring pasture), *küzdeu* (autumn pasture)); spiritual-religious; historical (*Aqtayban shubyryndy* (national catastrophe; “Great Disaster”), *Elim-ai* (lament “My country, oh”), *Zhoñgar shabqynshylygy* (Dzungar invasion), *Altyn Orda* (Golden Horde)); social (*zheti ata* (rule of seven ancestors), *ru* (clan), *taýpa* (tribe), *el* (people), *agaiyn* (kin), *zhurt* (community; folk)). This organization made it possible to demonstrate the multilayered nature of cultural content and the variability of functional zones in which linguocultural units are stabilized and actualized.

Methods and Instruments

The core research toolkit was the descriptive-analytical method, which enabled systematic registration of structural and semantic properties of *linguocultural units* and their characterization as culturally marked linguistic signs. Within this approach, scholarly classifications and interpretations were compared to identify shared and differentiating features relevant to typologization (Maslova, 2001; Teliia, 1996; Stepanov, 2004; Mankeeva, 2008). The descriptive-analytical procedure included: (1) selecting units as carriers of cultural information, (2) determining the principle(s) by which cultural meaning is embedded in semantics, (3) assigning each unit to a type (realia-based, conceptual, symbolic, or phraseological), and (4) interpreting its cultural function in language and communication.

As empirically verifiable instruments, the study applied context-based procedures drawn from the data: contextual profiling, collocational–cultural analysis, discourse-dominance mapping, analysis of semantic shift and metaphorization, conceptual-field positional analysis, intra-cultural comparison across historical and genre layers, and interpretive validation through recurring contextual confirmations. Together, these procedures move the analysis beyond declarative description by tying typological decisions to observable linguistic evidence and stable patterns of how units function in culture and discourse.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The proposed typology reflects the outcomes of a systematic organization of Kazakh *linguocultural units* based on how cultural information becomes entrenched in them and how it is manifested in meaning and usage. The key foundations include: the degree of “transparency” of the cultural component (from overt nomination to figurative-symbolic meaning), the link between a unit and the value–normative sphere of the national worldview, and the stability of reproduction in speech practice. This approach makes it possible to present *linguocultural units* not as a scattered set of examples but as a structured system in which different types capture different mechanisms of cultural representation—from material everyday experience to moral categories and collective memory.

The typology of *linguocultural units* can be seen in the table below (see Table 2).

TABLE 2
GENERAL TYPOLOGY OF LINGUOCULTURAL UNITS

No.	Type of linguocultural unit	Definition	Key features	Examples
1	Realia-type linguocultural units	Units that include names directly related to the material or social culture of a particular ethnos	Denote a concrete object or social phenomenon; cultural information is explicit; outside the national environment they may not be fully transparent	<i>kiiz ui</i> (yurt), <i>bosağa</i> (threshold; symbolic household boundary), <i>qymyz</i> (fermented mare’s milk), <i>asyq</i> (knucklebone game)
2	Concept-type linguocultural units	Units associated with mental structures that form the core of national consciousness and worldview	Express abstract notions; tightly connected to national evaluation and moral norms; realized through various lexical and phraseological forms	<i>ar</i> (honor), <i>uyat</i> (shame/modesty), <i>qonaqzhaiyq</i> (hospitality), <i>bereke</i> (prosperity/blessing)
3	Symbol-type linguocultural units	Units that convey cultural information implicitly and figuratively	Meaning is not literal; relies on cultural association; symbolic meaning is clarified through context	<i>aq</i> (white; purity/sacrality), <i>qara</i> (black; symbolic oppositions), <i>ot</i> (fire; hearth/life), <i>jol</i> (road/way; life path)
4	Phraseological linguocultural units	Fixed expressions that generalize national experience and worldview	Semantic integrity is preserved; components are not interpreted literally; require historical-cultural knowledge	<i>qoi üstine boz torgai jumyrtqalağan</i> (an idyllic time of peace and abundance), <i>töbesi kökke zhetu</i> (to be overjoyed; lit. “reach the sky with one’s top”)

In studying Kazakh *linguocultural units*, it is not sufficient to consider them only at the linguistic level or within the narrow scope of individual concepts and phraseologisms. Because national culture is a multi-layered and multi-sphere phenomenon, *linguocultural units* are formed in close interaction with different cultural domains. From this perspective, systematizing Kazakh *linguocultural units* through broad cultural spheres makes it possible to reveal their cultural content more deeply. In Russian linguistics, a typology of this kind was proposed by Evstigneev and Sysoev (Evstigneev & Sysoev, 2007). On this basis, it is reasonable to divide Kazakh *linguocultural units* into eight major types.

1. *Geographical linguocultural units*. This group includes names that reflect the Kazakh understanding of space. These units represent the linguistic projection of the natural environment and the nomadic way of life. For example, *Saryarqa* (Kazakh Uplands), *Zhetisu* (Seven Rivers region), *Altai* (Altai), and *Ulytau* (Ulytau) are not merely geographic objects but cultural spaces that encode historical formation zones and ethnic memory. In addition, *zhailau* (summer pasture), *qystau* (wintering site), *köktau* (spring pasture), and *küzdeu* (autumn pasture) function as linguistic models of seasonally structured spatial perception. They are not simply place names but represent a cyclical life model. Cognitively, these units express the integrity of the “nature–human–time” triad in the Kazakh worldview. Semantic analysis reveals components of movement, adaptation, and seasonal rhythm in their meanings. At the discourse level, they show stable usage in historical epics, genealogical narratives, and everyday speech. The key feature of this group is that it foregrounds the central role of space and nature in the national worldview.

2. *Religious–spiritual linguocultural units.* This group includes religious notions as well as spiritual units intertwined with the traditional Kazakh worldview. Units such as *bata* (blessing), *qudaiy as* (commemorative meal offered for God’s sake), *sadaqa* (alms), *quran oqytu* (Qur’an recitation), and *täube* (repentance) in Kazakh denote not only religious actions but also social, moral, and educational meanings. Cognitively, they shape binary oppositions such as “good–bad” and “permitted–forbidden.” In discourse, they are frequently used in everyday interaction and in educational contexts, which demonstrates their social function. For instance, *bata* (blessing) is not only an elder’s wish to a younger person but a cultural act expressing spiritual support and social concord. The distinctive feature of religious–spiritual units is their functioning at the intersection of religious meaning and national custom.
3. *Historical linguocultural units.* This group includes linguistic units that preserve past social experience and historical memory. Names such as *Aqtayban shubyrindy* (a national catastrophe; lit. “barefoot flight”), *Elim-ai* (lament song title; “My people, oh”), *Zhoňgar shabqynshylygy* (Dzungar invasion), and *Altyn Orda* (Golden Horde) are linguocultural units grounded in cultural memory and cannot be fully understood without historical reference. Their key feature is that they compress a specific historical period and convey it with an emotive–evaluative coloring. They preserve collective memory: for example, *Aqtayban shubyrindy* is not merely the name of an event but a linguistic expression of a national tragedy concept. Semantically, it is emotionally expressive; cognitively, it activates frames of loss, displacement, and suffering. A comparative approach shows that similar units exist in other cultures, yet their content is structured differently within each culture.
4. *Social linguocultural units.* This group covers units reflecting the structure of Kazakh society and social relations. Names such as *zheti ata* (seven ancestors), *ru* (clan), *taïpa* (tribe), *el* (people/community), *ağaiyn* (kin), and *zhurt* (community/folk) encode the foundations of social organization in Kazakh culture. Their main feature is that they regulate social order and communal relations through language. For example, *zheti ata* is a cultural norm that expresses not only a marriage taboo but also social responsibility and communal unity; it functions as a genealogical system and a mechanism of social control. Cognitively, it forms a conceptual chain of “kinship–responsibility–prohibition.” Discourse analysis shows that *zheti ata* is used as a non-legal yet rigid social norm.
5. *Ethnographic linguocultural units.* The ethnographic group reflects everyday life, household practices, and the economic system of the Kazakh people. Names such as *kiiz ui* (yurt), *shañyraq* (yurt crown; family continuity), *kerege* (lattice wall), *bosağa* (threshold), *tuskiiz* (decorative wall hanging), and *alasha* (woven rug) possess both referential meaning and symbolic value. For instance, *shañyraq* functions as a symbol of family, lineage, and intergenerational continuity. While *bosağa* is semantically a part of a house, in linguocultural terms it symbolizes the boundary of the family space. Cognitively, it encodes oppositions such as “inside–outside” and “own–other.” In discourse, expressions like *bosağa attau* (to cross the threshold; enter as a member/guest) and *bosağadan attamau* (not to cross the threshold; refrain from entering) become stable formulas marking social norms. The distinctive feature of this group is that it conveys spiritual meanings through material culture.
6. *Art-related linguocultural units.* This group represents the artistic worldview of the Kazakh people. Units such as *zhyr* (epic song/poetry), *terme* (didactic chant), *aitys* (improvised poetic contest), *kui* (instrumental composition), *dombira* (two-stringed lute), *zhyrâu* (bard), and *aqyn* (poet) show that art in Kazakh culture fulfills not only aesthetic but also social and educational functions. Art-related units serve as traditional channels of information transmission. The notion *kui* is not only a musical genre but also a non-verbal form of conveying historical events and social moods. Cognitively, listening to *kui* is based on a “knowing through listening” model. Semantically, *kui* is linked to the idea of an emotional state. *Aitys* is not only an art form but a traditional mode of public opinion expression. The distinctive feature of this group is that it communicates national thought through artistic language.
7. *Socio-political linguocultural units.* This group includes units related to power, governance, and public relations in Kazakh society. Names such as *han* (khan), *bi* (judge/wise arbiter), *töre* (noble), *zhargy* (legal code), *Qasym hannıñ qasqa zholıy* (Qasym Khan’s “Bright Path”), and *Zheti zhargy* (Seven Charters) represent the traditional legal system. The unit *bi* is not only a title but also a linguistic image of the justice concept. In discourse, the speech of *bi* figures is based on argumentation, metaphor, and proverbs, forming a cultural format of legal decision-making. Comparatively, this system is closer to an oral legal culture than to written law. The key feature here is the linguistic entrenchment of governance and legal norms.
8. *Scientific–cognitive linguocultural units.* This group includes names reflecting traditional knowledge systems of the Kazakh people. Units such as *zhuldyzname* (astrology), *esep* (calculation), *emshilik* (healing practice), *täuip* (healer), *balger* (fortune teller), and *zhoramal* (prediction) represent folk science and experiential knowledge in language. Cognitively, these units reflect an experience-based model of knowledge. Semantically, they may not coincide with modern scientific terminology, yet they function effectively within cultural practice. Their distinctive feature is the integration of knowledge with folk cognition.

Systematizing Kazakh *linguocultural units* across eight cultural spheres makes it possible to reveal the multi-dimensional nature of national culture. This typology provides a basis for treating Kazakh *linguocultural units* not merely as linguistic forms but as structural elements of national culture.

The study of *linguocultural units* requires a comprehensive approach that considers linguistic data not only structurally but also in cultural, cognitive, and communicative dimensions. Therefore, limiting analysis to a single method is insufficient from a scholarly standpoint. In linguocultural studies, several interdisciplinary methods are used in parallel, each aimed at revealing a specific facet of the research object.

TABLE 3
METHODS FOR STUDYING LINGUOCULTURAL UNITS

No.	Methods for studying linguocultural units	Key features	Significance
1	<i>Comparative method</i>	The <i>comparative method</i> considers a linguistic unit not in isolation, but in relation to another language system. In contrast, semantic or cognitive methods are most often applied within a single language.	Identifies national cultural specificity; makes it possible to distinguish cultural universals from nationally specific elements; important for translation studies and intercultural communication.
2	<i>Cognitive method</i>	Examines not only meaning, but also how that meaning is organized in consciousness. This method reveals the deeper layer of <i>linguocultural units</i> .	Determines the structure of the national worldview; shows how cultural meaning is formed in consciousness; effective for analyzing abstract notions such as <i>namys</i> (honor), <i>ar</i> (honor), and <i>uyat</i> (shame/modesty).
3	<i>Semantic analysis method</i>	Semantic analysis can examine meaning beyond context, whereas the discourse method necessarily requires a usage situation.	Shows how the cultural component enters linguistic meaning; enables the disclosure of multilayered semantics; identifies symbolic and evaluative meanings.
4	<i>Discourse method</i>	Considers a linguistic unit in actual use, within a concrete communicative situation.	Reveals the communicative function of a <i>linguocultural unit</i> ; shows how cultural meaning is actualized in a text; enables pragmatic and stylistic analysis.

While the methods listed above represent general research approaches, in contemporary linguocultural studies the investigation of *linguocultural units* is not limited to traditional semantic or descriptive techniques. To disclose the cultural content of language in a deeper and more consistent way, a new set of methods is employed. In the study of Kazakh *linguocultural units*, the effectiveness of the methods presented below has been demonstrated.

1. *Corpus-based contextual profiling method*. This method describes the meaning of a *linguocultural unit* not through an isolated dictionary definition but through the totality of all contexts in a corpus. Its essence is to collect the uses of a lexeme across different discourses and determine its cultural-pragmatic profile. For example, corpus contexts of *shañyraq* (yurt crown; family continuity) make it possible to identify its object-related function (a part of a house), symbolic function (lineage, family), and evaluative function (*berekeli shañyraq* (a prosperous/blessed family)). The advantage of this method is that it characterizes a *linguocultural unit* on the basis of actual usage.
2. *Collocational-cultural analysis method*. Although collocational analysis is traditionally used in lexicology, in linguocultural studies it acquires a new role as a tool for detecting cultural associations. The method aims to identify which words a *linguocultural unit* most frequently co-occurs with in a corpus. For example, *namys* (honor) often appears alongside *ar* (honor), *el* (people/community), *er* (brave man/warrior), and *qorǵau* (to defend). These collocations reveal the unit's value-laden cultural content. The method thus identifies the cultural semantics of *linguocultural units* indirectly, yet on the basis of objective data.
3. *Discourse-dominant method*. This method determines in which discourse type (literary, historical, colloquial, journalistic) a *linguocultural unit* performs its most dominant function. For example: *bata* (blessing) is dominant in colloquial and ethnographic discourse; *Aqtayban shubyryndy* (a national catastrophe; lit. "barefoot flight") is dominant in historical-literary discourse; *kui* (instrumental composition) is dominant in aesthetic-literary discourse. The outcome of the method helps define the functional domain of a unit and empirically supports the typology.
4. *Semantic shift and metaphorization method*. This method examines the process by which a *linguocultural unit* moves from an initial denotative meaning to a cultural-symbolic meaning. For example: *bosaǵa* (threshold) → a part of a house → a social boundary; *shañyraq* (yurt crown; family continuity) → a structural element → a symbol of lineage. The method's distinctive feature is that it shows the historical and cognitive pathway through which cultural meaning becomes established.
5. *Positional analysis within a conceptual field*. This method characterizes a *linguocultural unit* not in isolation but through its place within a specific conceptual field. For example, *ar* (honor), *uyat* (shame/modesty), and *namys* (honor) occupy one field, and each performs its own function within the moral system. Corpus data show that these units are not interchangeable, yet they form a single cultural system. The method reveals the systemic nature of *linguocultural units*.
6. *Intra-cultural comparison method*. Whereas the traditional comparative method operates across languages, this approach compares different historical periods and discourses within one language. For example, uses of *bi* (judge/wise arbiter) in traditional law are compared with its uses in contemporary journalistic discourse. This method reveals the dynamic character of a *linguocultural unit*.

7. *Interpretive validation based on corpus evidence.* This method aims to ensure that the researcher's interpretation does not remain at the level of a subjective claim, but is supported by corpus-based proof. Each cultural generalization is confirmed by concrete contexts, recurring patterns, and discourse stability.

The combined methods allow linguocultural units to be studied not only theoretically but also through real linguistic evidence. Integrating corpus- and discourse-based approaches meets international standards and helps reveal their semantic structure, cultural load, and functional range. Corpus contextual profiling and collocational-cultural analysis show dependence on actual usage, while discourse analysis demonstrates that cultural functions vary across text types. Semantic shift and metaphorization confirm that cultural meaning is dynamic, shaped by historical and cognitive processes, and conceptual-field positional analysis shows these units operate within an interconnected cultural system. Intra-cultural comparison and corpus-based validation capture temporal change and strengthen reliability. Overall, this integrated methodology links linguocultural units to national cultural experience and provides a basis for more universal analyses of culturally encoded meaning.

V. CONCLUSION

The study showed that linguocultural units are a complex, multilayered category revealing the *language–culture interrelation*. In line with the aim, it proposed a principled *typology* and an integrated methodological description. The findings stress that these units are *dynamic*: when linguistic evidence is examined alongside cultural context, one can trace *semantic expansion*, *narrowing*, and *reinterpretation* over time, showing how nationally embedded meanings in Kazakh are continually renewed in response to society's spiritual needs and linked to *contemporary national consciousness*.

As a result, the classification into *realia-type*, *concept-type*, *symbol-type*, and *phraseological* linguocultural units enables a systematic account of Kazakh national-cultural content. The typology is grounded in the *degree of cultural information*, links to the *national worldview*, *semantic complexity*, and *usage stability*, and is illustrated by examples such as *kiyiz ui* (felt dwelling), *bosağa* (doorstep; household boundary symbol), *namys* (honor; moral value), and *aq* (white; purity/sacrality). The study also argues that no single method is sufficient: *comparative*, *cognitive*, *semantic*, and *discourse* approaches complement one another and increase the *reliability* of linguocultural analysis, supporting a deeper understanding of the national worldview within the *anthropocentric paradigm* of Kazakh linguistics.

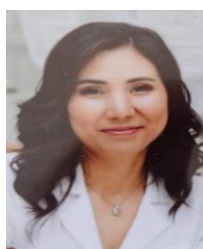
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