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## Kazakh And Turkish Proverbs On Equestrian Culture

**Abstract:** Proverbs describe cultural practice within a particular language. Linguistic anthropological features and cultural phenomena are always easily recognized in comparative and contrastive study of proverbs of two culturally specific societies. The study may successfully display the proverbial concept of culture by means of abstraction and interpretation of proverbs of two societies in Turkic world. Thus, the linguistic interpretation of proverbs directs to a proverbial theory and demonstrates linguistic and cultural similarities and/or peculiarities of societies. This paper examines proverbs on equestrian culture in Kazakh and Turkish languages. It aims to find out how proverbs are formed and what formation principles serve. The analysis of the proverbs in Kazakh and Turkish showed that proverbs on equestrian culture in both languages contain exclusive words of objects available in those specific environments and societies. The analysis of the lexis formation shows similar groups of lexical items used in the proverbs. Further on this linguistic theory of culture leads to understand how equestrian culture has been developed in both countries in Turkic world, and what features are mainly prioritized in a specific society.

**Key words:** Equestrian sport, Culture, Proverbs, Kazakh, Turkish, Proverbial theory of culture.

### Binicilik Kültürü İle İlgili Kazak ve Türk Atasözleri

**Öz:** Atasözleri, belirli bir dildeki kültürel uygulamayı tanımlar. Dilsel antropolojik özellikler ve kültürel fenomenler, kültürel olarak belirli iki toplumun atasözlerinin karşılaştırmalı çalışmasında her zaman kolayca tanınır. Çalışma, Türk dünyasındaki iki toplumun atasözlerinin soyutlanması ve yorumlanması yoluyla atasözü kültür kavramını başarılı bir şekilde ortaya koyabilir. Böylece atasözlerinin dilsel yorumu bir atasözü teorisine yönelir ve toplumların dilsel ve kültürel benzerliklerini ve/veya özelliklerini gösterir. Bu makale, Kazak ve Türk dillerinde binicilik kültürü ile ilgili atasözlerini incelemektedir. Atasözlerinin nasıl oluştuğunu ve hangi oluşum ilkelerine hizmet ettiğini ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlar. Kazakça ve Türkçe atasözlerinin analizi, her iki dilde de binicilik kültürü ile ilgili atasözlerinin, o belirli ortamlarda ve toplumlarda mevcut olan nesnelere özel sözlerini içerdiğini göstermiştir. Sözlük oluşumunun analizi, atasözlerinde kullanılan benzer sözlüksel öge gruplarını gösterir. Ayrıca bu dilsel kültür teorisi, Türk dünyasındaki her iki ülkede de binicilik kültürünün nasıl geliştiğini ve belirli bir toplumda hangi özelliklere öncelik verildiğini anlamaya yol açar.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Binicilik sporu, Kültür, Atasözleri, Kazakça, Türkçe, Atasözü kültür teorisi

### Introduction

Proverbs in any language of the world differ in origin, meaning, and semantic structure as well as their interpretation to another language. Sometimes proverbs mean the same ideas in two or more languages, and, vice versa, some of them may express different concepts. This paper attempts to analyze the proverbs on equestrian culture in Kazakh and Turkish languages

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and examine what principles serve in their formation in both languages. Thus, proverbs on equestrian culture in both languages may be interpreted through the prism of proverbial theory of culture in the following research which determines the essential impact of the proverbs in a particular culture as means of mediation, participation, reaction and others.

### **Literature review**

Proverbs (from Latin: *proverbium*) are generally understood as common traditional sayings which are short, compact, pithy statements based on someone's life experience or common sense, and may also express human behaviour of a particular society. This part concerns, the review of contemporary literature on Kazakh and Turkish proverbs, and proverbs devoted to equestrian culture in two languages of the Turkic world.

In Kazakh linguistics, A. Kaidarov (2004) initially researched Kazakh proverbs. The outstanding scholar highlights that using proverbs are extremely powerful way of expressing any language in the world, including their national, specific, local, and/or other peculiarities.

Kurmanali, Suiyerkul, Aitmukhametova, Turumbetova, and Smanova (2018) studied proverbs of a lexeme "tongue". The scholars analyzed the Kazakh and Turkish proverbs highlighting the Kazakh and Turkic vocabulary. They aimed to investigate the proverbial nature and identify similarities and differences in two languages:

In both languages, the idea of proverbs and sayings about the "language" is the same, and the value of the good word which supplies a person's soul with glory obviously depends on the language and on expressing the idea. In the proverbs that were compiled for this study, it is seen not only the positive effect of the language, but also a negative effect of the language on the human soul. In some proverbs related to the lexemes language/tongue it is encouraged to use the good words to compromise, to refrain from compromising words, to understand their dignity, and to please the people (p. 113).

This is very important that authors claimed person's inner feelings in connection to expressing the idea in the proverb, so the reader or listener may understand it in a proper way, not offensive one.

Mazhitayeva, Omasheva, Tazhikeyeva, Kadyrov, Talaspayeva, and Otyنشina (2015) and Tursyn and Abisheva (2018) examined zoonyms in Kazakh and English proverbs which is closer related to horse culture as well. Mazhitayeva et al. (2015) investigated that there are the similarity and differences of views on human qualities in the proverbs on zoonyms. For instance, they found out that “...no such a lexical unit as “curiosity” in the Kazakh language, but it occurs in the English language which implies that non-intervention in other people’s lives is a social norm for English people. Private life for English people is a response to overcrowding, the desire to protect the personal space that they jealously guard. Proverbs containing lexical unit “*care*” demonstrate restraint in manners as anxiety and excessive concern will not lead to something good” (p. 183). Consequently, this research shows, though the proverbs concern animal world, they tend to describe the relation to human world and the local relation of social characteristics of a specific culture.

An interesting article was written by Ayazbay, Gabidinova, Zhaksylyk, and Abrash (2021) in which they analyzed Kazakh, Turkish, and English proverbs. The young scholars found out some interpretation differences and translation of the same proverb exist. As a result, they researched the essence of these three cultures' proverbs using illustrations:

During the translation of proverbs the similarities and differences of them allows us to study the culture, life and traditions of other nations. In such a global exchange of information, the culture plays an important role. Proverbs demonstrate the originality of life assessments of different peoples and are usually transmitted when translated by equivalents that are adequately accepted in another culture. However, the problems of translation solutions in the process of transferring proverbs from one culture to another continue to excite. That is why, it is important to understand the similarities and differences of the proverbs and investigate the cultures (p. 621).

This research was significant in focusing on three languages, and once more proved that proverbs are complex in nature and their equivalents in other languages should be adequately submitted to the audience from another culture.

Other Kazakhstani scholars, Alymbaeva, Ramazanov, and Sagatbek dwelt on the concept of “horse” in their research. K. Zhumabekov studied the use of horses in proverbs in English and Turkish languages. Many other researchers devote their studies to the concept of horse. For instance, G. Sarbassova (2015) highlights that:

Studying horses promotes the national consciousness of Kazakh; it forms their cultural image and determines their course for the future. Research into the six-thousand-year history of Kazakh horse, complete with its historical-ethnographic and culturological implications, made it possible to throw light on the material and spiritual achievements of Kazakh which would not otherwise be clear. The material and spiritual world of Kazakh, their traditions, rituals, beliefs and world views were discussed in this paper, because all these aspects of traditional culture is important from the point of national identity, and it became clear when considered through the prism of *horse*. The horse provided a special key to understanding the culture of Kazakh, a culture of nomads (p.242).

Indeed, the horse and equestrian culture has been one of the important and valuable national traditions not only in Kazakh history and life, but also in Turkish history and national culture. Since ancient times, the horse was a true friend not only for riding as a means of transport, but also as a loyal companion for entertainment like an equestrian sport, and a military protector in the war against enemies. Thus, the horse culture has become an indispensable part of a Turkic culture.

The proverb causes confusion in people because of the contrast it contains at first hearing. The Turks are a nation that was the first to domesticate and use horses in the history of the world, so their lifestyle in a period of history is called “Atlı Göçebe Kültürü” (“The Equestrian Nomad Culture”) (Ata, 1940; Elçin, 1963). According to authors, the horse is the sacred being of the Turks, like comrade, brother, and the ideal beneficial animal for good luck. The horse has a special place in Turkish mythology, epics, literature and art. One of the years in the Turkish calendar with twelve animals is the year of the horse. As Kasgarli Mahmud wrote in his famous dictionary “Türk’ün kanadıdır at” (“Horse is the wing of the Turk”) (Mahmud, 2016). Therefore, many books and articles have been published that reveal the role and importance of the horse in Turkish history, culture and art.

The Turkish equestrian culture is clearly explained in different historical and cultural works. F. Sümer, the author of “Turkish horsemanship in history” describes the issues related to horse riding and riding gear. The collected information about the riding gear in this book provides the sources and photographs of the riding gear compiled from Anatolia (1983). In the

same vein, İ. Akinci “Ottoman Horses” (2017) refers present issues related to horses and horsemanship in Turkey. E. Gulec (2006) created “Turkish Equine Encyclopedia” which is an encyclopedic classification and valuable work of Turkish horse literature, including explanations of all the important issues of Turkish horsemanship, from the origin of Turkish horses to their development, from horse culture to games and sports. E. Nascali (1995) in ‘Horse in Turkish Culture and Contemporary Equestrianism’ demonstrates not only talk about the past effects of the horse on Turkish life, the historical traces of the equestrian culture; it also deals with important issues in contemporary equine breeding. Another remarkable aspect of the book is that Emel Esin's work, which was written in English and is one of the most comprehensive articles in this field, was brought to Turkish literature under the title "Horse in Turkish Art" (1965).

K. Yüksel’s work “Our Comrade Horse” (2003) presents the history of man and horse walking together. In the book the horse is not just a mount or a beast of burden. The adventure of man with horse is the most important story of human history. One of the earliest five-toed ancestors of the horse, its privileged place in Anatolian culture. Many subjects are explained in detail in the book, from horse-related beliefs to horse races and ancestry, from Ottoman raiders' horses to Kuvâ-yı milliye horses, from the importance given to horses in development programs to the institutions responsible for raising horses, from the horse's place in mythologies to horse-related words in languages, from the beginning of equestrian sports to its transformation.

The Turkish proverb “Ata binmek bir ayıp, inmek iki ayıp” (“Single shame to learn getting on the horse, double shame to get off it”) was chosen as a name for the article about Turkish proverbs and idioms written by N. Tan (2004). In the article, the author mentions that some of the proverbs have lost their meanings and gained new meanings in the face of the weakening of rural life and the acceleration of urbanization. He explains the proverb in the title as follows: “For a long time, the role of the javelin has disappeared in the folk culture of Yozgat. Brides are no longer mounted on horses. As such, new generations are naturally surprised when they hear the proverb in question. It is shameful to get off a horse and to leave a job unfinished, but why should it be a shame to get on a horse and start a business? they can't help

but think”. The proverb descending to the city is no longer associated with javelin and wedding. Today, throughout Turkey, the meaning of the word is understood as follows: “A job should not be started without being well-prepared for the profession and without training, and when it starts after the necessary preparation and training, it should not be abandoned halfway through, but must be concluded with success”.

Abovementioned works concern either determine the proverbs linguistic and cultural values in a particular language and society, or investigate translation issues of proverbs in two languages. This paper examines the Kazakh and Turkish proverbs on equestrian culture analyzing their linguistic lexis, items, and semantics from another angle. Further on, the authors attempt to investigate the proverbial theory of culture which describes the complex nature of proverbs in a particular language and society, and examine how aspects combine a set of important issues hidden in the proverbs.

### **Research method**

Proverbs, being an important representative of a particular language and culture, describe the culture with the peculiar linguistic anthropological features of a language and different cultural phenomena in the society. The comparative and contrastive study of proverbs from two culturally specific and recognizable societies may focus on these important features. Furthermore, the proverbial concept of culture by means of abstraction and interpretation of proverbs of two culturally distinct societies may present the data which is not usually recognized through other linguistic or cultural items. So, the linguistic interpretation of proverbs directs to a proverbial theory, and, further on, to a linguistic theory of culture.

Two *research questions* are studied in this paper:

1. How proverbs on equestrian culture in Kazakh and Turkish languages are formed?
2. What principles serve in their formation?

Proverbs on equestrian culture in Kazakh (100) and Turkish (100) were collected in the current research in order to study the formation of proverbs on the same subject in two languages:

- the same lexis is used to express the same idea;
- the same lexis is used to express different ideas;
- different lexical items are used to express the same idea;
- different lexical items are used to express different ideas.

Comparative and contrastive study of proverbs in two languages is based on four peculiar factors which examine proverbs from different angles and identify their linguistic and cultural value in a particular society (Bhuvaneshwar, 1997). The initial one is *the social factor* which determines how a person uses the proverb in a society in a particular setting. The second one is *the setting* which means the environment in which the proverb is used. Another one is the combination of *the subject and action* in which the social actor speaks in the proverb. The last factor is *the language* as the medium through which the social actor uses the proverb.

### Analysis of variation in Kazakh and Turkish equine proverbs

The authors selected and analyzed proverbs in Kazakh and Turkish languages (100 proverbs in each language). The comparative analysis shows that:

The most frequently used *equine term* in Kazakh proverbs is *AT* (92) which means *horse*. For instance, *Er qanatı – at* [Male wing is a horse].

In Turkish proverbs, the most common equine term is *AT* means horse (90). For example, *At, avrat, pusat emanet verilmez* [Horse, Avrat, Pusat are not entrusted].

The setting contains *exclusive words of objects* in Kazakh and Turkish available in those specific environments.

**Table 1. Formation of proverbs with lexis**

Item/ Kazakh	Item/ Turkish
1. <b>Food:</b> syt, bal, sorpa, mai, şeker	1. <b>Food:</b> pilav, et

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2. <b>Tools:</b> tumar, zhyilde, kanat, it, arba, qamşı	2. <b>Tools:</b> eyer, dizgin, kamçı, kılıç, çul, yular, üzengi, araba
3. <b>Names and people:</b> Qambar ata, awıl, Kökpar, toy, ene, bala, patşa, jigit	3. <b>Names and people:</b> Abdal, Türk, Yozgat (city), bey, dost, düşman, yaya
4. <b>Measurement units:</b> age, numbers, currency (teñge), baylıq, sandıq, qunı	4. <b>Measurement units:</b> saat, uğur
5. <b>Equine terms:</b> tulpar, at, jılqı, qunan, qulın, bie, ayğır, arğımaq, tay	5. <b>Equine terms:</b> at

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The proverbs on equestrian culture in both languages evidence in containing *similar groups* of lexical items like food, tools, names and people, measurement units, and other specific equine terms. However, the *lexical items* are also *similar*. This evidence that Kazakh and Turkish languages come from similar language family, and cultural values gain similar linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

## Conclusion

The comparative-contrastive analysis of the proverbs in Kazakh and Turkish in present paper showed that proverbs on equestrian culture in both languages contain exclusive words of objects available in those specific environments and societies. The analysis of the lexis formation shows similar groups of lexical items used in the proverbs.

The analysis of the semantics and ideas presented in the proverbs of two languages constitutes that two factors are more common: the same lexis is used to express different ideas; and different lexical items are used to express different ideas.

The paper claimed to research an integrated linguistic theory which comprises linguistic and anthropological features of culture and different cultural phenomena of two distinct societies in the proverbs by examining their lexis and semantics. Further research will be devoted to the proverbial theory of culture, i.e., equine proverbs of Kazakh and Turkish languages as knowledge and communication, participation, reaction, and mediation which evidence cultural values and linguistic features of a particular language and society.



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