

Montanay E.A. 

Al Farabi Kazakh National University, Almaty, Kazakhstan

E-mail: elmiramontanay@gmail.com

NATIONAL COSTUME AS A CULTURAL ARTIFACT: REPRESENTATION WITHIN LINGUOCULTURAL DISCOURSE

Abstract. The present study examines national costume as a complex cultural artifact and analyzes its representation within linguocultural discourse. Proceeding from the assumption that national costume functions not only as a material component of traditional culture but also as a semiotic formation, the article interprets it as a bearer of collective historical memory, cultural codes, and ethnically conditioned worldview patterns. The aim of the research is to identify the conceptual and discursive potential of national costume as a culturally significant sign reflected in linguistic representation. To achieve this aim, the study addresses the interpretation of national costume as an artifact, reveals its conceptualization in language, and explores the mechanisms of its discursive actualization. The research is grounded in an integrative methodological framework that combines descriptive, comparative, conceptual, and discourse-analytical methods, allowing for a multidimensional examination of the phenomenon. The scientific novelty of the study lies in the consistent application of the “artifact – concept – discourse” analytical model to the analysis of national costume within linguocultural discourse, which enables a systematic interpretation of its symbolic and communicative functions. The findings demonstrate that national costume serves as a key cultural marker that preserves and transmits cultural meanings, reinforces ethnic identity, and functions as an important medium of cultural communication. The results contribute to the theoretical understanding of national cultural heritage and offer new perspectives for linguocultural and discourse-based research.

Keywords: cultural artifact, mythologeme, national costume, linguocultural discourse, concept, semiotics, identity, cultural code

Introduction

Contemporary scholarly research increasingly focuses on the interplay between the real world and the cognitive realms generated by human thought, as well as the processes through which material reality is represented within cultural and linguistic contexts. As an integral component of culture, clothing functions as a multifaceted artifact that unites material, symbolic, and linguistic dimensions, playing a distinct role in human life. While an artifact can be defined as an object resulting from historical, cultural, and cognitive human activity that preserves collective memory and transmits cultural knowledge across generations, clothing, in this regard, transcends mere necessity. It serves as a cultural product that embodies national identity and carries symbolic significance.

Alongside dwellings, tools, industrial implements, and foodstuffs, clothing constitutes a vital element of a community’s material culture. Its primary function is to protect human life from the adverse effects of the natural environment, including cold, heat, wind, and precipitation. Although material functions may be similar across contexts, once situated within cultural frameworks, clothing acquires distinct national characteristics, reflecting the uniqueness of different ethnic groups. Clothing patterns vary across civilizations, from nation to nation, region to region, or social group to social group. Furthermore, geographical conditions, climate, lifestyle, religious beliefs, and traditional practices exert a significant influence on the formation and evolution of clothing styles (Salkynbai, 1999: 54).

National costume represents one of the oldest and most significant elements of an ethnic group's cultural heritage. It is closely intertwined with the historical development and social structure of the community and serves as a key marker of national identity. As a manifestation of folk art, national costume functions as a cultural artifact that reflects an ethnic group's distinctiveness, lifestyle, and adaptive strategies to the surrounding environment. While originating from practical necessity, national costume transcends its utilitarian function to acquire symbolic significance, embodying the cultural code, social organization, and worldview of the ethnic community.

In the literature, national costume is described as “everyday clothing that reflects the life patterns and cultural characteristics of the people” (Orlenko, 1996: 345), whereas the *Oxford Dictionary* defines it as “traditional attire worn by the inhabitants of a particular country on special occasions or formal ceremonies.” These definitions highlight the dual nature of national costume as both a practical and ceremonial artifact, emphasizing its uniqueness as a culturally specific marker of an ethnic group.

From an artifact perspective, national costume is not only the product of human creativity and folk artistry but also embodies the cultural code intrinsic to the nation. The significance of this national cultural code can be discerned through the analysis of the nomenclature associated with different components of traditional attire. Discourse analysis allows for the exploration of the communicative functions of clothing. Studying national costume within a discursive framework provides a foundation for examining the conceptual level of garment-related terminology, its historical evolution, and its cultural content within linguocultural studies. Furthermore, it enables the investigation of current lexicological issues, including the relationship between concept and name, the process by which words acquire symbolic meaning, and the development of denotative and connotative aspects of terminology.

The interplay between language and culture reflects the cognitive frameworks, worldviews, and modes of understanding reality specific to each ethnic group. This relationship is often manifested through phraseological units and idioms, where multiple layers of meaning are encoded within linguistic expressions. Within the scope of discourse, the semantic range of a linguocultural unit expands, and the system of concepts it encompasses contributes to the formation of a national worldview.

Building on the theory of artifacts, analyzing the oldest forms of cultural artifacts—namely, the names of traditional clothing – through a discursive lens allows for a novel examination of both the semantic and functional characteristics of clothing phenomena and their terminology. Such analysis, conducted within linguocultural studies, reveals the significance of national cultural codes and clarifies the principles underlying the formation of clothing-related concepts.

National costume, as a cultural phenomenon representing a nation's image, constitutes an integrated linguocultural system in language and serves as a distinctive text illustrating the interrelation of national consciousness and values. The emergence of value systems and the markers defining national identity are grounded in the processes of naming. The act of naming, as well as the functional role of artifacts, is closely linked to the historical experience and cultural existence of a people.

In this context, a comparative analysis of Kazakh and Turkish national costume terminology provides insights into the specific mechanisms of nomination, the etymological foundations of the lexical layer reflecting national codes, and the directions of cultural and linguistic transformation within the two communities. The relevance of this study lies in its direct engagement with the mutual influence of language and culture in the ethnogenesis of Kazakh and Turkish peoples. Additionally, identifying the linguistic and cultural representations that contributed to historical divergences among related peoples highlights the significance of scientifically examining the foundations of national identity.

Materials and methods

The study was conducted using a comprehensive approach grounded in contemporary methodological principles of linguocultural studies, cultural studies and discourse theory. The research materials comprised ethnographic works describing the phenomenon of national costume, as well as theoretical studies examining the interplay between culture and language. In addition, the analysis focused on concepts and interpretations established within the scholarly discourse on national attire. Methodologically, the research relied on several interrelated approaches, including descriptive and comparative methods, allowing for a systematic examination of the subject while integrating insights from multiple disciplinary perspectives.

Discussion

In the creation of traditional clothing, communities not only adapt to their surrounding environment but also express their relationship to it, as well as their aesthetic preferences and worldview. Clothing can be understood as the outcome of a dialogue between the individual and the external world, serving as an indicator of a person's socially situated internal identity. Although garments are made from external, material resources, humans shape them according to their worldview, assign names, and transform them into linguistic entities. As Wilhelm von Humboldt suggested, this process effectively “imbues the material with spirit.” In this sense, the idealization or spiritualization of an artifact begins with its act of naming.

For a material object to function as a recognized artifact within a social context, it must be perceived and acknowledged. An object cannot be considered an artifact solely by virtue of its materiality; it is accepted and understood only through a name that designates its conceptual significance. Once named, a material object persists within human consciousness, and its name subsequently conveys its significance. Philosopher Evald Ilyenkov argued that any object created by humans, if intended for a particular purpose and employed in daily life, gains significance as an object through naming, representing an “ideal form” which has no direct physical existence (Cole, 1997: 240). The material manifestation of this ideality, however, is intrinsically tied to human activity: “Ideality is expressed, preserved, and transmitted through human action, taking the form of words, signs, symbols, formulas, diagrams, and other means” (Ilyenkov, 2019: 38).

Founders of the cultural-historical school in psychology assert that humans, as active subjects, engage with the real world – namely, the surrounding objective environment – through artifacts, and that the content of this interaction is determined by the artifact's ideal nature or its meaning. Building on the perspectives of scholars such as J. Dewey and N. Chomsky, Michael Cole emphasizes that artifacts possess both material and ideal dimensions: “Artifacts are simultaneously material and ideal. They can mediate human connections with the world and with one another by integrating properties inherent to tools and symbols” (Cole, 1997: 293). From this perspective, the mediating function of artifacts, which facilitates human communication and interaction with other cultural objects, is inherently tied to their ideal properties.

Cole, Bartlett, and other scholars employ concepts such as schemas, scenarios, situations, contexts, and practices to define the ideal dimension of artifacts, approaching them from psychological and anthropological perspectives. Individuals construct cognitive schemas through the use, storage, and selection of information, which are then communicated, interpreted, and integrated into human experience. According to D. Rumelhart, a schema represents a system of relations that preserves the actions of each event (Cole, 255). R. D'Andrade distinguishes between the ideal aspect of an artifact, represented by the schema, and the material representation, embodied in symbols such as words, phrases, or images, asserting that the schema constitutes the meaning of the symbol (Cole, 263). Schemas simplify potential information obtained through sensory channels while discarding extraneous details (Cole, 267).

From a subject-oriented perspective, engagement with a cultural object relies on these schemas to associate events with particular circumstances. Individuals interpret which schema is

appropriate or effective for a given situation. Scholars describe this regulation of perception and action through terms such as “situation,” “context,” “environment,” or “practice.” Synthesizing these insights, Cole concludes: “Artifacts and artifact systems exist as entities only in relation to others, through what various authors have termed situations, contexts, actions, and so forth” (Cole, 1997: 293). Accordingly, the ideal existence of an artifact is defined by its relation to context or situation, with information generated through interactions organized by schemas and compressed into a meaning that constitutes the artifact’s ideality. The social use of an artifact further expands or contracts its contextual scope, and as contexts evolve, new layers of meaning are added to words and concepts associated with the artifact.

Theoretical frameworks play a crucial role in understanding national clothing as a cultural artifact. National attire is not merely a material object; it functions as a semiotic and cognitive construct that embodies specific cultural practices, collective memory, and a system of values. Garment terms, fixed expressions, textual descriptions, and artistic representations, when applied within particular historical and social contexts, serve to expand or refine the semantic field of clothing. Accordingly, the representation of national clothing in linguocultural discourse is shaped less by its material form than by the realization of idealized structures – schemata, contexts, and interpretative models – through language.

Historical-ethnographic studies examining the cultural-semantic content of national clothing demonstrate the interconnections between clothing elements, nomadic lifestyles, natural environments, and social structures, elucidating the processes through which their symbolic meanings are constructed (Nugmanova et al., 2023). Moreover, research investigating the position of clothing terminology within the linguistic worldview and its capacity to reflect national mentality confirms that these cultural connotations are preserved within the lexical system (Dalabayeva, 2015). Nevertheless, such studies rarely provide systematic analyses of how national clothing is interpreted in specific communicative situations, textual narratives, or social practices at the discursive level.

From a semiotic perspective, national clothing is regarded as a cultural code, emphasizing its iconographic features, symbolism, and semantic structure (Faizullina & Hristidis, 2020). Axological approaches highlight the value-laden content of clothing elements, including their educational and worldview functions. Ethnolinguistic research further examines the social status, age-specific applications, and ritual functions of garments and adornments, drawing on linguistic evidence (Isova & Izturganova, 2024).

Another significant study is the article by Asenamanova A.S. and Qalysh A.B. (2025), which examines the representation of material culture through traditional clothing. In this work, traditional attire is considered not only as a physical object but also as a reflection of Turkic worldview, social structure, and gender markers as presented in museum exhibitions. The study demonstrates that national clothing functions as a complex semiotic system of the material culture of Turkic peoples, meaningfully conveying aspects such as social status, age, and ethnic identity. In a museum context, such clothing does not merely exist as an exhibit; through its distinctive semiotic and praxeological context, it shapes the viewer’s perception and serves as a preserver of cultural memory. In this regard, the article links the representation of material culture with the idealized nature of national clothing as a cultural artifact, although the linguistic-discursive components and cognitive modeling are not fully addressed. Nevertheless, it highlights national clothing as a sign system conveying material culture content and interpreted within artistic and visual contexts, providing an additional analytical resource for research on artifact ideality and mechanisms of representation.

Synthesizing these studies, contemporary scholarly literature, while describing national clothing from semantic, symbolic, ethnographic, axiological, and semiotic perspectives, rarely approaches it as a holistic cultural artifact within the framework of linguocultural discourse – that is, as a dynamic phenomenon whose meaning is constructed through cognitive schemata, situational contexts, and interpretative models.

This study addresses this gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of how national clothing is represented in texts, scholarly discourse, journalism, and folklore. Here, the artifact’s idealized nature is conceptualized as a structure formed through cognitive models and cultural scripts, demonstrating that the meaning of national clothing is not confined to a symbolic level but is continuously renewed and expanded through its discursive use as a cultural construct.

Consequently, this research extends the understanding of national clothing from the symbolic to the discursive and cognitive levels, highlighting the interplay between the artifact’s societal application and its idealized representation, thus providing a novel contribution and enhancement to existing scholarship.

Results

The process of semantic expansion or narrowing of words through new contextualization can be explained using the three-tiered model of artifacts proposed by the American philosopher M. Vartofsky. According to Vartofsky, artifacts can be analyzed across three levels. The first level comprises the primary artifacts themselves. The second level includes both the artifacts and the ways they are utilized, encompassing associated routines, customs, traditions, laws, and other socially established practices. The third level refers to artifacts created within the imaginative realm, beyond the material reality—works of art and the actions involved in their reception and interpretation (Vartofsky, 1988:204). M. Cole further extends the third level to include schemas, scripts, and the contextual frameworks linked to these artifacts (Cole: 249).

Within this theoretical framework, both clothing and language qualify as primary artifacts. At the second level, one can consider the garments themselves, their designations, and the lexical meanings associated with them. A term functions as a bridge between language and clothing, simultaneously serving as a marker of meaning. At the third level, the word transcends its material form entirely. It interacts within the ideal, spiritual-linguistic realm with the meanings of other words, giving rise to new associations and semantic extensions linked to the term. This process is illustrated with an example in Table 1.

Table 1. Levels of the “Kimeshek” Artifact

Artifact Level	Example	Result / Significance
Primary	Kimeshek	A woman’s headgear
Secondary	Customs and prohibitions associated with wearing it (e.g., worn only by women with children)	Folkloric meanings and ritual use of the kimeshek (initiation rites and associated texts and rules)
Tertiary	Status symbol (marking the bride’s new role as a mother, respect as a mother, recognition in society)	Cultural code (representing Kazakh national attire)

Table 2. Levels of the “Kavuk” Artifact

Artifact Level	Example	Result / Significance
Primary	Kavuk	A man’s headgear
Secondary	Customs and prohibitions associated with wearing it (e.g., a teacher placing it on a student)	Folkloric meanings and ritual use of the kavuk (initiation rites and associated texts and rules)
Tertiary	Status symbol (designation of a successor)	Cultural code (representing Turkish national attire)

According to M. Vartofsky, as illustrated in Table 2, the *kimeshek* is not merely a piece of women’s attire but also transforms into a cultural symbol, evolving from headgear into a marker of national identity. The same applies to the *kavuk*. While the primary artifact exists materially as a tangible object, its designation through language conveys associated functions and knowledge,

preserving meaning within the collective memory of a nation and transmitting the community's relationship with the artifact across generations. Even when secondary-level information about an artifact is forgotten, its tertiary-level significance often endures as a cultural code, imprinting itself in the collective memory even after the artifact ceases to be in use. Customs and traditions linked to the artifact provide additional layers of meaning to its linguistic sign (name), thereby expanding its semantic scope within the linguistic domain. These meanings interact in the spiritual-linguistic realm, generating a network of derivative knowledge.

M. Cole refers to this network of derivative knowledge as *context*, which can also be interpreted in relation to the concept of *discourse*. The French scholar M. Foucault defines discourse as “a set of statements governed by a system of formation” (Foucault, 2004:225), whose basic unit he identifies as the discursive formation. Although discursive formations pertain to a set of signs, they cannot be analyzed grammatically or logically. According to Foucault, the emergence of discursive formations depends on: 1) a system of references and indications; 2) a specific positional framework; 3) an associative field; and 4) materiality (Foucault, 2004: 223). In other words, discourse constitutes a system of ideas that arises from verbal expression (materiality), associations without logical connections (associative field), interpreted within a certain worldview or stance (position).

Within this theoretical framework, the discourse of national attire is shaped by the worldview of each nation. While the name of a garment defines the materiality of its linguistic-symbolic representation, its shape, form, color, and other features indicate its intended purpose, such as warmth or protection. Moreover, information about the context in which the attire is worn and by whom contributes to the development of the associative field, shaping the broader semantic and cultural network surrounding the artifact.

From the perspective of linguistics, the discourse and its constitutive discursive formations, as theorized by the philosopher and cultural theorist M. Foucault, can be analogized to the processes by which objects acquire names, recognition, and an expanded semantic field. Linguist A.A. Ufimtseva defines the cognitive aspect of nomination as follows: “From a cognitive standpoint, direct lexical nomination is always the process through which factual reality is transformed into signs, and through which speakers, based on their social experience, convert facts of reality into linguistic facts, meanings, and categories” (Ufimtseva, 1977:8).

Building on the Marxist framework of the cognitive cycle—“object → action → word → action → object”—Ufimtseva identifies the first phase, *object → action → word*, as the stage where external reality becomes objectified and acquires a lexical designation. In this phase, an object is separated from its tangible qualities, as perceived through the senses, and is transformed into a concept that forms the nominative meaning of a lexical unit. The subsequent phase, *word → action → object*, relates to the linguistic function, where the virtual meaning of a word is clarified and its semantics expands through syntagmatic activity. As Lotman observes, “Thus, the signifying word becomes the primary cognitive unit of the language system, preserving in latent form the knowledge structures that represent the steps of cognition, or the translation of reality into thought, thereby consolidating the word-sign” (Lotman, 2000: 9).

As a cognitive unit within the language system, the word-symbol reflects each nation's perception of reality. Cognition begins with naming an object, while the semantic content of the name is shaped by the worldview, methods of understanding, and epistemological positions of the community. According to Ufimtseva, the cognitive act allows the word-symbol to reveal new semantic dimensions.

Ufimtseva outlines three theoretical principles regarding nomination: 1) when a linguistic unit acquires an initial name within the nominative system, it can also gain a secondary designation as a predicative unit in speech; 2) the linguistic material-ideal structure simultaneously represents and signifies reality; and 3) the psychological and physiological representation of reality through words generates a secondary system of signs, namely its image (Ufimtseva, 2004: 7).

Accordingly, lexical designations interact with other linguistic units in discourse, acquiring derivative meanings. Language itself, as an artifact, simultaneously unites the material and ideal properties of the word-symbol and its associated concepts. Reality, as mediated through language, diverges from objective reality, becoming a representation constructed by human cognition: “Language does not convey objective reality, but rather the representation of reality in the minds of cultural agents” (Ufimtseva, 1977: 3). Through naming, artifacts establish a linguistic image of the world, shaping the conceptual representation of reality.

A.G. Faizullina defines nomination as follows: “From the perspective of onomasiology, nomination is the verbal expression of an ideal content (concept) that has formed in the human mind as fragments of a mental representation of the world, based on personal experience” (Faizullina, 2008: 20). Through nomination, an object enters the system of knowledge, acquires cultural and symbolic significance, and becomes preserved and consolidated within language and collective memory. A material object, through its designation, transforms into a *culturaleme*, encompassing national values, mythological elements, indicators of social functions, and ritual significance. The core of a *culturaleme*, as a cultural sign, is constituted by the *mythologeme*.

Structural anthropologist and ethnologist Claude Lévi-Strauss proposed that the structural core of an artifact is formed by the *mythologeme* and developed a theory of binary oppositions to analyze it. According to Lévi-Strauss, a name functions as a sign: on one hand, its meaning is connected to neural structures, and on the other, it relates to a broader network of signs, reflecting its integration within the systematic world of language (Lévi-Strauss, 1985:88). Mythological thinking is realized through the semiotic system of human sensory experience. From this perspective, the *mythologeme*, as a structural unit of thought, defines the distinctiveness of a culture. Cultural variation among societies does not arise from the acceptance or rejection of certain artifacts per se, but from the symbolic values attributed to their properties, with such symbolic attribution grounded in the *mythologeme* (Lévi-Strauss, 1985: 89).

Artifacts such as clothing represent materialized expressions of these *mythologemes* through their names. According to Lévi-Strauss, the primary meaning of a name serves as a sign of the ideal aspect of an artifact, as illustrated in Tables 3 and 4

Table 3. Meaning Derived from the Relationship between *Mythologeme* and Names in Kazakh Clothing

Mythologeme	Artifact	Name	Cultural Significance
Initiation	Bride’s headgear	Saukele	Marks the girl’s transition into a new social status upon marriage.
Respect / Honor	Outer garment	Shapan / Shekpen	Conveys honor, attainment of a new social rank or position.
Gender / Sex	Other wearable covering	Zhaulyk / Oramal	Denotes the marital status of a woman.
Valor	Headgear	Dulyga	Symbolizes warrior status and bravery.

Table 4. Meaning Derived from the Relationship between *Mythologeme* and Names in Turkish Clothing

Mythologeme	Artifact	Name	Cultural Significance
Initiation	Bride’s headgear	Aleychin	Marks the girl’s transition into a new social status upon marriage.
Respect / Honor	Outer garment	Kaftan / Hilat	Conveys honor, attainment of a new social rank or position.
Gender / Sex	Other wearable covering	Başortü / Eşarf	Denotes the marital status of a woman.
Valor	Headgear	Yanışeri Borigi	Symbolizes warrior status and bravery.

From the perspective of structural anthropology, the mythologeme functions as a unit of mythical consciousness, enabling humans to comprehend and interpret the world through oppositions. Artifacts represent the material manifestations of these mythological oppositions, while the word (through nomination) encodes these structures within the linguistic system, thereby preserving them in cultural memory.

In myths, clothing primarily serves as a talisman, protecting the body and soul, marking social status, enabling transitions from one state to another, and signifying gender identity. Consequently, the mythologeme of clothing delineates concepts of sacredness, symbolism, status, initiation, transformation, and social or gender dichotomies.

Table 5. Explanation of Mythologemes in Kazakh Clothing Names

Name (Nomination)	Binary Opposition	Mythologeme	Explanation
Zhaulyk	Youth / Maturity	Status / Initiation	Wearing the zhaulyk marks a change in social status; indicates that a girl has married.
Muraq	Everyday / Ceremonial	Status	Denotes a change in social rank through the ritual of electing a khan.
Kebin	Death / Life	Initiation	Symbolizes transition from this world to the next.
Shalbar	Male / Female	Gender	Differentiates between men and women.

Table 6. Explanation of Mythologemes in Turkish Clothing Names

Name (Nomination)	Binary Opposition	Mythologeme	Explanation
Bashortu	Youth / Maturity	Status/ Initiation	Wearing the bashortu indicates that the girl is married.
Kaftan	Everyday / Ceremonial	Status	The presentation or reception of a kaftan signifies a change in social status.
Kefen	Death / Life	Transition	Symbolizes transition from this world to the next.

Based on Claude Lévi-Strauss's propositions, his conceptualization of culture as a system of sign-like structures can be extended to clothing. Within this system, the ideal aspect of a name-word is constituted by the *mythologeme*, recognized through binary oppositions, while the artifact represents the materialized form of the mythologeme in nominal terms (Table 7).

Table 7. Manifestation of Mythologemes in Clothing

Mythologeme	Manifestation in Clothing
High / Low	Headgear / Footwear; Collar / Hemline
Outer / Inner	Outer garment / Underclothing
Own / Other	National patterns distinguishing clothing
Male / Female	Trousers / Dress; additionally, color, cut, social function, and symbolic elements reflected in decorative features

According to Lévi-Strauss, each element of culture, including national attire, provides information about the society that produced it through the lens of its mythologemes, revealing:

- The origin of the people;
- Human interaction with and position in the world;
- Social structure, including gender, age, and status;
- Taboos and norms permitted within society.

For example, the Kazakh borik or taqiya resembles the shape of a yurt: its brim is rounded, while the crown is conical, reminiscent of a dome or peak. This form reflects the foundational worldview of the nomadic Kazakh people: humans grow and develop on the round earth, materially connected to life, with their spirit (soul and intellect) deriving vitality from the Sky God (Kok Tengri). Consequently, humans are seen as continuously linked to the cosmos and spiritual existence, aspiring toward elevation, symbolically reaching the sky. While Islam prescribes that God is omnipresent, many Kazakhs traditionally direct prayers skyward, reflecting this cosmological orientation.

The etymology of the borik can also be interpreted through the mythologeme: the Turkic and, by extension, Kazakh sacred animal is the wolf (boru). The borik symbolizes identification with the wolf, conferring sacred qualities associated with the animal. Its placement on the human head and its function as a mediator with the natural and spiritual worlds are encoded in the name of the headgear. However, because the wolf is sacred, restrictions on making a borik from actual wolf skins are observed—a principle rooted in collective memory. It appears that wearing a borik is traditionally permitted only for select individuals, preserving the mythic continuity of the artifact.

Continuing the interpretative approach to structural anthropology proposed by Claude Lévi-Strauss, the American scholar Clifford Geertz emphasizes the need to view cultural forms (artifacts) as socially constructed texts. He argues: “One should consider popular culture as a collection of texts, and each text itself is also a composite” (Geertz, 2004:508). According to Geertz, if a cultural form is understood as a text, its content and meaning can only be fully apprehended through analysis grounded in interpretation and context, often referred to as a *thick description*. By approaching symbolic forms as “speaking about something,” we gain the analytical capacity to identify the indicative values embedded within these forms (Geertz, 2004: 512).

Applying this framework to clothing as a cultural form leads to several conclusions:

- Semiotic elements of attire, such as color, patterns, and style, can be treated as “words,” while the garment itself functions as a text composed of these words (for example, ethnic affiliation can be inferred from specific motifs on clothing).

- Each element or component of a garment carries its own meaning (e.g., a man wearing an *ukili borik* indicates he belongs to a group of *sal-seris*, while a woman wearing a black veil signals mourning).

- Like a text, clothing conveys narrative; it communicates social information, including wealth, status, gender, and other personal or social markers.

In interpreting a cultural form or artifact, the analysis is anchored in its name. Interpretation involves not only the denotative meaning but also the connotative associations. Russian linguist V.N. Teliya asserts that when the denotation of an artifact’s name is interpreted through the lens of cultural categories, a cultural connotation emerges (Teliya, 1996: 214). The symbolic meaning of a name arises from the nature of its connotation within a denotative series (Teliya, 1996: 108–109).

Thus, the significance of cultural objects does not reside solely in their material creation but in their symbolic, traditional, and discursive functions. Each element of clothing can acquire distinct meanings in different cultural contexts, and its interpretation is contingent upon an analysis of the associated discourse.

From the perspective of communication, T.A. van Dijk defines discourse as follows: “Discourse is not the manifestation of an isolated meaning; it is a complex communicative phenomenon that encompasses social context, the process of information production, and the

reception of messages” (van Dijk, 2000: 113). According to van Dijk, the essential components of discourse include the context, the information itself, the speaker, and the receiver. If clothing is considered as a form of information or a text, questions such as who wears it, why, under which circumstances, what is worn, and for whom collectively determine the discourse associated with that garment.

In linguistics, discourse represents text in context, a manifestation of thought, and communication shaped by cultural factors. It can thus be described as “corresponding to explicitly articulated speech, encompassing both semantic-truth content and extralinguistic factors that structure interactions” (Alkebayeva, 2014: 247). Similarly, discourse has been defined as “the operational text in use, that is, the function of spoken language in actual communicative situations” (Kenshibaeva, 2005: 27), emphasizing its contextual and functional significance.

I.P. Susov identifies discourse as comprising the speaker (addresser), the listener (addressee), the speech situation, and language units (Susov, 2000: 128). V.Z. Demyankov further categorizes the elements constituting discourse into: the narrated event, participants of the event, performative information, and extra-event elements. Extra-event elements include: 1) circumstances related to the event; 2) background information clarifying the event’s meaning; 3) evaluative perspectives of participants; and 4) information derived from similar discourses (Demyankov, 1982: 6–7).

The following Table 8 illustrates the discourse components of garments such as the *shapan* and *fes*, providing a structured analysis of how clothing functions as a communicative and culturally embedded text.

Table 8. Discourse Components of the Shapan and Fes

Garment	Narrated Event	Participants	Performative Information	Extra-Event Elements	Discourse
Shapan	Arrival of a person wearing a shapan at a celebration during the Kazakh Khanate period	Kazakhs	Embellishment and ceremonial display manifested through fabric and ornamentation	1) The celebration; 2) Reason for the celebration; 3) Interest in the shapan; 4) Similar shapan garments	1) Expressing pride in Kazakh identity through wearing the shapan; 2) Setting an example for others
Shapan	Wearing a shapan at celebrations during the Soviet era	Kazakhs and members of other ethnic groups	Observed as a worn-out form inherited from elders	1) The celebration; 2) Reason for the celebration; 3) Perceiving the shapan as old-fashioned; 4) Shapan worn only by elderly men	1) Preserving ancestral heritage; 2) Passive resistance to Soviet policies; 3) Representing a style out of step with contemporary life
Fes	Wearing the fes on the streets of Turkey in the 19th century	Turks	Quality of stitching and materials signifying value	1) Everyday streetwear; 2) Demonstrating Turkish identity; 3) Interest in the fes; 4) Adoption by other Turks	1) Expressing pride in Turkish identity; 2) Setting an example for others

Fes	Wearing the fes on the streets of Egypt in the 19th century	Turks and Egyptians	Quality of stitching and materials signifying value	1) Everyday streetwear; 2) Demonstrating Turkish identity; 3) Identifying fes wearers as remnants of the Ottoman Empire; 4) Signifying the dominance of Turks	1) Expressing pride in Turkish identity; 2) Distinguishing themselves from Egyptians; 3) Signifying Egypt's subordination under the Ottoman Empire
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A concept that defines national characteristics determines the national content of discourse as a structural unit of the linguistic representation of the world, reflecting the key notions of a culture. Only concepts, which constitute the second-dimensional symbolic linguistic representation of the world exclusive to humans (Luria, 1979:35), manifest through discourse and reveal the values and content of a particular culture.

From this perspective, the discourse of national clothing represents a system of concepts embedded in ethnic consciousness, reflecting the cultural and social context of a specific historical period and space, and transmitted across generations. From the standpoint of language and cognition, national attire is not merely an element of material culture; it also constitutes an integral component of collective memory and national identity. It functions as a cultural code that shapes societal values, social structures, gender roles, and ethnic self-identification.

The structure of national clothing discourse operates across multiple semiotic levels, in which linguistic and non-linguistic tools hold particular significance. The discursive space of national attire is constructed through visual representations, material artifacts, and semiotic signs. Its semantic structure extends beyond mere nominal designations, encompassing the historical evolution of clothing-related concepts, social status, and the hierarchies of power.

Conclusion

As an element of culture, clothing functions as a multifaceted artifact that integrates material, symbolic, and linguistic dimensions, thereby occupying a unique position in human life. National attire not only fulfills material needs but also embodies symbolic properties that regulate relationships between individuals, between humans and nature, and between humans and objects, manifesting at the level of cultural codes.

Based on the theories of M. Wartofsky, M. Foucault, and M. Cole, the external, idealized aspect of clothing is determined through naming and nomination, while its internal meaning is interpreted through mythologemes. From this perspective, the discourse of national clothing constitutes a system of concepts embedded in ethnic consciousness, reflecting the cultural and social context of specific historical periods and transmitted across generations.

According to scholars such as A.A. Ufimtseva and V.N. Telia, nomination is a process through which real-world facts are projected into an idealized linguistic space. The denotative meaning of a garment's name engages with the cultural environment, producing cultural connotations, thereby transmitting information and values across generations via clothing discourse.

Scholars including C. Lévi-Strauss and C. Geertz conceptualize culture as a form of textuality, suggesting that its content can be interpreted to elucidate the processes through which a community perceives, understands, and structures social experience. This approach enables clothing to be seen not merely as a visual or material object but as a discourse conveying cultural and symbolic information, firmly rooted in ethnic consciousness.

As an artifact, clothing attains meaning through its designation, with connotations expanding through discourse to reveal its cultural significance. Human cultural experience—encompassing values, traditions, mythologemes, and worldview – forms the substantive content of the cultural units that shape clothing discourse.

By examining the components of national clothing discourse—namely, cultural units and linguocultural units—researchers can comprehensively identify the historical, cognitive, aesthetic, social, and symbolic functions of attire. Furthermore, the discourse surrounding national clothing actively contributes to the articulation of ethnic identity and the intergenerational transmission of cultural values, establishing it as a pivotal instrument in the preservation of national culture and uniqueness.

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Монтанай Э.Э.

Әл Фараби атындағы Қазақ ұлттық университеті, Алматы, Қазақстан

E-mail: elmiramontanay@gmail.com

ҰЛТТЫҚ КИІМ МӘДЕНИ АРТЕФАКТ РЕТІНДЕ: ЛИНГВОМӘДЕНИ ДИСКУРСТАҒЫ РЕПРЕЗЕНТАЦИЯСЫ

Аңдатпа. Бұл мақалада ұлттық киім мәдени артефакт ретінде қарастырылып, оның лингвомәдени дискурстағы репрезентация ерекшеліктері теориялық-әдіснамалық тұрғыдан талданады. Зерттеудің мақсаты ұлттық киімді материалдық мәдениет нысаны ретінде ғана емес, этностың тарихи жадысын, мәдени кодын және дүниетанымдық бағдарын жинақтайтын семиотикалық әрі концептуалдық құрылым ретінде сипаттау болып табылады. Аталған мақсатқа сәйкес ұлттық киімді артефакт, концепт және дискурс деңгейлерінде талдау, оның лингвомәдени мәнін айқындау және дискурстық репрезентация тетіктерін анықтау міндеттері қойылады. Зерттеудің әдіснамалық негізін сипаттамалы, салыстырмалы, концептуалдық және дискурстық талдау әдістері құрайды. Мақаланың ғылыми жаңалығы ұлттық киімді «артефакт–концепт–дискурс» ұштағаны негізінде жүйелі түрде талдап, лингвомәдени дискурстың құрылымдық компоненттері арқылы оның репрезентациялану

үлгісін ұсынуымен айқындалады. Зерттеу нәтижелері ұлттық киімнің мәдени кодты жеткізудегі, этностық бірегейлікті қалыптастырудағы және мәдени коммуникация үдерісіндегі маңызды ролін теориялық тұрғыдан негіздейді. Лингвомәдени дискурста ұлттық киім этностың мәдени құндылықтарын, дәстүрлі дүниетанымын және тарихи тәжірибесін бейнелейтін мәнді мәдени белгі ретінде репрезентацияланатыны дәлелденеді. Мақала қорытындылары ұлттық мәдени мұраны тілдік деректер негізінде зерттеуге арналған ғылыми ізденістер үшін теориялық және практикалық маңызға ие.

Кілт сөздер: мәдени артефакт, мифологема, ұлттық киім, лингвомәдени дискурс, концепт, семиотика, бірегейлік, мәдени код

Монтанай Э.Э.

Әл Фараби атындағы ҚазҰУ, Шығыстану факультеті, Алматы, Қазақстан

E-mail: elmiramontanay@gmail.com

НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫЙ КОСТЮМ КАК КУЛЬТУРНЫЙ АРТЕФАКТ: РЕПРЕЗЕНТАЦИЯ В ЛИНГВОКУЛЬТУРНОМ ДИСКУРСЕ

Аннотация. В статье национальный костюм рассматривается как культурный артефакт, а особенности его репрезентации в лингвокультурном дискурсе анализируются с теоретико-методологической точки зрения. Целью исследования является описание национального костюма не только как объекта материальной культуры, но и как семиотической и концептуальной структуры, аккумулирующей историческую память этноса, его культурные коды и мировоззренческие ориентиры. В соответствии с поставленной целью в работе решаются задачи анализа национального костюма на уровнях артефакта, концепта и дискурса, выявления его лингвокультурного содержания и механизмов дискурсивной репрезентации. Методологическую основу исследования составляют описательный, сравнительный, концептуальный и дискурсивно-аналитический методы. Научная новизна статьи определяется системным применением аналитической модели «артефакт – концепт – дискурс» при изучении национального костюма и разработкой модели его репрезентации через структурные компоненты лингвокультурного дискурса. Результаты исследования теоретически обосновывают роль национального костюма в передаче культурного кода, формировании этнической идентичности и процессах культурной коммуникации. Доказано, что в лингвокультурном дискурсе национальный костюм репрезентируется как значимый культурный знак, отражающий ценности этноса, традиционное мировоззрение и исторический опыт. Полученные выводы обладают теоретической и практической значимостью для исследований национального культурного наследия на материале языка.

Ключевые слова: культурный артефакт, мифологема, национальный костюм, лингвокультурный дискурс, концепт, семиотика, идентичность, культурный код.

Information for autor:

Montanay Elmira Azimbayevna, PhD Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Eurasian Research Institute of the Khoja Akhmet Yassawi International Kazakh-Turkish University, Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Автор туралы мәлімет:

Монтанай Элмира Азимбаевна, Әл Фараби атындағы ҚазҰУ PhDi, Қожа Ахмет Яссауи атындағы халықаралық қазақ-түрік университетінің Еуразия ғылыми-зерттеу институты, Алматы, Қазақстан.

Сведения об авторе:

Монтанай Элмира Азимбаевна, PhD КазНУ им. Аль Фараби, Евразийский научно-исследовательский институт Международного казахстанско-турецкого университета имени Ходжи Ахмета Яссави, Алматы, Казахстан.

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