









Linguo-Cultural Image of a Woman in the Turkic Gender <Conceptosphere>

Gulzhan T. Shokyma^a , Gulnar I. Yesbergenova^b , Altyn K. Bakytzhanova^c 
Galiya N. Kismetova^d , Nurgul M. Tukesheva^e , Astra Y. Gabdesheva^{f*} 

^a*K. Zhubanov Aktobe Regional University, Aktobe, Kazakhstan. Email: shokum@mail.ru*

^b*K. Zhubanov Aktobe Regional University, Aktobe, Kazakhstan. Email: gulnargizem@gmail.com*

^c*Professional Development Institute of the Academy of Public Administration under the President of Kazakhstan, Astana, Kazakhstan. Email: mak75@rambler.ru*

^d*M.Utemissov West Kazakhstan University/Uralsk/Kazakhstan. Email: galiya-1969@mail.ru*

^e*M.Utemissov West Kazakhstan University/Uralsk/Kazakhstan. Email: tukeshovanurgul@mail.ru*

^f*M.Utemissov West Kazakhstan University/Uralsk/Kazakhstan. Email: astragab@mail.ru*

Received 01 August 2023 | Received in revised form 03 November 2023 | Accepted 27 November 2023:

APA Citation:

Shokyma, G. T., Yesbergenovab, G. I., Bakytzhanovac, A. K., Kismetovad, G. N., Tukeshevae, N. M., Gabdeshevaf, A. Y. (2023). Linguo-Cultural Image of a Woman in the Turkic Gender <Conceptosphere>. *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 9(2), 237-245.

Doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.32601/ejal.922020>

Abstract

Gender linguistics is an important branch of cognitive linguistics. The current study investigated the gender linguistics as portrayed in the concept of *zhenge*, a symbolic and conceptual woman figure in Turkic linguoculture. The study attempted a discourse analysis of a few selected figurative expressions from lexicographic sources and collections of proverbs and sayings which dealt with the gender concept *zhenge*. The methodology used was a conceptual and component analysis, definitional and cognitive interpretation of linguistic, semantic and linguacultural, and sociocultural interpretation, stereotyping, linguacultural analysis of gender-marked components represented in *zhenge*. The findings made evident the complex analysis of the concept *zhenge* and revealed unique characteristics of a gender picture of the Turkic world, and also its linguistic and linguacultural contents as a gender concept. This study has thus introduced readers with material definitions such as lexemes, collocations (phraseological units and simile), proverbs, sayings, and speech expressions of modern native speakers through which the concept of *zhenge* is manifested in the Turkic linguoculture. This study has theoretical implications in the form of a conceptualization of the kinship and family relationships of the Turkic linguoculture in the role of *zhenge* and practical implications in the form of a supporter, mother figure and a confidant in the form of a *zhenge* in the family itself.

© 2023 EJAL & the Authors. Published by Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics (EJAL). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (CC BY-NC-ND) (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Keywords: Gender Concept, Conceptual Sphere, Gender Linguistics, Linguoculture and Turkic Languages.

Introduction

Cognitive discourse analysis is the discipline that investigates the interaction between language and culture. The concept of ‘*conceptosphere*’ is that part of “cognitive linguistics” which comprises concepts as

* Corresponding Author.

Email: shokum@mail.ru

<http://dx.doi.org/10.32601/ejal.902020>

knowledge units or linguocultural categories (Tuxtazarova, 2023). The gender conceptsphere is one such linguocultural category in the Turkic language which has been accepted as a scientific study. The gender conceptsphere has been established as a separate system of sociocultural order, as an independent research direction in the domain of linguoculture, highlighting the shifts in social and ethnocultural paradigms of contemporary society development (Terniievskaya, 2022). The originality of the gender conceptsphere in the Turkic language is determined by national-cultural characteristics and ethno-cultural worldview, which include features of stratification typification and stereotyping, categorization of masculine and feminine, linguocultural identification of different categories of the gender conceptsphere (Madmarova et al., 2023).

The concept of *gender* as a socio-cultural category is attracting more and more attention of researchers, from the perspective of identifying and describing ethno-cultural specificity. Several social scientists of Commonwealth of Independent States (Gritsenko, 2005; Kirilina, 2000; Kirilina & Tomskaya, 2005; Mochalkina, 2019) have recognized gender conceptsphere as a general scientific category, and recommend a gender specific research methodology. It has been argued to set tasks to identify and determine the structural organization of the conceptual meaning of the gender category. Mistryukova (2005), for instance, proposed a more complete definition of the *gender concept*, including “gender component” in the concept of the cultural concept, and defines it as “semantic formation arising as a result of combination of word meaning with ethnocultural worldview and giving an idea of typical male and female images, in which value, expressive and conceptual sides are distinguished” (p. 21) This definition actualizes the ethno-cultural specificity of the semantic construct of the gender concept in the typical representations of male and female images.

In the current context of discussing the Turkic linguoculture, the concept *zhenge* was chosen to represent the socio-cultural systems of the meta-gender linguoculture femininity in Turkic society. The concept of *zhenge* is associated with a female person, the mother or the eldest daughter in law or the spouse of the eldest male member in the family, which allows us to consider it as a category of gender linguistics and the conceptual sphere. A preliminary analysis of the linguistic and cultural material reveals that the concept *zhenge* carries a predetermined thematic focus, object, subject, tasks and material of a research study. The linguists and other scientists have not only been inspired by its ethno-cultural characteristics, but also the linguistic and the semantic specifics.

Problem Statement

Despite the fact that the category of gender in its various aspects has a well-established history of research and is the focus of interest of almost all humanities - history, anthropology, ethnography, philosophy, sociology, cultural studies, psychology, linguistics, etc., the category of gender linguistics and in general, the Turkic gender conceptsphere, is poorly studied. Among the most widely studied gender concepts are the Turkic linguoculture concepts of “ana/mother”, “woman”, “dzhit”, “ata/father”; or the Turkic gender concepts “zhenge”, “kelin”, “abysyn”, as well as “zhezde/husband of an older sister or aunt”, “kuyeu bala/son-in-law”, “bazha/brother-in-law”, “kayynsinili/sister-in-law.”

These concepts are poorly studied or have not yet been subjected to special scientific consideration from the standpoint of modern sections of linguistics mainly, they were considered fragmentally in historical and cultural, ethnological popular scientific works in the context of the description of family kinship (Alimkulov & Abdramanov, 1994; Argynbayev, 2005; Bizakov, 1990; Diuanova, 2010; Zholdasbek, 1998). At the same time, the role of a woman is significant in the system of family and kinship relations, in general, the ethno-cultural traditions of the family; the role of a woman is actualized in the Turkic culture through her female hypostases – in the role of spouse, mother, daughter-in-law, sister, mother-in-law, etc. Especially in the Kazakh linguoculture, the hypostases of a married woman are obvious, she acts not only as a daughter-in-law, but also in such significant roles as the elder daughter-in-law (*zhenge* /daughter-in-law), the younger daughter-in-law (*kelin* / daughter-in-law), *abysyn* (the role of a daughter-in-law in relation to other daughters-in-law of the family to each other).

Until now, the concept of *zhenge* has not been considered as an independent object of scientific study, but was marginalized within the framework of gender studies. No study has been found on *zhenge* as a construct of the Turkic gender conceptsphere category, especially from the point of view of describing national and cultural characteristics and linguistic and cultural modeling. The current study aimed to fill this research gap and establish the concept *zhenge* as an interesting subject to scientists in the field of Turkic linguistics and linguoculturology, gender linguistics and ethnolinguistics.

Literature Review

There is no dearth of gender studies in recent times that identify ethnic characteristics of linguocultures, and which compare them with other (genetically distant) linguocultures in order to determine typological features and principles of systemic organisation of gender concepts (Abdilkadimovna, 2021; Beisembayeva & Isina, 2023; Juraeva, 2022; Shokym et al., 2022; Usobovich, 2023). In the light of the changes in

anthropological, cultural and social paradigms of modernity, which have led to a change in values and attitudes, lifestyles, worldviews, mechanisms of regulation of generally accepted norms and typification of socio-cultural roles of gender representatives, gender studies are becoming more relevant. Scientists of the late twentieth century point to social shifts in social development that have led to a rethinking of the concept of gender/sex, both from a biological and sociocultural perspective. Over the past two decades, the interpretation of the concepts of “masculinity” “femininity”, which are now defined not as ontological categories, but as *socio-cultural constructs* of modern existence, have been seen in the context of changing gender paradigms (for example, transgenderism and androgyny). Such paradigm shifts have become much more relevant in gender linguistic research, which due to “new social position and nature of men’s and women’s activities,” which have markedly led to “a transformation of basic attitudes, values, psychological traits and states. Many socially significant personality traits have come to be considered gender-neutral” (Kurochkina & Shakhmatova, 2014).

The concept *zhenge* is one of the most significant gender concepts, along with the concept of “ana” (mother), which is explained by the importance for the Turkic linguoculture in terms of national and cultural characteristics of the institution of the family. *Zhenge* has a significant role in the Turkic linguoculture, firstly, as a female person assimilated to a *mother*, for example, in the traditional culture of Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Turks. The *zhenge* replaces a *mother* in the family after she (the mother) passes away; *zhenge* patronizes younger family members; *zhenge* as the eldest daughter-in-law of the family is perceived as the “right hand” of the mother. Secondly, in the family sometimes *zhenge* acts as a “confidant”, which means the younger brothers and sisters, as well as younger relatives, entrust their secrets, share experiences, dreams and resentments with *zhenge*.

In most Turkic or Uzbek families, younger relatives grow up and, according to the traditional culture of the family, no longer it is “decent” to talk openly about some topics with your mother. In such situations, culturally conditioned psychological and communicative subordination with the mother is compensated by a close and trusting family member who act as the *zhenge* (e.g., the eldest daughter-in-law of the family and the wife of the older brother). Thirdly, *zhenge* being the eldest *abysyn* (the eldest among the daughters-in-law of the family and relatives), she is the main daughter-in-law who is able to rally the rest for the benefit of the interests of the family. She is respected and her views and opinions are given importance, she is usually not contradicted (as well as the mothers of the family), honors are given, they listen to her advice, and consider her decisions. In short, the role of the *zhenge* in the family is very important; the unity, cohesion and well-being of the whole family depends on her. In confirmation of the role of *zhenge*, we can cite the well-known proverb “Abysyn tattoo bolsa, as kop”, which means “If Abysyns are friendly with each other, then there will be prosperity”.

In the Turkic linguoculture, the role of *zhenge* is significant as the keeper of family traditions, for example, it is *zhenge* who attends and conducts many important rituals associated with newlyweds, with seeing off the bride to a new family (the groom’s family) and with matchmaking. *Zhenge* is assigned the role of conducting significant family rituals and national traditions. In the Turkic linguoculture, *zhenge* is allowed to call all the younger relatives of the spouse (younger in age of her spouse) by a “different” affectionate name, for instance, this tradition is preserved in the Kazakh family, which expresses the respectful attitude of the elder daughter-in-law to the younger ones, demonstrating respect, caring for the younger relatives of the spouse. This ethno-cultural phenomenon is reflected in the proverb “Ulkenge – kurmet, kishige – izet”, which means “Respect the elders, honor the younger generation.”

The extant literature shows that the gender concept *zhenge* although attracts scientific interest not only as a gender category, but also as a socio-cultural phenomenon of the Turkic linguoculture of feminine order, characterized by ethno-cultural values, but it has been neglected in the domain of cognitive linguistics. This gender concept has not been widely studied as a “linguocultural category” and is of great interest as an understudied category in the Turkic conceptsphere, especially in the light of the paradigm shift in the feminine ontology and its socio-cultural manifestation in linguoculture.

Methodology

- *Research Design*

This research adopted a multiple array of scientific research methods, in particular, descriptive, systematic, and comparative, to attempt an understanding of the concept of *zhenge* as an independent object of a cultural-linguistic study. The descriptive method was used to interpret the results and conclusions; the comparative analysis was used to analyse the features of the structural and semantic organisation of the concept “zhenge”, and the systematic approach helped to determine its ethno-cultural characteristics and typology as a phenomenon of the Turkic linguoculture. It attempted to study *zhenge* as a construct of the Turkic gender conceptsphere category, especially to understand whether this concept manifest itself in the Turkic linguoculture as a part of any cognitive linguistic units such as lexemes, collocations (phraseological units and comparisons), proverbs, sayings and speech expressions.

- *Data Sources*

The purposive sampling technique and systematization of the data made it possible to form a corpus of gender-marked figurative expressions embedded with language and speech features, extracted from lexicographic sources (Yskakhov & Uali, 2011) and collections of proverbs and sayings (Kaskabassov, 2012). The gender concept *zhenge* was studied on the basis of the methodology of conceptual and component analysis, definitional and cognitive interpretation of linguistic and speech material, semantic and linguacultural classification of concept constructions, while sociocultural interpretation and construction, stereotyping, linguacultural analysis of gender-marked components of the concept *zhenge* were applied as methods of gender research.

The method of component analysis made it possible to identify gender-marked, national-cultural, ethno-cultural semes (components) in the semantic structure of the concept *zhenge*. The method of cognitive interpretation of the meanings of the linguocultural expression of the gender concept *zhenge* in the Kazakh language allowed us to describe the content of this concept as a set of conceptual features of the gender phenomenon of the Turkic woman in the role of *zhenge*. The revealed conceptual features are due to socio-cultural, gender, ethno-cultural, national-cultural stereotypical factors that allowed us to model the concept of *zhenge*, to identify its associative representations in the gender picture of the world of speakers of Turkic languages.

The associative method made it possible to determine the subject and figurative characteristics of the gender concept of *zhenge* with the help of their associates, presented in phraseological, lexicographic and associative dictionaries (Kaskabassov, 2012; Kenesbayev, 2007; Konyratbayev et al., 2010; Turmanzhanov, 2000; Yskakhov & Uali, 2011).

- *Data Collection Techniques*

On the basis of the method of linguocultural analysis, the formed and entrenched stereotypical gender stereotypes of the image of *zhenge* in the Turkic linguistic consciousness were revealed, which were reflected in the gender conceptosphere of the Turkic languages. Along with the gender stereotypes generally accepted in the modern culture of native speakers, typical gender stereotypes of the Turkic linguoculture were identified. The current research methodology determined that the gender concept *zhenge* is characterized as a linguocultural concept. In this regard, we relied on the well-known methodology of analyzing the concepts recommended by Stepanov (1997), who defined three stages of the study of the linguocultural concept, that of identifying the “literal meaning”, which means the etymology of the word; of identifying and describing the “historical” layer of the concept; and of studying the actual “newest” layer of the concept.

- *Data Analysis Techniques*

Based on the understanding that the linguocultural concept represents the collective experience of the people, characterized by a generally significant human, objective and ethnic mentality, as well as the individual experience of an individual representative of an ethnos or community, characterized by subjective mentality and individually significant features, we applied methods of conceptual analysis, semantic and linguoculturological classification of constructs of the concept “*zhenge*”, which allowed us to establish the structural organization.

The theoretical and methodological basis of this fragment of the study was formed by scientific ideas and concepts of domestic and foreign scientists, which set out in the works in the areas of (a) gender linguistics namely I. Goffman, M. Foucault, J. Derida, T.B. Kryuchkova, A.A. Popov, among many others; (b) Linguoconceptology, namely R. Capurro, B. Hjørland, V.Z. Demyankov, V.I. Karasik; and (c) Turkic linguoculture, which included Z.Zh. Tuyebekova, Z.M. Nurzhanova, G.B. Mamayeva, G.K. Ismagulova, A.T. Onalbayeva, to name only a few.

Results and Findings

The image of *zhenge* is multidimensional and is represented by a conceptual system which is characterized by ethno-cultural, axiological, evaluative and socio-cultural components of connotative content. There are various measures that have been taken to popularize the concept of *zhenge*, which has gradually built a linguo-cultural image of a woman in the Turkic gender conceptosphere.

Right at the outset, *zhenge* provides support and care for younger brothers and sisters, younger relatives of the spouse; *zhenge* in Turkic linguistic culture is always caring, lives in peace and harmony with younger brothers and sisters of the spouse, keeps their secrets, stands up for them, intercedes, provides support and spoils them; younger brothers “*kainy*” (pl. *kainylar*) and younger sisters “*kaiyin sini*” (pl. *kaiyin sinliler*) also express respect and kindness to their *zhenge* - they are her (*zhenge*'s) intercessors to her relatives (*zhenge*'s spouse: for example). This attitude in a Kazakh family is well illustrated in the feature film *Gaukhartas* in 1975, which depicts *zhenge* as a patroness who can pamper and show maternal care.

A few expressions prove this point of support and care: *Adamdikka bar ma ulylyk teng keler, Anam bolyp zhetti magan zhengeler. Men olargya boldym bala, ari ini...* translated as: “Is there any greatness comparable to the humanity that gave me the care of my mother in the person of the *zhengeler* (pl. form of *zhenge*). I was a child to them, and a brother...” (Yskakhov & Uali, 2011). Another expression, widely cited as a winged expression in the social media discourse, says: *Su surasa, sut bergen, ayran bergen...* which means ‘If we ask for water from *zhenge*, she gave us milk, and also treated us with *ayran*’ (Yskakhov & Uali, 2011). In this example, *ayran* (a cold savory yogurt-based beverage) is given to respected people especially, to guests. Similarly, another expression highlights this quality of a *zhenge*: *Anangnyng zhaksylygyn- auyrsang bilersing, kaiyinning zhanksylygyn- kydyrsang bilersing*, which means ‘the kindness of a mother you will know when you fall ill and the kindness of a *kaiyny* (a younger brother of a spouse) you will know when you visit someone’.

The younger brothers of a spouse in Turkic culture tend to get married after their elder brothers. When their elder brothers go to find food or “go to work”, *zhenge* should be accompanied by a younger brother of her spouse when she visits relatives or friends; *Kyzy bar uiding zhengesi suikimdi* ‘where the family with a daughter, there the *zhenge* is kind’. In every family in order to please a daughter (unmarried), *zhenge* plays a main role by taking care of, giving advice, helping to choose clothes and jewellery. Then, *zhenge* becomes a kind person in the family; *Kyzdyng syryn zhengesi biler* ‘the secrets of the daughter will be known by *zhenge*’ (Konyratbayev et al., 2010);

Another role of *zhenge* is to unite the family and relatives of the spouse in the role of *abysyn*, which is a familial name for a woman to refer to women-in-law of one family or close relatives. The spouses of brothers are *abysyn* to each other, often the spouse of older brothers is called *abysyn*, or *zhengeshe*. The role of *zhenge* as an *abysyn* is characterized by the role of the keeper of the hearth, family welfare, peace in the home, good relations between all family members and relatives. She strengthens family ties, for example: *Erge zhakkan aiyel, elge de zhagady* which means ‘she who is able to please her husband will also be able to please his family.’ The positive image of *zhenge* manifests family well-being, for example: *Agaiyin tatu bolsa, at kop, abysyn tatu bolsa, as kop* ‘If brothers live in peace and harmony, the yard will be full of cattle (*at* - horse) and if wives of brothers live in peace and harmony, the house will be full of plenty (food)’. The proverb “*Abysyn agaryp aldynda zhurmesin, karayip artynda kalmasyin*” means ‘let the *abysyn* not surpass, but not lag behind, be on an equal footing’ (Konyratbayev et al., 2010);

A *zhenge* is also a symbol of happiness, well-being, prosperity, family success and spouse in the role of *kelin* in the family of his/her spouse”. This image is conceptualized at the following levels of the conceptual sphere - *metagender* level (positive image of kind/good *wife* who is a symbol of well-being in the family; kind/good wife is a wealth and happiness for all family members), for example: *Zhaksy aiyel - zhigitke bitken bak* ‘good wife is happiness of a man’; or, as they say, *Zhaksy aiyel - yrys, zhaman aiyel - urys* ‘a good wife brings well-being, a bad wife quarrels’; and also on the level of *macro-concept* “*daughter-in-law*” of the family (home where kind/good wife is golden home, where angry/bad wife is death for home). For example: *Kelini zhaksy uiding keregesi altyn* ‘if there is a good daughter-in-law, the walls of the house are golden’; *Zhaksy kelin - kelin, zhaman kelin - kelsap* ‘good daughter-in-law is daughter-in-law, bad daughter-in-law is mortar (*kelsap*)’ (Turmanzhanov, 2000); *Kaiyyn yenesi as ishpes, kabagyn tuiigen kelinnen* ‘mother-in-law will not touch the food of a frowning daughter-in-law’ (Konyratbayev et al., 2010); and on the level *the micro-concept* - *zhenge* as the spouse of an older brother, which is described above in the 1st thesis;

A *zhenge* is also a symbol of good luck, an image of good fortune. A *zhenge* is often compared with the Roman Fortune and ancient Greek Tyukhe - the goddess of luck and destiny, an image of a good fairy, embodying a venerated woman, who is in every way supportive and understanding towards men and young men. In this conceptual meaning *zhenge* is formally fixed in the *megaconcept*, among all non-blood relatives, acquaintances, fellow countrymen, classmates, colleagues, friends younger than her spouse, for example: *Zholy bolar zhigittingi zhengesi shygar aldynan* which means ‘a *dzhigit* (a guy) accompanied by good luck will meet a *zhenge* on his way’ (Konyratbayev et al., 2010). A *zhenge* in this proverb is used as a precedent name, calling *zhenge* a sign of good luck and destiny, everyone who meets someone on his way who has supported a *zhenge* will mention this proverb in the spoken discourse. Therefore, *zhenge* as a precedent name represents an image of a good fairy (if one meets *zhenge* on his/her way, by the luck, she will help, support, assist, take part in the decision).

A *zhenge* is also often depicted in the image of a “matchmaker”, a woman who connects the loving hearts, supports the lovers, provides a service for the lovers - through her they meet each other, make an appointment, give love messages, and she is the first to find out about the heart-muse, to give advice, brings them closer together, pushes the lovers towards each other or helps the one who wins the girl/woman’s heart.” It says: *Kyzdyng syryn zhengesi biler* which means ‘a daughter’s secrets will be known by *zhenge*’; or *Kaiyynngnan tuiye sura, korykkannan biye bersin* which means ‘ask a camel from *kaiyny* (brother-in-law), he will afraid of and gives a female camel’ (Konyratbayev et al., 2010). There is another expression, *Meili, zhenge, azappen kun kesheyin! Tilegimdi orynda, tildeseyin*, which means in translation: “All right, *zhenge*, let me live in torment, just fulfil my desires, talk to me (Yskakhov & Uali, 2011).

There is also a negative image of a *procuress* associated with the gender concept *zhenge*. This name

(*procuress*) is derived from the lexeme *zhenge – zhengetaylyk*. For example, *zhengetaylyk etu* means ‘to procure lovers or to provide procuress services for relations (sometimes unwanted) between a man and a woman’, also in a situation when relations are not desired by one party. For instance, it says: *Kyzdy zhenge, zhengeni tengе buzady* ‘the girl is ruined by the *zhenge*, and the *zhenge* is ruined by money’ (Turmanzhanov, 2000). The *zhengetaylyk* is a tradition in Turkic linguistic culture that promotes the union of lovers, it comes from the role of *zhenge*, which helps lovers to negotiate, keep secrets, make appointments and brings the young to a date; when young people are shy to openly express feelings to each other, *zhengetaylyk* is a tradition that honorably carried this role.

Last, but not the least, a *zhenge* is a bearer and object of humour, a friend in all pranks, knows how to joke and accept humour in her attitude. In this conceptual image a *zhenge* represents a humorous image of a female friend, a pamperer, who supports humour of junior men (blood and not blood relatives of her husband and his social environment) and is not averse to initiate jokes and pampering to strengthen good relations. For example: the proverb *Nagashim bai, kайnim bai, Zharly qylar kai kudai!* is used in a playful way and translates as: ‘My mother's relatives are rich, my *kainy* (my spouse's younger brother) is rich, what God would make me poor!'; or in another proverb, *Balalygyngdy sagynsang, nagashynga bar, bozbalygyngdy sagynsang, kайnynga bar* which means ‘if you miss your childhood, visit your mother's relative, if you miss your adolescence, visit your husband's sibling/younger brother’; There is another proverb in joking form: *Kursangan zhaudan korikpagan basym, agama barganda zhengemnen korikkanym ay!* which means ‘I was not afraid of a dangerous enemy, but was afraid of *zhenge* when I visited my brother’ (Konyratbayev et al., 2010);

Table 1 summarizes a few stereotypical characteristics of the image of a *zhenge*, which is represented in traditional culture in proverbs, sayings and phraseological expressions of Turkic languages:

Table 1: Stereotypical Images of a Zhenge in The Traditional Turkic Linguistic Culture.

Gender Category	Key Role	Stereotypical Role of The Gender Image of Zhenge	
		Positive Image	Negative Image
<i>Kelin</i>	Follow ethnic, cultural and traditions of the family, brings up descendants, brings wellbeing to the spouse's home	Good <i>kelin</i> as a daughter-in-law to her mother-in-law, does not break traditions, respects family members and spouse's relatives, is well-mannered	Does not recognise the traditions and culture of her partner's family, shows her “morals”, is close to her relatives, is burdensome to the role of <i>kelin</i>
<i>Zhenge</i>	Caring, supportive, pampering, advising and nurturing her spouse's younger siblings; uniting the family, strengthening family relationships; a good fairy; an advisor; she is respected and listened to	Accepts the role of patroness for the younger members of the family and the spouse's relatives, the role of elder sister and mother, keeps the secrets of the spouse's brothers and sisters, is a friend, respects and spoils them, surrounds them with care; she is respected by the close social circle of her spouse	A spouse who does not accept younger relatives and does not show a close relationship and concern for them
<i>Abysyn</i>	The organising force, the core of the family and kinship	Image of solidarity, harmony, good relations between spouses of brothers	The image of a rival and a jealous rival, and unwilling to enter into a good relationship

The stereotypical characteristic of the conceptual image of *zhenge* differs from the two female roles (see Table 1) of “*kelin*” (daughter-in-law) and *abysyn* (wife of brothers - blood and close relatives); however, a *zhenge* represents a positive image of *wife* and *daughter-in-law*; a *kind/good zhenge* is a good *wife*, *daughter-in-law* and *abysyn*. A *zhenge* is close and caring not only to her husband's blood brothers and sisters, but also to her relatives and the social surroundings of her husband. The role of the *zhenge* in the family is invaluable, as has been presented in the examples and is characterised by the ethno-cultural values of the family.

Discussion

The concept of *zhenge* in the Turkic linguistic culture is most vividly manifested in the feminine stereotypical characteristics and conceptualized by figurative means of language and speech. *Zhenge* as a gender category and a feminine image of the Turkic gender picture is conceptualized in the original corpus of Turkic languages, in particular, by figurative means of the Kazakh language (as a reference language in this research). In this regard, the proverbs and sayings of Turkic languages translated into the Kazakh language, lexical units and phraseological units of Turkic languages, were defined as the key material of the study.

The gender concept *zhenge* is recognized as a socio-cultural category in the system of feminine ontology and ethno-cultural picture of Turkic language speakers, as evidenced by traditional culture samples, recorded in lexicographic sources. The meaning of this concept is followed in the works of Karasik (2009), Vorkachev (2007) and Pashchenko (2015), where a *zhenge* is presented as “a multidimensional culturally significant mental formation, characterizing carrier of a certain ethnoculture, connected synchronously and diachronously with stable language structures; it invariably contains *value*, *image* and *conceptual sides*”.

The name *zhenge* comes from and is associated with the social role of a woman who is the spouse of an older man (in the family, clan, community, place of residence, etc.). *Zhenge* is thus a familial name for a woman in the role of a spouse; *zhenge* could be the spouse of an older brother; a woman could be a *zhenge* of the spouse's younger brothers and sisters at any age; and a *zhenge* could be the wife of an older relative; an older countryman, neighbour, fellow soldier, colleague, etc. The lexical unit *zhenge* is a reference to a woman who is the spouse (or widow) of an elder brother, uncle and acquaintance. *Zhenge* is used by both males and females. For *zhenge*, the younger brothers of the spouse are *kainy* (a familial name for the male person, referring to the younger blood brother and relative of the spouse) and younger sisters are *kaiyin sinyly* (referring to the younger blood sisters and younger female relative of the spouse).

The gender concept *zhenge* as daughter-in-law (elder daughter-in-law of the family) is in opposition to the similar concept of *kelin* (younger daughter-in-law of the family) and demonstrates an oppositional gender model in the conceptual and socio-cultural content of this linguistic and cultural fragment of the Turkic worldview. In contrast to the concept *kelin*, the studied gender concept *zhenge* is represented lexically and paremiologically in Turkic languages (in particular Kazakh) by positive stereotypical characteristics, for example: *Zhaqsy kelin - kelin, zhaman kelin - kelsap* which means 'a good daughter-in-law (*kelin*) will be daughter-in-law, bad - will be mortar (*kelsap*)' (Turmanzhanov, 2000). *Kelsap* is a wooden mortar for grain milling, for example, millet. In another phrase, *Kelinnin ayagynan, koishynynin tayagynan*, it means 'everything depends on the intentions with which the daughter-in-law came to the family and how the herdsman shepherd his flock'; or another phrase more popular, *Ar elden kelin keler, arturli yryym eter*, which means 'a daughter-in-law will come from different family and each with her regulation and beliefs' (Turmanzhanov, 2000).

In most places, the image of *zhenge* (essentially the same daughter-in-law but the eldest in the husband's family) is characterized in positive stereotyping, for instance: *Kyzdyn syryn zhengyesi biler* which means 'daughter's secrets are known by her *zhenge*', not by a mother but her daughters-in-law (Turmanzhanov, 2000). This is a distinctive phenomenon in the Turkic linguistic culture where the daughters' and sons' secrets are kept by their *zhenge* and are trusted to her rather than to a mother or a younger daughter-in-law. Such proverbs reflect a positive stereotypical image of *zhenge*, which at all times is perceived in this linguistic and cultural meaning and has not been subject to re-evaluation both in the traditional and contemporary ethnic cultures of the Turkic peoples. In another example, one sees the socio-cultural significance and positive image of *zhenge* in its opposition to the image of *kelin* (younger daughter-in-law): *Zholy bolar zhigitting zhengesi shygar aldynan* which means 'a dzhigit (a guy) accompanied by good luck will meet a *zhenge* on his way' (Konyratbayev et al., 2010). Here, *zhenge* is equal to *good luck*, because at all-time elder daughter-in-law helps her family members to make a decision, to give advice and to cope with troubles.

There is also a lexical-semantic expansion of this ethno-cultural address; as a result of which *zhenge* is a form of respectful address to any older woman, which is more often used by men. The form of the address *zheneshe* and *zheneshetai* that are made from the word *zhenge* expresses respect, gratitude, warm and close relations with the elder brother's spouse on the part of the younger brothers and sisters, as well as the younger relatives of the spouse. The form of address *zhengey* is more often used in relation to a woman who is not the spouse of her blood younger brothers and sisters, or of her close younger relatives. Moreover, *zhengey* is widely used nowadays by men as a respectful reference to an older woman.

The gender concept of *zhenge* as a conceptual image in the system of kinship and family relations of Turkic linguoculture is distinguished by socio-cultural expression (system of expectations and requirements of stereotypical norms of social roles), conditioned by the role of *zhenge* in the family of his spouse, for his relatives and social surroundings. *Zhenge* in Turkic linguistic culture embodies the roles of *kelin* (daughter-in-law) and *abysyn* (brothers' wives). As an *abysyn*, she is the same for the youngest daughter-in-law of the family (junior *abysyn*) and acts in the same role as the younger blood brothers and sisters of her spouse.

Conclusion

The current study dealt with gender linguistics in the conceptual sphere of Turkic linguoculture. The main objective of this study was to investigate the gender concept of *zhenge* in the paradigm of Turkic ethnocultural specificity, in particular, on the material of Kazakh linguoculture. The study made a scientific analysis of the linguistic and cultural aspect of the linguistic representation of the gender concept *zhenge*, characterized by ethno-cultural significance in the Turkic conceptsphere of the family.

Key methods of research of the concept and methods of gender research, establishment of linguocultural significance for the gender picture of the Turkic worldview and identification of ethno-cultural constructs of the concept "zhenge" were applied in order to determine the structure of the gender concept "zhenge". Research of gender concept *zhenge* actualized the tasks on studying of gender conceptual sphere of Turkic linguoculture, which will contribute to the linguistic presentation of the gender picture of the world in a context of problems of gender identity of the person and strengthening of the gender ethnoculture.

The gender conceptual sphere is increasingly attracting the attention of scientists from various scientific fields - sociology, cognitive science, linguoculturology, psycholinguistics and social linguistics. The Turkic linguistic culture acts as a distinctive object of gender studies, as the ethno-cultural specificity of the gender picture of the world of speakers of Kazakh and other Turkic languages has not yet been studied. The Turkic gender conceptual sphere is characterized by the reliance on ethno-cultural and socio-cultural principles in stereotyping and conceptualization of the female image “zhenge”.

This study analyzed the unique characteristics of the gender concept *zhenge* in the Turkic linguoculture, recognized by ethnocultural signs, symbols and proverbs, which can be summarized by the following identified factors:

- The gender concept *zhenge* manifests the role of a female daughter-in-law, which is characterized by socio-cultural explication, which is formed by stereotypical perceptions of the speakers of Turkic linguoculture;
- The gender concept is structured by several levels of conceptual meaning - the metagender level, megaconcepts, macroconcepts, and microconcepts, organizing a system of gender-marked components.
- The conceptual meaning and socio-cultural significance of *zhenge* Turkic image allows this image to enter into opposition relations with a similar conceptual image of *kelin*, asserting its positive stereotypical model of an elder woman - daughter-in-law.
- The principles of stereotyping the characteristics of the gender concept *zhenge* are based on ethno-cultural factors (respect for elders, elders as parents, elders as a support for the younger ones in the family, elders as an example models and elders as the most respected) and socio-gender factors (*zhenge* as women and women as mothers; *zhenge* has experience as daughter-in-law, so she can be trusted; *zhenge* as the spouse of older brother, that is why she is respected, because love and respect for older brother is always unconditional);
- The image of *zhenge* is conceptualized as a symbol of well-being, strengthening family relationships and family happiness.
- The conceptual image of the *zhenge* as a gender category is characterized mainly as a positive image, which does not exclude two negative roles - the role of the *procuress-zhenge* (*zhengetaylyk*) and the role of the *rival-abysyn*.

This study on the gender concept *zhenge* has actualized the tasks of further study of the gender conceptual sphere of Turkic linguoculture, which is its contribution to the development of this scientific direction. As a result of the study, the authors conclude that the gender concept of *zhenge* as a conceptual image in the system of kinship and family relationships of the Turkic linguoculture is characterized by socio-cultural expectation due to the role of *zhenge* in the family of his spouse, for his relatives and social environment; the Turkic gender conceptsphere is characterized by reliance on ethno-cultural and socio-cultural principles in the stereotyping and conceptualization of the female image of *zhenge*.

References

- Abdilkadimovna, K. N. (2021). Comparative And Linguocultural Analysis Of The Concept " Gender" In Uzbek And English Languages. *The American Journal of Social Science and Education Innovations*, 3(06), 112-117. doi: <https://doi.org/10.37547/tajssei/Volume03Issue06-19>
- Alimkulov, B., & Abdramanov, E. (1994). *“Bridegroom, bridegroom, wedding”*: literary and ethnographic knowledge. Almaty: Sanat.
- Argynbayev, K. (2005). *Kazakh family traditions: popular science literature*. Almaty: Kainar.
- Beisembayeva, A. U., & Isina, G. I. (2023). On the Problem of Phraseologization of the Concept “Gender” in English and Russian Linguocultures. *European Journal of Natural History*, (3), 35-38. Retrieved from <https://s.world-science.ru/pdf/2023/3/34347.pdf>
- Bizakov, S. (1990). Transfer of kinship names in the Kazakh language. *Messages of the Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh SSR, Philol. Department*, 3, 12-17.
- Diuanova, R. (2010). *Features of the semantic structure and lexicography of kinship names in the Kazakh language*. Almaty.
- Gritsenko, E. S. (2005). *Language. Gender. Discourse. Monograph*. Nizhny Novgorod: NNSU named after Lobachevsky N.I. Publishing House.
- Juraeva, Z. R. (2022). Gender Stereotypes in the Mirror of the Categories of Masculinity and Femininity in Various Linguocultures. *European Journal of Innovation in Nonformal Education*, 2(3), 208-212. Retrieved from <https://www.inovatus.es/index.php/ejine/article/view/521>
- Karasik, V. I. (2009). Concept as a unit of linguocultural code. *Izvestia VGPU*, 10(44), 4-11. Retrieved from <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/kontsept-kak-edinita-lingvokulturnogo-koda>
- Kaskabassov, S. (2012). *Traditional system of Kazakh ethnographic categories, concepts and names* (Vol. 2). Encyclopedia. Almaty: Slon. Retrieved from <https://adebiportal.kz/web/viewer.php?file=/storage/upload/iblock/605/605ff1b669807b4f97db1572185d21f2.pdf&ln=kz>
- Kenesbayev, Y. (2007). *Phraseological dictionary*. Almaty: Arys.

- Kirilina, A. V. (2000). *Gender Aspects of Language and Communication* (Doctoral dissertation, Moscow State Linguistic University). Retrieved from <http://www.dslib.net/jazyko-znanie/gendernye-aspekty-jazyka-i-kommunikacii.html>
- Kirilina, A. V., & Tomskaya, M. V. (2005). Linguistic gender studies. *Domestic notes*, (2), 3-4. Retrieved from <https://strana-oz.ru/2005/2/lingvisticheskie-gendernye-issledovaniya>
- Konyratbayev, Z., G., K., K., Y., Zhanuzak, T., Momynova, B., & Suerkulova, B. (2010). *The Word of ancestors: proverbs and sayings* (Vol. 65). Astana: Folio. Retrieved from <https://tilalemi.kz/books/65.pdf>
- Kurochkina, I. A., & Shakhmatova, O. N. (2014). *The Problem of Gender and Gender Identity*. Yekaterinburg: Publishing house of Russian State Pedagogical University. Retrieved from https://elar.rsvpu.ru/bitstream/123456789/5561/1/978-5-8050-0549-8_2014.pdf
- Madmarova, G. A., Gaipova, A. N., Gómez, I. V., Karabekova, E. A., & Sabiralieva, Z. M. (2023). Reflections of Gender Inequality in Language and Culture. In E. G. Popkova (Ed.), *Sustainable Development Risks and Risk Management: A Systemic View from the Positions of Economics and Law* (pp. 469-473). Springer International Publishing. doi: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-34256-1_82
- Mistryukova, E. V. (2005). *Means of representation of the concepts of "masculinity" and "femininity" in modern English* (Dissertation of Candidate of Philological Sciences, Samara State Pedagogical University). Retrieved from <https://www.dissercat.com/content/sredstva-reprezentatsii-kontseptov-muzhestvennost-i-zhenstvennost-v-sovremennom-angliiskom-y>
- Mochalkina, A. A. (2019). The problem of studying gender in foreign and domestic linguistics. *Kazan: Molodoy Ucheny*, 6(244), 268-271. Retrieved from <https://moluch.ru/archive/244/56413>
- Pashchenko, M. A. (2015). On the structure and classification of linguocultural concepts. *Humanitarian vector*, 4(44), 91-97. Retrieved from <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/k-voprosu-o-strukture-i-klassifikatsii-lingvokulturnyh-kontseptov>
- Shokym, G., Burankulova, E., Yessenova, K., Sarbassova, A., Bauyrzhan Kyzy, B., & Yerzhanova, G. (2022). Representation of the "kyz" Gender Concept in the Turkic Linguistics. *International Journal of Society, Culture & Language*, 10(1), 125-134. doi: <https://doi.org/10.22034/ijsc.2022.543085.2467>
- Stepanov, Y. S. (1997). *Constants: Dictionary of Russian Culture. Research experience*. Moscow: Languages of Russian culture. Retrieved from https://biblioclub.ru/index.php?page=book_red&id=212939&razdel=154
- Terniievskaya, Y. (2022). The Interaction of Linguistic and Conceptual Pictures of the World. *Scientific Journal of Polonia University*, 51(2), 176-186. doi: <https://doi.org/10.23856/5122>
- Turmanzhanov, U. (2000). *Kazakh proverbs and sayings* (4th ed.). Almaty: Bilim.
- Tuxtazarova, S. (2023). The Conceptosphere: Unraveling the Linguistic Picture of a World in Cognitive Linguistics. *International Bulletin of Applied Science and Technology*, 3(10), 377-381. Retrieved from <https://www.researchcitations.com/index.php/ibast/article/view/2878>
- Usobovich, A. U. (2023). Linguocognitive and Linguocultural Characteristics of Proverbs and Languages in Different Languages. *Gospodarka i Innowacje*, 33, 394-398. Retrieved from https://www.gospodarkainnowacje.pl/index.php/issue_view_32/article/view/1180
- Vorkachev, S. G. (2007). Filling the conceptosphere. In *Linguocultural concept: typology in the sphere of being: monograph* (pp. 8-93). Volgograd: Volgograd State University.
- Yskakhov, A., & Uali, N. (2011). *Dictionary of the Kazakh literary language* (Vol. 6). Almaty. Retrieved from <https://emle.kz/books/3721098a1781415ca4ebcd03a30c6061.pdf>
- Zholdasbek, L. (1998). *Kinship names in Kazakh speech*. Almaty.