

LINGUISTIC BASIS OF THE KAZAKH-ENGLISH TOPONYMICS AND EASTERN THEMES AND ETHNOCULTURAL TRAITS IN THE WORKS OF NURALY NYSANBAYULY

Kazachų-anglų toponimikos lingvistinis pagrindas ir rytietiškos temos bei etnokultūriniai bruožai Nuraly'io Nysanbayuly'io darbuose

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ABSTRACT

Nuraly Nysanbayuly (1858–1931) was a prominent Kazakh aqyn whose works reflect the transitional cultural and literary processes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. His dastans represent a valuable source for investigating the ethnocultural foundations of the Kazakh worldview and the linguistic features of Turkic literary traditions. This study aims to examine N. Nysanbayuly's works from ethnocultural and linguistic perspectives and to identify the relationship between cultural meaning and language representation in his texts. The research is based on the dastans "Qaraqul", "Khanym Syry", "Zhetim Qubyl", and "Sauda Ishan". The methodology combines ethnocultural interpretation, comparative analysis, and morphological analysis of linguistic units. The first part of the study investigates the ethnocultural content of the selected dastans, focusing on traditional cultural codes and value systems, and their connections to the Eastern literary tradition. The analysis demonstrates that N. Nysanbayuly's works integrate elements of the Turkic epic heritage with distinctive Kazakh ethnocultural meanings, thereby shaping an individual poetic style. The second part examines the morphological structure of toponyms found in the author's texts through a comparative analysis of Kazakh and English toponymic systems. The results reveal several structural correspondences in the formation of toponyms despite the typological and genetic differences between the two languages. The findings contribute to a better understanding of the interaction between language and culture in Turkic literature and provide a basis for improving the translation and interpretation of Kazakh toponyms in English-language contexts.

KEYWORDS: aqyn, cultural codes, dastan, ethnocultural analysis, Kazakh literature, N. Nysanbayuly, toponymic morphology, toponymy, translation studies, Turkic literature.

ANOTACIJA

Nuraly'is Nysanbayuly'is (1858–1931) – žymus kazachų dastanas, kurio kūryba atspindi XIX a. pabaigos ir XX a. pradžios pereinamuosius kultūrinius ir literatūrinius procesus. Jo dastanai yra vertingas šaltinis tiriant kazachų pasaulėžiūros etnokultūrinius pagrindus ir tiurkų literatūros tradicijos kalbinius bruožus. Šio tyrimo tikslas – aptarti N. Nysanbayuly'io kūrybą etnokultūriniu ir lingvistiniu požiūriu bei nustatyti kultūrinės reikšmės ir kalbos reprezentacijos ryšį jo tekstuose. Tyrimas pagrįstas dastanais „Qaraqul“, „Chanym Syry“, „Zhetim Qubyl“ ir „Sauda Ishan“. Metodologija apima etnokultūrinę interpretaciją, lyginamąją analizę ir kalbinių vienetų morfologinę analizę. Pirmojoje tyrimo dalyje aptariamas pasirinktų dastanų etnokultūrinis turinys, daugiausia dėmesio skiriant tradiciniams kultūros kodams, vertybių sistemoms ir jų sąsajoms su Rytų literatūros tradicija. Analizė rodo, kad N. Nysanbayuly'io kūryba integruoja tiurkų epinio paveldo elementus su savitomis kazachų etnokultūrinėmis reikšmėmis, taip formuodama individualų poetinį stilių. Antroje straipsnio dalyje aptariama autoriaus tekstuose randamų toponimų morfologinė struktūra, atliekant lyginamąją kazachų ir anglų kalbų toponiminių sistemų analizę. Nepaisant tipologinių ir genetinių šių dviejų kalbų skirtumų, tyrimo rezultatai atskleidžia nemažai struktūrinių atitikimų toponimų daryboje. Šie rezultatai padeda geriau suprasti kalbos ir kultūros sąveiką tiurkų literatūroje ir suteikia pagrindą tobulinant kazachų toponimų vertimą ir interpretavimą anglų kalbos kontekste.

ESMINIAI ŽODŽIAI: akynas, kultūros kodai, dastanas, etnokultūrinė analizė, kazachų literatūra, N. Nysanbayul'is, toponiminė morfologija, toponimija, vertimo studijos, tiurkų literatūra.

1. INTRODUCTION

Kazakh literature constitutes a complex and multilayered system of oral and written traditions that developed over many centuries in close connection with the history, culture, and worldview of the Turkic peoples. In examining the history of Kazakh verbal art, early monuments of Turkic epic and folklore, such as The Book of Korkyt and Oghuz-nama, acquire particular significance, as they form part of the broader Turkic cultural heritage, including the Kazakh tradition (Mammadova 2022: 18; Gafarli 2024: 3). The depth and diversity of Kazakh literary culture are shaped both by enduring ties among the Turkic peoples and by the long-term historical and political transformations of the region

(Boeschoten 2021). Accordingly, the study of Kazakh akyns' creative work requires consideration of the ethnocultural, historical, and literary contexts within which their works were formed.

One of the prominent representatives of the Kazakh poetic tradition is N. Nysanbayuly (1858–1931), an akyn whose work reflects the transitional period between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. N. Nysanbayuly belonged to the tradition of akyns, itinerant poet-improvisers who differed from other performers of oral epic, such as zhyrau and zhyrshy, by their high degree of improvisational skill and individual poetic style. Born in the Syr Darya region, he travelled throughout the Kazakh steppe over the course of his life, creating works devoted to the spiritual, social, and cultural life of the Kazakh people. His oeuvre combines elements of the Eastern classical tradition and Kazakh national poetics, making him one of the significant representatives of Kazakh literature of this period.

The emergence of the akyn and zhyrau traditions dates approximately to the fifteenth century (Noda 2021; McGuire 2024: 498). This reflects one of the characteristic features of Turkic literary culture, in which the oral epic tradition long predominated over written forms of literature (Subakozhoeva 2022: 634). An important component of this tradition was the poetic contest known as aitys, based on improvisation and the artistic mastery of performers (Mursalimova et al. 2022: 469). N. Nysanbayuly's creative work developed precisely within this cultural milieu, which brought together folklore tradition, oral epic, and an individual authorial voice.

The main body of N. Nysanbayuly's literary heritage consists of dastans, a genre of narrative poetry that occupies an important place in the Turkic literary tradition. Certain forms of the dastan can be traced back to early monuments of Turkic folklore of the tenth century, which attests to the antiquity and continuity of this genre (Huseynov 2023: 59). Like many representatives of the classical dastan tradition, N. Nysanbayuly turned to historical, mythological, and heroic plots that reflected popular notions of justice, morality, and spiritual values. The use of well-known plots and motifs is a characteristic feature of the classical dastan (McGuire 2022: 281).

The ethnocultural content of the dastans is closely connected with the spatial and geographical worldview reflected in the toponymic vocabulary of the works. The toponyms used in N. Nysanbayuly's dastans not only denote specific geographical objects but also serve an important cultural and symbolic function, associated with historical memory, local identity, and the distinctive features of the popular worldview. The study of toponymic vocabulary enables a deeper understanding of the specificity of local folkloric discourse and the representation of ethnocultural concepts in literary texts (Shurieva et al. 2024: 194).

Despite growing interest in Turkic oral literature and ethnolinguistics, the work of N. Nysanbayuly has so far remained insufficiently studied from both literary and linguistic perspectives. Existing studies are primarily devoted to general issues in Kazakh folklore, oral poetry, or the historical and cultural significance of dastans, whereas the interaction between ethnocultural features and the toponymic system in N. Nysanbayuly's works has received insufficient scholarly attention. In the context of globalisation and the expansion of intercultural communication, the study of Kazakh literary heritage within the international scholarly space has become particularly relevant. An analysis of the ethnocultural features of N. Nysanbayuly's dastans and their relationship to the Eastern literary tradition helps to clarify the specificity of the Kazakh artistic worldview. At the same time, a comparative study of Kazakh and English toponyms is of practical interest for translation studies and for the interlingual transmission of national and cultural specificity.

The present study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the ethnocultural features of N. Nysanbayuly's dastans and to conduct a comparative examination of the structural characteristics of Kazakh and English toponyms represented in his works. To achieve this aim, the study seeks to identify the ethnocultural codes and value systems reflected in N. Nysanbayuly's dastans, determine the influence of Turkic and Eastern

literary traditions on the author's poetic worldview, analyze the functions of toponyms and their role in representing cultural identity, compare the morphological structure of Kazakh and English toponyms found in the corpus of the author's works, and evaluate the implications of the identified linguistic features for the translation and interpretation of Kazakh toponyms in English-language contexts. To accomplish these objectives, the research employs literary, ethnocultural, and comparative linguistic methods of analysis.

1.1. Literature Review

Despite N. Nysanbayuly's significance to the Kazakh literary tradition, the number of scholarly studies devoted to his work remains relatively limited, particularly in recent decades. Insufficient attention to the heritage of the akyn-zhyrau of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is largely associated with a prolonged period of weakened interest in local history, folklore, and national literature (Uyama and Matsuzato 2000: 70; Kudaibergen 2024). As a result, N. Nysanbayuly's creative legacy has not yet received a comprehensive literary and linguistic interpretation. At the same time, studies of the oral epic tradition, the dastan genre, and the culture of the akyn-zhyrau provide the necessary theoretical basis for analysing his works.

One of the most developed areas of contemporary research is the study of Kazakh oral literature and the distinctive features of akyn-zhyrau creativity. The importance of the akyn-zhyrau in the formation of the Kazakh literary tradition is difficult to overestimate, even though a substantial part of the oral heritage has been lost due to the specific nature of improvisational performance and the oral transmission of texts (Rancier 2024: 159). The surviving works allow researchers to analyse the value orientations and artistic features of akyn-zhyrau creativity, including themes of national consciousness, moral ideals, and cultural identity (Malgaraeva, Tairova 2021: 52; Oshakbayeva 2021: 39).

The dastan genre occupies a special place in both the Kazakh and the broader Turkic literary traditions. Researchers note that the dastan, as a form of narrative poetry, emerged considerably earlier than the concepts of akyn and zhyrau themselves became established (Pardaeva 2022: 152). Dastans constitute an important part not only of Kazakh literature but also of the broader Eastern literary tradition, which connects the Turkic peoples with the cultures of the Middle East (Al-Marashi, Goldschmidt 2024). The formation of the akyn-zhyrau tradition and the dissemination of dastans are regarded as manifestations of a shared bardic culture that existed across territories where Turkic and Arabic languages were used (Naghiyeva et al. 2019: 116; Yang 2019: 15). Moreover, scholars emphasise that dastans reflect the major historical and cultural processes of their time (Ross 2019).

The scholarly literature also examines specific mythological and folkloric elements characteristic of akyn-zhyrau creativity. One such image is the figure of Kydyr (Hidr, Hizr), widely represented in Turkic and pre-Islamic traditions. In Kazakh culture, this figure is associated with ideas of wisdom, spiritual knowledge, and moral perfection, which corresponds to the thematic orientation of many dastans and works of akyn-zhyrau poets (Uali 2022). Considerable scholarly attention has also been paid to the phenomenon of naziragoylik, a tradition of creative reworking and reinterpretation of well-known plots that is characteristic of Turkic literary culture (Kaskabasov 2018: 423). Elements of this tradition can also be traced in the works of N. Nysanbayuly, indicating his connection with the classical Eastern literary heritage.

N. Nysanbayuly created his works during a period of profound social and cultural change in the Kazakh steppe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. His creative output combines elements of classical Eastern poetics, folkloric tradition, and the national Kazakh worldview. However, despite the author's literary significance, contemporary Kazakh-, Russian-, and English-language scholarship still lacks comprehensive studies that address both the ethnocultural features of his dastans and their linguistic characteristics.

In contrast to the limited number of studies devoted specifically to N. Nysanbayuly, toponymy is widely represented in contemporary linguistics. In psycholinguistic, cognitive-linguistic, and sociolinguistic studies, toponyms are regarded as an important element in the representation of a community's collective worldview and cultural memory (Gin, Cacciafoco 2021: 1). Researchers also associate toponymic vocabulary with issues of linguistic and cultural identity (Alasli 2019: 1; Skorupa 2021). In this regard, the analysis of toponyms in literary texts has become one of the promising directions of literary and linguistic research. This approach is applied both in studies of Western literature (Diamanti 2019: 97) and in analyses of works by Turkic authors (Düzgün 2020).

The comparative study of Kazakh and English toponyms is of particular interest. Researchers note substantial differences between the two systems, determined by the structural and genetic features of the languages (Kurban, Duysembekova 2023: 201). Comparative analysis of English and Kazakh toponymy has already gained some development in contemporary linguistics (Meirbekov 2022; Akhmetova 2024: 9). However, the toponymic system of dastans as an object of comprehensive literary and translation-oriented analysis remains insufficiently studied. There is an almost complete absence of studies devoted to toponyms in the works of N. Nysanbayuly, as well as to the problem of rendering this vocabulary in English translation.

Thus, the analysis of scholarly literature in Kazakh, Russian, English, and Turkish shows that N. Nysanbayuly's work remains insufficiently explored from both literary and linguistic perspectives. Existing studies address individual elements of the oral epic tradition, the dastan genre, and toponymy; however, a comprehensive analysis of the ethnocultural features of N. Nysanbayuly's works and the functioning of toponyms in his texts has not yet been undertaken.

1.2. Problem Statement

The relevance of the present study is determined by the insufficient extent to which N. Nysanbayuly's work has been examined, despite his significance to the Kazakh literary and cultural tradition of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Contemporary studies are primarily devoted to general issues of Kazakh oral poetry, the dastan genre, and the akyn-zhyrau tradition, whereas the ethnocultural features of N. Nysanbayuly's works and the functioning of toponymic vocabulary in his texts remain insufficiently explored.

The aim of the present study is to analyse the ethnocultural features of N. Nysanbayuly's dastans and to examine the structural characteristics of toponyms in the Kazakh and English languages, based on his works.

To achieve this aim, the following objectives must be addressed:

- 1) to identify the features of the Eastern literary tradition represented in N. Nysanbayuly's dastans;
- 2) to reveal and characterise the ethnocultural features of the author's works;
- 3) to analyse the structural and word-formation features of Kazakh and English toponyms represented in N. Nysanbayuly's texts;
- 4) to examine the specific features of rendering Kazakh toponyms in English translation.

2. METHODS AND MATERIALS

2.1. Sources and Materials

The primary material for the present study consisted of the texts of N. Nysanbayuly, above all his dastans "Qaraqül", "Khanym Syry", "Zhetim Qubyl", and "Sauda Ishan". The texts of these dastans are included in Yakov Lutsh's Chrestomathy (Lutsh 1883) and in the separate edition "Sauda Ishan" (Nysanbayuly 1974). Although these editions belong to an earlier period, they contain the most complete available collection of N. Nysanbayuly's works. The absence of a modern critical edition of his texts can be explained by two factors:

first, the insufficient attention paid to his legacy by literary and academic scholarship, as discussed in detail in the Literature Review section; and second, the fact that N. Nysanbayuly was an akyn whose creative work was oral and often improvisational in nature, which significantly complicates the recording and systematization of his heritage.

Individual poems by N. Nysanbayuly were not included in the direct linguistic or ethnocultural analysis in order to preserve a clear research focus and avoid broadening the main object of study. The selection of dastans as the central material of the study was also motivated by the aim of emphasising the connection between N. Nysanbayuly's work and the Eastern literary tradition within which this genre developed and which shaped the character of the epic tradition associated with it.

The theoretical basis for analysing N. Nysanbayuly's works in the broader cultural and ethnic context of Turkic languages and literatures was formed on the basis of Johanson's fundamental academic study (Johanson 2021). Additional theoretical concepts applied in the present study are presented in the relevant section below.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

The key concept determining the results of the present study is Eastern literature, which may be interpreted in different ways depending on the context. In a broad sense, Eastern literature encompasses the written and oral works of peoples from Eastern regions, ranging from Japan and China (Thornber 2009) to the Middle East (Mattar 2020) and the Ancient Near East (Kuhrt 2020). To define more precisely the literary phenomena that influenced the work of N. Nysanbayuly, it is necessary to narrow the scope of the study. Thus, the present study draws on two key literary traditions in Eastern literature: the Turkic and the Persian-Arabic traditions.

Turkic literature includes Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Turkish, Azerbaijani, Bashkir, Uzbek, and other cultural clusters of this broader Eastern region, which is determined by the common Turkic origin of these cultures and by the affiliation of their literatures with the Turkic language group (Johanson 2021: 83). Persian and Arabic literature is also central to the present study because of the close connections between the literary tradition of the Kazakh akyn-zhyrau, to which N. Nysanbayuly belongs, and Persian-Arabic authors (DeWeese 2019: 131). The linking element between these traditions is the dastan genre, whose key characteristics include: (1) the epic nature of the genre; (2) a hyperbolic and idealistic narrative tone; (3) folkloric and mythological sources of plots; and (4) themes of exploits, virtues, heroic deeds, and moral self-consciousness (Kayumov, Khozhiev 2025: 518). In addition to these general characteristics, dastans are marked by considerable generic diversity and display unique features determined by the region or historical period of their creation (Shaheen et al. 2020: 1045; Khusaynova 2022: 104; Tayyab, Jamshaid 2022: 109; Nabieva 2023: 194). The dastans of N. Nysanbayuly also possess specific features, which are examined in greater detail in the Results section.

Another aspect of the present study that requires appropriate theoretical justification is its ethnocultural dimension. The turn to ethnoculturalism in literary and linguistic research is natural within the contemporary cognitive approach (Abdelhameed et al. 2023: 189). According to theories developed by cognitive linguists, the primary unit is not language itself but the person who speaks it, a view that fundamentally differs from the traditional approach in which human thought is regarded as secondary to language (Evans, Green 2018). The application of cognitive-linguistic methods in literary studies, in turn, enables the identification of the influence of identity and ethnoculturalism on a given author's texts (Ternavskaya, Bogdanova 2023: 160). Thus, each linguistic unit used in a literary text is considered a reflection of the author's conceptual worldview as a representative of a particular ethnocultural group (Isakova et al. 2018: 298).

The practical linguistic aspect of the present study is implemented through the analysis of toponyms, primarily Kazakh ones, which is determined by N. Nysanbayuly's

cultural and ethnic identity. Toponyms themselves are regarded as elements in constructing the linguistic representation of the worldview (Usmonova 2024: 716). At the same time, this study focuses on the linguistic characteristics of toponyms, particularly their morphological features. It should be emphasised that in Kazakh, elements such as *-köl*, *-aral*, *-tau*, *-ata*, and *-qorǵan* are traditionally classified in Kazakh onomastics as geographical terms rather than suffixes, in accordance with the position of Kazakh onomastic scholars Erkebay Koichubayev and Gali Konkoshpayev. This distinction is of fundamental importance for the correct interpretation of morphological parallels between Kazakh and English toponyms. Given the considerable territorial and cultural distance between the Kazakh and English languages, it is at the morphological level that the most significant similarities and differences can be identified for further linguistic analysis.

2.3. Methods

The study has a comprehensive literary and linguistic character, which determined the use of several interrelated methods of analysis.

The main method of literary analysis used was the descriptive method, which was employed to examine the generic, thematic, and ethnocultural features of N. Nysanbayuly's dastans. To identify the connections between the author's works and the Eastern literary tradition, the comparative method was applied. This method makes it possible to compare individual motifs, generic features, and artistic characteristics of the dastans with those of works in the Turkic, Persian, and Arabic literary traditions.

The linguistic analysis of toponyms was conducted using descriptive, comparative, and morphological methods. The study took into account the following aspects:

- 1) the structural features of toponyms;
- 2) the presence of geographical terms;
- 3) word-formation patterns;
- 4) the functioning of toponyms in literary texts;
- 5) the specific features of rendering toponymic vocabulary in English translation.

The descriptive method was used to characterise the structure and semantics of toponyms, whereas the comparative method made it possible to identify structural and word-formation correspondences between Kazakh and English toponymic models. Morphological analysis was applied to determine the role of geographical terms in the formation of the toponymic system of the texts under study.

3. RESULTS

3.1. N. Nysanbayuly in the Context of Eastern Literature

N. Nysanbayuly belonged to the educated Kazakh akyns of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, whose work developed under the influence of both the Kazakh oral poetic tradition and classical Eastern literature. Alongside such authors as Nurzhan Naushabayev, Makysh Kaltayev, and Shädi Jängirov, he sought to combine the traditions of Turkic folklore with the artistic models of Persian and Arabic literature. His works demonstrate a synthesis of oral epic, religious and moral problematics, and elements of Eastern poetics.

One of the most characteristic features of N. Nysanbayuly's work is his appeal to the tradition of *naziragoylyk*, that is, the creative reinterpretation of well-known plots and motifs of Eastern literature. This tradition was widespread in the Turkic literary milieu and presupposed not the mechanical reproduction of a plot but its adaptation to the author's national and cultural context. In the dastan "Sauda Ishan", one can trace a didactic conflict characteristic of Eastern literature between justice and moral decline. The main characters, Zhanat and Bolat, are contrasted with "Sauda Ishan" as bearers of moral qualities associated with honesty, loyalty, and human dignity. Similar motifs are also present in the dastan

“Zhetim Qubyl”, where the fate of an orphan is used by the author to reveal the themes of social injustice and moral resilience.

An important feature of N. Nysanbayuly’s dastans is the presence of images characteristic of the Eastern literary tradition. One such figure is Kydyr, a character widely represented in Turkic, Arabic, and Persian literature. In N. Nysanbayuly’s works, Kydyr appears not only as a religious figure associated with the Islamic tradition but also as a bearer of wisdom and moral authority. His function is to uphold justice and moral order, which corresponds to the overall moral and didactic orientation of the dastans.

The connection between N. Nysanbayuly’s work and the Eastern literary tradition is also manifested at the formal level. The author’s dastans are composed in a rhythmic, rhyming form suitable for oral performance and musical accompaniment, which aligns with the features of the akyn-zhyrau tradition. For example, in the dastan “Sauda Ishan”, lines with a seven- and eight-syllable structure predominate, a feature characteristic of the Turkic oral epic. This organisation of the text facilitated the memorisation of the works and their performance before an audience.

3.2. Ethnocultural Characteristics of N. Nysanbayuly’s Texts

As a blend of a strong foothold in traditional Eastern literature and modern Qazakh elements, the dastans of N. Nysanbayuly are rich in ethnocultural elements. Such ethnocultural aspects as religious doctrines, societal norms, linguistic details, and historical context are the most prominent.

Firstly, the Qazakh society of N. Nysanbayuly’s time was Muslim, which means that this religion, which has dominated the region for centuries, is also dominant in the worldview of Qazakh writers and, thus, in their texts. For example, in N. Nysanbayuly’s Zhetym Kubyl, as well as in “Sauda Ishan”, the values of Islam are present and communicated through the protagonists’ words and actions. The insincerity and the intention to become rich or powerful by letting another person down are among the biggest sins it represents. This aspect is similar to other works of Islamic literature, where righteousness is consistently linked to sincerity and devotion. Instead, those who disobey, who have a heart full of contempt or violent intentions, are not just lectured on the topic of morals but also punished accordingly. The topic of sin and punishment, present in N. Nysanbayuly’s dastans, is also connected to the core idea of justice at the fundamental doctrines of Islam.

At the same time, despite relying on the essentials of his religion, N. Nysanbayuly distanced his dastans from religious discourse, bringing some traditionally spiritual elements closer to the regular, mundane world. For example, Kydyr, mentioned previously, is a natural character of Arabic, Persian, and Turkic literature; his image is forever united with the prophecy of Allah. However, in the story by N. Nysanbayuly, Kydyr is not so much an envoy from Allah as a person independent in their wisdom and capabilities.

Thus, the societal norms described in N. Nysanbayuly’s dastans are no less important than the religious component. For example, in the aforementioned “Sauda Ishan”, “Zhanat”, the female protagonist, stands not only against the unfaithful and corrupt Sauda himself but also against the discrimination she faces in society. Her brother Bolat, even though experiencing a different kind of hardship, is also withstanding significant societal pressure.

Such a combination of religious motifs and values, and societal impacts, reflects respect for tradition and an interest in modernity, both of which are displayed in the texts of N. Nysanbayuly. The societal aspect of N. Nysanbayuly’s stories offers a unique window into the ethnic and cultural dimensions of his community and Qazakh life.

3.3. Linguistic Characteristics of Qazakh-English Toponyms

Toponymic vocabulary plays an important role in the works of N. Nysanbayuly and serves not only a nominative function but also cultural and symbolic ones. The analysis of

toponyms enables the identification of the specific features of the linguistic representation of space and the tracing of the connection between the literary text and the national-cultural worldview.

In the course of the study, 47 toponyms were identified in the dastans' texts through continuous sampling. The analysis showed that the most common structural components of Kazakh toponyms are geographical terms denoting natural objects, settlements, and artificially created landscape features.

A comparison of Kazakh and English toponyms reveals certain structural and semantic correspondences, which are presented in Table.

Table. Comparative Analysis of Toponymic Bases (compiled by the author on the basis of Kazakh and English toponymic vocabulary)

Semantic group	Kazakh language	Meaning	English	Meaning
Water bodies	köl (Kökköl)	lake	loch (Loch Ness)	lake
Water bodies	aral (Aral Teñizi)	island/body of water	pool (Liverpool)	body of water
Mountainous features	tau (Aqtau)	mountain	rock (Castle Rock)	rock
Mountainous features	tau (Qaratau)	mountain range	cliff (Clifton)	cliff/elevation
Settlements	ata (Alma-Ata)	settlement/sacred place	ham (Birmingham)	settlement
Artificial objects	qorğan (Aqqorğan)	fortification/fortress	bury (Glastonbury)	fortified settlement

The results presented in Table 1 show that, in both languages, toponyms are often formed using geographical terms associated with natural objects, terrain features, and types of settlements. However, the origins and functions of these elements differ across the historical and cultural development of the languages.

In the English toponymic system, a significant proportion of structural components can be traced back to Old English and Celtic origins. For example, the element *loch* is characteristic primarily of Scottish toponymy. In Kazakh, toponymic elements are closely connected with the Turkic linguistic tradition and also partially reflect the influence of Arabic and Persian.

It should be noted that elements such as *-köl*, *-aral*, *-tau*, and *-qorğan* are regarded in the Kazakh onomastic tradition primarily as geographical terms rather than suffixes. This distinction is of fundamental importance for comparative analysis, as it allows these elements to be considered independent carriers of spatial and cultural meaning.

The analysis also showed that toponyms in N. Nysanbayuly's works serve an important artistic function. In a number of cases, the author uses conventional or generalised toponymic models that create a folkloric and epic space. In other words, real geographical names associated with the territory of Southern Kazakhstan occur, including Saryarka and Zhetisu Alatau. The use of such toponyms strengthens the text's national and cultural anchoring and contributes to the formation of the spatial image of the Kazakh steppe.

From a translation perspective, toponyms present particular difficulty, as they contain not only geographical but also ethnocultural information. In some cases, semantic translation may help preserve the artistic imagery of the original. For example, the toponym Saryarka may be rendered as "Yellow Steppe", while Zhetisu Alatau may be rendered as "Mountain Range of Seven Rivers". However, the choice between transliteration and

semantic translation depends on the translator's strategy and on the extent to which the national and cultural component of the text is to be preserved.

4. DISCUSSION

The overall analysis shows that N. Nysanbayuly's work remains insufficiently studied in contemporary literary scholarship, despite its significance in both the Kazakh and broader Turkic literary traditions. The limited number of specialised studies devoted to his life and works indicates the need for further scholarly attention to this author and his legacy.

The findings confirm that N. Nysanbayuly should be regarded as a representative of the Turkic literary tradition situated at the intersection of oral poetic culture and the written influences of classical Eastern literature. As scholars of Turkic literary tradition, particularly Akbope Suleimenova (2018) and Madina Moldasheva (2023), have noted, the dastan genre and the akyn-zhyrau tradition form a unified cultural and literary space within which N. Nysanbayuly's work demonstrates organic integration into the broader Eastern literary context.

The textual analysis showed that the author's dastans contain stable elements of the naziragoylyk tradition, thereby confirming their connection to Persian and Arabic literary models (DeWeese 2019: 131). At the same time, these elements do not constitute a simple borrowing of plots; rather, they function as a mechanism of cultural adaptation and reinterpretation characteristic of the Turkic literary milieu. This is consistent with arguments concerning the generic flexibility of the dastan as a literary form (Shaheen et al. 2020: 1045; Khusaynova 2022: 104; Tayyab, Jamshaid 2022: 109; Nabieva 2023: 194).

The ethnocultural features identified during the study confirm that N. Nysanbayuly's works reflect the value system of Kazakh society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In particular, religious motifs associated with Islamic ethics are closely intertwined with social notions of justice, morality, and public order. These observations align with the general characteristics of Eastern literature, in which the moral and didactic components play a significant role (Uali 2022; Rancier 2024: 159).

At the same time, the analysis demonstrates that religious images in N. Nysanbayuly's texts undergo a distinct artistic transformation. For example, the image of Kydyr functions not only as a traditional religious symbol but also as a literary character with an independent narrative function (Umirzakov, Nasirdinov 2019). This interpretation is consistent with the development of the imagery system in Turkic and Eastern literature, including the works of Hakim Ferdowsi, Ganjavi Nizami, and Alisher Navoi.

The linguistic analysis of toponyms revealed stable structural correspondences between the Kazakh and English toponymic systems. However, these systems differ in their historical and cultural origins and in their word-formation patterns. Kazakh toponymy is dominated by Turkic elements, as well as borrowings from Arabic and Persian, whereas the English system preserves traces of Old English and Celtic influence (Johanson 2021; Kenbayeva et al. 2022: 45; Al-Jarf 2023: 42).

As shown in Table 1, the structural elements of toponyms in both languages perform similar functions in naming natural objects, settlements, and anthropogenic landscape forms. At the same time, it is important to emphasise that elements such as *-köl*, *-aral*, *-tau*, and *-qorğan* are regarded in the Kazakh onomastic tradition as geographical terms rather than suffixes, in line with the positions of Kazakh onomastic scholars E. Koichubayev and G. Konkoshpayev.

From the perspective of translation practice, the findings demonstrate that toponyms in literary texts perform not only a nominative but also an ethnocultural function. Therefore, the choice of strategy for rendering them, whether through transliteration or semantic translation, depends on the aim of preserving cultural information. This conclusion is consistent with studies on the translatability of culturally marked vocabulary (Marinis 2025:

77) and with practices of toponym analysis in Arabic and Turkic languages (Kenbayeva et al. 2022: 45; Al-Jarf 2023: 42).

The study also demonstrates that the approaches used in analysing toponyms in the texts of N. Nysanbayuly may be applied to other corpora of Turkic literature. However, such generalisations require separate verification, taking into account the specificity of each language and literary tradition.

Several limitations of the present study should be noted. First, the analysis is limited to the corpus of texts represented in available editions, which does not exclude the existence of additional materials. The sample of toponyms, comprising 47 units, reflects only part of the potential linguistic material. These limitations do not diminish the significance of the findings; however, they indicate the need for further expansion of the data corpus.

The findings confirm the relevance of further study of N. Nysanbayuly's work from both literary and linguistic perspectives. The data obtained may be used in research on Turkic literature, onomastics, and the theory of literary translation, particularly in the context of rendering ethnocultural elements when translating Kazakh texts into English.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The study allows us to conclude that N. Nysanbayuly is a significant figure in the history of Kazakh literature, representing the tradition of akyn poetic creativity rooted in the oral improvisational culture of the Turkic peoples. The analysis of his dastans demonstrates their belonging to the broader context of Turkic, Persian, and Arabic literary traditions, as evidenced by the use of traditional plot models, motifs, and poetic devices.

At the same time, N. Nysanbayuly's works reflect stable ethnocultural features of the Kazakh worldview of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. His texts combine classical Eastern literary forms with local cultural elements, indicating a synthesis of tradition and authorial reinterpretation within the dastan genre.

The linguistic analysis revealed structural parallels between the Kazakh and English toponymic systems, primarily at the level of the functional components of geographical names. The identified correspondences make it possible to speak of the potential for comparative study of toponyms in the two languages and for their consideration in translation practice. At the same time, elements such as *-köl*, *-aral*, *-tau*, and *-qorğan* should be regarded as geographical terms rather than affixes, which is important for accurate morphological interpretation.

The findings indicate that translating Kazakh dastans into English requires a comprehensive approach that combines transliteration and the semantic rendering of culturally significant toponyms, depending on the translation strategy and the aim of preserving ethnocultural information.

A limitation of the present study is the use of a restricted corpus of texts and a relatively small number of analysed toponyms, which leaves room for further expansion of the empirical base. Future research may focus on broadening the corpus of N. Nysanbayuly's texts, conducting a more in-depth analysis of other representatives of the akyn tradition, and applying the proposed approach to the study and translation of toponyms in other Turkic and Indo-European language pairs.

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