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## ONOMATOPOEIA OF KAZAKH AND CHINESE LANGUAGES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

**Abstract.** This study is devoted to a comparative analysis of onomatopoeia in Kazakh and Chinese, which are lexical means for transmitting sounds of living and inanimate nature, animals, humans, technology and natural phenomena. The novelty of the work lies in the identification and systematization of the specific features of onomatopoeia in two different language systems, as well as in the analysis of their categories from the point of view of phonetics, grammar and pragmatics. The purpose of the study is to identify similarities and differences in the use of onomatopoeic words in Kazakh and Chinese, as well as to reveal their functions and communicative role. The research solved the tasks of selecting the most commonly used onomatopoeic words, classifying them according to phonetic, grammatical and pragmatic characteristics, reviewing examples of their use in context, as well as identifying cultural and national specifics of their use. The methodological basis of the study was a comparative analysis, descriptive method and theoretical analysis. The results showed that despite the difference in the structural foundations of the two languages, Kazakh and Chinese have common trends in the transmission of everyday and natural sounds, but the forms and frequency of their use differ significantly. It is revealed that onomatopoeia in both languages play an important communicative and expressive role, giving an emotional coloring to the utterance and enhancing its expressiveness. The theoretical significance of the research lies in expanding knowledge about the grammatical and pragmatic nature of onomatopoeia, while the practical value lies in the possibility of applying the findings in interlanguage comparison, in translation studies and in teaching Kazakh and Chinese languages.

**Keywords:** Kazakh languages, Chinese languages, linguistics, imitative words, onomatopoeia, comparative analysis, study, language structure.

### Introduction

Language is not only a means of communication but also an essential tool for expressing ideas, emotions, and cultural characteristics. It is inextricably linked to thought, manifesting itself in the way we perceive and reproduce the sounds of the world around us. One of the most striking examples of this connection is the use of onomatopoeia, a type of vocabulary that reflects natural phenomena and objects through the senses. These words are found in all languages, including Kazakh and Chinese, and serve a unique purpose in conveying sound and sensation.

In the scientific literature, onomatopoeia is used to describe the formation of words that imitate natural sounds. This phenomenon, from the Greek words "onoma" meaning "name" and "poieo" meaning "create", is a special way of reflecting reality through language (Palupi M. E., 2023:10). The sound form of an onomatopoeic word is associated with specific noises, voices, or sounds in nature.

In linguistics, onomatopoeia can refer to both the creation of these words and the already existing onomatopoeic units. It forms the basis for onomatopoeic vocabulary, which has both similarities and differences between Kazakh and Chinese.

Kazakh, a member of the Turkic language family, and Chinese, a member of the Sino-Tibetan language group, have significant differences in their grammatical structures. However, both languages share a rich set of onomatopoeic words that play a special role in their vocabulary systems.

A comparative analysis of these imitative words allows us to identify both their universal and unique properties, as well as how they contribute to the imagery and reflection of national and cultural perspectives in speech.

The relevance of this research is determined not only by linguistic interests, but also by modern social realities. In light of the strengthening political, economic, and cultural ties between China and Kazakhstan, there is a growing need for a deeper understanding of both languages. This includes their onomatopoeic systems, which play a significant role in colloquial speech, literary texts, and everyday communication.

The significance of a comparative analysis of Kazakh and Chinese onomatopoeia becomes evident in both theoretical and practical terms. The theoretical value of this work lies in its contribution to the understanding of the lexical-semantic systems of these two languages. It helps to identify their universal and unique characteristics, as well as to clarify the role of onomatopoeic vocabulary in shaping grammatical and pragmatic structures of utterances.

The practical significance of this research lies in its potential application in various fields. The results can be utilized for interlanguage comparison in translation studies and teaching Kazakh and Chinese, as well as for developing intercultural communication skills. In addition, the comparison of onomatopoeic words can contribute to a deeper understanding of emotion transmission mechanisms and cultural codes in language, which is essential for professionals in the field of intercultural dialogue. It is also valuable for linguists, translators, and other practitioners. The findings can be applied in lexicography, educational materials, and research on cognitive linguistics, ethnolinguistics, and communication theory.. In today's world, where international cooperation is growing rapidly, especially between Kazakhstan and China, the study of onomatopoeic words and onomatopoeia acquires additional practical significance, as it contributes to the formation of more accurate and emotional translations, facilitates the process of language learning and enhances mutual understanding between representatives of different cultures.

### **Research materials and methods**

The methodological basis of this study was a comparative analysis, a descriptive method, and a theoretical analysis. These methods together provided a holistic and objective approach to the issues under study.

Comparative analysis allowed us to compare the onomatopoeic vocabulary in the Kazakh and Chinese languages. This helped us identify their similarities and differences, as well as the phonetic, grammatical, and semantic features of onomatopoeia. We also examined their pragmatic role in communication, which led to the identification of universal trends in onomatopoeia formation and the recording of national-specific features in each language.

Descriptive analysis was applied to systematically organize and categorize onomatopoeic words, allowing us to examine their structure, function, and place within the vocabulary systems of both languages in detail. Individual examples of onomatopoeia were analyzed using the descriptive method, revealing patterns of use and stylistic characteristics.

The theoretical analysis provided a comprehensive understanding of the material being studied. Based on this analysis, the scientific works of both domestic and foreign scholars on the topic of onomatopoeia were reviewed. This allowed us to justify the selection of onomatopoeic words as an independent subject of research and consider them from various perspectives, including phonetics, morphology, semantics, and pragmatics.

A variety of sources were used during the research process. The scientific literature on general and comparative linguistics, as well as the work of Kazakhstani and Chinese scholars in the field of onomatopoeia, formed the basis for the generalization of theoretical positions. In addition, international acts governing the preservation and promotion of linguistic heritage, such as UNESCO's documents on multilingualism and cultural diversity, were analyzed. Statistical data on the number of speakers of the Kazakh and Chinese languages and the dynamics of their learning and use were

also used, allowing us to emphasize the social importance of the study.

Special attention was paid to the analysis of national and foreign legislation regulating the language policy and the status of the Kazakh and Chinese languages. Legislative acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan on language and education, as well as regulatory documents of the People's Republic of China regarding the preservation and development of the national language were considered as sources.

Other sources were also used, such as materials from national Kazakh and Chinese language collections, artistic and journalistic texts, dictionaries, and reference books. This ensured the representativeness and comprehensiveness of the research.

Thus, the chosen methods, combined with the use of scientific literature, international acts, statistical data, and regulatory documents, allowed us to comprehensively examine the specific features of onomatopoeia, determine its role in the development of conversational style, and identify cultural and linguistic characteristics inherent in the Kazakh and Chinese languages.

### Discussion

At the end of the XX — beginning of the XXI century, due to the emergence and development of many new priority areas in linguistics, the study of lexico-semantic systems is also considered relevant among them the system of onomatopoeic (onomatopoetic) vocabulary. First of all, onomatopoeia are unusual in that they have a direct resemblance to the sounds of the outside world (Khalil L., Sagheer I., Malik T. G., 2025:390).

The linguist Akhmet Baitursynuly, whose work "Til qural" divided imitative words as exclamation and function words, served as the foundation for Kazakh grammar up until 1930 (Kuderinova K. et al, 2025:284). However, following generations did not use Akhmet Baitursynuly's categorisation. Special studies of imitative words in Kazakh began in 1948 with an article titled "on imitative words" by Akhmedi Isakov and continued in the works of Shora Sarybayev, B. Katembayeva, and S. Ibrayev. Academician Abduali Kaidar exhibits his fresh perspective on imitation theory by asserting that the earliest roots of imitative words are one of the linguistic components supporting the language's development into an independent one. Academician A.T. Kaidar is the founder of Kazakh ethnolinguistics. In all his works related to the problems of etymology and onomastics, the author has always provided an ethnolinguistic explanation (Kaidarov A.T., Bakhamova A., 2003:55). Qudaybergen Zhubanov classifies the words into eight different categories (Khusainov A. S., 1988:65). In the 1948 magazine "People's Teacher" (Khaliq mugalimi) Akhmed Isaqov, a scholar who first objected to that view, argued that imitation was not to be part of the exclamation category. Imitations are a unique type of word. The imitations were classified in one part of the speech in "Kazakh Language Grammar (Qazaq tili grammatikasi), published in 1952. Isaqov's word classes for the "Modern Kazakh language" contained nine categories in 1954: names, adjectives, numbers, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, imitations, auxiliary words, and exclamations.

In Chinese linguistics, a special study of imitative words begins in the late twentieth century. One of the first speakers on this subject included Geng Shimin, Li Zengxiang, Zhang Dingjing, Yang Ling, Cheng Shixun, etc. You can then see the work of scientists who took into account a number of articles in Chinese on the question of imitation. Consider the following comparative studies by the Chinese scientists named for the words-imitation of the Kazakh language.

The "Modern Kazakh Grammar" book of Geng Shimin provides an extensive description of the definition, classification, grammatics and phonetic properties of Kazakh onomatopoeias (Geng Shimin, Shimin Geng, 1989:1). In the book "Foundation of Turkic linguistics," Li Zengxiang defines imitation of words as "impersonation of a variety of sounds emitted by people or things, when used in a variety of overlapping forms, overlapping can also change part of the vowel, such as sibdyr-sibdyr "rustle (沙沙声), sitir-sutyr "pop (啪啪声), get (Horseshoe running sound (马蒂奔跑声))" and so on. Mimetic words are words that mimic a person or thing in movement's image and state. They are also employed in overlapping forms. The meaning of onomatopoeia is in Zhang Dingjing's

book "Practical Grammar of Modern Kazakh language" which is: a imitative word used to mimic a person's tone, state and feeling, and functions as an adverbial part of a sentence. With regards to part of the attribution of speech, Zhang Dingjing will be divided into real words into "Practical Grammar of Modern Kazakh language". The type of onomatopoeia, grammatical features and the phonetic features will be presented in detail(Dingjing Zhang,2004:200). The imitation of this word is divided by onomatopoeia, quasi-sensory words and words, quasi-sensory words, to mimic the different feelings of the human body's imitation of the word, a small proportion of this imitation of the word, for instance:

“Lyq-lyq” hop feeling (一跳一挑的感觉)

“Basym lyq—lyq etip auirip tur” My head hurts, he said (我的头一跳一调地疼).

“Chyng” the feeling of tinnitus (耳鸣的感觉).

“Qulaqym chyng ete tusti”, My ears suddenly buzzed with tinnitus (我的耳朵突然嗡的一下耳鸣了)

Modern Kazakh onomatopoeia can be used as the main, predicate, object, set, adverbial in Yang Ling's paper "Kazakh onomatopoeia Research." Where the word imitation is a component of the sentence, it should be what part of the speech. As a result, the term imitation quickly arose in this component's location in the speech; as a result, it had a unified shape and meaning. According to Cheng Shixun's study, "Test Analysis of Kazakh Onomatopoeia," Kazakh onomatopoeia is divided into two categories from the syllable point of view: monophonic and polyphonic onomatopoeia; and from the meaning point of classification: onomatopoeia imitating the sound of human language entrained onomatopoeia. According to its grammatical purpose, it may be separated into two groups: adjective onomatopoeia and verb onomatopoeia. Onomatopoeia, according to Cui Chongde's early study on the language, does not have a specific meaning; rather, it has an abstract meaning. This abstraction is referred to as the "second element of sense" and is a part of the conceptual meaning of color. Compared from a source object, structure and syntactic function were chosen for Hu Xiaoyan and Cheng Sixun's comparative study of Chinese and the Kazakh onomatopoeia. It was noted that there is direct onomatopoeia, and no indirect onomatopoeia in chinese, in terms of semantinal rationale (Hu Xiaoyan, Cheng Shixun, 2013:10).

In many studies, it is believed that onomatopoeia create problems for translation, but there are few studies of onomatopoeia translation in pragmatics(Sasamoto R., 2021:348). It can be said that onomatopoeia are widespread in all human languages, is one of the oldest components of human language, plays an important role in the use of language. Suppressing onomatopoeia or substituting them for another type of word is a common practice for their use(Azari R., Sharififar M.,2017:34). Onomatopoeia is disproportionately high in the early words of children compared to the language of adults(Laing C. E.,2019:180).

### Research results

A comparison of the source and object of onomatopoeia in Chinese and Kazakh. The onomatopoeia of both Kazakh and Chinese comes from three aspects: human voice, the voice of animals and the sound of different things.

(1) Onomatopoeia which imitates the voice of human beings. The human being has created onomatopoeia in the course of historical development by simulated different sounds of human beings. "yiyiyaya (咿咿呀呀)" (kids learn to speak), the "chirp (叽叽喳喳)" (unorderly voice) and "huchi (呼哧)" (panting), are all present in the Chinese language(Hasen, 2013:23). In the Kazakh language, the onomatopoeic words that mimic human voices include "yrs yrs" (wheezing), "sybr sybr" (whispering voice), etc.

(2) Onomatopoeia that simulates animal calls. Observing and imitating animal calls yields a large number of onomatopoeia words. There are words like "meow(喵)" (cat barking), "Wang Wang 旺旺" (dog barking), "clucking(咯咯哒)" (Chicken barking), and so on in Chinese. Kazakh people



have lived a nomadic life for a long time due to the influence and limitations of the natural environment and geographical environment. Many words related to animal husbandry arose as the ancient Kazakh people transitioned from a hunting economy to a nomadic economy. Onomatopoeia words imitating animal calls evolved naturally.

(3) Onomatopoeia that simulates the sound of things in nature. Everything in the world, as we all know, has spirit. Nature produces a wide range of sounds, which naturally leads to the third type of onomatopoeia (Zhao Yanfang, 2018:131). Chinese terms for the audible sound of gunshots, the loud sound of reading, and the deafening sound of thunder are "Ba Ba Ba," "Lang Lang," and "boom," respectively. In Kazakh, people use "art ura" to describe rumbling thunder, "taq taq" to describe knocking at the door, "sar sur" to describe clattering water, and the image of "yr-yr" to describe ringing phone.

It is not hard to find that the sources of onomatopoeia in Kazakh and Chinese have many similarities. When describing the sound of a gun, for example, Chinese uses "ba 叭" and Kazakh uses "tars turs," in which the first morpheme "ta" vividly describes the sound of a gun; when describing the cry of a hen, Chinese uses "clucking 咯咯哒" and Kazakh uses "qytyqldaw," both vividly describe the cry of a hen, and we can judge what kind of animal it is by listening to its voice. However, due to differences in phonetic habits, observation angles, and language types, there are significant differences in simulating the same sound between Chinese and Kazakh. Dog barking is in Kazakh and Chinese is used in Chinese as a "Wang Wang 旺旺." Moreover, "the majority of verbs in Kazakh expressing animal calls are derived from onomatopoeia; i.e., verbs which express animal calls are derived by adding onomatopoeia suffixes." No such thing exists in Chinese. In "qarqldaydy," for instance, the suffix "dy" will be added to "qarqldau" to produce a "quack quack" for the crow.

Compared with Chinese onomatopoeia, Kazakh onomatopoeia is relatively simple. Generally speaking, it only takes a single word to express. In some cases, it uses compound words, two word juxtaposition and two word combination to express.

A comparison of syntactic functions of onomatopoeia in Chinese and Kazakh. The first is identity. The same grammatical functions in sentences pertain to Kazakh and Chinese Onomatopoeia. Their grammatical components are equivalent in some cases, which means they can be used as predicates, adverbials, attributives, and independent components in sentences. For example:

1. Jañbir sar etip tolassız jaudy (雨哗哗地下个不停)。
2. Tars tars etken miltıq dayısu auladan shıqtı (平平的枪声从院子里传出来)。
3. Kenet shyryldağan telefon onyń oıyn buzıp jiberdi. (突然一阵叮铃铃的电话铃声打断了他的思路)。

The second is dissimilarity. Kazakh and Chinese are two language families, Chinese is a member of Sino Tibetan, Kazakh is a member of Altaic, so there are great variations in grammar (Tazhibayeva S. et al., 2023:131). The most obvious difference between Kazakh onomatopoeia and Chinese onomatopoeia is the adjective onomatopoeia of Kazakh onomatopoeia and the verb onomatopoeia and onomatopoeia of the noun. Although onomatopoeia has the same grammatical function in Chinese, it does not change morphology.

The use of the descriptive method made it possible to systematize and classify onomatopoeic words according to their sources and grammatical functions. It was revealed that in both languages onomatopoeia can act as a predicate, circumstance, or definition. For example, the Kazakh "Tars tars etken miltıq dayısı" and the Chinese "啪啪啪枪声" perform the same function — creating an image of a sharp and repeated sound. The descriptive approach also showed that the Chinese language is characterized by greater regularity and musicality of onomatopoeic words, while the Kazakh language focuses on simplicity and capacity of form, which is associated with the peculiarities of oral tradition and nomadic life.

The theoretical analysis allowed us to comprehend the linguistic and cultural nature of onomatopoeia. It was found that onomatopoeia not only performs an aesthetic and expressive

function, but also reflects the worldview of native speakers. In Chinese, onomatopoeia is closely related to the idea of rhythmic speech and the musical nature of language, whereas in Kazakh they are more deeply integrated into the sphere of describing everyday life and nature (for example, cattle breeding, steppe phenomena, sounds of nomadic life). Theoretical analysis also confirmed that onomatopoeia in Kazakh is actively involved in word formation (through verbs and adjectives), while in Chinese it remains more static and syntactically embedded. The study of international acts and their comparison with national sources has shown that, despite the lack of direct regulation of onomatopoeic constructions in legislation, the cultural policy of China and Kazakhstan emphasizes the importance of preserving linguistic identity and unique forms of expression. This indicates the importance of preserving and further studying onomatopoeic vocabulary as part of the intangible cultural heritage.

When reviewing statistical data extracted from dictionaries, language corpora and oral speech materials, it was revealed that onomatopoeia associated with the animal world and natural phenomena is most actively used in both languages. At the same time, the Kazakh language has a close connection of onomatopoeia with the traditional way of life and nomadic culture, which is expressed in a large number of words related to animal husbandry and natural processes. In Chinese, there is a noticeable tendency to create polysyllabic structures that enhance the expressiveness of speech.

An analysis of literary texts and oral folk art has revealed that onomatopoeia plays an important stylistic and emotionally expressive role in both languages. It not only reproduces the sounds of nature, animals or humans, but also forms a special atmosphere of narration, making speech more vivid and imaginative.

Thus, the study showed that, despite the fact that Kazakh and Chinese belong to different language families, they have many common features in the sources and functions of onomatopoeia, but they differ significantly in structural models and ways of grammatical use of onomatopoeia.

A comparative analysis of onomatopoeia in Kazakh and Chinese has demonstrated its universality and significance for the linguistic practices of both cultures. Onomatopoeia serves not only phonetic and grammatical purposes, but also reflects the unique perspectives of different societies, their lifestyles, and cultural customs(). The novelty of this research lies in the fact that it is the first time a comprehensive classification and comparison of onomatopoeia in two languages from different language families has been conducted. The findings of this study have both theoretical implications for the advancement of comparative linguistics and practical applications in teaching, translation, and intercultural communication.

### **Conclusion**

The study of onomatopoeia in Kazakh and Chinese has revealed that this linguistic phenomenon not only has linguistic significance, but also cultural importance. Both languages utilize onomatopoeia to represent human voices, animal sounds, and natural phenomena, indicating its universal nature. However, differences in the structure and grammatical function of onomatopoetic words reflect the unique characteristics of each language. In Chinese, onomatopoeic expressions are represented by a diverse range of forms and rhythmic patterns, whereas in Kazakh, they are closely linked to nomadic traditions, nature, and animal husbandry and play an important role in word formation.

Thus, the comparative analysis has confirmed that onomatopoeia is not only a linguistic tool, but also a carrier of cultural codes and worldviews of different peoples. The novelty of this study lies in its systematic comparison of onomatopoeic expressions in two languages from different language families, allowing us to identify both similarities and differences. The results of this research can be useful for further development in comparative linguistics, intercultural communication, and in teaching and translation practices, where an accurate transmission of sound imagery is essential.

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## ҚАЗАҚ ЖӘНЕ ҚЫТАЙ ТІЛДЕРІНДЕГІ ОНОМАТОПЕЯСЫ: САЛЫСТЫРМАЛЫ ЗЕРТТЕУ

**Аңдатпа.** Бұл зерттеу қазақ және қытай тілдеріндегі ономотопеяны салыстырмалы талдауға арналған, олар тірі және жансыз табиғаттың, жануарлардың, адамның, техниканың

және табиғи құбылыстардың дыбыстарын жеткізуге арналған лексикалық құралдар болып табылады. Жұмыстың жаңалығы екі түрлі тілдік жүйеде ономотопеяның ерекше ерекшеліктерін анықтау және жүйелеу, сондай-ақ фонетика, грамматика және прагматика тұрғысынан олардың категорияларын талдау болып табылады. Зерттеудің мақсаты қазақ және қытай тілдерінде ономотопеялық сөздерді қолданудағы ұқсастықтар мен айырмашылықтарды анықтау, сондай-ақ олардың функциялары мен коммуникативтік рөлін ашу болып табылады. Зерттеу аясында ең көп қолданылатын ономотопеялық сөздерді таңдау, оларды фонетикалық, грамматикалық және прагматикалық белгілері бойынша жіктеу, оларды қолдану мысалдарын контексте қарастыру, сондай-ақ оларды қолданудың мәдени және ұлттық ерекшеліктерін анықтау мәселелері шешілді. Зерттеудің әдіснамалық негізі салыстырмалы талдау, сипаттамалық әдіс және теориялық талдау болды. Алынған нәтижелер екі тілдің құрылымдық негіздерінің айырмашылығына қарамастан, қазақ және қытай тілдерінің тұрмыстық және табиғи дыбыстарды берудегі ортақ тенденциялары бар екенін көрсетті, бірақ оларды қолданудың формалары мен жиілігі айтарлықтай ерекшеленеді. Ономотопея екі тілде де маңызды коммуникативті және экспрессивті рөл атқаратыны анықталды, бұл мәлімдемеге эмоционалды түс беріп, оның экспрессивтілігін арттырады. Зерттеудің теориялық маңыздылығы ономотопеяның грамматикалық және прагматикалық табиғаты туралы білімді кеңейту болып табылады, ал практикалық құндылығы алынған тұжырымдарды тіларалық салыстыруда, аудармада және қазақ және қытай тілдерін оқытуда қолдану мүмкіндігінен тұрады.

**Кілт сөздер:** Қазақ тілі, Қытай тілі, тіл білімі, имитациялық сөздер, ономотопея, салыстырмалы талдау, зерттеу, тілдік құрылым.

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## ОНОМАТОПЕЯ В КАЗАХСКОМ И КИТАЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКАХ: СРАВНИТЕЛЬНОЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ

**Аннотация.** Данное исследование посвящено сравнительному анализу звукоподражаний в казахском и китайском языках, которые представляют собой лексические средства для передачи звуков живой и неживой природы, животных, человека, техники и природных явлений. Новизна работы заключается в выявлении и систематизации специфических особенностей звукоподражаний в двух разных языковых системах, а также в анализе их категорий с точки зрения фонетики, грамматики и прагматики. Цель исследования заключается в определении сходств и различий в употреблении звукоподражательных слов в казахском и китайском языках, а также в раскрытии их функций и коммуникативной роли. В рамках исследования были решены задачи по отбору наиболее употребляемых звукоподражательных слов, классификации их по фонетическим, грамматическим и прагматическим признакам, рассмотрению примеров их употребления в контексте, а также выявлению культурно-национальной специфики их использования. Методологическую основу исследования составили сравнительный анализ, описательный метод и теоретический разбор. Полученные результаты показали, что несмотря на различие структурных основ двух языков, казахский и китайский языки имеют общие тенденции в передаче бытовых и природных звуков, однако формы и частотность их употребления существенно отличаются. Выявлено, что звукоподражания в обоих языках играют важную коммуникативную и экспрессивную роль, придавая эмоциональную окраску высказыванию и усиливая его выразительность. Теоретическая значимость исследования заключается в расширении знаний



о грамматической и прагматической природе звукоподражаний, в то время как практическая ценность состоит в возможности применения полученных выводов при межъязыковом сравнении, в переводоведении и в преподавании казахского и китайского языков.

**Ключевые слова:** Казахский язык, китайский язык, лингвистика, имитационные слова, звукоподражание, сравнительный анализ, изучение, структура языка.

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