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Linguocultural Aspects of the Concept of “Qonaqjailylyq” (Hospitality)

Aigul Onalbayeva ¹ , Bakitgul Zhumagulova ^{2*} , Tolkyntoktarova ³, Dinara Aliyeva ³, Zhanbai Kadyrov ⁴,
Mendykiz Yesmatova ⁴

¹Department of Russian Language and Literature of the Kazakh National Women's Teacher Training University, Almaty 090000, Kazakhstan

²Department of Russian Language and Literature of the Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Almaty 050010, Kazakhstan

³Department of Languages at the International University of Information Technologies, Almaty 050040 Kazakhstan

⁴M. Kozybaev North Kazakhstan University, Petropavlovsk 150003, Kazakhstan

ABSTRACT

The aim of the study is to identify the national and cultural features of the concept of “qonaqjailylyq” (hospitality) within the Kazakh linguistic worldview. To achieve this aim, methods of conceptual analysis, lexicographical research, and a free associative experiment involving 109 respondents were employed. The research is based on the analysis of lexicographical data, examples from literary texts, and the results of the associative experiment, which made it possible to reveal the key semantic and symbolic meanings of the studied concept. The findings indicate that hospitality in Kazakh culture encompasses material, emotional, and ritual elements, reflecting key national values such as respect, generosity, and warmth. The concept of “qonaqjailylyq” is closely linked to the traditions and cultural code of the Kazakh people and retains its significance in contemporary contexts. The study highlights the importance of hospitality as a component of intercultural communication and national identity, offering new approaches to its investigation.

Keywords: Linguoculturology; Linguistic Worldview; Concept; Associative Experiment; Symbol; Phraseology; Aspect

*CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Bakitgul Zhumagulova, Department of Russian Language and Literature of the Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Almaty 050010, Kazakhstan; Email: Bakitgul@inbox.ru

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1. Introduction

The relevance of this study stems from the growing scholarly interest in issues of linguoculturology, which explores national and cultural representations of individuals' views of the world and themselves. The cultural component of linguistic units plays an essential role, revealing not only the lexical meanings of words but also their connection to cultural objects and phenomena. This enables an understanding of how culture is expressed through language, as well as how words and expressions reflect the cultural and mental characteristics of a people.

Moreover, contemporary research frequently focuses on intercultural relations and interactions between cultures. The processes of information and value exchange that occur in intercultural communication promote mutual understanding among nations, broaden cultural horizons, and deepen knowledge of one another.

The hypothesis of this study is that an analysis of lexical units and expressions related to hospitality will reveal unique linguocultural aspects of this phenomenon and identify ways it is represented in language. The aim of this research is to identify the communicative, cultural, and symbolic meanings of the universal concept of "Hospitality" through its representation in the Kazakh language.

The study's objective is to conduct a conceptual analysis of the concept of "Hospitality" and describe its semantic and symbolic meanings. The concept of "Hospitality" serves as an important element of Kazakh culture, reflecting the nation's values and characteristics.

The object of this research is the linguistic representation of the concept of "Hospitality," while the subject is the identification of its national-cultural specificity within Kazakh linguoculture.

2. Literature Review

In contemporary linguistics, there is a strong focus on how the cultural and linguistic characteristics of peoples influence the perception and representation of fundamental concepts, such as hospitality. The linguocultural aspect allows researchers to identify and examine the features of this concept within specific national cultures, as reflected in language, proverbs, folklore, and other expressions of folk creativity. Studying hospitality as a cultural phenomenon is

essential for understanding social relationships and values transmitted from generation to generation.

For instance, Zakharova, in her work "Comparative and Contrasting Linguocultural Study of the Concept of 'Hospitality'"^[1], focuses on comparing this concept across different linguistic and cultural traditions. Zakharova emphasizes how hospitality is perceived and expressed in various cultures, highlighting the cultural significance and multifaceted nature of this concept. Her study underscores the similarities and differences in hospitality across nations, offering deeper insights into intercultural connections and distinctiveness.

Yunusova, in her work "The Axiology of Hospitality in Russian and Tatar Proverbs"^[2], investigates how the value aspects of hospitality are reflected in Russian and Tatar proverbs and sayings. Yunusova analyzes established expressions that embody the principles and norms of hospitality. A key point in her study is identifying differences in the axiological (value) orientations of these two peoples, despite the similarities in their traditions.

Tserenova, in "The Concept of 'Hospitality' in Kalmyk Linguoculture"^[3], analyzes the specificity of hospitality within Kalmyk culture. Like other Turkic peoples, the Kalmyk people are known for their hospitality traditions, but Tserenova's study focuses on cultural features of this phenomenon that distinguish it from other cultures. She highlights the influence of the nomadic lifestyle on the development and preservation of values associated with hospitality.

Zhabaeva, in her study "National-Cultural Specifics of Realizing the Concept of Hospitality (Based on Kazakh, Russian, and English)"^[4], compares the cultural characteristics of three nations—Kazakh, Russian, and English. Zhabaeva examines how the concept of hospitality is expressed in different languages and cultures, demonstrating that each culture has its own unique system of values and symbols associated with welcoming guests.

In their joint work, Duysekova and Tolybayeva explore "The Concept of 'Hospitality' and its Representation in Kazakh, English, and French"^[5]. The researchers show how each of these cultures represents hospitality in language and emphasize the importance of hospitality as a central concept in Kazakh linguoculture. Their work also illuminates the differences in expressions and perceptions of hospitality, shaped by diverse historical, cultural conditions, and traditions.

The concept of “Qonaqjailylyq” (Hospitality) is examined in detail in Akhmetzhanova’s work “Essays on National Conceptology”^[6]. This concept holds a prominent place in the Kazakh national worldview and reflects a defining characteristic of the Kazakh people—respect for guests and readiness to welcome them.

Akhmetzhanova^[6] highlights the main aspects of the concept of “Qonaqjailylyq,” which, according to the author, include:

Cultural and Mental Significance: Akhmetzhanova points out that the concept of “Qonaqjailylyq” (hospitality) is a fundamental part of Kazakh mentality and culture. Hospitality is traditionally linked to a value system that is passed down through generations, embodying important social and cultural norms. Welcoming a guest is considered a sacred duty, regardless of the guest’s status, intentions, or the circumstances of the visit.

Linguistic Representatives: The concept of “Qonaqjailylyq” is expressed through specific stable phrases and expressions frequently found in the Kazakh language. Examples of these representatives include terms such as “қонақ” (guest), “қонақасы” (food for the guest), and “қонақ күтім” (care for the guest), which form a broad semantic network related to the behavior toward guests.

Semiotic System: Akhmetzhanova analyzes “Qonaqjailylyq” as part of a semiotic system where language serves as a key to understanding social behavior and cultural attitudes. Terms associated with hospitality help describe not only cultural practices but also the emotions, intentions, and internal dispositions Kazakhs have toward guests. The concept “Qonaqjailylyq” includes ideas such as generosity, respect, benevolence, and openness.

Dynamism and Change: Although the concept of “Qonaqjailylyq” has a stable traditional foundation, Akhmetzhanova notes that it is also evolving in the modern context. Over time, the notion of hospitality adapts to new conditions, yet remains an important value in Kazakh culture. For example, contemporary forms of hospitality may incorporate new elements, but the fundamental principles of respect and care for the guest remain unchanged.

Comparison with Other Cultures: Akhmetzhanova also conducts a comparative analysis of the concept of “Qonaqjailylyq” with hospitality in other cultures. In Kazakh tradition, hospitality is often perceived as a social obligation, with

failure to fulfill it potentially leading to a loss of honor or respect. In other cultures, such as Western cultures, hospitality may take on a more pragmatic character, highlighting cultural differences in the understanding of this concept.

In Akhmetzhanova’s work^[6], the concept of “Qonaqjailylyq” represents not just a cultural phenomenon but a complex structure that includes both mental and linguistic elements. It is an essential aspect of Kazakh identity, reflecting the values of community, respect, and etiquette. The author illustrates how national concepts help provide a deeper understanding of an ethnic group’s worldview and cultural codes.

Thus, the study and literature review on the topic allow us to draw the following conclusions:

- Hospitality as a cultural phenomenon: In different cultures, this concept has unique manifestations that reflect each nation’s system of values and worldview.
- Linguocultural approach: This approach helps reveal similarities and differences in the perception and expression of hospitality through language, proverbs, and folklore, expanding our understanding of cultural specificity and worldview perspectives.
- Comparative studies: The works of researchers such as Zakharova, Zhabaeva, Duisikova, and Tolybaeva demonstrate the cultural features of hospitality across various languages and traditions, highlighting both intercultural differences and connections.
- The concept of “Qonaqjailylyq” in Kazakh culture: This concept holds a central place, reflecting important social norms and values, as emphasized in the works of Akhmetzhanova.
- Evolution of hospitality: Contemporary cultural contexts are adapting traditional forms of hospitality, while preserving their key principles.

Unlike previous studies, this work not only analyzes the concept of hospitality in the Kazakh linguistic culture, but also includes an empirical approach. A free associative experiment revealed how modern native speakers of the Kazakh language perceive and interpret the concept of “Qonaqjailylyq”. This study integrates cultural, linguistic and social analysis, which makes it possible to present hospitality as a complex phenomenon combining traditional values with modern changes.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Materials

The study is based on the following data sources:

1. Lexicographical materials:
 - Explanatory and phraseological dictionaries of the Kazakh and Russian languages, including specialized dictionaries such as “Kazakh Literary Language Dictionary” and others^[7–16].
 - Synonym dictionaries and encyclopedic sources reflecting the historical and contemporary meanings of the concept “qonaqjailylyq” (hospitality).
2. Literary and journalistic texts:
 - Examples from Kazakh literature and press demonstrating the usage and symbolism of the concept.
3. Results of an associative experiment:
 - Responses of participants to the stimulus word “qonaqjailylyq” collected during the survey.
4. Scientific works:
 - Studies dedicated to the linguocultural analysis of hospitality, including works by T.N. Zakharova, R.D. Yunusova, S.S. Zhabaeva, and others.

3.2. Respondents

1. Number of participants:
 - The study involved 109 respondents who provided associative responses. During the first stage, 89 participants completed an electronic survey via Google Forms. The second stage involved 20 informants, native speakers of Kazakh culture, surveyed in person.
2. Socio-demographic characteristics:
 - Respondents varied in age, education level, and cultural preferences, ensuring diverse data collection.
3. Selection criteria:
 - Participants were required to be native speakers of the Kazakh language and representatives of Kazakh culture to ensure the associations reflected national-cultural features. Additionally,

participants included representatives of other nationalities living in Kazakhstan (Russians, Uyghurs, Uzbeks, Turks, Germans) as well as foreign tourists and city visitors.

3.3. Procedure

1. Free associative experiment:
 - Participants were asked to respond to the stimulus word “qonaqjailylyq” (hospitality).
 - No time limit was imposed, allowing participants to express their associations freely.
2. Data collection:
 - Associations were recorded in written form or through surveys.
 - Alongside the associative experiment, texts and dictionary definitions were analyzed.
3. Data processing:
 - Experiment results were structured into thematic groups, highlighting key directions in the perception of the concept.

3.4. Research Ethics

1. Informed consent:
 - All participants provided consent for participation, data processing, and publication of results.
2. Confidentiality:
 - Respondent identities and data are protected; results are published anonymously.
3. Ethical standards:
 - The researcher adhered to standards preventing pressure on participants, manipulation of their responses, or distortion of results.

3.5. Data Analysis

1. Classification of associations:
 - Respondent associations were grouped into thematic categories:
 - Material aspects (food, dastarkhan, traditional dishes).
 - Emotional associations (love, warmth, happi-

- ness).
- Social and cultural aspects (guests, family, traditions).
- 2. Statistical analysis:
 - Computer processing was applied to calculate the frequency of associations.
 - Histograms were created to visualize data distribution.
- 3. Contextual analysis:
 - The use of the concept in texts was analyzed to identify its semantic and symbolic meanings.
- 4. Data interpretation:
 - Data from the associative experiment were compared with conclusions from text and dictionary analyses.
 - Results identified core elements of the concept, including:
 - Archisemes (receiving guests),
 - Differential semes (treats, traditions),
 - Potential semes (emotions, rituals).

4. Results

4.1. Lexicographical Analysis of the Word “Hospitality” in Russian and Kazakh Languages

To begin the conceptual analysis, it is essential to determine the full semantic scope of the concept within the lexical system of the language. In this process, the dictionary definition plays a crucial role, as it represents the core of the concept by capturing the primary meanings and aspects associated with it. Dictionary definitions provide a foundational understanding of the concept and its usage in the language, serving as a starting point for further analysis of its cultural, communicative, and symbolic meanings. Analyzing the definition of the concept “hospitality” based on various dictionaries allows us to highlight several key aspects:

In all dictionary definitions, common elements can be observed: the readiness to receive guests, warmth, the provision of refreshments, and protection. This reflects the fundamental significance of hospitality as a socio-cultural phenomenon aimed at establishing friendly relations. However, there are also varying perspectives on the understanding of this term. For instance, in V. Dahl’s^[7] dictionary, hospital-

ity is defined as “a free, generous reception of travelers and guests,” emphasizing care and generosity^[7]. In the dictionaries of S. Ozhegov^[8] and S. Ushakov^[9], attention is given to warmth and willingness to welcome guests, highlighting the emotional connection between the host and the guest.

The Brockhaus and Efron Encyclopedia^[10] adds an aspect of “bread and salt” and providing shelter to the definition of “hospitality,” indicating the practical side of this process. In the Biblical Encyclopedia by Archimandrite Nikifor^[11], hospitality is viewed as a virtue, significant even among “rude and uneducated peoples,” suggesting its universality across different cultures. The explanatory dictionary by Efremova^[12] and the Small Academic Dictionary^[13] emphasize the readiness and desire to receive guests, which indicates an element of communication.

In the Kazakh context, the term “Qonaqjailylyq” similarly encapsulates a rich tapestry of meanings, associated with hospitality, warmth, and the cultural imperative to welcome guests. A thorough lexicographical analysis would reflect these dimensions, elucidating how the concept of hospitality operates within the Kazakh language and culture, reinforcing the idea that hospitality transcends mere functionality and is deeply embedded in cultural identity and values.

The analysis of dictionary entries reveals how the meanings of the concept of “hospitality” evolve across various lexicographical sources. Over time, the concept has been enriched with new meanings, reflecting changes in cultural and social understandings while maintaining key aspects of warmth and guest reception. Historical sources, such as Dahl’s and the Brockhaus-Efron dictionaries, exhibit a broader understanding of the word “hospitality,” which includes not only warmth but also a social responsibility towards travelers. In the dictionaries of Ozhegov, Ushakov, and Efremova, there is a narrowing of meaning to focus on the interpersonal aspect. However, it is important to note that all definitions of this word emphasize the significance of hospitality as a cultural norm that has been entrenched in language and tradition. Thus, the meaning of the word “hospitality” in Russian lexicographical sources represents a multifaceted category that unites emotional, material, and moral aspects. This phenomenon reflects not only cultural norms but also moral and ethical principles that maintain their relevance in both historical and contemporary societies.

The lexicographical analysis of the word “qonaqjailylyq” in the Kazakh language shows that it is revealed through different aspects that emphasize its importance in the culture and traditions of the Kazakh people. For instance, the explanatory dictionary “Qazaq adebi tiliniñ sözdigi” defines “qonaqjailylyq” as hospitality, the readiness to receive guests, and to express warmth and care^[14]. Examples from literature demonstrate that this quality is prevalent in everyday life and literature, serving as one of the traits of the national character:

- “Сонша асыққандарың не? Отырыңдар,” - деді, Жұлдызай qonaqjailylyq білдірді [“Why are you in such a hurry? Sit down,” Zhuldyzai said, expressing his hospitality.] (from the journal “Қазақстан әйелдері”);
- “Өз елінің қонақжайлылығын, сауықшылдығын дәріптеп жатқандар да бар” [“There are also those who glorify the hospitality and well-being of their country”] (T. Alimkulov, Akboz At);
- “Көрсеткен қонақжайлылығы үшін шалға алғысымызды айтып, біз әрі қарай жүгіріп кеттік” [“Thanking the chalet for the hospitality shown, we ran on”] (Ш.Өтепов, Жалында).

The dictionary of musical and cultural terms adds a socio-cultural context, where “qonaqjailylyq” is described as a complex system of relationships between hosts and guests, as well as among various age and social groups^[15]. This underscores the customs associated with receiving guests that are strictly observed in traditional culture.

The concept of hospitality in Russian and Kazakh cultures shares similar foundations, expressing respect and care for guests. However, in Kazakh culture, hospitality is particularly closely linked to traditions and rituals, highlighting social and age roles within society. In the Russian language, the evolution of meanings emphasizes both practical and emotional components while retaining elements of social responsibility.

The dictionary of synonyms in the Kazakh language offers a range of synonyms such as “меймандостық,” “қонағуарлық,” “қонақжайлық,” and “қонақшылдық,” which demonstrates the richness and diversity of the language in describing the concept of hospitality. These synonyms indicate that this quality is an important part of the mentality and national consciousness of the Kazakh people^[16].

- “Not withholding anything from the guest, offering all that one has to their mouth. This refers to the hospitality, care, cleanliness, and order provided to these guests” (A. Tokmagambetov).
- “I personally appreciate the openness of this people, their sincere and kind-hearted nature, as well as their tireless diligence and hospitality” (S. Sargaskayev).
- “There are those who promote the hospitality and entertainment of their homeland” (T. Alimkulov, Akboz At).
- “We honored them, welcomed them into our midst, and displayed our hospitality by offering them all that we could” (S. Begalin).

The excerpts from literary works illustrate the multifaceted nature of Kazakh hospitality, where each author highlights different aspects of this tradition. The synonyms used in the text allow the authors to elaborate more specifically on the characteristics of this process.

“Qonaqjailylyq” (hospitality) represents a complex concept with a multilayered semantic structure.

4.2. Semantic Analysis of the Concept of “Qonaqjailylyq” (Hospitality)

The analysis of the concept of “Qonaqjailylyq” (hospitality) within Kazakh culture reveals its multifaceted and complex semantic structure, which is deeply rooted in the traditions and lifestyle of the Kazakh people. Examining this term through a semantic lens allows for the identification of its core and supplementary elements.

Core Semes (Archemes):

- Receiving Guests: This is the central meaning that defines the actions associated with hospitality. In Kazakh culture, receiving a guest is not merely a formality but a sacred duty that underscores the importance of the guest, regardless of their social status or purpose for the visit.
- Tradition: Hospitality in Kazakh culture is intricately linked to traditions passed down through generations. It forms an essential part of the Kazakh mentality and is considered one of the key elements of national identity.

Differential Semes:

- Number of Guests: Hospitality in Kazakh culture often implies the reception of a large number of guests.

In traditional Kazakh society, hosting a wide banquet and having an open home for many people signifies a high level of hospitality from the hosts.

- Continuity of Traditions: A crucial aspect of Kazakh hospitality is the strict adherence to the traditions of welcoming guests. These practices are inherited and remain unchanged regardless of lifestyle or temporal shifts.

Potential Semes:

- Offering Food: An essential part of hospitality involves not only a warm welcome but also the obligatory offering of food to the guest. In Kazakh culture, it is customary to present the best dishes and drinks to the guest, emphasizing respect and care.
- Traditional Dishes: The semantics of hospitality is closely tied to the preparation and serving of traditional foods. For instance, “қонақасы” (food for the guest) is a mandatory part of the reception, and the meal must adhere to established traditions.
- Adherence to Traditions: This aspect entails precise compliance with the rituals and customs associated with receiving guests. This includes the order of serving, hospitable gestures, respectful treatment of the guest, and adherence to social norms.

In Kazakh culture, hospitality extends beyond a mere invitation and reception of guests. It is a multilayered process that encompasses material and spiritual elements, expressed through language, symbolism, and actions. For example, a guest in a Kazakh household is welcomed with the words: “Қонаққа төрден орын,” which symbolizes an invitation to take a place of honor in the home, highlighting respect and acknowledgment of the guest’s importance.

The semantic analysis of the concept of “Qonaqjailylyq” indicates that it is not simply a social obligation but a significant component of the cultural code linked to communal values and etiquette rules. Traditional elements of hospitality are preserved even in modern contexts, undergoing only minor changes.

Thus, the concept of “Qonaqjailylyq” represents a rich semantic system reflecting the unique aspects of Kazakh culture and traditions.

4.3. Associative Experiment

As part of the study, we conducted an associative experiment that revealed a number of important characteristics

of the concept of “Qonaqjailylyq” (hospitality), which are closely related to the cultural traditions and values of the Kazakh people. We collected 500 reactions from 109 participants, which reflected a wide range of perceptions and meanings of this term in the Kazakh language.

Description of the free associative experiment: The place of the experiment is Almaty and the Almaty region. The city of Almaty is a cultural and economic center, one of the largest megacities in Central Asia. Almaty region is the nearest region that is located next to the city; Time of the experiment – the experiment was conducted in 2022–2024. The data obtained during this period were used in the analysis of the experiment;

The age of the respondents who participated in the experiment is from 20–70 years old. Different ages will show a more complete picture of how the concept is reflected in the consciousness of the people;

The education of the respondents did not matter, as we are exploring how the concept is reflected in the consciousness of the people.

Kazakh, Russian are the languages of the answer (the answers of foreigners were recorded in Russian with the help of translators);

The total number of respondents who participated in the free association experiment was 109 people;

Nationality: the experiment involved mainly the indigenous population - 90% Kazakhs, 10% Russians, Uighurs, Uzbeks, Turks, Germans.

The ethics of a free associative experiment – with the prior consent of the informants.

Social categories of respondents – students, teachers, tourists, pensioners; The form of conducting a free associative experiment: a questionnaire (in writing), online (via Google forms);

The respondents were offered the word incentive and 10 questions related to this word. During the experiment, respondents should respond with a reaction to the word stimulus, preferably without hesitation, i.e. the linguistic and cultural aspect is important here;

The main purpose of our experiment is a linguistic and cultural study of the associative halo of the word *Qonaqjailylyq*, revealing the respondents’ vision of the national picture of the world, taking into account national and cultural characteristics.

The objectives of the associative experiment are:

- To identify the stereotypical ideas associated with this concept,
- evaluate individual responses-responses of respondents, taking into account a certain age, gender, education, place of residence.

Description of the Free Associative Experiment

Gender of respondents:

96.4% of the respondents are women, while only 1.36% are men.

Nationality of respondents:

- Kazakhs: 69%
- Uzbeks: 10%
- Turks: 10%
- Uyghurs: 10%
- Mixed ethnicity: 1% (as specified by the respondent)

(Figure 1).

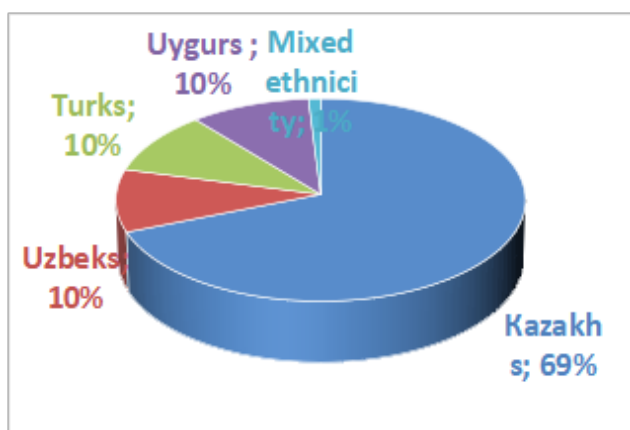


Figure 1. Nationality of respondents.

Associative responses to the stimulus word “qonaqjailylyq” (hospitality):

The following responses were recorded:

Food-related associations:

- Dastarkhan – 7
- Rich dastarkhan – 2
- Guests – 3
- Relatives – 5
- Friends – 6
- Tea – 5
- Food – 10
- Beshbarmak – 2
- Songs – 5
- Toybatar – 2

- Warmth – 10
- Grandmother – 2
- Village (aul) – 3
- Hugs – 1
- Generosity (кең пейіл) – 1
- Welcoming people with a warm smile – 1

Emotional and abstract associations:

- Love – 8
- Happiness – 8
- Warmth – 8
- Prosperity – 5
- Comfort – 4
- Mutual understanding – 2
- Trust – 2
- Reliability – 2
- Celebration – 2
- Joy – 2
- Care – 1
- Confidence – 1
- Tablecloth – 1

Cultural associations:

- Hospitality linked to: Kazakhs – 5, Neighbors – 3, Friends – 3

Responses to the question: “Can synonyms be found for the word?”

Participants provided the following synonyms:

- Hospitality
- Generosity
- Open-heartedness (кеңпейілділік)
- Responsiveness
- Magnanimity (жомарт)
- Hospitable table (дастарханды).

Responses to the question: “Which movies or song lyrics do you associate with the word qonaqjailylyq (hospitality)?”

The following cultural references were mentioned:

- Films: Kyz Zhibek, Tomiris, Appak Kelin
- Songs: Nauryz, Ak Bata, Kazakh Dastarkhan.

Responses to the question: “What traditions are associated with qonaqjailylyq (hospitality)?”

Participants named the following traditions:

- Tör – offering a seat of honor
- Kuda kytu – receiving the in-laws
- Kyz uzatu – bridal send-off ceremony

- Cooking meat
- Setting the dastarkhan (traditional dining table).

Responses to the question: “Through which idioms would you convey the meaning of the word qonaqjailylyq (hospitality)?”

Participants provided these idioms:

- Кең болсаң, кем болмайсың (“Be generous, and you will not lack”) – 60 responses (71.4%)

- Қонақ келсе ет пісер, ет піспесе бет пісер (“When a guest arrives, meat will cook; if not, faces will burn with shame”) – 21 responses (25%)

- Қонаққа «кел» демек бар, «кет» демек жоқ (“Inviting a guest is allowed; telling them to leave is not”) – 15 responses (17.9%)

- нҚуыс үйден құр шықпа (“Don’t leave an empty house empty-handed”) – 10 responses (11.9%).

Open-ended question:

Only one response was recorded:

- Qonaqjailylyq қазақ халқының әдет – ғұрпы (“Hospitality is a custom of the Kazakh people”) – 1 response (1.2%).

Summary and Analysis of the Experiment

A total of 109 respondents participated in the associative experiment, generating over 500 reactions. Upon analyzing the data, the responses were categorized into the following broad groups:

1. Qonaqjailylyq – home, Kazakhs, Kazakhstan.
2. Qonaqjailylyq – dastarkhan, abundance, generosity, a richly laid table.
3. Qonaqjailylyq – celebration, songs, guests, boursak, beshbarmak, pilaf.
4. Qonaqjailylyq – hospitality, generosity, communication.

Based on the results of our experiment, we reached the following conclusions:

1. Hospitality (qonaqjailylyq) in the linguistic worldview of the Kazakh people, and more broadly among Turkic peoples, is a significant cultural and life value. For every cultural bearer, this word evokes an image reflecting their spiritual world and life values.

2. Hospitality is not merely a tradition but also represents the character of the people, their way of life, and the customs and norms passed down from generation to generation.

3. Proverbs emphasize the importance of the tradition of hospitality in Kazakh culture, illustrating the belief that hosting guests is not just a custom but a vital practice that strengthens social bonds and fosters mutual understanding and respect.

4. Kazakhs believe that with the arrival of a guest, prosperity enters the home. The tradition of hospitality is deeply rooted in Kazakh culture and is transmitted from generation to generation.

5. This tradition helps create a supportive and friendly environment, which is a key aspect of the worldview and culture of the Kazakh people.

The analysis of the collected reactions allowed us to identify several major thematic groups of associations:

1. Dastarkhan: One of the most frequent reactions to the word “Qonaqjailylyq” (hospitality) is “дастархан” (dastarkhan) – a traditional Kazakh table set for receiving guests. Out of 109 responses, 27 are directly related to dastarkhan, with 2 further specifying “rich dastarkhan.” This underscores the central role of food and the table in the concept of hospitality among the Kazakh people. In traditional culture, the dastarkhan is not merely a place for dining but a symbol of abundance, warmth, and openness of the hosts. Hospitality is expressed through generosity and the willingness to share food with guests.

2. Kinship: Hospitality in Kazakh culture is closely linked to the concepts of relatives, friends, and family. Among the reactions to the word “Qonaqjailylyq,” we find the following: “relatives” (10 mentions), “friends” (9 mentions), “family” (12 mentions), and “guests” (13 mentions). These data emphasize the importance of not only receiving close individuals but also fostering strong human relationships. For Kazakhs, hospitality is fundamentally about openness to people, the desire to bring them together around a common table, and an opportunity to strengthen kinship bonds.

3. Food and Dishes: Food plays a crucial role in the Kazakh concept of hospitality. Alongside mentions of dastarkhan, a significant number of reactions are related to traditional dishes: “бешбармак” (beshbarmak) (2 mentions), “чай” (tea) (5 mentions), “еда” (food) (10 mentions), “бауырсаки” (boursaks) (5 mentions), as well as “плов” (pilaf) and other festive dishes. These elements highlight that in Kazakh culture, hospitality is inseparably linked to offer-

ing guests traditional food, which symbolizes the care and generosity of the hosts.

4. Emotion: The next most significant group of associations relates to emotional reactions and feelings that arise among native speakers when mentioning hospitality. Here we can identify reactions such as “love” (8 mentions), “happiness” (8 mentions), “warmth” (8 mentions), “well-being” (5 mentions), and “comfort” (4 mentions). These data show that hospitality in Kazakh culture is perceived not only as a physical act of receiving guests but also as an expression of sincere emotions, maintaining an atmosphere of friendliness and trust. Joy, mutual understanding, and warmth of human relationships are important aspects of the concept of hospitality.

5. Ethnocultural Aspects: Several respondents associated “Qonaqjailylyq” with ethnocultural characteristics. During the experiment, we received 5 reactions linking hospitality to Kazakhs (Kazakhs – 5), and 3 reactions mentioning neighbors and friends (neighbors – 3, friends – 3). This emphasizes that in respondents’ perceptions, hospitality is not only an important trait of personal qualities but also a characteristic of Kazakh ethnocultural identity. It is important to note that the Kazakh tradition of hospitality is regarded as a vital element of the identity and culture of the entire Turkic people.

6. Traditional Rituals and Holidays: We can separately highlight reactions related to traditions and festive elements of Kazakh culture. Words like “songs” (10 mentions), “тойбастар” (toybatar, a celebratory event) (6 mentions), and “той” (celebration) (10 mentions) indicate a close connection between hospitality and festive occasions. Holidays and celebrations play a crucial role in Kazakh society, and hospitality becomes an essential element of these events, underscoring the significance of communal gatherings and collective traditions.

The analysis of the associative field of the concept of “Qonaqjailylyq” reveals that hospitality for the Kazakh people is not merely a tradition but also a profound spiritual value. This concept encompasses various aspects of life, ranging from material (food, dastarkhan) to spiritual (love, warmth, mutual understanding). National identity plays an important role, confirming that hospitality is not only a social ritual but also an expression of the cultural code of the Kazakh people.

It is important to note one more important factor: the reactions of respondents can be divided by age, so the younger generation of “Qonaqjailylyq” was associated more with the arrival of guests and a richly laid feast, and the adult generation was given reactions related more to traditions. This indicates continuity, a deep understanding of the way of life of the people, and the preservation of identity.

If we talk about the participation of other nationalities in the experiment, the results of the analysis show that for the indigenous population “Qonaqjailylyq” is a tradition that they honor, it is the continuity of a generation, a way of life. And for other nationalities who live in Kazakhstan and actively participate in the social life of the republic, “Qonaqjailylyq” is a holiday, a dastarkhan, a feast and a lot of meat (from the respondents’ answers). And foreigners, guests of the city who participated in the experiment noted that “Qonaqjailylyq” is a national trait of the people. This once again emphasizes that “Qonaqjailylyq” is an important symbol of Kazakh identity and national pride.

Thus, “Qonaqjailylyq” in Kazakh culture is a complex and multifaceted concept, reflecting the unity of material and spiritual culture, a close connection with social life and cultural traditions, as well as the expression of national values and identity.

4.4. Value Component of the Concept “Qonaqjailylyq” (Hospitality)

Hospitality among the Kazakh people is one of the key cultural values that has been carefully passed down through generations for centuries. This quality developed in the context of a nomadic lifestyle, where having friends and allies and providing help to travelers played a vital role in survival. Let’s examine the significance of hospitality and its reflection in language in more detail.

The nomadic way of life dictated strict behavioral rules, with hospitality forming the foundation of relationships. For Kazakhs, a guest has always been a symbol of luck and well-being. This is reflected in numerous proverbs, such as “Қонақ келсе құт келер” (“When a guest arrives, prosperity comes”), emphasizing that a guest brings not only joy but also fortune. Similarly, the expression “Гость придет – счастье в дом войдет” (“When a guest comes, happiness enters the home”) highlights the sacred significance of a guest’s arrival.

It is important to note that, traditionally, nomadic people welcomed guests with honor, inviting them into their homes and offering food without excessive questioning. Before inquiring about the purpose of the visit, the host was expected to feed the guest, demonstrating respect and hospitality. This tradition fostered a sense of mutual assistance and strengthened bonds among nomads, as any traveler could find themselves in a difficult situation in the steppe, and the host's help could save a life. The Kazakh proverb “Қонаққа «кел» демек бар, «кет» демек жоқ” (“You can say ‘come’ to a guest, but you cannot say ‘leave’”) reflects an important rule of hospitality. Guests are always welcomed, and hosts strive to make them feel wanted and comfortable. It is forbidden to expel a guest or show disrespect toward them. Another proverb, “Малымды алса алсын, қонағымды алмасын” (“You can take my livestock, but do not take my guests”), symbolizes how significant a guest was to nomads. Even material goods were not valued as much as the presence of a guest in the home. For Kazakhs, losing a guest signified the loss of prosperity and happiness.

Hospitality in Kazakh culture represents a whole system of unspoken rules that Kazakhs consider their duty to follow. These rules are based on centuries of wisdom necessary for survival in the harsh conditions of nomadic life. A person who violates hospitality norms risks facing reproach not only from their kin but from the entire community^[17]. Respecting a stranger, sharing the last piece of bread, and not asking about the reasons for a visit until the guest is fed and warmed are norms that are ingrained from childhood and passed from father to son, making them an integral part of Kazakh identity.

In Kazakh culture, communication with a guest always begins with a warm and friendly tone. Inquiries about family and relatives help establish emotional contact and create an atmosphere of trust and mutual understanding. This custom expresses respect for the guest and a desire to endear them. The proverbs analyzed illustrate the key aspects of Kazakh hospitality: “Сыйларға асың болмаса, сипарға тілің болсын” (“If you have nothing to treat the guest, find kind words for them”) highlights the importance of not only material hospitality but also sincere communication. Even if the host has no food or treats, kind words and a warm attitude can be just as valuable.

“Қонақ келсе, сөйлес – деп, атып тұрып, атын тұт.

Жай сұрасаң жайласып, алдыменен өзін күт” (“When a guest arrives, first tie up their horse, then create conditions for conversation”) emphasizes that care is the first step toward successful and heartfelt communication. “Құтты қонақ келсе, қой егіз табады” (“When a desirable guest arrives, the sheep gives birth to twins”) reflects the idea that the visit of a cherished guest brings luck and well-being. Hospitality is rewarded with favorable events.

“Қонақ келсе есікке, жүгіріп шық, кешікпе” (“If a guest comes, run to the door, do not be late”) underscores the importance of welcoming a guest on time, demonstrating readiness and warmth. This shows respect and reverence for the guest. Analyzing these proverbs, we can conclude that they illustrate not only the external manifestations of hospitality but also the internal values of Kazakh culture based on respect, sincerity, and mutual assistance.

In Kazakh culture, raising children has always included instilling the skills of hospitality. From an early age, children learn appropriate behavior in the presence of guests, respect for elders, and an understanding of hierarchy and social norms. Important traditions involve seating guests according to seniority, social status, and kinship ties, reflecting the structure and respect for social hierarchy that is vital in Kazakh society.

The proverb “Жақсы бала қонаққа үйір, жақсы тай атқа үйір” (“A good son is always near guests, just as a good foal stays near the herd”) emphasizes that a good son shows interest and attention to guests, a trait considered essential in character. Just as a foal seeks to be among horses, a good child actively participates in receiving guests, helping and showing care. This teaches children sociability and responsibility in hospitality.

Another proverb, “Ат болатын тай саяққа үйір, Адам болатын бала қонаққа үйір” (“A good horse seeks the herd, a good person seeks guests”), highlights that a fundamental trait of a worthy individual is the ability to be hospitable, to value communication, and to respect others. The proverb “Құтты қонақ келсе, қой егіз табады; Құтсыз қонақ келсе, қораға қасқыр шабады” (“When a desirable guest arrives, the sheep gives birth to twins; when an undesirable guest arrives, a wolf attacks the pen”) underscores the importance of the correct attitude toward guests. A welcome guest is associated with prosperity and fortune, while an unwelcome guest may bring trouble.

Analyzing these proverbs reveals that, in Kazakh culture, hospitality is not merely a tradition but an essential aspect of upbringing that shapes personality. These values help children understand the importance of respecting others, communicating and interacting within society, as well as demonstrating care and attention.

The associative and conceptual field of the concept of “Qonaqjailylyq” (hospitality) in Kazakh culture can be represented as follows:

1. Arrival of Prosperity: A guest brings luck and well-being (“Қонақ келді – құт келді”).

2. Sacredness: Hospitality is associated with divine protection and sanctity. Welcoming a guest is akin to receiving a blessing from above (“Қырықтың бірі – Қыдыр”; “Қонақ келсе құт келер”; “He who is open-hearted will never be in need” — “Кең болсаң, кем болмайсың”).

3. Generosity of the People: Even the most modest home can accommodate a guest, and the host must demonstrate generosity and warmth (“In an empty house, a guest will not leave without being fed” — “Қуыс үйден құры шықпа”; “For a cherished guest, the best treats” — “Құтты қонаққа тәтті тамақ”; “If the host is hospitable, the guest will be content” — “Қонақ иесі мейірілі болса, қонақ көңілді болады”; “The host and the home are matched, as hospitality reflects the guest’s stature” — “Қожасына қарай үйі, қонағына қарай сыйы”; “Even if you have not fed them, your good intentions will nourish” — “Асыңа тойғызбасаң да ақ ниетіңе тойғыз”; “If the heart is generous, the narrowness of the home will not be felt” — “Көңіл кең болса, үйдің тарлығы білінбес”).

4. Generosity of Spirit: In every home, there is a place for a guest, and the host’s kindness will always manifest (“In a poor house, you will find food; kindness is more important than wealth” — “Қаратаз барсаң Мोजан бар, асулы тұрған қазан бар”; “He who is open to others will not suffer losses” — “Кең болсаң, кем болмайсың”).

5. Social Values: A person should explore the world when possible and maintain relationships when able (“If you have a horse, travel and learn about the world; if you have food, meet people” — “Атың барда жер таны, асың барда ел таны”; “Those who have horses have friends, and those who can provide food have fortune” — “Аты бардың танысы бар, асы бардың ырысы бар”; “A bird lands where it wishes, and a person visits where it pleases them” — “Құс

жеткен жеріне қонады, қонақ қалаған жеріне қонады”).

This concept reflects not only the material aspects of hospitality but also the profound spiritual and social values of the Kazakh people.

5. Discussion

5.1. The Uniqueness of the Kazakh Concept of Hospitality

The results of this study confirm that the concept of qonaqjailylyq (hospitality) holds a central place in Kazakh culture, reflecting key values such as respect for guests, generosity, openness, and the pursuit of social harmony^[18, 19]. This aligns with the findings of Akhmetzhanova^[6], who emphasized the fundamental importance of hospitality in preserving cultural identity and fostering social connections within Kazakh society. Respondents’ associations such as “dastarkhan,” “family,” and “respect” clearly demonstrate a close link to these values, highlighting their relevance in the modern context.

Comparative studies, such as the work of Zakharova^[1], affirm the universality of the concept of hospitality while also revealing its cultural specificities. For instance, Tserenova^[3] notes that hospitality in Kalmyk culture is associated with a nomadic lifestyle but is less emotionally charged. In contrast, as shown by this study, the spiritual aspect of hospitality (associations like “warmth,” “joy,” and “happiness”) is paramount in Kazakh culture. This difference underscores the multilayered nature of Kazakh hospitality, where material and spiritual elements intertwine to sustain cultural norms and traditions.

5.2. Lexicographical Analysis: Similarities and Differences

The lexicographical analysis conducted in this study demonstrates that the concept of qonaqjailylyq reflects both universal and unique aspects of Kazakh culture. For example, definitions of hospitality in Russian dictionaries, such as those by Dal^[7] and Ozhegov^[8], emphasize cordiality and protection of guests^[20]. In the Kazakh language, as shown in the Qazaq adebi tiliniñ sözdigi^[14], hospitality is linked to rituals such as qonaqасы (a meal for guests) and underscores the social and spiritual significance of this phenomenon.

The study reveals that the material aspect of hospitality plays a more significant role in Kazakh culture compared to some other cultures. For instance, Yunusova's^[2] research on Russian and Tatar proverbs emphasizes hospitality through cordiality and assistance. In contrast, Kazakh proverbs, such as Қонаққа барсаң, құрметінді ала бар ("When visiting, take respect with you"), highlight the importance of adhering to social and ritual norms.

5.3. Social Aspect: Connection with National Identity

According to Zhabaeva's^[4] research, the characteristics of hospitality across cultures are shaped by historical experiences. This study corroborates her findings: for the Kazakh people, hospitality is not merely a social obligation but an integral part of national identity. The high frequency of associations related to spiritual aspects ("warmth," "respect") indicates the deep significance of this concept in maintaining communal structure and social relationships.

Moreover, the analysis of the associative experiment showed that hospitality in Kazakh culture is perceived as an obligation tied to collective values. This aligns with proverbs such as Қонақ келсе құт келер ("With the arrival of a guest comes prosperity"), symbolizing spiritual and material enrichment through hosting.

5.4. Comparative Analysis with Other Cultures

The results of the study highlight important cultural differences in the interpretation of hospitality, consistent with the findings of K.K. Duisekova and K.K. Tolybayeva^[5]. In Western cultures, such as English and French, hospitality is often formal and emphasizes the pragmatics of social interactions^[21–25]. In contrast, Kazakh hospitality involves obligatory rituals, such as offering the guest the place of honor (қонаққа төрден орын), and is seen as a spiritual act aimed at strengthening interpersonal bonds.

Zhabaeva's^[4] research suggests that hospitality in English culture is associated with individualism and personal preferences. In this study, however, the collective nature of Kazakh tradition is emphasized, where hosting guests is viewed as a duty to both society and family^[26].

5.5. Evolution of the Concept in the Modern World

As noted by Akhmetzhanova^[6], the concept of hospitality adapts to modern conditions while remaining an integral part of Kazakh culture. This is supported by the findings of this study: despite urbanization and globalization, associations with hospitality still include traditional elements such as "dastarkhan" and "respect for guests."

Modern changes introduce new forms of hospitality, such as dining out or digital interactions, yet the core principles of warmth and care persist. This conclusion resonates with Tserenova's^[3] research, which indicates that even under globalization, elements of traditional hospitality retain their significance, albeit in transformed ways.

5.6. Limitations and Future Prospects

Despite the findings, the study has some limitations. First, it focuses primarily on Kazakh culture, which limits the generalizability of the conclusions^[27–29]. Second, it does not consider gender and age differences in perceptions of hospitality, which could enrich the understanding of this concept^[30].

Future research could explore a deeper comparative analysis with other Turkic cultures, such as Tatar or Uzbek, to identify similarities and unique aspects of hospitality. Additionally, examining the influence of modern technologies on perceptions of hospitality across cultures could provide further insights into the dynamics of this concept.

6. Conclusions

A detailed analysis of the concept of "Qonaqjaillyq" (hospitality) demonstrates its complexity and multifaceted nature as a significant cultural phenomenon in Kazakh and other cultures. In light of the conducted research and review of various approaches to studying this phenomenon, several key conclusions can be drawn regarding both the general aspects of hospitality and its cultural characteristics within the context of Kazakh tradition.

Hospitality as a Cultural Phenomenon: Hospitality, being a universal trait of many cultures, acquires unique features in each, shaped by the history, mentality, and value system of a particular people. In cultures where nomadic and

agricultural traditions play an important role, such as among the Kazakhs, hospitality is an integral part of social life and survival. These studies emphasize that, for Kazakh culture, hospitality is not merely a formality but a fundamental characteristic of national identity, reflecting collective values, respect for elders, and a spirit of assistance and support.

Linguocultural Approach to the Study of Hospitality: A linguocultural analysis allows researchers to explore how different cultures convey their values related to hospitality through language, folklore, and paremias (proverbs and sayings). Studies show that the concept of hospitality is enshrined in language and represented through stable expressions, idioms, and phrases. For example, in Kazakh, expressions like “қонаққа барсаң, құрметіңді ала бар” (when going to visit, take your respect with you) emphasize the importance of mutual respect and cordiality in social relationships.

Cultural Features and Intercultural Connections: Comparative studies (by T.N. Zakharova, S.S. Zhabayeva, K.K. Duysekova, and K.K. Tolybaeva) indicate that despite the commonality of the concept of hospitality, its specific manifestations differ according to cultural traditions and historical experiences of peoples. For instance, among the Kazakhs, hospitality is linked to the tradition of nomadic life, where the help and support of guests played a decisive role in survival. In Western cultures, such as English or French, hospitality tends to be more formalized, pragmatically conditioned by social norms. This research on intercultural connections aids in understanding the similarities and differences in the perception and representation of hospitality at the level of national cultures.

Central Role of the Concept of “Qonaqjailylyq” in Kazakh Culture: In Kazakh culture, hospitality occupies a special place and reflects essential social norms and values. The concept of “Qonaqjailylyq” is not merely a tradition but a significant component of the spiritual and material culture of the Kazakhs. It is important to note that the acceptance of guests in Kazakh tradition is accompanied by not only material aspects (hospitality, accommodation) but also spiritual ones (respect, care for the guest, adherence to moral norms).

Evolution of Hospitality in the Modern World: Contemporary changes in cultural contexts affect traditional forms of hospitality; however, key principles remain unchanged. Hospitality adapts to modern conditions, including urbanization, globalization, and changes in the socio-economic structure

of society. Nevertheless, core values such as generosity, respect for the guest, care, and mutual assistance continue to be preserved. In modern circumstances, traditional norms may undergo slight changes but remain an important aspect of social interaction.

Research on the concept of “Qonaqjailylyq” confirms its crucial role in shaping and maintaining social relationships, both in Kazakh culture and beyond. A linguocultural analysis enables a deeper understanding of how language and traditions reflect the fundamental values of a people, shape behavioral norms, and regulate social interactions. Comparative studies highlight the diversity of forms of hospitality across different cultures, while Kazakh culture, while maintaining its unique characteristics, demonstrates a deep commitment to traditions and respect for guests as a fundamental social rule.

Thus, the concept of “Qonaqjailylyq” can be regarded as a multifaceted and dynamic system reflecting the unity of the spiritual and material values of the Kazakh people, which remains relevant in contemporary conditions.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, A.O. and B.Z.; methodology, A.O.; software, T.T.; validation, D.A., Z.K. and M.Y.; formal analysis, A.O.; investigation, A.O.; resources, B.Z.; data curation, B.Z.; writing—original draft preparation, T.T.; writing—review and editing, D.A.; visualization, Z.K.; supervision, M.Y.; project administration, A.O.; funding acquisition, A.O. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Data Availability Statement

The data used in this study include lexicographical materials, results of the associative experiment, and examples

from literary and journalistic texts. These data can be provided by the corresponding author upon reasonable request. To ensure confidentiality, participant data from the experiment are available only in anonymized form. Data requiring additional protection are not publicly accessible..

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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