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Conceptualization of Shame in the Kazakh Linguistic Culture: Psycholinguistic Study

The concept of shame is an integral part of the Kazakh culture and mentality. It embeds in the upbringing of a child and covers the whole life of the representatives of the Kazakh language and culture. The study is aimed at exploring the concept verbally represented by the lexeme “ұят” (shame) in the linguistic culture of the Kazakh nation. Mixed methods research combining lexicographic analysis, semantic and cognitive analysis, and a psycholinguistic experiment was conducted to determine the meaning, content of the concept of shame in the Kazakh language and its impact on daily life and culture of the nation. The participants of a free associative experiment, administered via Google Forms, included 63 representatives of the Kazakh language and culture (19 male, 44 female) aged 17–45 years. The participants of the experiment were asked to provide associations (words that came to their mind as reactions) to the stimulus word “ұят” (shame). The number of associations was not limited. The experimental data were quantitatively analyzed and further categorized for modeling the associative field of the concept under study. The results of the study demonstrate how extensive and diverse the concept of shame in the Kazakh linguistic picture of the world is.

Keywords: conceptualization, shame, the Kazakh language, linguistic culture, psycholinguistic study, linguistic consciousness, free associative experiment.

Introduction

There is a growing interest within the anthropocentric paradigm in the investigation of the linguistic worldview [1]. The development of a cognitive approach to language phenomena aided in its comprehension as a source of information on the conceptual or cognitive structures of people's consciousness [2]. A word is kept in the internal lexicon and occurs in speech not simply as a “sign” of a notion or representation; it carries a weight of associations that are firmly tied to it and arise individually in speech [3].

A new understanding of human behavior has resulted in the reworking of fundamental concepts such as personality, ethnicity, and so on [4]. Peoples' perception of situation and their subsequent emotional response is dependent on whether it is culturally acceptable and normative to do so, and whether it is functional within the particular sociocultural context [5; 97]. There is a lot of discussion around the concept of shame in various cultures. Shame is a complex emotion and often discussed with reluctance; these feelings are usually incapacitating and unbearable [6]. Some people see it as harm, taking into consideration its excessively archaic content, while others reanimate the concept of shame, considering it the only effective tool in the fight against radicalization. Previous studies have found cultural variation in the frequency and intensity of guilt and shame, in which Japanese participants reported experiencing them more than Americans [7].

The main function of shame is the regulation of social behavior of the individual; being able to experience shame a person becomes more sensitive to the feelings, assessments, and experiences of other people [8]. Shame acts as a force that brings people together [9]. A person who can overcome shame becomes more receptive to other people's comments and criticism, and criticism, in turn, has its positive aspects and in a constructive way brings benefits. Moreover, shame is important in overcoming challenges and helps in understanding certain aspects of the individual [8].

Shame is a part of Turkic culture and traditions, and it contributes to understanding of who the Kazakhs are. Elder generation used to say “It is a shame” to young people warning them against the unwise steps and the concept of shame passed down from generation to generation.

Today, in the context of globalization when the borders have expanded and most traditions have faded [10], it is important to investigate the conceptualization of the cultural concept of shame in the picture of the world of the Kazakhs. We can assume that there are some changes in the understanding and experience of shame nowadays, which may be associated with a sharp change in values. Thus, the study is aimed at ex-

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ploring the concept verbally represented by the lexeme “ұят” (shame) in the linguistic culture of the Kazakh nation. The study results will add to an in-depth understanding of shame in the Kazakh linguistic culture and consciousness, and will contribute to the effective cross-cultural communication.

Materials and methods

In this respect, we overtook the investigation of the conceptualization of shame in the Kazakh linguistic culture by means of the complex of linguistic and psycholinguistic methods. The current study manipulated the research methods such as lexicographic analysis, a universal method which being interrelated with the theory, enriches and develops it, provides a large amount of dictionary material and “collective wisdom”, semantic and cognitive analysis explaining a word and moving towards a knowledge about the world [11], and a psycholinguistic method of a free associative experiment.

A free associative experiment was carried out among the representatives of the Kazakh language and culture. The experiment was administered via Google Forms, which allowed creating a poll for the mass sending of questionnaires to e-mail addresses and social networks of the respondents. Sixty-three respondents (19 male, 44 female) aged 17–45 years took part in the experiment. The participants of the experiment were asked to provide associations (words that came to their mind as reactions) to the stimulus word “ұят” (shame). The number of associations was not limited. The experimental data were quantitatively analyzed and further categorized for modelling the associative field of the concept under study.

Results and discussion

Based on the lexicographic analysis the following definitions of the lexeme “ұят” in the dictionary of the Kazakh language were revealed:

1. Адам бойындағы ізгі қасиет, ар-намыс, адамдардың қарым-қатынас мәдениетіндегі ненің жақсы, ненің жаман екендігін түсіну және ажырата білуі / A good quality of human, honour, knowledge of what is good and what is bad in the communication of people;

2. Адамның ұждан мен қоғамдағы моральдық принциптерге үйлеспейтіні, жағымсыз, теріс қылық жасаған кезде байқалатын сезімі / Something which does not comply with moral principles, a feeling observed when doing negative things; 3. Жарасымсыз, келіспейді / Negative, not good [12].

The phrases *бейбастақ іс істелді* / Something wrong is done; *ыңғайсыз болды* / It is inconvenient, not proper; *ұятқа қалды* / caused a shameful situation; *өз атына кір келтірді* / messed his name; *ұятты жиып қойды* / gathered the shame; *масқара етті, жер қылды, ұялтты* / put down to the ground; *ұят пердесін жыртты* / teared the septum of shame; *абыройы төгілді* / the honour was poured out; *ұяттан айырылды* / was deprived of shame; *ұяттан аттады* / stepped over shame; *ұяттан беті күйді* / face burned from shame; *ұятты шүберекке түйді* / wrap the shame into fabric indicate that it is considered a shame when something improper is done.

Shame is an important part of upbringing in the Kazakh culture and the religion of Islam beginning from the early period of a child. Kazakh people use the word “ұят” (shame) in different situations saying “ұят болады”. The phrase can be transferred into the English language only in the context of different situations. A lot of examples can be provided to describe the meaning of the phrase “ұят болады”, as the Kazakhs use it in various setting. It can be used even when they are afraid to tell the truth or false and when they are afraid to put somebody to a shame situation and to preserve peace and unity: “It will be a shame, do not do ...”, “Would not be a shame if I will...”, “It will be a shame even if I am right”, “I am afraid to put somebody in a shame situation”. The Kazakhs used to appreciate their culture and positive attitude. It is a shame not to know family ancestors in the Kazakh tradition and the phrase “it will be a shame” makes the Kazakhs know their relatives and seven grandfathers. Day by day, the younger generation is reminded of the importance of culture and traditions by the older generation. The traditions and culture being a highest value in the Kazakh society are treated from the perspectives of shame.

The phraseological corpus of the language is the mirror in which a linguocultural community identifies its national self-consciousness [13]. Cultural-national connotation of phraseological units plays a significant role in the reproduction of the commonplace mentality [14]. The phraseological stock of the language conceptualizes not only the knowledge about naive picture of the world and all the types of the subject’s attitude to its fragments but the usage of these language entities and the intergeneration transmittance of standards and stereotypes of the national culture” [13; 14]. In this respect, the analysis of the phraseological corpus containing the lexeme “ұят” (shame) was carried out.

All Kazakhs grow up by reading Abay's works about morality, faith and conscience. According to Abay, «*Рухани әлемнің қайнар көзі — білім, ғылым, адамгершілік пен ақыл, ар-ұят, яғни адамның рухани байлығы*» / The source of the spiritual world is knowledge, science, morality and intellect, **conscience**, that is, the spiritual wealth of a person (translated by the authors). In Abay's teaching, the word "conscience" is referred to the Kazakh word "ар-ұят" which is directly translated into English as "shame". In this respect we can assume that an intellectual person with high morals never does shameful things, and Abay directs us to be a well-educated and good person, who is able to appreciate others' opinions and decisions.

In one of his words of wisdom, Abay quoted the hadith: "Whoever is ashamed to have faith" [15]. The word "shame" is one of the most comprehensive and profound words. This is one of the most studied concepts of Sharia. Wisdom of the Kazakhs combines with Sharia. Shame is a branch of faith, a manifestation of Islamic behavior. If the feelings of shame occupy a special place in a person's soul, then this shows the beauty and a high degree of human adherence to the path of Islam. Shame is a characteristic of God's prophets who were sent to earth to share the truth and set an example. According to the associate of Abu Sayyid al-Khudri, "the feeling of shame of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was greater than the girl sitting behind the curtain. If the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) saw something shameful, we would know that he was ashamed looking at his face. This truthfulness of the prophets is one of the characteristics of the righteous servants of God who have dedicated their lives to it. The presence or absence of shame is a sign of the true nature of a person. Shame is a virtue that strengthens a person's faith and character. If a person is embarrassed by one action and his ace turns pink due to an inappropriate action, then his name and soul are pure [16].

The Kazakh proverb says: *Өлімнен ұят күшті* / Shame is stronger than death. For a conscientious person, shame has a special place. Our ancestors said "Because of a sense of shame, I almost fell into a hole in the ground". Therefore, shame is a noble quality, incompatible with human behavior that keeps people from doing bad things, encourages them to do well and makes them hate evil. According to S. Sarayi, "*Ұятсыз адам иттен де жаман*" / A shameless person is worse than a dog. Such sayings guide a new growing generation to the right direction.

As a result of the associative experiment conducted among the speakers of the Kazakh language aimed at investigating the content and the structure of the concept shame in the Kazakh linguistic consciousness 222 associative responses were received. 338 cognitive features of the concept were identified, 12 of which were stated once (Table 1).

Table 1

Associative responses of respondents to the stimulus "ұят"

Reaction	Quantity	Percentage
Тәрбие (upbringing)	20	9
Ар-ұждан (honour)	20	9
Ұялшақтық (shyness)	6	2.7
Иман (religion)	13	5.86
Өңгімелеу (to talk)	1	0.45
Менталитет (mentality)	2	0.9
Әсиет (advice)	3	1.35
Кірерге тесік таппау (not to find a hole to enter / to feel ashamed)	5	2.25
Шыншылдық (sincerity)	5	2.25
Ата-ана (parents)	6	2.7
Ар-намыс (conscience)	39	17.6
Тәрбиесіз (ill-mannered)	20	9
Керек емес (not needed)	1	0.45
Болмайды, ұят болады (you are not allowed, it is a shame)	3	1.35
Біздің менталитетімізге жат (does not comply with our mentality)	1	0.45
Қазақи болмыс (Kazakh tradition)	4	1.8
Маңызы зор (important)	1	0.45
Қыз баласы (girl)	4	1.8
Мәдениетсіздік (lack of culture)	3	1.35
Тәрбиесіздік (ill-mannered)	7	3.15
Имансыздық (impiety)	3	1.35

Мәдениет (culture)	7	3.15
Өлімнен ұят күшті (death is better than shame)	2	0.9
Ұяндық — тәрбие, тыйым, иман, жақсылық (humbleness — education, taboo, goodness)	1	0.45
Адамгершілік (humanity)	5	2.25
Сабыр (patience)	1	0.45
Шүкіршілік (thanksgiving)	1	0.45
Ешкімнің ала жібін аттамай (not to do harm)	3	1.35
Кішіпейілдік (simplicity)	1	0.45
Кешірім, кешірімді болу (to forgive)	2	0.9
Надандық (ignorance)	8	3.6
Субханаллах дұрыс емес (Subhanallah incorrect)	10	4.5
Табиғатымызға жат (does not comply with our nature)	1	0.45
Намыссыз (without ambition)	1	0.45
Ата-ананы жерге қарату (to cause shame to parents)	2	0.9
Үмітті ақтамау (not to realize expectations)	1	0.45
Көрегенді / білімді (learned)	8	3.6
Ой, жан және тіл тазалығы (purity of thought, soul and language)	1	0.45
Total	222	100%

Source: authors' elaboration based on the word association test

Based on the frequency of lexical associations, the core (identified by reactions from more than 20 subjects), the near periphery (10–20 reactions), the far periphery (<10 reactions), and the outer periphery (individual associations) were determined (Table 2).

Table 2

The associative field of the concept ұят in the Kazakh linguistic consciousness

Centre <i>more than 20</i>	ар-намыс (conscience) 39, тәрбие (upbringing) 20, ар-ұждан (honour) 20, тәрбиесіз (ill-mannered) 20.
Near periphery <i>10–20</i>	иман (religion) 13, субханаллах дұрыс емес (subhanallah incorrect) 10.
Far periphery <i>less than 10</i>	надандық (ignorance) 8, көрегенді / білімді (learned) 8, тәрбиесіздік (ill-mannered) 7, мәдениет (culture) 7, ұялшақтық (shyness) 6, ата-ана (parents) 6, адамгершілік (humanity) 5, кірерге тесік таппау (not to find a hole to enter / to feel ashamed) 5, шыншылдық (sincerity) 5, қазақи болмыс (Kazakh tradition) 4, қыз баласы (girl) 4, өсиет (advice) 3, болмайды, ұят болады (you are not allowed, it is a shame) 3, мәдениетсіздік (lack of culture) 3, имансыздық (impiety) 3, ешкімнің ала жібін аттамай (not to do harm) 3, менталитет (mentality) 2, кешірім, кешірімді болу (to forgive) 2, өлімнен ұят күшті (death is better than shame) 2, ата-ананы жерге қарату (to cause shame to parents) 2.
Outer periphery <i>Individual associations</i>	әңгімелеу (to talk), керек емес (not needed), біздің менталитетімізге жат (does not comply with our mentality, маңызы зор (important), ұяндық — тәрбие, тыйым, иман, жақсылық (humbleness — education, taboo, goodness), сабыр (patience), шүкіршілік (thanksgiving), кішіпейілдік (simplicity), табиғатымызға жат (does not comply with our nature), намыссыз (without ambition), үмітті ақтамау (not to realize expectations), ой, жан және тіл тазалығы (purity of thought, soul and language).

Source: authors' elaboration based on the word association test

As stated in the Table 2, the shame is primarily associated with conscience (17.6%), upbringing (9%), and honour (9%). The associative field *shame* in the Kazakh linguistic consciousness was further interpreted and categorized into the clusters forming the semantic zones. The following semantic zones were formed:

Moral qualities (38.7%): ар-намыс (conscience) 39, ар-ұждан (honour) 20, иман (religion) 13, шыншылдық (sincerity) 5, адамгершілік (humanity) 5, ой, жан және тіл тазалығы (purity of thought, soul and language), сабыр (patience), шүкіршілік (thanksgiving), кішіпейілдік (simplicity);

Education (16.67%): тәрбие (upbringing) 20, көрегенді / білімді (learned) 8, мәдениет (culture) 7, кешірім, кешірімді болу (to forgive) 2;

Negative implications (27.5%): тәрбиесіз (ill-mannered) 20, субханаллах дұрыс емес (subhanallah incorrect) 10, надандық (ignorance) 8, тәрбиесіздік (ill-mannered) 7, кірерге тесік таппау (not to find a hole to enter / to feel ashamed) 5, мәдениетсіздік (lack of culture) 3, имансыздық (impiety) 3, ата-ананы жерге қарату (to cause shame to parents) 2, үмітті ақтамау (not to realize expectations), әңгімелеу (to talk), намыссыз (without ambition);

Subject (3.6%): ата-ана (parents) 6, қыз баласы (girl) 4;

Mentality and tradition (12.6%): ұялшақтық (shyness) 6, қазақи болмыс (Kazakh tradition) 4, өсиет (advice) 3, болмайды, ұят болады (you are not allowed, it is shame) 3, ешкімнің ала жібін аттамау (not to do harm) 3, менталитет (mentality) 2, өлімнен ұят күшті (death is better than shame) 2, ұяндық — тәрбие, тыйым, иман, жақсылық (humbleness — education, taboo, goodness), керек емес (not needed), біздің менталитетімізге жат (does not comply with our mentality), маңызы зор (important), табиғатымызға жат (does not comply with our nature).

Conclusion

We aimed at exploring the concept of shame verbally represented by the lexeme “ұят” in the linguistic culture of the Kazakh language and culture bearers. Mixed methods research combining lexicographic analysis, semantic and cognitive analysis and a psycholinguistic experiment was conducted to determine the meaning, content of the concept of shame in the Kazakh linguistic and to understand its impact on daily life and culture of the ethnos. The study results show that shame is an integral part of the Kazakh culture and mentality. Shame is present in the whole life of Kazakhs starting from childhood and exists in every step of the Kazakhs.

The concept of shame, as comes out from the research results, is extensive in the Kazakh linguistic consciousness. Shame is something sacred in the Kazakh linguistic culture and inviolable for society. Shame is closely related to conscience, education, religion and upbringing of younger generation in the culture of the Kazakh nation. Two types of attitudes and perception of shame among young generation of the Kazakhs can be noticed: (1) “no need to be in a shameful situation or cause it” and (2) “no need to speak of shame” as it is against our mentality and against our nature.

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Қазақ лингвомәдениетінде ұяттың концептуалдануы: психолингвистикалық зерттеу

Ұят ұғымы қазақ мәдениеті мен ділінің ажырамас бөлігі. Ол бала тәрбиесіне негізделіп, қазақтардың бүкіл өмірін қамтиды. Осы зерттеуде қазақ халқының лингвомәдениетіндегі «ұят» лексемасымен ауызша ұсынылған тұжырымдамаға талдау жасалды. Лексикографиялық талдау, семантикалық және когнитивті талдау, психолингвистикалық экспериментті қамтитын аралас әдістер қазақ тіліндегі ұят ұғымының мағынасын, мазмұнын және оның этностың күнделікті өмірі мен мәдениетіне әсерін анықтау үшін қолданылды. *Google Forms* көмегімен жүргізілген еркін ассоциациялық эксперименттің қатысушылары 17-45 жас аралығындағы қазақ тілі мен мәдениетінің 63 өкілі (19 ер адам, 44 әйел адам) болды. Экспериментке қатысушылардан «ұят» сөзіне ассоциациялар (олардың санасына реакция ретінде келген сөздер) келтіру сұралды. Ассоциациялар саны шектелмеді. Эксперименттік деректер сандық түрде талданды және ассоциативті өрісті модельдеу үшін одан әрі жіктелді. Зерттеу нәтижелері қазақ тілдік әлем бейнесінде ұят ұғымының қаншалықты кең және алуан түрлі екендігін көрсетеді.

Кілт сөздер: концептуалдану, ұят, қазақ тілі, лингвомәдениет, психолингвистикалық зерттеу, лингвистикалық сана, еркін ассоциативті эксперимент.

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Концептуализация стыда в казахской лингвокультуре: психолингвистическое исследование

Понятие стыда является неотъемлемой частью казахской культуры и менталитета. Он закладывается в воспитание ребенка и охватывает всю жизнь казахов. В настоящем исследовании предпринят анализ концепта, вербально представленного лексемой «ұят», в лингвокультуре казахского народа. Для определения значения и содержания понятия стыда в казахском языке, а также выявления его влияния на повседневную жизнь и культуру казахского этноса было проведено исследование посредством комплекса методов, сочетающих лексикографический, семантический и когнитивный анализ, психолингвистический эксперимент. В свободном ассоциативном эксперименте, проведенном с помощью *Google Forms*, приняли участие 63 представителя казахского языка и культуры (19 мужчин, 44 женщины) в возрасте 17–45 лет. Участников эксперимента попросили привести ассоциации (слова, которые пришли им на ум в качестве реакций) к слову-стимулу «ұят» (стыд). Количество ассоциаций не было ограничено. Экспериментальные данные были количественно проанализированы и далее классифицированы для моделирования ассоциативного поля исследуемого понятия. Результаты исследования демонстрируют, насколько обширно и разнообразно представлено понятие стыда в казахской языковой картине мира.

Ключевые слова: концептуализация, стыд, казахский язык, лингвокультура, психолингвистическое исследование, языковое сознание, свободный ассоциативный эксперимент.

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