







Cognitive Characteristics of Ethnographisms Related to Material Culture (Based on Ethnographic Poems of Ilyas Zhansugurov)

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Abstract

This study is devoted to a qualitative analysis of ethnographic terms presented in Ilyas Zhansugurov's works including *Kazak uiding turmysy*, *Malta*, *Sharkei*, *Urshyk*, *Betashar*, *Sabyn*, *Saptyayak*, and *Besik*. The purpose of the research was to identify the linguo-cultural features of ethnographisms and their role in reflecting the traditional lifestyle of the Kazakh people. A total of 255 ethnographic terms were selected and classified into thematic groups. Through the application of content analysis, linguo-cultural, and semantic analysis methods, the author establishes that ethnographisms serve significant artistic and cultural functions. They contribute to the reconstruction of the ethnic worldview, enhance the national color of the text, and preserve elements of intangible cultural heritage. The findings confirm the significance of Zhansugurov's work as a valuable source of ethnocultural memory and national identity. These findings can be utilized in the compilation of ethnolinguistic dictionaries and the expansion of ethnographic glossaries. Furthermore, they help to clarify the meanings of these expressions and integrating them into the literary language. The results of the study make a certain contribution to the study of the vocabulary of the Kazakh language, historical lexicology, Kazakh ethnography, and contribute to the development of ethnolinguistics as one of the promising areas of general linguistics.

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Introduction

The cultural aspect of using ethnography to study the traditions, history, daily life, aspirations, national identity, and linguistic characteristics of the Kazakh people is critically significant in the context of the national culture revitalization. Every nation has its own unique spiritual and cultural wealth and heritage. It has been supplemented for many centuries, leaving a great mark not only on the development of a particular nation, but also on the language of that nation. The uniqueness of each culture is reflected in the lexical layer of their languages. Culture-specific phenomena unique to a particular ethnic group are often represented by the distinct terms in their native language. Each language has a special set of words that are not found in other languages. This category comprises words that lack direct semantic equivalents in other languages. Therefore, the concept of “non-equivalent vocabulary” represents the linguistic expression of a specific material and spiritual culture. Such words are characterized by national-cultural semantic features. These include ethnographic expressions (Seidimbek, 1997).

At all stages of the development of society, language is closely connected with the life of the people and their culture, as it reflects elements of the material, spiritual, and moral culture of society. Language serves as a repository and carrier for preserving the historical heritage of a nation and its ethnic identity. The study of ethnographic idioms in literary works allows us to recognize and evaluate the linguistic wealth that lies in the deep depths of the vocabulary of our national language. Language is a mirror of culture, which contains not only the real life around a person and the real conditions of his life, but also the public consciousness and mentality of the people, their way of life, traditions, morality, value system, perception and understanding of the world (Ter-Minassova, 2018). Analyzing the ethnocultural concepts within the linguistic representation of the world, using literary texts as a source, contributes to understanding the ethnic characteristics of people's cognitive style. This cognitive style reflects cultural imagery, which is one of the components of their spiritual heritage.

The article examines ethnographic terminology in Zhansugurov's ethnographic poetry by organizing and summarizing these linguistic elements (Nazarova, Sailaugiin, & Omarova, 2020). It presents quantitative data on ethnographic terms within the poems, and for the first time, categorizes them thematically. The collected ethnographic expressions and their identified characteristics serve multiple purposes. They can facilitate the introduction of Kazakh culture, to broader audience and enable comparative analysis of cultural similarities between Kazakhs and other ethnic groups. Additionally, the study analyzes these terms in relation to the distinctive features of national culture. The national-cultural component of ethnographic expressions used in Kazakh life has been identified. The article focuses on the terms that represent objects or phenomena of the material and spiritual life of the people, reflect national, historical and temporal identity, have a clear connotative meaning, and have no linguistic equivalent.

Literature Review

The Relationship Between Ethnicity, Culture and Language in Ethnolinguistics

One nation is distinguished from another by its way of life, religion, traditions, national identity, and character. It is impossible to express an opinion about ethnicity without understanding the nature of this individuality. This is how the science of ethnography emerged, which pays attention to this ethnic specificity (Seidimbek, 1997). Ethnography studies material and spiritual culture. Culture is a set of national knowledge. Knowledge is reflected in language. Therefore, language is a mirror of culture, which contains the public consciousness and mentality of the nation, its way of life, traditions, beliefs, human value system, perception and understanding of the world (Ter-Minassova, 2018). Ethnographers who study the ethnic characteristics of a nation observe the daily life of a person, systematize this data, create a personality of a representative of a certain nation, and identify many factors of a theoretical and practical nature by observing the participants in their experimental work (Floersch, Longhofer, & Suskewicz, 2014).

Although the national identity, ethnolinguistic features, cultural, social, and ethnic history of the Kazakh people have not been fully documented, there is information in scientific sources that has long been said and written about what kind of people the Kazakhs are, and there is also enough information preserved among ordinary people. We can find the cultural and spiritual identity of the Kazakhs in the literary works (Bolat, 2016).

The Study of Ethnographisms

The classification of ethnographisms in any national language as either material or spiritual helps to determine their distinct role and function in society (Ryspayeva, Akhmetova, Borgul, & Iskakova, 2024). Various customs and traditions established in the life of our people shape their spiritual feelings, moral values, and behavior, guiding them along a normative path. At the same time, they broaden their worldview and provide an opportunity to acquire knowledge based on various forms of understanding. From the customs and traditions that have been passed down to us, the profound wisdom and remarkable intellect of the Kazakh

people, as well as their humane attitude toward nature, are clearly evident (Sagatova & Orazbayeva, 2013). The Kazakh language not only ensured the consolidation and integration of national culture but also facilitated its renewal and revival in accordance with the demands of the time. It verbalized the nation's perception, intellectual wisdom, and the world of delicate emotions (Chermukhambetov et al., 2024).

The science of linguo-culturology, which emerged at the intersection of language and culture, studies the national code of the material and spiritual culture of the people, which is reflected and preserved in language (Mankeyeva, 1988). The national-cultural code in ethnocultural vocabulary, which studies the manifestation of material and spiritual culture in language, is recognized by such concepts as “the consciousness of the people”, “the memory of the people”, “national feeling”, “spiritual world”, “folk psychology” (Mankeyeva & Kozhakhmetova, 2025). Kazakh names in the Kazakh language are directly related to the daily life of the people, they give names to objects and concepts based on what they saw with their eyes, made with their hands, and felt with their soul (Kakzhanova, 2018). Language and thinking are a co-existing phenomenon. Thoughts in a person's mind are expressed through language. Concepts in national consciousness are expressed through language (Toktanova, Nussupova, Kyakhmetova, Imatayeva, & Jakypbekova, 2021).

National Identity in the Poetry of I. Zhansugurov

The roots of national identity begin with the unique traditions, culture, and knowledge of the nation, express through its language. The study of I. Zhansugurov's ethnographic poems from the aspect of linguistic and cultural studies opens up new opportunities for studying the national and cultural identity of the Kazakh people in the era of globalization (Nazarova et al., 2020). Nationally marked ethnographisms, encoding the entire history, philosophy, and psychology of the people in I. Zhansugurov's ethnographic poems, reflect the course of cultural development of the Kazakh people, changes in their social and spiritual life (Kassimova, 2023). By studying ethnographisms in the text of ethnographic poems, new uses in the language are identified, and new terms and names are formed on their basis. For instance, the work “*Kazak uiding turmysy*” presents the entire inner and outer essence of the Kazakh yurt in a poetic tone. A yurt is a sacred concept in Kazakh culture. Every place inside it was considered sacred according to the mythological worldview of the people, and every item used in the yurt had significance (Ramazanova, 2024). The main dwelling of the peoples of Central Asia, the nomadic dwelling of the yurt, differed in its types depending on the conditions of the people's place of residence (Karataev & Kadyrov, 2024). Each piece of equipment in a yurt has its own role. The yurt's wooden poles are important for tying the yurt together and adding beauty to the house. They are divided into three types according to their use (Burkhanov & Sharipova, 2024).

I. Zhansugurov's Ethnographic Vocabulary

The ethnographic vocabulary of the Kazakh language represents one of the richest lexical layers, the roots of which go back to ancient times. Nationally marked ethnographic terms, encoding the entire history, philosophy, and psychology of the ethnic group, reflect the cultural development of the Kazakh people, changes in their social and spiritual life (Mukhtarova, Karagulova, Yergazina, Imangazina, & Kyakhmetova, 2025). During the development of the language, a number of ethnographic terms became archaic, while some of them became historicisms associated with realities that existed in the historical past. This process also predetermines the emergence of neologism ethnographisms (Zinulla & Zhanguhim, 2022). This allows us to consider ethnographic expressions from the perspective of their active and passive basis in our language. A deep and comprehensive cognitive study of ethnographic terms in literary texts is of great importance in studying the issues of ethnogenesis, the history of our nation, the theory of knowledge, and nomenclature. The analysis of the ethnographic terms in the literary text facilitates the identification of their new usage in the language, and contributes to the development of new terms and designations (Mukhsynova & Kassimova, 2023). In this way, the vocabulary of our language will be enriched not by borrowed words from foreign languages, but by reviving ethnonyms, which are the linguistic treasure of our people.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study used a qualitative research design with a focused sample of Zhansugurov's works “*Kazakh Uiding Turmysy*”, “*Malta*”, “*Sharkei*”, “*Urshyk*”, “*Betashar*”, “*Sabyr*”, “*Saptyayak*”, “*Besik*”. The qualitative study aimed at finding answers and explanations for the features of the ethnographic terms used in the poems and their cultural connotations. This allowed us to gain deep knowledge about the cultural context of the ethnographic terms used in the poems.

Data Collection

In the course of the study, ethnographisms presented in the works of Ilyas Zhansugurov were collected and analyzed. A major attention was paid to identifying and classifying ethnographic terms that reflect the cultural, daily and traditional characteristics of the Kazakh people. The following works and the corresponding number of ethnographisms were selected for analysis: “*Kazakh Uiding Turmysy*” – 176

ethnographic terms; “*Malta*” – 13 ethnographic terms; “*Sharkei*” – 9 ethnographic terms; “*Urshyk*” – 10 ethnographic terms; “*Betashar*” – 13 ethnographic terms; “*Sabyn*” – 11 ethnographic terms; “*Saptyayak*” – 15 ethnographic terms; “*Besik*” – 8 ethnographic terms. The collected corpus of ethnographisms allows us to classify them by thematic groups (everyday life, rituals, folk crafts, traditional clothing, household items, etc.), identify the features of their functioning in texts and trace how the author conveys the ethnocultural heritage of the Kazakh people through language.

Data Analysis

First and foremost, linguo-cultural and cognitive analysis methods were applied to examine the cognitive nature of lexical units in Zhansugurov’s ethnographic poetry, which reflected various aspects of national identity, including lifestyle, profession, economy, historical and cultural life, heritage, worldview, and cognitive world. Next, several methodological approaches were used such as accumulation method was employed to systematize ethnographic terminology, while the differentiation method helped to identify the main features of ethnographic vocabulary nomination. The grouping method facilitated the classification of terms into a system of cultural and object-related names. These research methods have shown that national-cultural features are inherent in all levels of the language, but are most clearly manifested at its lexical level. An artistic analysis of ethnographic elements in the poetry of Zhansugurov allows us to show the dynamics of the development of the genre within the framework of artistic ethnography and national ethno-mentality.

The study also analyzed ethnocultural terms used by the I. Zhansugurov to describe the daily life, identity, traditions, beliefs, worldview, and value systems of the people in his poetry. Additionally, it examines the poet’s linguistic skills and ethno-artistic approach, highlighting how these terms skillfully integrated into the poem’s rhythm and thematic structure. To provide linguistic definitions for the terms, the website <https://sozdikgor.kz/>, which contains the entire vocabulary of the Kazakh language, explanatory, phraseological, and literary Kazakh dictionaries, and the Kazakh encyclopedia of ethnographic categories, concepts, and names were used.

Results and Discussion

Ethnographic Vocabulary and its Role in Reflecting Cultural Identity

Ethnographisms are words and phrases reflecting folk traditions, customs, and beliefs shaped by the complex historical development of ethnography. These elements, deeply rooted in the spiritual, social, and socio-economic aspects of society, embody the nation’s unique cultural identity and collective ethos. Ethnographic vocabulary and ethnography are often used interchangeably, with the latter offering an empirical understanding of social phenomena, uncovering contradictions, and expanding the theoretical framework (Floersch et al., 2014). In literature, ethnographic elements make it vivid and unique, allowing readers to understand the customs and mentality of the people. The language, which is closely related to the life and culture of its native speakers, reflects the material, spiritual and moral aspects of society. It serves as a storehouse of history and a means of cultural transmission.

Ethnographic terms that have no direct equivalents in other languages serve as significant indicators of cultural values. These terms trace the historical development of the people, reflecting their material culture, way of life and economic activity, as shown in the work of Kazakh scientist Zh. Mankeyeva (1988). The study of ethnographic vocabulary sheds light on the cognitive nature of language and how it classifies concepts related to everyday life, traditions and customs. Unlike professional vocabulary, ethnographic terms are familiar to a wide range of the population, emphasizing the cultural and ideological characteristics of society. This research contributes to the understanding of the linguistic and socio-cultural dimensions of national languages, promoting an interdisciplinary approach in the humanities.

Cognitive Characteristics of Ethnographic Terminology Related to Material Culture

The study of I. Zhansugurov’s non-equivalent vocabulary, which has a national and cultural significance, as an aspect of his linguistic identity, is essential for a more comprehensive analysis of his creative process. This research allows us to identify additional causal connections between the poet’s language and worldview. The poet has a collection of ethnographic poems such as “*Kazakh uiding turmysy*”, “*Yesski kun*”, “*Betashar*”, “*Sabyn*”, “*Saptyayak*”, “*Koshi-kon*”, “*Bobek boleu*”, “*Urshyk*” and others. His poem “*Kazakh uiding turmysy*” was not included in his early collections, such as “*Saganak*” (1928), “*Zhana zhyr*” (1930), “*The Complete Collection of Poems*” Volumes 1 and 2 (1933). It was not published in his later collections either (“*Six-volume Collection of Works*” (1964), “*Five-volume Collection of Works*” (1986). The poem was first published in 2004 in Volume 1 of the “*Multi-volume Collection of Works*”, where it was noted that the poem was written in 1915-1916.

The following sub-sections analyze a few ethnographic expressions of cultural importance from Zhansugurov’s poetry. These expressions are significant because they do not have any linguistic equivalent, and represent objects of material and spiritual life of people, and reflect historical identities, connotative meanings.

Ethnocultural Terminology Related to the Kazakh Yurt

Table 1: Thematic Groups.

No.	Thematic groups	Terms
1.	Yurt furnishing	23 terms: alty kanat ak ui (six-section white yurt), bosaga (doorstep), mandaisha (lintel), tabaldyryk (threshold), kerege (wall lattice), uyk (roof poles), shanyrak (dome of yurt), kuldireuish (decorative lattice above the shanyrak), kur (ornamental band), tangysh (fastening strap), baskur (decorative woven band), arkan (rope), bau (tie), tort irge (four base section), yessik (door), shi (reed mat), tuyrlyk (felt wall covering), beldeu (belt securing the yurt), zhelbau (wind rope), tundik (roof covering), bakan (supporting pole), syryk (wooden rod), dodege (roof reinforcement).
2.	Household items used inside the a yurt	8 terms: tus kiiz (decorative wall hanging), korpe (quilt), shai shymyldyk (tea curtain), tekemet (felt rug), zhastyk (pillow), kilem (carpet), syrmak (patterned felt rug), alasha (woven rug).
3.	Household furniture	11 terms: ustel (table), sandyk (chest), kebezhe (storage chest for food), adalbakan (wooden hanger for clothes), kazan (cauldron), oshak (hearth), oryndyk (chair), zhukayak, shkaf (cupboard), zhashik (box), shamdal (candlestick).
4.	Names of dishware and utensils	23 terms: samauryñ, kesse (tea bowl), shainek (teapot), shaugim (teapot), patnos (tray), shelek (bucket), mosy, shilapshyn, ayak, kassyk, tarelke, ozhau, shomish, saba, torsyk, tuz baspagy, dastarkhan, tutkush, kyrgy, konek, kepser, kakpak, saptayak.
5.	Names of household items	6 terms: tarak, ina, sabyn, sakar, sypyrtyky, sulgi oramal.
6.	Names of tools	28 terms: ustara, kairak, pyshak, urshyk, biz, balga, kosseu, kap, ine, zhip, keli, kelsap, asha, kurek, uski, kilt, shappashot, balta, mashina, kergish, kaishy, ilgek, kulyp, ilgek, shalgy, orak, burgy, kashau
7.	Horse tack and equipment	10 terms: er-tokym, zhugen, tartpa, aйл, kamshi, kuiyskan, uzenggi, ishpek, omildirik, ayakkap.
8.	Name of national food	18 terms: airan, uitky, ashytky, kozhe, saumal, un, tary, bidai, suly, sur men shuzhyk, irimshik, kospa, mai, kymyz, kurt, kant, kagaz shai.
9.	Products derived from animal wool and hair	3 terms: zhun-zhubyr, kybyr, teri-tersek.
10.	Terms related to livestock care	6 terms: at kalta nokta, buida, zheli arkan, kogen, tokpak, zhylyky kuryk
11.	Personal belongings	8 term: sagat, kalam, kagaz, dorba, sauyt, nasybai shelek, shaksha, assyk
12.	Musical instruments	2 terms: dombyra, garmon (accordion).
13.	National clothing items	18 terms: shapan, beshpent, koilek, shali, borik, sym, shalbar, zheide, dambal, kebis, baipak, takiya, ishik, tulyp, belbeu, beldik, kimeshek, shuberek.
14.	Jewelry	7 terms: Asyl tas, akyk, meruyert, marzhan, uki, zhuzik, sakina
15.	Handicrafts items	2 terms: bastyrma, shok.
16.	Religious items	3 terms: zhainamaz, kuran kitap, taspi.

“Kazak uiding turmysy” is a purely ethnographic work consisting of 42 lines. The poem’s uniqueness lies in its ability to include 176 terms related to Kazakh daily life, despite its relatively brief length. The poet not only listed the terms, but also grouped them according to their functional use in daily life. He integrated them semantically into each line, providing coherence with structural principles of poetry while skillfully maintaining rhyme and rhythm. Academician A. A prior study argues that the material elements Kazakh tribes and clan names can be systematically classified into thematic-semantic groups. He emphasizes that most of these elements are objects historically considered sacred in ancient belief systems. These objects, necessary for daily life, were revered, and had ritual significance in traditional Kazakh culture (Bolat, 2016). The poet concludes the final two lines as follow:

Baska turli zhabdygyn sanai almaï,

Syrtyky uzigin kormekke kettim shygyp.

The poet indicates that there are still terms left in the poem by saying that he “baska turli zhabdygyn sanai almaï (unable to count the rest of his many furnishing)”.

Ak uige alty kanat kelsem kirip,

Bosaga, mandaisha men tabaldyryk,

Kerege alty zhapsar, alpys uyk,

Shanyrak, kuldireuish ogan zhuyk.

Kur, tanggysh, arkan yeki ayak bau,

Tort irge, yessik zhabyk, shi, tuyrlyk,

The first lines of the poem, which begin with these words, are intended to describe the Kazakh yurt. Considering that a traditional Kazakh yurt is classified based on the number of walls (*kerege*), consisting of four, six, eight, twelve, or fourteen sections, a six-section yurt (*alty kanatty ui*) was regarded as a symbol of prosperity and referred to as a “white yurt” (*ak ui*), the home of a wealthy person. The earliest forms of traditional yurts appeared in the 3rd millennium BC, as evidenced by rock carvings in Bayar (Siberia), Crimea, and the Gobi-Altai region. It is impossible to imagine the life of Kazakh people, who have a unique way of life, without their traditional dwelling – the yurt.

In historical literature, two types of nomadic dwellings of nomads have been identified. These are Kalmyk and Kyrgyz (Kazakh) yurts, which differ in the structure of the “*shanyrak*” – the dome framework of the yurt. While the Kalmyk-style yurt predominates among the Mongols, the Kazakh-style of yurt is more common among the Kereys living in Kazakhstan (Karassayev, Naimanbayev, Abenova, Karibayev, & Mukataeva, 2024). In the poem, 176 lexical units with special national and cultural meaning are categorized into thematic groups. Table 1 summarizes these expressions in thematic groups.

The Kazakh yurt is a symbol of the nomadic way of life; its various sections and objects have deep philosophical and symbolic meanings. The term “*tort irge*” refers to the four main sections of the yurt: the right side, the left side, the tor (place of honor) and the bosaga (side of the door). Each zone is associated with gender roles and cultural practices. For example, household items related to women are placed on the left side, known as *kazan-ayak zhak* (cooking area), while items related to men are placed on the right side. The symbolic blessings associated with these items emphasize prosperity, good luck, and abundance.

The term “*kuldireush*”, found in the phrase “*Shanyrak, kuldireush ogan zhuyk*”, emphasizes its close connection with *shanyrak*, which symbolizes home, hearth and generations. The poem also mentions the various types of *bau* (decorative and functional cords) used in the yurt, such as the “*ishki-syrtyk beldeu* (inner and outer belts) and *zhelbau* (wind ropes), which are necessary for the construction of the yurt. Table 2 lists these key terms with their symbolic meaning.

Table 2: Key Terms and Their Symbolic Meaning in the Yurt.

No.	Term	Symbolic Meaning
1	<i>Tort irge</i>	Four main sections of the yurt
2	<i>Kazan-ayak zhak</i>	Cooking area, associated with women’s roles
3	<i>Kuldireush</i>	Part of <i>shanyrak</i> , symbolizing home, hearth and generations
4	<i>Beldeu</i>	Inner and outer belts used for securing the yurt cover
5	<i>Zhelbau</i>	Wind ropes tying <i>shanyrak</i>

The poem also uses terms such as “*kyrgy konek*” and “*sauyt*”, which refer to certain objects such as containers and tools. *Kyrgy* (a scraper tool) and *konek* (a milking container) are examples of household tools that are important in everyday life. The term *pyshak* (knife) appears several times, which emphasizes its importance in daily life. Table 3 presents these objects mentioned in the poem along with the functions they represent.

Table 3: Objects Mentioned in the Poem and Their Functions.

No.	Term	Function
1	<i>Kyrgy</i>	Metal tool for scraping (knife/scissors)
2	<i>Konek</i>	Animal-skin container for milking
3	<i>Sauyt</i>	Protective armor or deep container (inkwell)
4	<i>Pyshak</i>	Knife, repeatedly referenced in daily activities

Using these terms, the poem conveys the essence of daily Kazakh life, encompassing household items, economic activities and cultural practices. The poet’s ability to succinctly describe such a vast cultural landscape reflects the deep connection between material culture and spiritual beliefs in the Kazakh nomadic tradition. Table 4 illustrates these cultural elements.

Table 4: Cultural Elements Reflected in the Poem.

No.	Element	Cultural significance
1	Yurt	Symbol of nomadic culture, material and spiritual worldview
2	Horse tack (er turman)	Central to pastoral life and Kazakh identity
3	Traditional clothing	Crafted according to the natural climate and seasons
4	Kazakh feast	Reflects hospitality and culinary traditions

Name of National Food

Qualitative and quantitative analysis was conducted to study the ethnocultural vocabulary in Ilyas Zhansugurov’s poem “*Malta*”, with an emphasis on linguistic and cultural features associated with traditional Kazakh food. Using the direct selection method, the study identified ethnocultural lexical units, in particular,

those that name traditional food, with reference to ethnographic and linguocultural dictionaries.

The artistic depiction of ethnographic elements in literature is often referred to as “folk artistic perception” and “artistic ethnography”. The former reflects the mentality and cultural identity of the people, while the latter focuses on providing material and spiritual culture through folklore and mythology. Zhansugurov’s work deeply reflects Kazakh customs and identity, although some elements, such as in “*Malta*”, remain understudied. The poem, published in 1929, translated by Gaziza Issakhan, is a dialogue between a child and Malta (a traditional food) explaining its preparation. “*Malta – noun, ethnographic term, food. In winter, it refers to small pieces of hardened kurt that remain after being soaked in water, a national food*” (Mankeyeva, 1988).

There are several expressions in the Kazakh language associated with the term “*Malta*”. For instance, the phrase “*alty malta*” is found in Makhambet Utemisuly’s poem “*Yeruli atka yer salami: Tebingi terge shirimei, / Terligi maidai yerimei, / Alty malta as bolmai, / Ar tuiiri at bolmai...*”. The *Kazakh Linguocultural Dictionary: Ethno-Semantic Analysis* (N. Uali’s) defines the term “*alty malta*” as follows: “1. Kurt, malta, serving as daily’s ration for a person on a military campaign or expedition. 2. In early times, a person engaged in a military campaign carried zholkazan (travel cauldron) and malta made of sheep’s milk. When hungry, they would set up tasoshak (temporary stove), boil water in zholkazan (also called a zhankazan), put six pieces of malta in it, and drink mixture hot. Alty malta is a standard portion that indicates a day’s food supply for a traveler” This definition highlights the historical and cultural significance of malta as a staple food in Kazakh nomadic life (Mankeyeva, 1988).

There is also a phrase in Kazakh language called “*Maltatas*”, which is defined in the dictionary as: “*Maltatas – noun, a small, smooth, rounded stone shaped by a water flood*”. Then the term of the national food product “*malta*” in Kazakh language is basically associated with the name of a small stone that has been crushed at the bottom of the water. Considering that crushing a *malta* (hardened *kurt*) is a long process, based on this, a stable expression “*maltasyn yezip*” has been formed in Kazakh language. This phrase frequently appeared in literary works. For example, in A. Baitursynov’s poem “*Dossyma khat (Letter to a Friend)*”, the expression appears as follows: “*Sassyk mi, salkyn zhurek sanasyzdar, / Anangsyz ak maltasyn yezip zhatyr*” (Mankeyeva, 1988).

Ilyas Zhansugurov’s poem “*Malta*” offers a vivid ethnographic depiction of the traditional Kazakh food culture through a poetic dialogue between a child and Malta, a type of dairy product. The poem systematically describes the stages of cooking Malta: milk is collected from brown ewe → it is poured into a cauldron and boils → fermenting agent is added to curdle the milk → mixture is whipped in the *saba* (leather vessel) → it is strained and shaken → it is boiled again in a cauldron → it is removed from heat and cooled → the mixture is placed on a drying rack to hydrate → the dried product is soaked in hot water in winter → it is kneaded with both hands until softened → the prepared *malta* is givens to the child. In addition to its culinary content, the poem includes a rich set of ethnographic terminology, thereby acting as a means of cultural transmission.

The lexical units presented in the poem are divided into several ethnosemantic categories: utensils (*tostagan, saba, pispek, sura, ure*), food (*kurt, kaimak, uytky, airan, tari kozhe*) and verbs related to processes (*kylshyktau* (to strain), *boktiru* (to soak)). These lexical units are culturally loaded and linguistically significant, reflecting the material and spiritual practices of the Kazakh people (Mankeyeva, 1988). The study used both qualitative and quantitative methods to study the linguistic and cultural characteristics of these ethnographic lexemes. The data was collected through direct selection and interpreted using ethnographic, linguocultural and explanatory dictionaries (Mankeyeva, 1988). The results illustrate how language functions as a repository of national consciousness, identity and worldview, which corresponds to the broader goals of ethnolinguistics.

As noted by Koptleuova, Karagulova, Zhumakhanova, Kondybay, and Salikhova (2023), language plays a key role in the formation and transmission of cultural values. In the context of modern discussions about national revival and identity, such works emphasize the need to include ethno-cultural elements in educational and literary discourse. Zhansugurov’s “*Malta*” is an example of how folklore and daily life practices are embodied in a poetic form, emphasizing the pedagogical and cultural value of the ethnographic lexicon in literature. In support of this, Salikzhanova, Turgut, and Mursalim (2023), defines ethnolinguistics as a discipline dedicated to the revival and study of cognitive and cultural meanings preserved in language over generations. Ethnographisms – culturally specific lexical units with limited interlanguage equivalence – serve as essential markers of national heritage and should be carefully documented and analyzed to ensure cultural continuity. Thus, this analysis of *Malta* contributes to the understanding of the Kazakh ethnolinguistic heritage, emphasizing the interaction between language, culture and identity within the framework of artistic ethnography.

Traditional Handcrafts

Ethnographic elements found in the works of Ilyas Zhansugirov give an idea of the entire cultural and daily life of the Kazakh people, reflecting their natural originality and distinctive national characteristics. In particular, I. Zhansugurov’s story “*Sharkei*” gives a vivid idea of the craftsmanship of Kazakh women in traditional handcrafts. Table 5 illustrates these ethnographisms with their transliterations and meaning.

Table 5: *Ethnographisms in I.Zhansugirov's story "Sharkei".*

Original in the Kazakh language	Transliteration	Meaning
Қарпу	Karpu	Stretching and rolling felt
Жүн шүйкелеу	Zhun shuikелеu	Preparation of smoked wool for spinning, stretching and rolling
Сыру	Syru	The type of seam that is often sewn between
Ұлтару	Ultaru	Install a new sole
Қозы көгендеу	Kozy kogendeu	Tie and fix the lamb with a temporary hobble
Шәутиген	Shautigen	Small
Шәркей	Sharkei	Light shoes without heels made of the unrolled skin of cattle
Тулақ	Tulak	Animal skin without fur used instead of lining
Шабақтау	Shabaktau	Gently stroke the wool with a straw to spread it evenly on the Shi, loosen, lay out. Install a new sole

In the short story, the writer describes how shoes, specifically *sharkei*, are made through a conversation between a mother and her son. If we delve into the labor process of making shoes, we see how many stages it goes through: shearing the lamb's wool, collecting the wool, beating it, stretching it into a reed mat, wetting and rolling it, fulling, kneading, streaming, cutting, carding the wool, spinning the thread, stitching, inserting the sole.

Ethnographic artistic elements may differ in their expressiveness in relation to the filling of a literary work with the phenomena depicted in it. The presence of this difference depends on the writer's opinion about the importance of these phenomena and their integration in the work. The presentation of ethnographic elements and phenomena in each literary work is not their conventional depiction, but the degree of visibility of ethnographic elements is an ambiguous indicator that significantly affects the reader's perception of the work. In conclusion, it is of great significance to study the materials that convey the national identity and cultural characteristics of the nation in the works of Ilyas Zhansugurov (Altayev & Imanbayeva, 2021).

The ethnographic poem "Urshyk" is called as "Zhengem zhyry (My Sister-in-law's Song)". The poem, consisting of four stanzas, describes *urshyk* used in the process of spinning thread. According to the *Encyclopedia of Kazakh Ethnographic Categories, Concepts and Terms*, *urshyk* is defined as follows: "Urshyk is a tool for spinning thread by hand from combed wool, down and cotton. The main part of *urshyk*, made of a straight wooden rod, is called the *urshyksap*. It is made from finger-thick, twigs of trees such as *yrgai* (buckthorn) and willow".

The term "Urshyk" appears 8 times in Zhansugurov poetry. "Urshyk, biz, balga, kosseu, kap, ine, zhip" (in the poem "Kazakh uiding turmysy"), "Urshyktarı mailanyp" (in the poem "Baspakhanada kyr kazagy"), "Tas urshykyng tesigi" (in the poem "Tas sheshei"), "Alsangshy, apa, urshykty, iirdy apang urshykty" (in the poem "Kun shykkanda"), and "Urshyktar oinap, bilep bi" (in the poem "Zavodta"), where it appears twice. In the poem "Urshyk", the description of *urshyk* (spindle), focuses on its role in the spinning thread process:

Syrtyldama on sausak,
Maidalap, **mapa** tutilshi.
Shyrtlydama shynashak,
Shyr ainalshy, **shuike** ilshi.
Oimyshty ushkat, yrgai sap,
Urshygym, seni kolga alam.
Urshygym ushkyr, **nar tailak,**
Zhez buidaly – zhelmayam.
Kyla ma zhalkau zharlylyk,
Kylmasa **dilger** zhun azy.
Yekilen, zyrla yendi, urshyk,
Ireiin biyazy (Zhansugurov, 2019).

In this context, "mapa tutilshi" means the process of teasing wool into fine fluff, while "shuike ilshi" denotes the process of hanging the finely spun wool to a spindle. "Oimyshty ushkat, yrgai sap" includes the names of the trees, *ushkat* and *yrgai*, from which *urshyk* is made, and "oymyshty" describes the carved ornaments on these wooden spindles. The phrase "nar taylak, zhez buidaly – zhelmaya" metaphorically compares the fast rotation of *urshyk* (spindle) with the fast pace of the *zhelmaya*, a legendary one-humped camel with a bridle wrapped in copper. This comparison is based on the well-known legend of Assan Kaygy, who rode his *zhelmaya* in search of the ideal land (*Zheruiyk*). Referring to this image, the poet emphasizes the extraordinary speed and dynamic movement of the spindle. "Yekilen" also means a doubling of the action, and brings to mind the moment when the spinning wheel is spinning like a butterfly with the palm of the hand, bulging the side of the spinning wheel with thread. In Kazakh language, the idiomatic expression "urshyktai iirdi" expresses the agility and swiftness in human movement. Additionally, the term "dilger", meaning necessity or urgency, in this context reflects the concern that the spinning process should not be interrupted due to a shortage of fibers – expressing the desire for the continuous production of thread.

A tradition Expressed in Poetry

The poem “*Betashar*” is written in a manner different from its version preserved in oral literature. This poem compares the depiction of life before and after the October Revolution, describing the lack of freedom of the Kazakh women in the pre-revolutionary period, her being sold for cattle, and her difficult life. Each depiction of these conditions is accompanied by the repeated phrase “*Ol kunge yendi bir salem (farewell to those days)*”, symbolizing a move away from past oppression. After describing the past hardships, the poem moves on to the newlywed’s newfound happiness and ends with the phrase “*Bul kuninge bir salem (hello to this day)*”, symbolizing the celebration of her new life. The poem concludes with an encouragement “pursue education”. The text contains numerous archaic words. For instance, the word “*kurgei*” in “*Kurgesiz kunge mangdai ber*” means a barrier or a fence, however, in this context it is used metaphorically “*turn your face to your new life without obstacles*”. In the phrase “*Ker ketkende adet shomeidi*”, the verb “*shomei*” denoted a hunched or bent posture, but in this context means the rejection of the old habit or custom. Similarly, in “*Kyrkylzhyng kyrttar kyzhap kyp*” the term “*kyrkylzhyng*” refers to the incessant chatter of an elderly person, while “*kyrt*” also means talkative or garrulous person.

Together these words describe the tiresome, repetitive complaints of elderly people. In the phrase “*Azhe de aldi auzhaldy*”, the *auzhal* is used in the sense of nourishment, food, and in the context of the poem, everyone received their share of *kalyng mal* (bride price) payment. While “*kunys*” in “*Kutyng kashty kynysyp*” means hunchback, here it is also used in the sense of a hunchback to describe a person whose fortune has been lost. In this poem, there are not only archaic words but also numerous ethnographic terms related to kinship relations (*kuda*, *abysyn*, *tokal*, *baibishe*), objects of daily use (*torsyk*), rituals (*ak bata*, *kade*), and customs and traditions (*aza*). These linguistic elements give the poem cultural and historical depth, reflecting the traditional worldview and social structure of the Kazakh people.

The Traditional Method of Soap Making

In Ilyas Zhansugurov’s poem “*Sabyn (Soap)*”, the poet presents the narrative from perspective of his *zhenge* (sister-in-law), as indicated by the designation “*Zhengem Zhyry (My Sister-in-law’s Song)*”. The poem describes the preparation of soap, its use in life, and there are many archaic words. The line “*Sakaryng edi sekseuil*” introduces the term “*Sakar*”, referring to the ashes of *sekseuil* (saxaul) or *alabota* (saltwort), which were traditionally used to make soap. These ashes were boiled and mixed with animal fat, undergoing a careful process of refinement to produce *kara sabyn* (black soap). The poem contains the names of clothes such as “*koilek*” (dress), *kimeshek* (a traditional women’s headwear)”. In the line “*Zhabagy boldy zhibek shash, Zhabylyp zhaman zhabyskak*”, the word *zhabagy* is used in the Kazakh language in several meanings. *Zhabagy* means the name of a young horse’s foal, sometimes it means felted wool, and sometimes it is also used as a warm textile product. In the poem, the character of hair that has not been washed with soap, which has become completely clumped, felted, and greasy, is expressed by the metaphorical comparison of “*zhabagy*”, which means clumped wool. In the following lines, there are national vessel names such as *saba*, *astau*, *saptyayak*, and *kubi*.

Sabam sauys, kassyk kak,
Satala samsyp bozde tur.
Oramaly *on batpan,*
Balanyng bassy koz kotyr.
Arulansyn astauym,
Muntazdansyn saptyayak.
Ongezden kubim *arylsyn,*
Ony bireu aitpai-ak

The artistic-objective world of each culture has a special status in it, where the values such as labor, strength, craftsmanship, and time objectively acquire a material form, and traditions are accumulated. The artistic traditions of crafting wooden products among the Kazakh people originate from the most ancient layer of Kazakh culture, which is distinguished by its multifaceted nature (Kassimova, 2023). Utilitarian art, which has developed in a syncretic, bifunctional way in the depths of ethnic history, represents an organic union of material and spiritual. The forms and semantic-functional characteristics of the traditional Kazakh wooden utensils, especially their ritual forms, are directly related to the traditions of making wooden utensils of the pastoral culture. The appearance of wooden utensils retains clear archaic elements.

Traditional Kazakh Dishware and Utensils

It is natural to examine the artistic-objective world formed within the depths of a nation’s history from the perspective of the environment. Its artistic form is multifaceted and cannot be considered in isolation from ethnography, semantics, customs, and worldview. Wooden utensils and dishware have played an important place in the daily life of all ancient peoples, including the Kazakh people.

Another ethnographic work that vividly describes this Kazakh national wooden vessel is the poem “*Saptyayak*”. *Saptyayak* is a deep wooden vessel, the archaic name for what is now commonly known as “*kureshke*” in Kazakh language, but modern “*kureshke*” are made of glass, porcelain or ceramics according to

new technology, which gives them a delicate appearance. *Kureshke* are made of denser and heavier materials – ceramics, tempered glass, metal. As a result, they retain the temperature and aroma of beverages for a longer period. *Saptyayak* is mentioned in the poet's poems "*Sabyn*" and "*Kyrman*", which have been analyzed above. The poem "*Saptyayak*" consists of only four stanzas, and the poem uses a lot of archaic words related to ethnography. For example:

Karynsau, kara tegeshtei,
Kara kongyr saptyayak.
Dongelek qaryn, kemeshteu,
Akzhem yerneu, ak kabak.

The poem "*Saptyayak*" has a number of lexical and cultural expressions, as listed in Table 6.

Table 6: Lexical and Cultural Description of in the Poem.

Aspect	Description	Source / Note
Term in Poem	<i>Kara tegeshtei karynsau</i>	–
Term: <i>Karynsau</i>	Large, bulging, rounded wooden vessel	Lexical definition
Verb: <i>Kemeshteu</i>	Derived from " <i>kemesh</i> "	–
Meaning of Kemeshteu (1)	Inclined or leaning to one side	(Toktanova et al., 2021)
Meaning of Kemeshteu (2)	A vessel with a wide internal space	(Kaiyrzhan, 2013)
Definition of Kemeshteu	Hollow, concave (made of wood)	Dictionary definition
Visual Image	Hollow inside of <i>saptyayak</i> creates the effect of a "round belly"	Interpretation
Term: <i>Yerneu (edge)</i>	The edge of wooden vessel " <i>Akzhem</i> ", subject to natural wear	Material/craft note
Term: <i>Shygyrshyk</i>	Hollow-centered, circular component; used in jewelry	Encyclopedic dictionary
Poetic Image	Handle compared to <i>shygyrshyk</i> – emphasizes rounded shape and function	Symbolism
Decoration	Handle covered with silver and gemstones; produces ringing sound	Cultural practice
Traditional Use	Used to serve <i>kymyz</i> (fermented mare's milk)	Cultural context
Poetic Comparison	Pouring of <i>kymyz</i> compared to murmur of mountain stream	Poetic imagery
Phrase: <i>Bauyrdai balbyrap</i>	Describes <i>katyk</i> (fermented milk); epithet implies softness/smoothness	Linguistic note
Other Use	Also used to serve <i>koimalzhyng kurt</i> (thickened dairy product)	Culinary detail
Preparation of kurt	Made from strained <i>airan</i> , salted, dried on <i>shi</i> mat	Ethnographic detail

The poem "*Saptyayak*" has the following ending:

Kabakka bitken kaiyngnyng
Berishi yedi, bezi yedi.
Otindei-ak ayudyng
Akemnen kalgan koz yedi.

In the line "*Kaiyngnyng berishi yedi, bezi yedi*" the poet emphasizes that *saptyayak* is made of hard wood like birch, namely from the nodes where the branches converge and harden over the time. This choice of material ensures the strengths and durability of the vessel. The idioms "*ayudyng otindei*" can be explained with Ilyas's poem cited as an example. The phrase designates an object of sacred heritage, emphasizing its cultural and symbolic significance. In Kazakh customs, it is customary to preserve certain elements such as bear bile, fur, wolf skins and the claws of birds of prey, as talismans and relics.

The Kazakh Artifacts – Besik (Cradle)

One of the Kazakh artifacts that forms the core of the Kazakh national education and goes beyond its specific cultural purpose, acquiring a symbolic meaning, is *besik* (cradle) (Mankeyeva, 1988). This term *besik* is defined as "one of the cultural heritages of the Kazakh people, a unique work of national craftsmanship, an instrument of upbringing and a wooden cradle made specifically for babies. It serves as a sacred shelter that protects the baby from the wind, damp earth, the cold and scorching heat". It is also defined as "one of the cultural heritages of the Kazakh people, a unique work of national craftsmanship – a wooden bed designed for swaddling babies, with a specially installed lining pot and a spout to prevent contamination". The term *besik* appears in 8 poems of the poet: "*Besiktegi balany bazarga sala berme! Besikte belim buyp bitiskenim; Besikten beling shykpastan; Besikke bolepbobegin; Bederli besik, tort besik; Bopeshim besik – otauyng; Barkyt besik; Zhez besik, altyn kyndak Ridder zhatyr*". Two of these poems use idiomatic expressions related to *besik*: *besikten beli shykpai* (before raising from the cradle), which means "at early age", and *besikte belin buyp*

(tightening the belt in the cradle), conveying the concept of determination or preparation. The phrase “*Zhez besik*” is used for poetic purposes to give the name of a factory that produces copper.

The linguistic conceptualization of the worldview in literary texts is characterized by the variety and richness of lexical means of representation, the semantic components of which emphasize the interrelationship to the language, culture, national identity, customs and hospitality. Cultural concepts, actualized through key words in the literary text, combine notions, ideas, images, priorities, stereotypes, reflecting the peculiarities of the national mentality and worldview. In addition, they integrate the systems of socio-cultural relations, customs and traditions characteristic of Kazakh culture. Conceptual spheres cover a significant amount of ethnocultural information and have a cognitive orientation, acting as the most important elements of literary texts when describing a person and the surrounding reality. The poetry of I. Zhansugurov present cultural concepts that reveal the national identity and cultural and historical features of the Kazakh people. Therefore, a literary text is a linguo-cultural phenomenon that reflects the history, way of life, traditions, and mentality of the nation.

The linguistic heritage of the people serves as fundamental repository of their identity, allowing for connection between historical and contemporary realities through a comprehensive study of linguistic data. This analysis gives an idea of the cultural and spiritual essence of the nation. The independence of language and thinking is emphasized, since language cannot exist without cognition, and thought cannot be effectively implemented without linguistic expression. These attributes are unique to humans, providing communication, the exchange of ideas, and the internal formulation of the concepts. Consequently, language and thinking function as an integrated and inseparable category (Toktanova et al., 2021).

The inherent ability of language to preserve the past experience and the true wisdom, along with its function as a carrier of cultural heritage, serves as repository of true knowledge, worldview and material culture of the people. This includes basic tools, weapons, clothing, food, household and concepts related to customs and traditions. Many of these aspects were revealed with help of the linguistic evidence in the ethnographic works of I. Zhansugurov. This highlights the inextricable between the ethnic group and its language, which develop and evolve together. Due to the study of the ethnocultural linguistic data stored in ethnographic works and identification of the cognitive features of the ethnocultural terms, the relationship between language and culture becomes obvious.

The way of life of each ethnic group is determined by its national spiritual and cultural characteristics. The mastery of traditional occupation, the organization of the daily life in accordance with their identity, and the integration of these practices into their spiritual existence are connected to the blessings bestowed upon them by nature.

Conclusion

There is a folk saying: “The Kazakh people have grown up on the horse’s mane and the camel’s hump.” Since the emergence of the Kazakh identity, the nation has experienced periods of war, shaping its way of life and customs accordingly. Upon hearing the signal “The enemy at the border!” the Kazakhs could quickly dismantle their yurts, gather their belongings and set off at any time. Likewise, when an unexpected guest crossed the threshold, they immediately set the table with all available supplies, lit a fire for cooking and saw the guest off with a blessing after a plentiful feast. All these customs were performed with extraordinary speed and efficiency, which is a unique quality for the Kazakh way of life” (Bolot, 2016). In the daily life of the Kazakh people, any object, in addition to serving as a tool in human life, had its own symbolic meaning. The name of the object arose depending on what it was made of, its size (large or small), and the place where it was used. From the very beginning of the existence of mankind, it has been a natural phenomenon that only that nation has its own material world, which describes its daily life, customs, traditions, and professions that support its existence in accordance with its national knowledge.

The 20th century became the golden age of Kazakh literature, marked by its dynamic development in all genres and its ability to meet the spiritual and cultural needs of the nation. The life, fate and work of the writers of this period have become a subject of extension discussion, analyses, and research. However, these studies are currently being enriched with new perspectives, deeper syntheses, and more comprehensible conclusions. In the field of linguistics, it is important to study new research directions, in particular, the study of the linguistic richness through the ethnocultural vocabulary in the poetry of Ilyas Zhansugurov. In this regard, the vocabulary of the poet’s poems serves as valuable resource for understanding the rich heritage and national culture.

In accordance with the complex directions of modern language research from the perspective of the continuity of language and culture, a few conclusions and findings were made. First, ethnographisms in the Zhansugurov poems are one of the most key sources of information about the national language, the history of the country, its material and spiritual culture, and its worldview. Second, the principle that “Language is the foundation of the nation and the basis of national culture” emphasizes the connection between language

and national culture. This connection is maintained due to the enduring vitality of the native language, which is preserved and transmitted the cultural heritage from generation to generation, despite the centuries that have passed. Third, the essence of each nation is preserved in its language, and a comprehensive study of the linguistic data allows us to connect the past and present of our people, giving an idea of their spiritual and cultural identity. The ability of language to preserve the past experience and traditions, along with its function as cultural heritage, serves as the evidence of the true wisdom and worldview of the people. It embodies the tools, weapons, clothes, food, household items, customs, traditions that were necessary for life in a certain historical period. These aspects are confirmed by the linguistic data of the ethnographic works of the creative person. This, in turn, confirms that at an ethnic group and its language arise, develop and evolve as an inseparable phenomenon.

Fourth, based on linguistic data obtained from the ethnographic elements in the poet's works, we can observe the material culture heritage of our ancestors who lived in that era and acted as transmitters of tradition, connecting the past and the present. These linguistic discoveries provide insight into the eternal values of the ethnic group, in particular, its spiritual culture, lifestyle, ancient professions, labor practices, clothing, food, weapons, horse equipment, and various items related to customs and traditions. These elements collectively reflect the integral aspects of the material and cultural heritage of the people. Finally, in conclusion, it should be noted that the ethnocultural terms in the poetry of Ilyas Zhansugurov not only reveal the inherent richness and expressive power of their native language, but also serve as remarkable verbal artifacts that reliably reflect the daily life, traditions, and history of our ancestors.

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