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## Symbolism of the number “four” in English and Kazakh Languages

The article considers the comparative study of the symbolism of English and Kazakh stable combinations, as well as proverbs and sayings with the numerical component “four”. The study revealed both similarities and differences in the symbolism of the number “four” in English and Kazakh languages, which is explained by the universality of the character of the symbols on the one hand and the fact that there is an ethnocultural specificity in the connotative meaning, which is reflected in the culture and language of the people. The universality of the symbolization of numbers is determined by the anthropocentric worldview and the universal system of human development, as well as the desire of a person to explain the structure of the world through the sacred power of numbers. At the end of the article the authors came to conclusion that the numerals with the component four as part of stable combinations in English and Kazakh Languages acquire a symbolic meaning. Stable combinations with the numeral component characterize various aspects of human life: its external qualities and internal properties, behavior, relationships with other people, as well as ideas related to the quantitative and spatial development of the world and the universe.

*Keywords:* number, culture, symbolism, four, phraseological units, stable expressions.

### Introduction

The model of the world in each culture is built from a number of universal concepts and constants of culture — space, time, reason, fate, number. “Despite the presence of universal concepts, each nation has special, only inherent relationships between concepts, which creates the basis of a national worldview and assessment of the world” [1; 146].

At different stages of the formation of scientific thought, researchers addressed the problem of “magic” medicines in different sources, their progress and significance in the spiritual culture and language of different peoples. This issue is raised in the labor of philosophers and culturologists V.V. Ivanov, H.E. Kerlot, A.I. Kobzev, Yu.m. Lotman, A.F. Losev, Yu.S. Stepanov, V.N. Toporov, D.O. Shepping and others. In linguistics, the problems of symbolic semantics of numbers were studied in the works of Foreign, Russian and Kazakh scientists: D.O. Shepping, N.N. Poppe, N.F. Rosenberg, G. Ramsted, L. Zhukovskaya, V.N. Toporov, D.O. Dobrovolsky, T.I. Vendina, B.L. Vladimirtsov, V.M. Kirillin, M.M. Makovsky, M.N. Priemysheva, Ya. Shichzhan, I. Kenesbayev, A. Khassenov, T. Zhanuzakov, E. Koishybayev, Zh. Baizakov, A. Yelesheva, K. Gabitkhanuly and others.

Scientists study linguistic units with a numerative component in connection with the mentality, worldview, and ideas of the people, focusing on the mysterious meanings of numbers, their role in mythology, and functions in folk literature.

According to Mazhitayeva Sh., national images (symbols) of the world reflect the peculiarities of the idioethnic worldview; they are determined by the psychology of the people, their way of life, natural living conditions and centuries-old national traditions. In fact, only those symbols that have value for a particular people are actualized in the system of images. Moreover, the same image, cultural concept is interpreted differently by different peoples, which is also fixed in the language. [2]

An important starting point in identifying the ethnic features of worldview and their expression in the language picture of the world is the definition of a system of key mental images that organize the semantic space of various forms of creative understanding of the world by a person, first of all literature and art. Language plays a primary role in the verbalization of these mental images in units of different language levels (words, phraseological units, proverbs and sayings) in the content of various artistic tropes (metaphor, personification), in the text of a work of art.

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Scientists have noted that numbers, in addition to denoting quantitative significance, carry the meaning of the whole world, ideas about the universe, i.e. information that is not related to quantity. They are represented by symbols, signs. The well-known scientist-linguist S.A. Shvachko, having studied in detail the stages of the evolution of quantity cognition, analyzed the connection and conditionality of the logical and linguistic category of quantity in the monograph “Linguistic means of extracting quantity in the modern English, Russian and Ukrainian languages”, comes to the conclusion that the linguistic and logical categories of quantity are not identical: “... The semantic model of quantity category is served by the real relations of objects and phenomena of the mathematical world, historical experience and the results of the knowledge of quantity, linguistic commonality, and even linguistic factors. The language category of quantity is represented by certain mathematical means inherent in each particular language” [3; 13].

Within the framework of the linguistic picture of the world, the concept of number is interpreted not only as a number, but also as a system, a model, as a unity of the interweaving of culture and language. Linguists study unstructured language with a numerative component in connection with the mentality, worldview, and ideas of the people, focusing on the mysterious meanings of numbers, their role in mythology, and functions in folk literature.

Numbers have archaic semantics, embedded in them during the existence of early cosmogonic systems, the mythopoetic picture of the world of ancient man. The famous Kazakh scientist A. Khassenov wrote: “The names of numbers belonging to the main vocabulary of Turkic languages are derived from the reality of life, from a concrete thing. Certainly, this is due to the development of general quantitative concepts, the idea that humanity originated out of necessity does not contradict, but refutes and confirms it. Secondly, it is possible to discover and recognize the past history of a certain concept, phenomenon by comparing it with the present, studying its current forms”, we add that the materials of the ancient Turkic languages and modern Turkic languages contain archaic traditions that have a special symbolic meaning, which cannot be explained from a modern linguistic point of view [4; 63].

The reason for the identification of numbers with ideas-symbols is explained by a person's approach to studying the surrounding world. In the human society, numbers are considered as religious, divine and worldly symbols, and it is believed that they contain powerful secrets and mysteries that cannot be understood by the human mind, and also that these powerful forces bring good and evil to a person.

The number occupies an important place in the spiritual culture of the people; it has symbolic semantics, expresses sacred meanings, acts as a parameter that determines the national linguistic picture of the world. “The number as an element of culture is able to project and reflect the main features of a certain ethnic group at a certain stage of its development, and therefore to be a symbol” [5; 16].

Numbers have played an important role in the development of societies, as well as in the evolution of beliefs and customs of all the peoples of the world, some reaching the status of sacred. [6]. The “Sacred Numbers” became a neighborhood of faith and later of the fashionable belief, and largely described within the well-liked rituals [7].

#### *Research methods*

The work was based on general scientific methods: induction and deduction, analysis and synthesis. The work with the collected card index of stable expressions was carried out by the continuous sampling method, using the descriptive-analytical method. An important place in the work with the material was given to the methods of definitional, contextual analysis. Using the comparative method, the national-specific and universal features of English and Kazakh languages were determined.

The research material was lexical units with the numerical index “four”, collected from phraseological, thematic dictionaries of English and Kazakh languages, as well as material on sacred numbers contained in the works of linguists.

The subject of the study is lexical units with a numerical component “four”.

As part of this research work, a selection of phraseological units was made from the dictionaries of English and Kazakh languages: Oxford Dictionary of Phrase and Fable, Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners 2006, The Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1995; Kazakh-Russian Dictionary, 2008, proverb-sayings, 2018.

#### *Results and discussion*

Archaic symbolic meanings can explain the presence of a particular lexeme in the phraseological units of modern English. It is known from history that a druidic monument was found at the place where the annu-

al meeting of the druids was held, dedicated to the religious, legal and political ceremonies of the Celts, which is a stone on which a symbolic figure is carved — three concentric squares connected by four lines running at right angles.

Celtic culture covers the period from 500 BC to 44 BC. It is known that the Celts migrated from the European continent, Druids believed in many gods, including the God of Heaven, and had their own alphabet and number system. Druids took an active part in matters of worship, observed the correctness of public sacrifices, interpreted issues related to religion. The most powerful and influential class of Celtic society chose the number four as its symbol, which is probably why Celtic mythological representations had a significant impact on the formation of the English and French mythopoetic traditions that were formed later.

The period of completion of the Celtic culture. The connection with the year 44 B.C. coincides with the invasion of the British Isles by the Roman Julius Caesar. After the Roman invasion, there were radical changes in British culture, writing system, agriculture, and political structure. The Romans did not want to be influenced by anyone. Therefore, they tried their best to make the druids disappear as soon as possible. As a result, the old Celtic mythology, writing system and numerical symbols disappeared with the Druids. Instead, the pantheons of Roman gods and the first seeds of Christianity were sown.

In western countries, God is the ruler, the supreme existence, and god is unique. The religion of Britain is New Christianity spread by the Anglican Church. Bible is the classic of Christianity, which contains allusions, metaphors and proverbs for example: Do not give dogs what is holy to dogs — they will only turn and attack you [8].

“Four” is often associated with stable phenomena in nature and human life: Four seasons; four phases of the moon: *new, half-moon waxing, full, half-moon waning; four elements*; — four primary elements: earth, air, water and fire; *four humours or cardinal humours* — four types of temperament: phlegmatic, sanguine, choleric, melancholic [9; 343]. In 1941 F.D. Roosevelt listed four basic civil liberties in his speech to the American Congress: four freedoms (freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear) [9; 266].

In a symbolic reading, the number four has the meaning “very much” and serves to actualize the sense “the highest degree of intensity of a feature or action” (*be four-sheets to the wind*). As part of the phraseological units of English language a four-letter word (obscene word, strong word), a four-letter man (disgusting type), the numeral four plays an important role, since it serves to express a qualitative-evaluative value with the “-” sign.

As part of a phraseological unit, the numeral four realizes not only its direct quantitative and symbolic meaning, which is associated with the spatial sphere (*sitting in four walls, on all four sides (the four corners of the earth, within four walls)*), but also contributes to the formation of a qualitative and evaluative meanings (see *four arshines; be four-sheets to the wind*) [10].

English phrase *four eyes* — (colloquial) (Russian) a rude expression used to insult someone who wears glasses. Researchers give some more examples of sayings and phraseologisms relating to the number four: *shartarap, tortkul, tort kul duniye, duniyenin tort burushy* (the universe, four cardinal points: North — South — East — West), *tort toksan, tort tulik* (upper, middle, lower worlds) [11].

According to English superstitions, the number “four” can bring good luck: it is believed that if a person finds a four-leaf clover or a button with four holes, something good will happen soon after: “Four-leaf clover — a cloverleaf with 4 leaflets thought to bring good luck” [12; 535].

It should be noted that archaic meanings with the lexeme four were noted in ancient monuments of runic writing of the Turks. In Kultegin's writing, the text “All four corners were enemies” reflects the ideological boundaries of the Turkic world. The Turkish state, the Turkish horde, is located at the intersection of the four corners of the world, that is, in the heart of the world. The navel of the universe is sacred because it is the foundation of the first divine beginning, that is, the creation of man. *kystau, kokteu, jailau, kuzeu* (*winter, spring, summer, autumn pastures*) — these serve as the state border of nomadic society. The Earth is a four-cornered, square space in ancient Turkic mythology. This can be learned from the Orkhon stelae, inscriptions of the Yenisei Kyrgyz, ancient Uyghur runic and cursive texts, Muslim authors about the Kimak, Kypchak, Guz, Karluk, and Chinese data about the tribes living north of the Great Wall.

According to R. Bayymbetova: “the language of monuments written in the VII-IX centuries included four main directions of the idea of Tengri, reflecting the religious and mythological worldview of the ancient Turks. The first is the worship of the only God; the second is the eternal unchanging world, the abode of the God— the sacred sky; the third is the sacred place of man — the Earth — Water, which ensures the growth of life; the fourth is the worship of the spirit of the ancestors” [13]. The mythical representations of the ancient

Turks gave rise to the influence of the Kazakhs in the world. For example, the four phenomena of manifestation are all — all in harmony, right and left, about a blessed country, sometimes the sun rises on Silver Peaks, and the sun rises on the blue sea [14].

The meaning of the number four in Kazakh culture is characterized by a wide range of meanings: four elements (fire, water, air, earth); four seasons (winter, autumn, spring, summer); four angels (Jibril, Azrael, Mikail, Israfil); four goals (the goal of the dispute is to reach a solution, the goal of trade is to win, the goal of the trip is to get to the place, the goal of the girl is to get married); four books (the Psalms, the Torah, the Bible, the Quran); four types of animals (camel, horse, cow, ram); four swords (Hamkam, Samsam, Zulka-zha, Zulpykar); four wealth (head, tongue, hand, foot), four blessings (plant a tree, build a bridge, dig a well, give water to the thirsty); four surprises (meeting a person, being a guest, marriage, death); four happiness (health, children, wealth, reputation); four humiliations (visiting without invitation, talking indiscriminately, waiting for help from the enemy, asking for help from a greedy person); four tools necessary for riding a horse (saddle, girth, stirrup, bridle) [15].

The symbolism of proverbs, sayings and stable expressions with the component “four” is diverse: *Tort ayagy ten zhorga* — talented, skillful improvise; *tort kubylysy sai* — happy, *tort kozi tugel* — the family is safe, everything is fine, *eki kozi tort bolu* — to be very anxious, to be agitated, to be restless, to be afraid, *tun uykysyn tort bolu* — worry, be emotional over, *Tort Arystyn Balasy* — the whole country, the population, *Tort ayaktan aksady* — to have difficulties, *Tort tagany kimyldady* — moved violently, weakened; *Tort qubylysy tugel* — everything is in order; honor by honor, *tort tuligi say boldy* — got rich with cattle, became rich [16].

For Kazakh people, four foods were the main source of sustenance and life. The motif of the phrase “four food animals” is a camel, a horse, a cow, and a sheep. It was believed that four animals had a guardian owner, namely: a camel — Oysyl Kara, a horse — Kambar Ata, a cow — Zengi Baba, a sheep — Shepherd (Shekshek) and prayed to them. In Kazakh culture, there are four types of food — food, drink, clothes, and a car, so they valued it very much and tried to increase their number. If there were many of them, there was wealth, abundance, and scarcity. So, the horse was not only a means of transportation, but also honor, pride, the wings of a horseman, it is given to the most honorable and respected person. In addition, the horse and food, and clothing, and medicine. Horse meat is considered a delicacy, from which kazy, shuzhyk, zhaya, karta, kuyrdak are prepared. The camel served for Kazakhs as a transport during nomads, meat and milk were eaten, a rope was woven from wool for a yurt, leather was used for making dishes. The cow gave milk, meat. Different things were made from animal skin: *tulak* (dried animal skin, used as bedding and for whipping wool), *bylgary* (tanned leather), *kayys* (raw, specially tanned, or tanned leather, used for horse harness, tong for skid horses and saddle horses), *zhugen* (bridle), *nokta* (halter), *shylbyr* (a long leash for tying a horse), *tizgin* (reins), *kuyiskan* (tailpiece, horse harness), *omildirik* (horse breastplate attached to the saddle at the girth), *kamshy* (whip, nogayka), etc., sewed clothes. Sheep were bred for the purpose of obtaining meat, and the wool was used to make clothes, shoes, and utensils in the yurt. Four animals also served as exchange value. That's why the following poem has not lost its meaning to this day: Camel — wealth, glory, Horse — decoration, pride, Cow — satisfaction, whiteness, Sheep — treasure, lordship. Due to this, in our language, there are four types of phraseology. That is, it means the concept of being wealthy and living in abundance.

Some expressions that occur with component four contain information of an ethnolinguistic nature. The expression “*Tort kanatty uy*” means four-leaf yurt (*kigiz yy*). The yurt was the main mobile home of the ancient nomadic people. It is convenient to fold quickly, sew quickly, and fit for movement. The appearance of the yurt dates back to the Bronze Age (3 thousand years BC). A yurt is a composite house suitable for moving from one place to another in spring, summer and autumn.

The frame of the yurt consists of three parts: *kerege* (lattice frame), *uyk* (poles supporting the upper circle), *shanyrak* (upper circle) — each of which is a certain level vertically. In turn, the roofing felt cloth also consists of three parts: *tuyrlyk* (covering the lattice base of the yurt), *uzyuk* (covering the dome poles) and *tundyk* (felt covering the upper circle). *Being skilled cattle breeders, Kazakhs have developed a rational way of alternating pastures for centuries, established a convenient order of grazing cattle. The entire grazing area was divided into four types of pasture, according to the seasons: kystau, kokteu, jailau, kuzeu. Migrations were mainly carried out in the direction from south to north and back, and in mountainous areas a vertical system of nomadism was practiced: summer pastures (zhailau) were located in alpine meadows, and winter pastures (kystau) in the foothills. During migrations the path was very long and reached 800-1200 km in one direction.*

The presented expressions with numerical semantics four reflect the worldview of English and Kazakh ethnic groups. So, for both nations, the number “four” is associated with stable phenomena in nature and human life (four seasons, four elements: earth, air, water and fire, four cardinal directions); religious beliefs: four rivers in paradise, four books (the Psalms, the Torah, the Bible, the Quran), four angels (Jibril, Azrael, Mikail, Israfil), four swords (Hamkam, Samsam, Zulkazha, Zulpykar), four last things: death, the last judgment, heaven, hell.

The emergence of religious themes in Kazakh language is associated with the spread of Islam in the territory of the Kazakh Khanate. It is said that four angels are called to carry out the will of God in the holy book Quran: Angel Jibriel carried the message of God. He supported and protected the Prophet Muhammad by the order of God. The angel Mikayil controlled the order in the world according to God's order.

The number four among the British and Kazakhs is related to superstitions. According to English superstition, the number “four” can bring good luck: it is believed that if a person finds a four-leaf clover or a button with four holes, something good will happen soon after: “Four-leaf clover — a cloverleaf with 4 leaflets thought to bring good luck” [12; 535].

The Kazakhs have predestination at the moment of the baby's birth (good, poor, necessary bread, destiny).

The contextual analysis of the considered material showed that in most cases stable expressions of the English and Kazakh languages manifested a positive, neutral and negative assessment of the process and nature of the subject's actions. The object of positive and neutral assessment of English stable expressions with numerical components was the qualities and behavior of a person, character of actions and interpersonal relations.

The symbolism of the number “four” in English is associated with historical facts, traditions, realities and religious beliefs. Over the centuries, the Bible was the most widely read and quoted book in England. Therefore, whole idiomatic expressions entered English language from the Bible.

The semantics of Kazakh stable expressions with the numerical component “four”, unlike English language, reflects a close connection with the traditions and customs of the people, therefore exceeds the number of expressions. The internal form of stable expressions of Kazakh language is based on the nomadic lifestyle of Kazakhs, which influenced the formation of ethnic culture and human psychology.

The comparative analysis of lexemes in English and Kazakh languages has shown that there is a common feature in the studied combinations: the numerical four realizes its direct quantitative meaning and symbolic meaning, which can have an equivalent and vice versa.

#### **Representation of cultural texts in English and Kazakh languages:**

1) Time, space, natural phenomena: The four corners of the earth (world), four phases of the moon: new, half-moon waxing, full, half-moon waning;

2) **Religious beliefs:** Four Gospels, Four last things: death, doomsday, heaven, hell, four books (the Psalms, the Torah, the Bible, the Quran);

3) **Character, property, condition, actions of a person:** A four-letter man (disgusting person, ignorant), To be (to sit) within four walls — loneliness To be/stand four- square behind smb. Strongly support anyone. To be (to sit) within four walls, Scatter to the four winds, *Tort ayagy ten zhorga* — talented, skillful improvise; *Tort beygamsyzdyk* (Four indifferences), *Tort Sauap* (Four blessings);

4). **Family relations:** *torteu tugel bolsa tobedegi keledi, altau ala bolsa auyzdagy ketedi* — if there is unity, there will be joy and celebration, if there is no unity, there will be no prosperity. Four: health, wealth, gifts, animals. Six: children, relatives, neighbors, matchmakers, aunts, nieces, friends;

5. **Friendship/Enmity:** Camels are friendly among cattle, brothers-in-law among people. The enemy has four eyes;

6. **Mythological representations:** Four spiritual leaders: leader of the poor — kaltak ata, leader of the thief — zhaltak ata, leader of the craftsman — tepshen ata, leader of old age — kekshil ata;

7) **Freedom:** four freedoms (freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear);

8) **Happiness, satisfaction:** *Tort bakyt* (Four happiness) health, child, wealth, Fame-honor;

9) **True, false:** Lies — two, truths — four;

10. **Ethnographic features:** *Tort tulik* (four animals), *Tort kanatty uy* (Yurt consisting of four wooden lattice);

11. **A lot:** be four-sheets to the wind.

Among the presented word combinations there are word combinations with stylistically neutral and emotional evaluation. A positive assessment refers mainly to stable combinations corresponding to the concept of time and space in both languages. In the composition of stable combinations of the English language, a four-letter word (indecent word, obscene word), a four-letter man (disgusting person), within four walls (closed space), the numeral four serves to express a negative opinion. In stable combinations and proverbs, sayings of Kazakh language with component four, a positive assessment prevails over a neutral one.

### Conclusion

Symbolic meanings of numbers are fixed in mythology, folklore, the language of the people and are a reflection of the linguistic picture of the world of the people, its ideological and mental features. They, in addition to their basic meanings, express ethno-cultural significance, are an integral part of the spiritual culture of the people and may have a similarity of symbols in different cultures, which is explained by the fact that the symbols go back to the basic feelings and emotions that all people experience. However, the meaning of some symbols may differ according to their different significance as realities in different cultures.

A number of stable combinations of the Kazakh language include somatic words (head, tongue, arm, leg), zoonyms (camel, horse, cow, ram) involved in the creation of a phraseological image.

The study revealed that numerical symbols played an important role in the culture of the English and Kazakhs. The sacred symbolism of the number four is fixed in the spiritual and material culture, beliefs, mythological cosmological representations of peoples, since the numerical code permeates any culture, systematizing and grouping the accumulated knowledge of the ethnos, passing from generation to generation the national numerical symbolism.

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## Ағылшын және қазақ тілдеріндегі «төрт» санының символикасы

Мақалада ағылшын және қазақ тілдеріндегі тұрақты тіркестердің, «төрт» сандық компоненті бар мақал-мәтелдердің символикасына салыстырмалы талдау жасалған. Зерттеу барысында ағылшын және қазақ тілдеріндегі «төрт» саны символикасының ұқсастықтары мен айырмашылықтары анықталған, бұл бір жағынан символика сипатының әмбебаптығымен және екінші жағынан халықтың мәдениеті мен тілінде көрініс тапқан «төрт» санының коннотативті мағынасының этномәдени ерекшелігінің болуымен түсіндіріледі. «Төрт» санын таңбалаудың әмбебаптығы антропоцентристік дүниетаныммен және адам дамуының әмбебап жүйесімен, сондай-ақ адамның сандардың қасиетті күші арқылы әлемнің құрылымын түсіндіруге деген ұмтылысы арқылы анықталады. Мақаланың соңында авторлар ағылшын және қазақ тілдеріндегі тұрақты тіркестер мен мақал-мәтелдер құрамындағы «төрт» компоненті бар сандар адам өмірінің әртүрлі аспектілерін сипаттайтын символдық мәнге ие болады деген қорытынды жасаған. Олар оның сыртқы қасиеттері мен ішкі қасиеттері, мінез-құлқы, басқа адамдармен қарым-қатынасы, сондай-ақ дүние мен ғаламның сандық және кеңістіктік дамуына байланысты түсінігі.

*Клт сөздер:* сан, мәдениет, символизм, төрт, фразеологиялық бірліктер, тұрақты тіркестер.

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## Символика числа «четыре» в английском и казахском языках

В статье представлен сравнительный анализ символики английских и казахских устойчивых сочетаний, а также пословиц и поговорок с числовым компонентом «четыре». В ходе исследования выявлены как сходства, так и различия в символике числа «четыре» в английском и казахском языках, что объясняется универсальностью характера символов, с одной стороны, и наличием этнокультурной специфики коннотативного значения числа «четыре», которое нашло отражение в культуре и языке народа, — с другой. Универсальность символизации числа «четыре» определяется антропоцентрическим мировоззрением и универсальной системой развития человека, а также стремлением человека объяснить устройство мира через сакральную силу чисел. В конце статьи авторами сделан вывод о том, что числительные с компонентом «четыре», в составе устойчивых сочетаний и пословиц и поговорок в английском и казахском языках, приобретают символическое значение, характеризующее различные стороны жизни человека: его внешние качества и внутренние свойства, поведение, отношения с другими людьми, а также представления, связанные с количественным и пространственным развитием мира и мироздания.

*Ключевые слова:* число, культура, символизм, четыре, фразеологические единицы, устойчивые сочетания.

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