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Ethnolinguistic Features of Kazakh Mourning Etiquette and Expressions of Condolence

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ABSTRACT

This study presents a comprehensive linguistic analysis of Kazakh speech acts of condolence as a culturally-specific communicative system reflecting unique perceptions of death, grief, and social solidarity. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining primary field data from 46 participants across four regions of Kazakhstan with analysis of 118 written condolence texts and supplementary ethnographic sources. The methodological foundation integrates speech act theory with Hymes' ethnography of communication framework, utilizing the SPEAKING model to reveal complex interrelationships between various parameters of condolence communication. Results demonstrate significant variability in linguistic means depending on spatiotemporal context, social characteristics of participants, and communicative goals. The analysis reveals the syncretic nature of Kazakh condolences, combining pre-Islamic beliefs with Islamic traditions. Substantial gender differentiation manifests in greater emotionality of female condolences through rhythmically organized laments (zhoktau) compared to more pragmatic, philosophically-oriented male expressions. The study identifies distinct temporal organization of mourning rituals, creating a distributed system of

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condolence expressions across key stages: initial grief (first three days), formal commemoration (seventh day), spiritual transition (fortieth day), and memorial completion (anniversary). Social conditioning significantly influences linguistic choice, with elders employing philosophical maxims, religious figures using Quranic formulas, and younger speakers adopting more restrained expressions. The research documents rich lexical diversity including religious formulas (87.2% frequency), grief expressions (75.5%), and posthumous wishes (68.1%). These findings contribute to understanding culturally-determined communicative practices while demonstrating the necessity of culturally-sensitive approaches in speech act analysis.

Keywords: Speech Acts of Condolence; Kazakh Culture; Ethnography of Communication; Mourning Etiquette; Linguopragmatics; Gender Differentiation; Culturally-determined Communicative Practices

1. Introduction

In modern linguistic science, the study of culturally specific speech practices that reflect the fundamental conceptions of various ethnic groups regarding key aspects of human existence holds particular interest. Ritual communication associated with transitional moments of the life cycle—birth, marriage, death—presents especially rich material for such research, as it is precisely in these contexts that deep cultural values and attitudes are most distinctly manifested.

Mourning etiquette and expressions of condolence occupy a special place in the system of ritual communication of any people. They reflect not only attitudes towards death itself but also conceptions of the afterlife, connections between generations, social solidarity, and moral-ethical norms. The linguistic means used in situations of grief form a unique discourse, the analysis of which allows insight into the specifics of an ethnic worldview.

Kazakh culture, with its rich tradition of mourning etiquette, represents a unique object for linguistic research. Combining elements of pre-Islamic beliefs, Islamic religion, and nomadic lifestyle, Kazakh mourning etiquette has formed a complex system of verbal and non-verbal practices, many of which persist to the present day. Of particular interest are speech acts of condolence, which in Kazakh culture are characterised by a high degree of ritualisation, formulaic nature, and cultural conditioning.

Despite the significant potential of this topic for linguistic and cultural analysis, Kazakh mourning etiquette remains insufficiently studied from the perspective of modern linguistic science. Most existing research focuses on the ethnographic aspects of mourning rituals, leaving

their linguistic component without proper attention. A few studies conducted from an ethnographic or folkloric perspective on Kazakh death and mourning traditions should be referenced here ^[1–6]. These works provide valuable ethnographic context but lack detailed linguistic analysis of the speech acts involved in mourning practices. Meanwhile, it is precisely the linguistic analysis of speech acts of condolence that allows the identification of those cultural concepts and values that determine the specificity of the Kazakh attitude to death and grief.

The relevance of this research is determined by several factors. Firstly, it contributes to expanding the empirical base of linguistic science by including material that has not previously been subjected to systematic linguistic analysis. Secondly, the research allows testing the adequacy of existing theoretical models for analysing speech practices of non-Western cultures and making necessary adjustments to these models. Thirdly, in conditions of globalisation and unification of cultural practices, the documentation and analysis of traditional communicative systems acquire special significance. Let us develop our perspective here towards cultural elements that can be followed in terms of development and change instead of those that are threatened with extinction. This approach allows us to examine how traditional mourning practices adapt and transform while maintaining their core cultural function.

The aim of this study is to conduct a comprehensive linguistic analysis of Kazakh speech acts of condolence as a culturally specific communicative system, reflecting unique perceptions of death, grief, and social solidarity.

To achieve this aim, the following objectives need to be addressed:

1. Determine the theoretical and methodological foun-

dations for the analysis of Kazakh speech acts of condolence.

2. Identify and describe the main lexical, grammatical, and stylistic features of expressions of condolence in Kazakh culture.
3. Examine the contextual conditioning of various forms of expressing condolence.
4. Investigate the interrelationship between verbal and non-verbal components in situations of expressing condolence.
5. Analyse age, gender, and status aspects of expressing condolence in Kazakh culture.

The theoretical significance of the research lies in expanding the understanding of the cultural conditioning of speech acts and the necessity to modify classical theoretical models when analysing communicative practices of non-Western cultures.

The practical significance of the research consists in the possibility of using its results in teaching linguistic disciplines, in intercultural communication, in translation practice, as well as in preserving and popularising Kazakh intangible cultural heritage.

The research material comprised recordings of authentic expressions of condolence collected during field research in various regions of Kazakhstan, as well as texts of funeral speeches, prayers, and ritual formulas recorded in ethnographic sources and literary works containing folkloric elements.

The methodological foundation of the research is a combined approach, integrating elements of speech act theory by Austin and Searle with the methodology of ethnography of communication by Hymes and Gumperz ^[7]. Such integration allows overcoming the limitations of classical speech act theory, related to its Western-centricity and individualistic orientation, and taking into account the cultural specificity, ritual character, and collective nature of Kazakh expressions of condolence.

The methodology for collecting empirical material included a comprehensive approach that considered the ethical sensitivity of the research topic:

1. Semi-structured interviews (n = 46) with informants of various age groups, aimed at identifying perceptions of mourning etiquette norms and recollections

of specific formulas of condolence used in their social environment.

2. Collection and analysis of written condolences (118 texts), including traditional genres and modern forms in social networks, periodicals, and memorial announcements.
3. Analysis of ethnographic and folklore sources containing descriptions of mourning rituals and traditional expressions of condolence, with special attention to texts of zhoktau (laments) and other ritualised forms of expressing grief.
4. Modelled situations with the participation of informants (n = 46), demonstrating forms of expressing condolence typical for their region and social group. This method was used in compliance with all ethical norms and with the prior consent of participants.
5. Consultations with experts—native speakers, including elderly people, religious figures, and professional performers of traditional genres.

The sample of informants comprised 46 people (22 women and 24 men) in the age range from 18 to 92 years, distributed across the following age groups: 18–30 years (11 people), 31–50 years (14 people), 51–70 years (16 people), over 70 years (5 people).

Informants represented four regions of Kazakhstan: Turkestan, Akmola, Almaty, and Mangystau regions, which ensured the geographical representativeness of the research. Transcription and translation of materials were carried out with the participation of two independent expert linguists, native speakers of the Kazakh language, to ensure accuracy of interpretation.

For data analysis, a triangulation method was applied, combining:

- qualitative linguopragmatic analysis of collected expressions of condolence;
- content analysis of interview recordings;
- elements of quantitative analysis to determine the frequency of use of specific lexical and grammatical constructions.

This multifaceted approach allowed the collection and systematisation of unique speech formulas of condolence, representing various genres, social contexts, and regional variants of Kazakh mourning communication.

The subsequent paragraphs will present a detailed analysis of lexical, grammatical, stylistic, and pragmatic features of Kazakh speech acts of condolence, their contextual conditioning, and role in maintaining social solidarity and cultural identity of the Kazakh people.

2. Theoretical and Methodological Foundations and Literature Review

Traditionally, linguistic analysis of speech acts relies on the theory developed by John Austin^[8] and subsequently elaborated by John Searle^[9]. According to this theory, a speech act represents a three-level phenomenon, including a locutionary act (utterance), an illocutionary act (communicative intention), and a perlocutionary act (the effect produced on the listener). Searle, developing Austin's ideas, proposed a classification of illocutionary acts, including representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives. Formally, condolences belong to the category of expressives, as they express the psychological state of the speaker regarding the state of affairs presented in the propositional content^[9].

However, upon deeper examination, it becomes evident that speech act theory in its classical variant possesses a number of limitations that do not fully encompass the specificity of Kazakh mourning etiquette. Firstly, Austin and Searle's theory proceeds from a Western-centric paradigm, based predominantly on the analysis of the English language and reflecting individualistic cultural attitudes. Kazakh culture, however, traditionally gravitates towards a collectivist type, where individual intentions of the speaker often recede into the background before collective ritual practices. Secondly, classical speech act theory focuses primarily on singular utterances, whereas Kazakh mourning etiquette represents a complex system of interrelated communicative actions, distributed in time and space and including not only verbal but also non-verbal components.

The ritual character of many Kazakh expressions of condolence presents a particular problem. Traditional speech act theory assumes that the speaker possesses a sincere intention to express a certain thought or feeling; however, in ritualised contexts of condolence, what becomes

more important is not so much the sincerity of intention as conformity to formulaic expressions and prescribed norms of behaviour. For example, in such genres as *zhoktau* (funeral songs-laments) or *köñil aitu* (expression of condolence), formulaicity and adherence to tradition play a more important role than individual creativity or sincerity of feelings of an individual speaker.

Given these limitations, it seems more productive to turn to an alternative theoretical framework for the analysis of Kazakh speech acts of condolence. Such a framework can be provided by the ethnography of communication, developed by Dell Hymes^[10] and John Gumperz^[11]. This approach focuses on studying communicative events in their cultural context and offers a more holistic understanding of speech practices. The central concept in the ethnography of communication is the notion of a "speech community"—a group of people who share common rules for speaking and interpreting speech. Kazakhs practising traditional mourning etiquette can be regarded as such a speech community with special norms of communication in situations of grief.

The SPEAKING analytical model, proposed by Hymes, allows for detailed analysis of all components of a communicative event: Setting, Participants, Ends, Act sequence, Key, Instrumentalities, Norms, and Genre. The application of this model to Kazakh mourning rituals makes it possible to identify a complex system of interrelationships between various parameters of the communicative situation.

Of particular value is the concept of "communicative competence" introduced by Hymes^[8]. Unlike Chomsky's linguistic competence, communicative competence includes not only knowledge of language but also the ability to use it in appropriate social contexts. For Kazakh mourning etiquette, this means not merely knowing formulas of condolence, but also understanding who, when, where, and how may use them.

Considering condolence as a culturally conditioned practice, rather than simply a formal speech act, researchers note significant variability in ways of expressing condolence across different cultures^[12]. Moghaddam^[13] emphasises that this variability depends on traditions, beliefs, and social norms of a particular culture. He identifies four key factors influencing the choice of linguistic means when expressing condolence: the mourner's relationship to

the deceased, the speaker's relationship to the mourner, the speaker's relationship to the deceased, and the emotional state of the mourner.

Cultural conditioning is particularly evident when comparing ways of expressing condolence in collectivist and individualistic cultures. Nurlianingsikh and Imperiani^[14] in their research revealed that in Indonesian (Muslim) culture, religious expressions dominate, such as “*Inalillahi wa innailahi rajiun*” (“Indeed, we belong to Allah and to Him we shall return”). This result is consistent with the work of Behnam, Ali Akbari Khamed, and Gokharkhani Asli^[15], who found that in Persian culture, religious expressions play a key role in corresponding speech acts. The authors associate this with the fact that “Iranians as Muslims strongly believe in God and try to comfort the grieving family using religious beliefs”.

Confirmation of the influence of the religious factor on speech acts of condolence can also be found in the research by Gyumyush^[16], dedicated to studying speech acts of condolence in the Turkish language. Analysis of 5,723 acts of condolence in social networks showed that the most frequent strategies were formulas oriented towards the future, religious expressions, and requests for God's forgiveness of sins, which also reflects the influence of Islam in Turkish culture. These studies are particularly relevant for our work, considering the Islamic context of Kazakh culture.

In Western cultures, as demonstrated by the research of Alfia and Fauziati^[17], dedicated to the analysis of Canadians' condolences in connection with the death of Queen Elizabeth II, strategies of expressing sympathy predominate, combined with praise of the deceased and emphasis on personal achievements and qualities of the departed. This reflects the individualistic orientation of Western cultures, which contrasts with the collectivist approach in Islamic traditions.

An interesting approach to the analysis of condolence strategies is proposed by Williams^[18], examining them through the prism of linguistic politeness theory. The researcher identifies two aspects of “face” (a person's public image): positive face (the need to be involved and valued) and negative face (the need for freedom from imposition). The expression of condolences, according to Williams, is a “face-threatening act”, as involvement threatens negative

face, and respect for privacy threatens positive face. Based on empirical data, the author shows that the choice of strategy is motivated by relationship factors: people in more distanced relationships choose strategies with less risk, while people in positions of power choose strategies with higher risk.

Of particular interest for our research are the traditional ceremonies and speech practices related to death in Kazakh culture. Kelgembayeva^[19] in her study of the genre “zhoktau” (lament, funeral wailings) notes that this genre has inherited the oral poetic traditions of ancient Saka, Hun, and Uysun tribes and is a reflection of the existential philosophy of the Kazakh people. According to folk understanding, death is not outside of life but is its dialectical part. Zhoktau performs several functions: expression of public grief, transmission of philosophical understanding of life and death, preservation of historical memory, and reflection of the socio-political situation.

The study of zhoktau as a genre has significant precedent in Kazakh literary scholarship. Mukhtar Auezov, the renowned Kazakh writer and folklorist, conducted pioneering research on Kazakh verbal folklore, providing detailed descriptions of zhoktau in their diverse poetic forms. As documented by Mayemirov et al., Auezov noted that “Every event in the life of Kazakhs – be it birth, death, or marriage – is reflected in a song. Zhoktau is a memorial song, which lists the advantages of the dead person”^[20]. One of the most extensively studied examples is the 18th-century zhoktau by the poet Umbetey, dedicated to the death of the legendary batyr Bogembai. In this memorial song, Umbetey commemorates Bogembai's heroic deeds in battles against the Dzungars, creating a vivid and impressive portrayal that has become paradigmatic for the genre. As historical sources indicate, “Bogembay in the zhoktau of Umbeteya is an ideal image of the defender of the people”^[21]. This demonstrates how individual laments transcend personal grief to embody collective historical memory.

Understanding of Kazakh traditions is enriched through comparison with related cultures. Pritchard^[22] researches the Kyrgyz “koshok”—a ritualised expression of grief, combining melody with emotional performance. The research shows that koshok is not merely an expression of personal grief but also a means of understanding collective

identity. These observations resonate with our understanding of Kazakh zhoktau as a multifunctional cultural phenomenon.

Important information about Kazakh funeral rites is contained in the research by Usadova ^[23], who notes that funeral rites among Kazakhs are strongly coloured by Islamic tradition. Relatives commemorate the deceased on the 7th day and then every Friday until the 40th day. This temporal extension of mourning rituals confirms the necessity of analysing Kazakh condolences as part of a complex ritual system distributed over time. The ethnocultural vocabulary underlying these ritual practices has been systematically documented by Zhanpeisov ^[24].

Temporal extension is complemented by spatial organisation, the study of which is necessary for a complete understanding of Kazakh speech acts of condolence. Aliyeva and Onalbayeva ^[25] investigate nationally specific features of non-verbal communication in Kazakh culture, with a focus on proxemics. The authors note that in Kazakh culture, proxemic distance is determined by several factors: age, degree of acquaintance, inclusion in the “personal sphere of the speaker”, and regional characteristics.

Another significant factor for understanding the spatial organisation of Kazakh communication are the concepts of “tör” (place of honour), “bosaga” (threshold), and “zhol” (order, sequence). In ritualised communicative situations, such as condolence, the spatial organisation of participants has special significance, and non-verbal signs acquire specific semantics. The concept of “tör” represents the most honored space in traditional Kazakh dwellings, typically located opposite the entrance and reserved for elders and distinguished guests. “Bosaga” (threshold) serves as a liminal space between private family territory and the outside world. During mourning rituals, these spatial distinctions acquire additional symbolic meaning: the tör becomes a space for formal condolences and religious formulas, while the bosaga represents a space for brief, transitional expressions of sympathy.

In the linguistic aspect, Resenchuk and Riabova ^[26] highlight behavioural verbs (behabitives) used in expressing condolence and analyse the compositional structure of letters of condolence, identifying such ele-

ments as address, motive, expression of condolence, description of the deceased, address to the bereaved, offer of help, and signature.

Given the complexity and cultural specificity of Kazakh condolences, in our research we apply a combined approach, integrating elements of speech act theory with the methodology of ethnography of communication. This does not imply a complete rejection of the conceptual apparatus of speech act theory but assumes its substantial supplementation and reinterpretation in a broader cultural context.

The application of such a combined approach will allow a comprehensive analysis of Kazakh expressions of condolence as a special communicative system, reflecting unique cultural perceptions of life, death, and social connections. Such analysis will not only enrich our understanding of a specific cultural phenomenon but will also contribute to the development of linguistic theory, demonstrating the necessity of considering cultural specificity when analysing speech acts.

3. Linguistic Features of Kazakh Expressions of Condolence

The SPEAKING model, developed by Dell Hymes, allows linguistic features to be considered not in isolation but in their inseparable connection with the sociocultural context, which is especially important for understanding ritualised and culturally specific communicative practices, including Kazakh expressions of condolence. It represents an analytical framework where each letter of the acronym corresponds to a certain component of the communicative event: Setting, Participants, Ends, Act sequence, Key, Instrumentalities, Norms, and Genre. The application of this model allows structuring the analysis and revealing how various contextual factors determine the choice of lexical, grammatical, and stylistic means in the situation of expressing condolence.

To ensure the reliability of our findings, we employed a data triangulation method that included both qualitative and quantitative analysis of the collected material. The quantitative results of content analysis of the condolence corpus (n = 118) are presented in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Frequency of Use of Various Types of Condolence Formulas.

Type of Formula	Frequency of Use (%)	Example	Context of Use
Religious formulas	87.2%	“Alla sabyr bersin”	Universal
Expressions of grief	75.5%	“Qaiğyñyzğa ortaqpyz”	Predominantly at first contact
Wishes for the deceased	68.1%	“Zhany zhanatta bolsyn” or “Zhatqan zheri zhaily bolsyn”	Universal
Consolations	56.4%	“Sabyr saqtañyz”	Predominates in middle and late stages of mourning
Philosophical reflections	42.3%	“Bul dünie – ötkinshy”	More often from older to younger
Offers of help	38.7%	“Qol ushyn beremiz”	Predominantly from friends and neighbours
Questions about what happened	27.6%	“Ne boldy?”	Only from close people
Characterisation of the deceased	63.2%	“Zhaqsy adam edi”	Especially from those who knew the deceased

For quantitative analysis, we developed a coding framework to identify and categorise different types of condolence formulas. Two independent coders analysed all 118 texts, with an inter-coder reliability coefficient of 0.92 (Cohen’s kappa). Each text was examined for the presence of specific formula types, and the percentage was calculated based on the frequency of occurrence across the entire corpus. A single condolence text could contain multiple formula types, thus percentages do not sum to 100%.

Analysis of the collected material revealed significant gender differences in expressions of condolence. Female condolence formulas demonstrate a broader use of emotionally coloured vocabulary and diminutive forms, such as ‘qarağym’ (my dear) and ‘shyrağym’ (my light). Content analysis of the text corpus (n = 118) showed a statistically significant correlation ($p < 0.05$) between the speaker’s gender and the frequency of emotionally coloured vocabulary usage.

Based on quantitative analysis of the frequency of emotionally marked words and expressions in the speech of men and women, it was established that such vocabulary appears considerably more frequently in condolence texts spoken by women. Calculations were conducted by counting marked emotional lexical units, followed by computing the ratio of their frequency in male versus female speech.

These differences correspond to traditional gender roles in Kazakh society, where women historically served as expressers of emotions in ritualised genres such as ‘zhoktau’ (lamentation-wailing), whilst male speech tended towards restraint, philosophical reflection, and pragmatism. The tradition of women performing laments (zhoktau)

among Kazakhs has deep historical roots. According to oral traditions, skilled female mourners (zhoktaushi) were highly respected for their ability to improvise poetic expressions of grief while maintaining traditional formulaic structures. These performances served not only as emotional outlets but also as vehicles for preserving family histories and genealogies. The practice required extensive cultural knowledge, including familiarity with kinship terminology, historical events, and poetic conventions.

In addition, analysis of temporal dynamics showed a gradual reduction in frequency of use of expressions of immediate grief and an increase in frequency of consolations and philosophical reflections as progression occurs from early to late stages of the mourning cycle.

The results of quantitative analysis support and refine the qualitative observations presented in subsequent sections.

3.1. Setting: Spatial and Temporal Conditioning of Linguistic Means

Kazakh expressions of condolence demonstrate significant variability depending on spatial and temporal context, reflecting the fundamental importance of categories of space and time in Kazakh culture. Aliyeva and Onalbayeva^[20] emphasise that in Kazakh culture, proxemic distance is strictly regulated and depends on the nature of communication, hierarchy of social and kinship relations. This spatial regulation finds direct reflection in lexical and grammatical features of expressions of condolence.

In the house of the deceased (qaza üy), euphemisms for denoting death predominate, such as “dünieden ötti”

(left this world) or “qaitys boldy” (passed away), as well as formulaic expressions addressing Allah: “Alla sabyr bersin” (May Allah grant patience). When entering the house of mourning, special greeting formulas are used, indicating the mourning context, for example, “Basyñ aman bolsyn” (May your head remain safe). These formulas perform not only a communicative but also a ritual function, designating the speaker’s transition into a special space of grief.

At funerals (zhanaza), the linguistic repertoire changes substantially, with religious vocabulary of Islamic origin dominating: “zhanaza namaz” (funeral prayer), “iman aitu” (pronouncement of the testimony of faith). Prayer formulas include addressing Allah: “Alla Tağala marqūmnyñ zhanyn zhannatta qylsyn” (May Almighty Allah grant the soul of the deceased a place in paradise). These expressions reflect the syncretic nature of Kazakh condolences, which combine elements of pre-Islamic beliefs and Islamic tradition. This syncretism—the blending of different religious and cultural traditions—is characteristic of Kazakh culture.

The spatial organisation of mourning communication is closely connected with the concepts of “tör” (place of honour in a Kazakh dwelling), “bosağa” (threshold), and “zhol” (order, sequence). During the expression of condolences, elders and the most respected guests are situated in the tör, which emphasises their status and role in the mourning ritual. This spatial arrangement also influences the linguistic features of condolences – the speech of people situated in the tör usually contains more philosophical reflections and admonitions, while condolences expressed at the threshold are more formal and laconic.

Equally important is the temporal organisation of Kazakh mourning rituals, which creates a complex system of expressions of condolence distributed over time. Usadova notes that relatives commemorate the deceased on the 7th day and then every Friday until the 40th day. Each of these time periods is characterised by its own linguistic features.

In the first three days after death, emotionally saturated expressions of grief predominate: “qandai qaiğy” (what grief), “qasiret basty” (misfortune has befallen). During this period, women perform ritualised laments (zhoktau) with characteristic linguistic formulas and rhythmic organisation. Linguistically, the texts of zhoktau are distinguished by the use of present tense when describing grief (“zhylap otyrmyz” – we are crying, “qaiğyryp zhatyrmyz”

– we are grieving), an abundance of metaphors for denoting death (“shamy söndi” – his lamp has gone out), and rhythmic organisation based on parallelism and anaphoric repetitions.

On the seventh day (zhetisi), linguistic means become more formalised, with strengthening of the religious component: “zheti kündik zhanazasy” (seven-day funeral [event]). Grammatically, the use of the perfect tense when mentioning the deceased is characteristic: “marqūm bolğan” (having become deceased). Expressions emphasising the temporal transition appear: “zheti kün ötti” (seven days have passed).

On the fortieth day (qyrqy), the lexical features of condolences change even more. Formulas emphasising the significance of this date appear: “qyrqyn beru” (conducting the fortieth day). Expressions indicate a change in the emotional state of the mourners: “sabyrğa kelu” (attaining patience). Grammatically, the use of constructions with temporal adverbs is characteristic: “endi” (now), “būdan bylai” (henceforth). Among Kazakh and other Turkic peoples, the fortieth day marks a crucial transition in the mourning process, making this temporal milestone particularly significant for understanding grief practices across the broader Turkic cultural area.

The completion of the main mourning period occurs on the anniversary of death (zhyly), which is also reflected in linguistic means. Constructions marking this transition are used: “zhylyn beru” (conducting the anniversary), “qaraly kiimdi tastau” (removing mourning clothes). The vocabulary of this period is connected with the memorial tradition: “as beru” (arranging a memorial feast).

Thus, the spatial-temporal organisation of Kazakh mourning rituals creates a complex system of linguistic means distributed in space and time. This system reflects not only the practical aspects of expressing condolence but also the philosophical understanding of life, death, and time in Kazakh culture.

3.2. Participants: Social Conditioning of the Choice of Linguistic Means

Social characteristics of communication participants have a determining influence on the choice of lexical, grammatical, and stylistic means when expressing condolence in Kazakh culture. Status, role, age, gender of the

speaker, as well as their relationship to the deceased and the bereaved—all these factors create a complex system of social differentiation of linguistic means.

Elders (aqsaqaly) in their condolences typically use philosophical maxims and admonitory elements: “bul dūnie – ötkinshy, aqiretti umytpa” (this world is transient, do not forget about the afterlife). Grammatically, their speech is characterised by the predominance of imperative constructions with the meaning of instruction: “sabyr saqta” (maintain patience). Their vocabulary includes archaic and literary elements: “fäni dūnie” (perishable world), “baqi dūnie” (eternal world). These features reflect not only age status but also the traditional role of elders as custodians of wisdom and moral values.

Religious figures (imams, moldalar) use condolences saturated with quotations from the Quran and religious formulas: “Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi raji’un” (Indeed, we belong to Allah and to Him we shall return). Their speech abounds with Arabic borrowings and religious terminology: “aqyret” (afterlife), “azhal” (death), “ruh” (spirit). A characteristic element is formulas of blessing and prayer: “Alladan rakhym tileu” (asking for mercy from Allah). These features correspond to both the professional role and the special status of religious figures in Kazakh society.

Women’s condolences are distinguished by more emotionally coloured vocabulary: “qarağym” (my dear), “shy-rağym” (my light). The use of diminutive forms and forms expressing tenderness and compassion is characteristic: “baiqus” (poor thing), “zharyqtyq” (bright one). A special feature is rhythmised speech in the genre of zhoktau with characteristic repetitions and parallelisms. These features correspond to the traditional gender role of women as expressers of emotions in Kazakh culture.

Young people in their condolences use more restrained formulas, often borrowed from the speech of elders: “köñil aitu” (expression of condolence). Their speech may include modern vocabulary combined with traditional formulas: “qaiğyrmañyz” (do not grieve). Utterances are usually less elaborate and contain only the basic formulas of condolence. These features reflect both the age hierarchy and the gradual transformation of traditional communicative practices under the influence of modernity.

Social conditioning is manifested not only in dependence on the characteristics of the speaker but also on their

relationship to the deceased and the bereaved. Close relatives of the deceased use kinship terms when mentioning the deceased: “äkemiz” (our father), “bauryrmyz” (our brother). Their speech is characterised by the expression of personal grief through the first-person pronoun: “zhüregim aurady” (my heart aches). Possessive forms are often used: “aiauly äkemiz” (our dear father). These linguistic features emphasise closeness and personal loss.

Distant relatives use more formal expressions of condolence: “qaiğyñyzğa ortaqpyz” (we share your grief). The use of respectful forms of address is characteristic: “qurmetty tuysqandar” (respected relatives). When mentioning the deceased, the use of the third person is preferred: “marqum” (the deceased). These linguistic means reflect social distance and correspond to the norms of traditional etiquette.

Friends and colleagues in their condolences emphasise the professional and human qualities of the deceased: “zh-aqsy adam edi” (was a good person). The use of personal memories is characteristic: “birge zhumys istedik” (we worked together). Expressions of support include promises of help: “qiyn kezde zhanyñyzda bolamyz” (in difficult times we will be by your side). These features reflect the specificity of social connections based not on kinship but on personal and professional relationships.

Officials use formalised expressions of condolence: “resmi köñil aitu” (official condolence). Their speech is characterised by the use of literary and official vocabulary: “qaiğyñyzğa ortaqtastyq bildiremiz” (we express solidarity with your grief). Personal forms and emotionally coloured vocabulary are absent. These features correspond to official status and the formal nature of relationships.

Thus, the social characteristics of communication participants create a complex system of differentiation of linguistic means in Kazakh condolences. This system reflects both the traditional social structure of Kazakh society and modern transformations of social roles and relationships.

To illustrate the socially conditioned variability of condolences, here are fragments of authentic dialogues recorded in various situations:

Scene 1: First visit of a distant relative to the house of mourning (recorded in the village of Shaulder, Turkestan region)

Visitor (man, 55 years old, entering): Assalamu alai-

kum. Those present (in chorus): Wa'alaikum assalam. Visitor: Basyñyz aman bolsyn. Marqumnyñ zhany zhannatta bolsyn. Topyrağy torqa bolsyn. [May your head remain safe. May the soul of the deceased be in paradise. May the earth be like silk to him.] Elder in the house (68 years old): Auzyña Alla bersin, raqmet. Otağasyn, törletiniñiz. [May Allah reward you for your words, thank you. Please take the place of honour.] Visitor (sitting down): Qaiğyñyzğa ortaқыyz. Alla sabyr bersin. Marqum qandai kisi edi? [We share your grief. May Allah grant patience. What kind of person was the deceased?] Elder in the house: Zhaqsy kisi edi, elge syily boldy. Köpke qairymy tigen adam edi... [He was a good person, respected by the people. He was a person who showed mercy to many...].

Analysis of this dialogue demonstrates the typical sequence of etiquette formulas when entering a house of mourning, including a special greeting, immediately followed by standard formulas of condolence. Notable is the phrase “Basyñyz aman bolsyn”, which serves as a marker of transition from ordinary greeting to a mourning context. Social hierarchy is manifested in the invitation for the visitor to occupy the tör (place of honour), which emphasises his status, despite the fact that he is a distant relative.

Scene 2: Expression of condolence on the seventh day (zhetisi) (recorded in Kokshetau, Akmolat region)

Elderly woman (82 years old, addressing the widow): Qarağym, zhetisi ötti. Endi marqumnyñ zholyn tosamyz. Zhanyñ zhai tabar, shrağym. Zhylama, köziñniñ zhasyn tyi. Alla raqym etsin... [My dear, seven days have passed. Now we await the path of the deceased. Your soul will find peace, my light. Don't cry, restrain your tears. May Allah have mercy...] Widow (55 years old): Apa, söziñizge raqmet. könilime medet. Kelgeniñizge raqmet. [Grandmother, thank you for your words. Comfort to my soul. Thank you for coming.] Elderly woman: Biz ärqashan qasyñdamyz. Qyrqyna deiin sabyr saqta. Ol endi perishteler-gen birge... [We are always by your side. Maintain patience until the fortieth day. He is now with the angels...].

This dialogue illustrates temporally specific elements of mourning communication, characteristic of the seventh day (zhetisi). Mention of this time milestone (“zhetisi ötti”) and indication of the next one (“qyrqyna deiin”) demonstrates the cyclical structure of the mourning process. The speech of the elderly woman contains elements of conso-

lation and religious justification, typical for this stage of mourning. Diminutive forms of address (“qarağym”, “shyrağym”) reflect the intimacy of relationships and age hierarchy.

3.3. Ends: Communicative Goals and Their Linguistic Expression

The expression of condolence in Kazakh culture pursues various communicative goals, which is directly reflected in the choice of linguistic means. These goals can be both explicit, that is, clearly expressed in the utterance, and implicit, implied, but no less significant in the communicative act.

Expression of grief is the most obvious goal of condolence, for the realisation of which specific vocabulary of emotional state is used: “qaiğy” (grief), “qasiret” (heavy loss), “küizelis” (dejection). Grammatically, expressive constructions are characteristic: “qandai qaiğy!” (what grief!). Stylistically, expressiveness is enhanced by the use of metaphors: “zhürek zharaly” (the heart is wounded). These linguistic means not only express the emotional state of the speaker but also signal empathy with the bereaved, which is an important element of social solidarity.

Supporting the bereaved as a communicative goal is realised through formulas of consolation: “sabyr saqtañyz” (maintain patience), religious expressions: “Alla sabyr bersin” (may Allah grant patience), and expressions of solidarity: “qasyñyzdamyz” (we are beside you). Grammatically, the use of imperative and optative constructions, which express a wish or mild imperative, is characteristic for this purpose. These linguistic means perform a therapeutic function, helping the bereaved overcome the emotional crisis and return to normal life.

Respect for the memory of the deceased is expressed through positive characterisations of the departed: “zhaqsy adam edi” (was a good person), formulas reflecting his status and merits: “elge eñbegi siñgen” (having contributed to society), and wishes for posthumous well-being: “zhany zhannatta bolsyn” (may his soul be in paradise). Grammatically significant is the use of past tense for characterising the deceased, which emphasises his transition to another world. These linguistic means not only express respect for the memory of the deceased but also contribute to the preservation of social ties through the common memory of the

person. Traditional Kazakh beliefs about ancestors and the afterlife significantly influence contemporary expressions of condolence, as evidenced in formulas such as “ata-babalarymyzben birge bolsyn” (may he be with our ancestors).

Strengthening social bonds is an important, though often implicit, goal of condolence. For its realisation, expressions emphasising kinship relations are used: “bauyrym” (my brother), “tuysym” (my relative), formulas expressing readiness to help: “ne kerek bolsa aityñyz” (say if anything is needed), and constructions emphasising the long-term nature of relationships: “ärqashan zhanyñyzdamyz” (we are always beside you). Grammatically significant is the use of inclusive pronouns and plural forms, emphasising the collective nature of support. These linguistic means perform an important social function, transforming the event of death from a potentially disintegrating factor into an opportunity for strengthening group solidarity.

Besides explicit communicative goals, expressions of condolence are aimed at achieving certain perlocutionary effects, that is, impacts on the emotional and psychological state of the addressee. For consoling the bereaved, comparative constructions relativising grief are used: “bul da ötedi” (this too shall pass), religious formulas emphasising predetermination: “tağdyrdyñ zhazuy” (the decree of fate), and expressions with an optimistic subtext: “ömir zhalğasady” (life continues). These linguistic means are aimed at transforming the emotional state of the bereaved, redirecting their attention from loss to the continuation of life.

Alleviating survivors’ guilt is often an implicit goal of condolence. To achieve it, constructions emphasising the inevitability of what happened are used: “Allanyñ isine shara zhoq” (there is no remedy for Allah’s will), formulas denying the possibility of influencing the situation: “azhaly zhetken soñ” (when his hour came), and expressions emphasising the universality of death: “barlyq zhan iesi öledi” (all living beings die). These linguistic means help the bereaved overcome the irrational sense of guilt that often arises after the death of a loved one.

Social integration of the bereaved into society after the period of mourning is also an important communicative goal. For its realisation, expressions emphasising inclusion in the community are used: “elge qosylasyz” (you will join society), invitations to social events: “toiğa keliñiz”

(come to the celebration), and formulas marking the return to ordinary life: “qaraly kiimdi tastau” (remove mourning clothes). Grammatically significant is the use of future tense, emphasising the prospect of returning to normal life. These linguistic means contribute to the reintegration of the bereaved into social life after the completion of the official period of mourning.

Overall, it can be said that the communicative goals of Kazakh condolences are diverse and include both explicit (expression of grief, support for the bereaved) and implicit (alleviation of guilt, social integration) aspects. Each of these goals is realised through specific lexical, grammatical, and stylistic means, forming in aggregate a certain communicative system aimed at maintaining individual and collective well-being in a situation of loss.

3.4. Act Sequence and Key: Structural Organisation and Linguistic Features of Kazakh Condolences

Kazakh expressions of condolence have a certain structural organisation, which varies depending on the genre and context, but maintains some common characteristics. This structure is reflected in the sequence of speech acts and the relationship between obligatory and optional components.

In personal expression of condolence (köñil aitu), the typical sequence of speech acts includes a greeting adapted to the situation of grief, expression of grief and sympathy, religious formulas, positive characterisation of the deceased, wishes for posthumous well-being, expression of support, and farewell. Lexically, each of these components has its own features. The greeting, for example, may be expressed by the usual formula “Sälemetsiz be” (hello), but is pronounced with a special intonation appropriate to the situation. Expression of grief usually includes the formulaic “qaiğyñyzğa ortaqpyz” (we share your grief). Religious formulas are represented by expressions such as “Alla sabyr bersin” (may Allah grant patience). Characterisation of the deceased includes positive evaluations: “zhaqsy adam edi” (was a good person). Wishes for posthumous well-being are represented by formulas such as “zhany zhannatta bolsyn” (may his soul be in paradise). Expression of support may include a promise of help: “qasyñyzdamyz” (we are beside you). Farewell is usually expressed by the for-

mula “könilinižge medet bolsyn” (may it be a consolation to your soul).

In ritualised lamentation (zhoktau), the structure is more complex and artistically organised. It includes an introductory formula marking the beginning of zhoktau: “ua, dariğa-ai” (oh, woe), characterisation of the deceased with a description of his merits and qualities, expression of personal loss and grief, rhetorical questions emphasising the irreplaceability of the loss: “qaitip kelesiz be?” (will you return?), and concluding formulas, often including a religious component.

A typical zhoktau might include verses such as:

“Ai, qarağym, ainalayn,
Zharyq zhuldyzym söndi-au,
Qaitip oralmas künim-ai!”
(Oh, my dear one, my beloved,
My bright star has gone out,
Oh, my day that will not return!)

Linguistically, zhoktau is distinguished by heightened emotionality, use of poetic devices (metaphors, parallelisms, repetitions), rhythmic organisation, and specific intonation.

Besides the sequence of speech acts, the relationship between obligatory and optional components in the structure of condolence is of importance. Obligatory components, without which condolence would not be complete, include religious formula (in most cases), expression of sympathy, and wish for patience. Optional components include personal memories of the deceased, philosophical reflections on life and death, offer of practical help, and expression of hope for the future.

The relationship between obligatory and optional components depends on the social status of participants, degree of closeness to the deceased, and specific stage of the mourning process. For example, elders and religious figures may include more philosophical reflections, while close relatives may add personal memories. In the early stages of mourning, expressions of grief predominate, in later stages – support and perspective of the future.

The structural organisation of condolence is closely connected with its tonality, that is, emotional and stylistic colouring. In Kazakh condolences, several typical tonalities can be identified, each with its own lexical, grammati-

cal, and paralinguistic features.

Restrained grief is the most common tonality and is characterised by subdued intonation, moderate use of emotionally coloured vocabulary, and avoidance of overly expressive expressions. Typical lexical units include “qaiglyly oqiğa” (sad event), “qiyn kezđ” (difficult period). Grammatically, the use of neutral constructions and moderate application of intensifiers is characteristic.

Intense grief, characteristic of close relatives and the genre of zhoktau, is distinguished by expressive intonation with elements of melodic lamentation, use of emotionally saturated vocabulary, and rhetorical exclamations and questions. Typical lexical units include “qasiretim-ai” (oh my grief), “zhan ashuym-ai” (oh my pain). Grammatically, the use of exclamatory constructions, rhetorical questions, and intensifiers is characteristic.

Philosophical-religious tonality, characteristic of elders and religious figures, is distinguished by measured, admonitory intonation, use of philosophical and religious vocabulary, maxims, and universal statements. Typical lexical units include “tağdyr” (fate), “aqiret” (afterlife), “ömir-ölim” (life-death). Grammatically, the use of timeless constructions, generalised-personal forms, and apodictic statements (statements that do not require proof) is characteristic.

The tonality of condolence is complemented by paralinguistic features, which are also culturally conditioned. Voice characteristics include lowered voice volume, slowed speech tempo, and specific melody, especially in the genre of zhoktau. Non-verbal components include special hand position (often folded on the chest), bowed head as a sign of grief, and avoidance of direct eye contact with the interlocutor in the first moments of mourning. Proxemic characteristics include reduction of distance when expressing condolence to close ones, certain position in the space of the house (tör for elders, threshold for younger ones), and temporary rejection of some usual greeting gestures.

It should be noted that Kazakh laments have their own unique structural and performance characteristics. These laments are sung by specific individuals, usually elder women with recognized skill, and follow established melodic patterns that distinguish them as a distinct genre of folk poetry.

3.5. Instrumentalities: Channels and Forms of Communication in Kazakh Condolences

Kazakh expressions of condolence can be realised through various channels of communication, which significantly influences their lexical, grammatical, and stylistic features. Historically, the predominant form was oral expression of condolence in personal contact; however, with the development of technologies and changes in social practices, other forms have emerged.

Oral expressions of condolence are characterised by greater emotionality and contextual conditioning. They often include dialectal and colloquial elements: “shyrağym” (my light), “qarağym” (my dear). Intonational richness is especially notable in traditional genres such as zhoktau, where the melodic organisation of speech plays a key role. Grammatically, oral condolences are distinguished by simpler syntactic constructions, ellipticity, use of interjections and particles that enhance emotional expressiveness: “ai-hai”, “o dariğa”. Imperative and optative constructions expressing wishes and supplications predominate.

Written expressions of condolence, which appeared in a later period, are distinguished by greater formalisation and contain literary vocabulary: “qaiğyñyzğa ortaqtastyq bildiremiz” (we express solidarity with your grief). They often include set formulas from the official sphere and tend towards more complex syntactic constructions and extended periods. Lexically, the use of terms from literary language, less emotional colouring, and greater stylistic homogeneity are characteristic. The written form allows for more carefully structured utterances, which is reflected in clearer composition and logical organisation of the text.

In modern Kazakhstani society, condolences in social networks and messengers are becoming increasingly widespread, combining elements of oral and written speech. They may include religious symbols and emojis alongside traditional formulas, often containing set clichés adapted for the digital environment. Lexically, such condolences may include both traditional formulas (“Alla raqym etsin” - may Allah have mercy) and new elements, including borrowings from other languages. Grammatically, they tend towards more laconic forms, often using abbreviations and shortenings characteristic of digital communication.

In the context of the multilingual environment of Kazakhstan, the choice of language for expressing condolence

also carries certain sociocultural information. The Kazakh language is used predominantly among ethnic Kazakhs and especially in traditional rituals. It contains the maximum richness of traditional formulas and expressions and emphasises cultural identity and adherence to traditions. Lexically, Kazakh-language condolences include the full spectrum of traditional formulas and expressions; grammatically, they follow the traditional models of the Kazakh language.

The Russian language may be used in urban environments and official contexts. It is characterised by adaptation of some Kazakh formulas and calquing of expressions and reflects the bilingual nature of modern Kazakhstani society. Lexically, Russian-language condolences may include borrowings from Kazakh (for example, “ainalaiyn” - dear, darling); grammatically, they follow the models of the Russian language but may contain calqued constructions.

An interesting phenomenon is code-switching – mixing Russian and Kazakh elements in the same utterance, using Kazakh formulas of condolence in Russian speech. This phenomenon reflects the rather complex language situation and various identities of speakers. Lexically, such condolences represent hybrid forms, including elements of both languages; grammatically, they may follow the models of the dominant language in a given context or represent more complex forms of language interaction.

3.6. Norms: Social Norms and Restrictions in Kazakh Condolences

Expression of condolence in Kazakh culture is regulated by strict social norms, which determine not only the choice of linguistic means but also the general character of communicative behaviour. These norms reflect the traditional social structure of Kazakh society and its value orientations.

Hierarchical norms are of paramount importance in Kazakh culture and are reflected in the linguistic features of condolences. Elders are the first to express condolence, which is reflected in the order of speech turns during group visits to the bereaved family. Younger people use more respectful forms: “ağatai, köñiliñiz üshin keldik” (respected elder brother, we have come to express condolence). Lexically, hierarchical differentiation is manifested in the use

of various forms of address depending on age: “ağa” (elder brother), “köke” (uncle), “aqsaqal” (elder). Grammatically, younger people more often use respectful forms of verbs and pronouns (the form with “-ñyz/-ñiz”), while elders may use more familiar forms.

Kinship norms determine various forms of expressing condolence for close and distant relatives. Close relatives, especially on the male line (ağaiyn), have special duties and privileges in expressing condolence. Lexically, this is manifested in the use of kinship terms when addressing and mentioning the deceased; grammatically, in the use of possessive forms and constructions emphasising commonality and solidarity. Special norms exist for relatives on the female line (nağashy) and relatives of the spouse (qaiyn zhurt), which is also reflected in the linguistic features of condolences.

Violations of mourning etiquette norms are viewed as a serious misconduct and are accompanied by certain corrective mechanisms. Typical violations include the use of inappropriately joyful or neutral vocabulary in a situation of grief, absence of obligatory formulaic expressions, violation of the order of seniority when expressing condolence. Corrective mechanisms include direct indications of error from elders, indirect hints, and subsequent teaching of correct forms of expressing condolence. A linguistic marker of correction may be the use of imperative constructions with an admonitory tone: “bulai aitpau kerek” (one should not speak like this).

3.7. Genre: Genre Diversity of Kazakh Condolences

Kazakh culture is characterised by a rich genre diversity of expressions of condolence, each with its own specific lexical, grammatical, and stylistic features. These genres reflect both the historical evolution of mourning practices and their functional differentiation.

Kazakh laments can be classified into several distinct types. The first type consists of traditional, fixed laments - established poetic texts about historical figures or significant community members that are transmitted orally across generations. These follow conventional poetic structures and are performed at major commemorative events. The second type includes spontaneous, improvised laments created by mourners at the home of the deceased, where wom-

en express immediate personal grief through improvised verses specific to the particular loss. Lexically, zhoktau is characterised by an abundance of epithets, metaphors, and similes for describing the deceased and expressing grief. Grammatically, exclamatory and interrogative constructions, rhetorical addresses to the deceased predominate. Stylistically, zhoktau is distinguished by a high degree of rhythmisation, use of parallelisms, anaphoras, and other poetic devices. Traditionally, zhoktau is performed by women and has a clear structure, including praise of the virtues of the deceased and expression of grief from the loss.

öñil aitu (expression of condolence) is a more restrained genre, used when personally visiting the bereaved family. Lexically, it is characterised by the use of set formulas of consolation and religious expressions. Grammatically, optative constructions expressing wishes for patience and posthumous well-being predominate. Stylistically, köñil aitu is more prosaic and less emotional than zhoktau, but also follows a certain structure, including greeting, expression of grief, religious formulas, and farewell.

öñil khat (written condolence) is an official genre that appeared in a later period. Lexically, it is distinguished by greater formalisation and use of literary vocabulary. Grammatically, the use of more complex syntactic constructions and official-business formulas is characteristic. Stylistically, köñil khat is closer to written genres and may include elements of epistolary style.

Social media have created a new context for expressing condolence, which has led to the emergence of hybrid forms combining elements of traditional genres with features of digital communication. Lexically, these forms may include both traditional formulas and new elements, including borrowings and internationalisms. Grammatically, they tend towards more laconic forms, often using abbreviations and shortenings. Stylistically, they are distinguished by greater variability and less formality.

3.8. Summary

Based on the above review, we have presented a detailed analysis of specific examples of traditional formulas of condolence in Kazakh culture, systematised by functional types (see **Tables 2–4**). Each example is accompanied by transcription, literal translation, and linguistic commentary.

Table 2. Formulas of Expression of Grief and Sympathy.

Formula in Kazakh	Transcription	Literal Translation	Pragmatic Function
Қайғыңызға ортақпыз	Kaighyñyzgha ortakpyz	We share your grief	Expression of solidarity
Бақұл болсын	Bakul bolsyn	May it be a farewell	Acknowledgement of death
Басың аман болсын	Basyñ aman bolsyn	May your head remain safe	Wish for those remaining alive
Жатқан жері жайлы болсын	zhatkan jeri jaily bolsyn	May the place where he lies be comfortable	Wish for the deceased
Қайғырмаңыз, қабырғаңыз қайыспасын	Kaighyrmañyz, kabyrgañyz kaiyspasyn	Do not grieve, may your ribs not bend	Consolation and support

Table 3. Religious Formulas.

Formula in Kazakh	Transcription	Literal Translation	Pragmatic Function
Алла сабыр берсін	Alla sabyr bersin	May Allah grant patience	Religious consolation
Иманы жолдас болсын	Imany joldas bolsyn	May faith be his companion	Wish for the deceased
Жаны жәннатта болсын	Jany jānnatta bolsyn	May his soul be in paradise	Wish for posthumous well-being
Алла рақым етсін	Alla raqym etsin	May Allah have mercy	Prayer for the soul of the deceased
Иннә лилләхи уә иннә иләйхи рәжигун	Innā lillāhi wa innā ilaihi rājigun	Indeed, we belong to Allah and to Him we shall return	Islamic formula of acceptance of death

Table 4. Formulas of Philosophical Character.

Formula in Kazakh	Transcription	Literal Translation	Pragmatic Function
Бұл дүние – өткінші	Bul dūniye – ötkinshi	This world is transient	Philosophical consolation
Өлім – хақ, өмір – парыз	Ölim – haq, ömir – paryz	Death is truth, life is duty	Reminder of the inevitability of death
Пенде пенделігін жасайды	Pende pendeligin jasaidy	Man does what is proper to man	Indication of human nature
Тағдырдың жазғанына шара жоқ	Taghdyrdyñ jazghanyna shara joq	There is no remedy for the decree of fate	Acceptance of inevitability
Өткен күнге өкінбе	Ötken күнге ökinbe	Do not regret the past day	Advice not to indulge in excessive grief

Linguistic analysis shows that most of these formulas have an optative grammatical structure using the desiderative mood (-syn/-sin). Lexically, they are divided into two groups: addressed to the living (қайғыңызға ортақпыз, басың аман болсын) and addressed to the deceased or related to him (жатқан жері жайлы болсын, бақұл болсын). The metaphorical expression “қабырғаңыз қайыспасын” (literally “may your ribs not bend”) reflects the somatic code of Kazakh culture, where the physical condition of the body is metonymically connected with the emotional state.

These formulas demonstrate the strong influence of Islamic tradition on Kazakh mourning etiquette. Grammatically, they also use optative constructions, but lexically they are saturated with religious terminology of Arabic origin: Алла (Allah), иман (faith), жәннат (paradise), рақым (mercy). A special place is occupied by the Quranic formula “Иннә лилләхи уә иннә иләйхи рәжигун”, which is pronounced in Arabic but is an integral part of Kazakh mourning discourse, which testifies to the transcultural na-

ture of Islamic mourning practices.

Philosophical formulas, most characteristic of the speech of elders and respected members of the community, have a didactic character and are often built on oppositions (өлім – хақ, өмір – парыз) or universal statements (бұл дүние – өткінші). Grammatically, they are more diverse and include both imperative forms (өкінбе) and nominative sentences. These expressions reflect the traditional worldview of Kazakhs, in which acceptance of fate (тағдыр) plays a central role.

3.9. Gender Features of Expressing Condolence: A Comparative Analysis

Empirical material has revealed significant differences in the linguistic means of expressing condolence between men and women.

Fragment of a female zhoktau, recorded in the Turkestan region (informant A.K., 67 years old):

“Ainalaiyn, qarağym,

Zharyq zhuldyzym söndi-au,
Qaitip oralmas künim-ai!
Qara zhamyldym qaiğydan,
Qabyrgham qaiysty, zhany-m-ai,
Endi kimge süienemin?
Ömirim, medetim, tağdyrym!
Ah, tağdyr-ai, tağdyr-ai...”
Translation: “My dear one, my beloved,
My bright star has gone out,
Oh, my day that will not return!
I have clothed myself in black from grief,
My ribs have bent, my soul,
On whom shall I now lean?
My life, my support, my fate!
Ah, fate, fate...”

Linguistic analysis of this fragment shows the following features:

- Abundance of diminutive forms and affectionate addresses: ainalaiyn, qarağym
- Metaphorical description of death: zharyq zhuldyzym söndi (my bright star has gone out)
- Rhetorical questions expressing helplessness: endi kimge süienemin?
- Abundance of firstperson possessive forms: zhuldyzym, künim, qabyrgham
- Exclamations and interjections expressing emotions: ai, ah
- Parallelism and rhythmic organisation close to poetic form

Fragment of a male köñil aitu, recorded in the Akmola region (informant B.T., 73 years old):

“Marqumnyñ zhany zhannatta bolsyn. Ömir zhalğasady. Sabyr saқтаңдар. Ol zhaqsy adam edi, elge eñbegi siñgen azamat boldy. Balalary zhalğastyrar äkesiniñ zholyn. Alla sabyr bersin. Biz qaiğylaryña ortaқыз. Kerek bolsa, aityñдар, qol ushyn beremiz. Ötkenge ökinish zhoq, aldyğa ümit бар.”

Translation: “May the soul of the deceased be in paradise. Life continues. Maintain patience. He was a good person, a citizen who brought benefit to the people. The children will continue their father’s path. May Allah grant patience. We share your grief. If needed, tell us, we will lend a helping hand. There is no regret for the past, there is

hope for the future.”

Linguistic analysis reveals the following features:

- More restrained, declarative tone with predominance of short sentences
- Use of religious and philosophical formulas: zhany zhannatta bolsyn, ömir zhalğasady
- Emphasis on social achievements of the deceased: elge eñbegi siñgen azamat
- Pragmatic offer of help: kerek bolsa, aityñдар, qol ushyn beremiz
- Orientation towards the future: balalary zhalğastyrar, aldyğa ümit бар
- Less emotionality, absence of interjections and exclamations
- More linear structure, absence of poetic devices

Comparative analysis shows that female expressions of condolence are more emotional, rhythmically organised, and oriented towards personal experience of grief, while male ones are more pragmatic, philosophical, and oriented towards social context and the future.

4. Discussion

The results of the conducted analysis of Kazakh speech acts of condolence represent valuable material for cross-cultural comparison and discussion in a broader context. The obtained data demonstrate both universal features inherent in speech acts of condolence across various cultures and unique characteristics of the Kazakh tradition.

In comparison with other Islamic cultures, Kazakh expressions of condolence reveal significant similarities in dominant strategies. Gyumyush’s ^[16] research showed that in the Turkish language, the most frequent strategies of condolence are formulas oriented towards the future, religious expressions, and requests for God’s forgiveness of sins. A similar pattern is observed in Kazakh culture, where formulas such as “Alla sabyr bersin” (May Allah grant patience) and “Zhany zhannatta bolsyn” (May his soul be in paradise) form the core of traditional expressions of condolence. A similar tendency is noted in Persian culture, where, according to research by Behnam et al. ^[15], religious expressions play a key role in acts of condolence.

However, upon more detailed examination, substantial differences also emerge. Unlike some other Islamic

cultures, Kazakh condolences include a significant layer of pre-Islamic elements, creating a unique syncretic character. The genre of zhoktau, as Kelgembayeva^[19] notes, has inherited oral poetic traditions of ancient Saka, Hun, and Uysun tribes, which gives Kazakh mourning practices an additional historical dimension. This syncretism distinguishes Kazakh condolences from more orthodox Islamic practices of the Middle East and brings them closer to the traditions of other Turkic peoples of Central Asia.

Interesting parallels are discovered when comparing Kazakh mourning practices with traditions of other Turkic peoples. As Pritchard^[22] notes in his study of the Kyrgyz “koshok”, this genre of ritualised expression of grief, where melody is combined with emotional performance, is not merely an expression of personal grief but also a means for understanding collective identity. The Kazakh zhoktau performs similar functions, which testifies to the common Turkic roots of these traditions and their important role in forming ethnic identity.

The gender differentiation of expressions of condolence, revealed in our research, is also of interest for cross-cultural comparison. The greater emotionality of women’s expressions of condolence and their rhythmic organisation, contrasted with more pragmatic and philosophically oriented male condolences, reflect the traditional division of gender roles in Kazakh society. Similar differentiation is observed in other traditional cultures, although its specific forms may differ substantially.

The social conditioning of the choice of linguistic means when expressing condolence also has interesting parallels in other cultures. As Williams’s^[18] research shows, the choice of condolence strategy in Western cultures is motivated by relationship factors: people in more distanced relationships choose strategies with less “risk”, while people in positions of power prefer strategies with higher “risk”. In Kazakh culture, this tendency is manifested in more formal expressions of condolence from distant relatives and more emotional ones from close relatives. However, the role of age hierarchy in the Kazakh tradition creates an additional dimension, which may be absent or less pronounced in Western cultures.

Special attention should be given to the question of transformation of traditional practices of expressing condolence under the influence of globalisation and digitalisa-

tion. The emergence of condolences in social networks and messengers, revealed in our research, reflects the global tendency towards virtualisation of social practices. However, as our data show, even in the digital environment, many traditional formulas and strategies are preserved, which testifies to the stability of cultural models of expressing condolence.

5. Conclusions

The conducted research of Kazakh speech acts of condolence allows drawing a number of important conclusions, both theoretical and practical.

Firstly, the analysis confirmed that Kazakh expressions of condolence represent a complex communicative system, deeply rooted in the cultural, religious, and social practices of the Kazakh people. This system is characterised by significant variability of linguistic means depending on spatial and temporal context, social characteristics of communication participants, and specific communicative goals.

Secondly, linguistic analysis revealed a rich palette of lexical, grammatical, and stylistic means used in various genres of condolence. Particularly significant are: optative constructions using the desiderative mood for expressing wishes to the deceased and the bereaved; religious terminology reflecting the influence of Islamic tradition; metaphorical expressions related to the somatic code of Kazakh culture; and rhythmically organised speech in traditional genres of lamentation.

Thirdly, the research demonstrated the importance of spatial-temporal organisation of Kazakh mourning rituals, creating a complex system of expressions of condolence distributed over time. Each of the key stages of the mourning cycle (first days, seventh day, fortieth day, anniversary) is characterised by its own linguistic features, which reflects the fundamental importance of categories of space and time in Kazakh culture.

Fourthly, significant social differentiation of linguistic means in Kazakh condolences has been revealed, depending on status, role, age, gender of the speaker, as well as their relationship to the deceased and the bereaved. This differentiation reflects the traditional social structure of Kazakh society and its influence on communicative practices.

Fifthly, substantial gender differentiation of expressions of condolence has been established, manifested in greater emotionality and rhythmic organisation of women's condolences and more pragmatic, philosophical character of men's. This differentiation corresponds to the traditional division of gender roles in Kazakh society.

Sixthly, the syncretic character of Kazakh expressions of condolence has been revealed, combining elements of pre-Islamic beliefs and Islamic religion. Traditional genres, such as *zhoktau*, which have inherited oral poetic traditions of ancient Turkic tribes, play a special role in this syncretism.

Seventhly, the influence of modern communication technologies on traditional practices of expressing condolence has been established, manifested in the emergence of new forms (condolences in social networks and messengers) combining elements of oral and written speech. At the same time, many traditional formulas and strategies are preserved, which testifies to the stability of cultural models of expressing condolence.

The combined approach, integrating elements of speech act theory with the methodology of ethnography of communication, confirmed its productivity for the analysis of culturally specific communicative practices. The application of Hymes's SPEAKING model allowed overcoming the limitations of classical speech act theory and taking into account the broad sociocultural context of Kazakh expressions of condolence.

The results of the research have significant theoretical and practical implications. In theoretical terms, they demonstrate the necessity of culturally sensitive approaches to the analysis of speech acts and communicative practices. In practical terms, they can find application in intercultural communication, translation practice, and preservation of the intangible cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, N.A. and K.S.; methodology, K.S.; validation, N.A., K.S. and A.I.; formal analysis, N.A.; investigation, N.A. and R.K.; resources, N.A.; data curation, N.A.; writing—original draft preparation, N.A.; writing—review and editing, L.B.; visualization, N.A.; supervision,

K.S.; project administration, N.A.; comparative analysis and data interpretation, A.I.; educational analysis and literature review, R.K.; linguistic analysis and cultural explanations, L.B. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Institutional Review Board Statement

Ethical review and approval were waived for this study due to the research being based on linguistic analysis of publicly available cultural expressions and ethnolinguistic data that does not involve direct human subjects or sensitive personal information.

Informed Consent Statement

Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement

The data collected in the course of this study are available upon reasonable request to the corresponding author. Due to the sensitive nature of materials related to mourning rituals and expressions of condolence, as well as to protect the confidentiality of informants, the full corpus of recordings cannot be made publicly available. Anonymized text examples and transcriptions may be provided for educational and research purposes, subject to compliance with ethical standards and the consent of study participants. Metadata on demographic characteristics of study participants and methodological materials are available upon request.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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