

## The concept of “happiness” in Turkic languages: A linguocultural approach (based on Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Turkish)

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### ABSTRACT

This article examines the national and cultural specificity of the concept of 'happiness' in Turkic languages, taking a linguistic, cultural, and cognitive approach. Adopting a qualitative research approach, it aims to reveal the interconnection between language, culture and worldview by analyzing how the concept of 'happiness' emerges in Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uzbek and Turkish. The study is based on the theory of conceptual metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980) and a comparative-interpretative linguocultural approach. The analysis is based on proverbs and idioms in the Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, and Turkish languages, which belong to different branches of the Turkic language family. This allows us to identify common and differing linguistic and cultural representations of the concept of 'happiness' in various Turkic traditions. The study's primary objective is to reveal the conceptual structure, semantic field, metaphorical models, and cultural representations inherent in lexemes denoting 'happiness' in Turkic languages. It covers three main areas: an etymological review of key terms (e.g. *baqyt*, *mutluluk*, *bakıt*); a linguistic and cultural interpretation, based on paremiological materials and idiomatic expressions; and a comparative analysis of metaphorical models. The paremiological analysis revealed that, in most Turkic cultures, happiness is generally viewed as a blessing or an external gift, originating from the will of God or fate. The most frequent metaphors include images of 'light', 'birds', 'luck', and 'gift' reflecting the common cultural perception of the impermanence of happiness. For instance, Kazakh and Turkish proverbs often depict happiness as transient, 'fleeting' or 'coming and going', depending on a person's spiritual or social harmony. Studying the concept of 'happiness' from linguistic and cultural perspectives reveals that the historical and philosophical worldview and traditional way of life of Turkic peoples play an important role in its formation. In a nomadic lifestyle, ideas about happiness

are based on harmony with nature, respect for elders, and humility before fate. Islam has also had a significant influence; in the Muslim worldview, true happiness is understood as spiritual peace and the attainment of Allah's favor. For example, the following expressions are widespread among Kazakhs: 'Sabyr tubi – sary altyn' and 'Qanagat – qaryn toygizar', in which happiness is associated with patience, contentment and spiritual maturity. For many Turkic peoples, happiness is not a personal achievement or an atmosphere of external comfort, but rather a harmonious existence with nature, family and God. In conclusion, the study emphasizes that the concept of 'happiness' is firmly rooted in the cultural consciousness of the Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uzbek and Turkish peoples, acting as both a linguistic phenomenon and a sign of national identity, collective values, historical experience and cultural worldview. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the cultural semantics of these languages, demonstrating how language constructs and preserves cultural representations of the world.

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**Түркі тілдеріндегі «Бақыт» ұғымы: лингвомәдени зертеу  
(қазақ, қырғыз, өзбек және түрік тілдері негізінде)**

**Аннотация.** Мақалада түркі тілдеріндегі «бақыт» концептісінің ұлттық-мәдени ерекшелігі лингвомәдени және когнитивтік тұрғыдан қарастырылады. Сапалық зерттеу парадигмасына сүйене отырып «бақыт» ұғымының түркітілдес қоғамдардағы құрылымын зерттеу арқылы тіл, мәдениет және дүниетаным арасындағы байланысты анықтауды көздейді. Зерттеу әдіснамасы ретінде Лакофф пен Джонсонның (1980) концептуалдық метафора теориясы мен салыстырмалы және интерпретативтік лингвомәдени тәсілдер қолданылған. Талдау қазақ, қырғыз, өзбек және түрік тілдерінің мақал-мәтелдері мен идиомаларына сүйенеді, бұл тілдер түркі тілдері отбасының әртүрлі тармақтарына жатады. Олардың зерттелуі «бақыт» ұғымының түркі дәстүріндегі ортақ және өзіндік лингвомәдени бейнелерін анықтауға мүмкіндік береді. Зерттеудің негізгі мақсаты – түркі тілдеріндегі «бақыт» лексемасының концептуалдық құрылымын, семантикалық өрісін, метафоралық үлгілерін және мәдени репрезентацияларын ашып көрсету болып табылады. Зерттеу үш негізгі бағытқа: негізгі терминдердің этимологиялық шолуына (мыс., бақыт, мутлулук, бакыт), паремиологиялық материалдар мен тұрақты тіркестер негізіндегі лингвомәдени интерпретацияға және метафоралық үлгілерді салыстырмалы талдауға шоғырланған. Паремиологиялық материалдарға сүйенсек,

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түркі мәдениеттерінің басым көпшілігінде бақыт – Құдайдың еркімен немесе тағдырмен келетін сый ретінде қабылданады. Ең жиі кездесетін метафоралар – нұр, құс, сәттілік, сый. Бұл бақыттың киелі әрі сырттан келетін болмыс екенін білдіреді. Мысалы, қазақ және түрік мақал-мәтелдерінде бақыт жиі ұшып кететін немесе белгілі бір рухани не әлеуметтік үйлесіммен келетін уақытша құбылыс ретінде сипатталады. «Бақыт» концептісін лингвомәдени тұрғыдан зерттегенде, түркі халықтарының тарихи-философиялық дүниетанымы мен дәстүрлі өмір салтының маңызды рөл атқаратынын байқауға болады. Мысалы, көшпенді өмір салтында табиғатпен үйлесімде өмір сүру, үлкенге құрмет, тағдырға мойынсұну – бақыт ұғымының іргетасы болып табылады. Ислам дінінің әсері де зор: мұсылмандық түсінік бойынша, нағыз бақыт – рухани тыныштық пен Алланың разылығына жету. Бұл көзқарастар тілде көрініс тапқан: «Сабыр түбі – сары алтын», «Қанағат – қарын тойғызар» сияқты мақалдарда бақыт материалдық емес, рухани тұтастықпен өлшенетіні аңғарылады. Сондай-ақ, түркі әдебиетінде бақыт жиі әділ патша, дана адам, не болмаса жомарт қоғам бейнесінде көрініс табады. «Бақыт» концептісі түркі халықтарының мәдени санасында тек тілдік құбылыс ретінде ғана емес, сонымен қатар ұлттық болмыс, ұжымдық құндылықтар, тарихи тәжірибе және дүниетанымдық құрылымдардың көрінісі ретінде орныққан. Бұл жұмыс түркі дүниесінің мәдени семантикасын түсінуге ықпал етіп, тілдің мәдени дүниетанымды қалай жасақтайтыны мен сақтайтынын көрсетуге мүмкіндік береді.

**Кілт сөздер:** түркі тілдері, концепт, бақыт, лингвомәдениеттану, когнитивті лингвистика, мәдениетаралық салыстыру, метафоралық модель, мақал-мәтелдер, идиомалар когнитивтік модуль, эмоция.

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### **Концепт «Счастье» в тюркских языках: лингвокультурный подход (на материалах казахского, кыргызского, узбекского и турецкого языков)**

**Аннотация.** В статье в лингвокультурологическом и концептуальном аспектах рассматриваются национально-культурные реалии концепта «счастье» в тюркских языках. Исходя из верифицированной научной парадигмы, автор статьи пытается определить взаимосвязь языка, культуры и картины мира, которые проявляются в концепте «счастье» в казахском, киргизском, узбекском и турецком языках. Методологическую основу исследования составляют сравнительно-концептуальный подход и теория концептуальной метафоры (Лакофф и Джонсон, 1980). Анализ основан на пословицах и идиомах казахского, кыргызского, узбекского и турецкого языков, которые принадлежат к разным группам тюркской языковой семьи (кыпчакской, кыргызско-кыпчакской, карлукской и огузской соответственно). Такой выбор позволяет выявить как общие, так и различающиеся лингвокультурные репрезентации концепта «счастье» в различных тюркских традициях.

Цель исследования – раскрыть концептуальную структуру, семантическое поле, метафорические модели и культурные представления, заключённые в лексемах,

обозначающих «счастье» в тюркских языках. Исследование охватывает три основных направления: этимологический обзор ключевых терминов (например, *baqyt*, *mutluluk*, *bakıt*), лингвокультурную интерпретацию на основе паремиологических материалов и устойчивых выражений, а также сравнительный анализ метафорических моделей. Паремиологический анализ показал, что в большинстве тюркских культур счастье воспринимается как благословение или внешний дар, как нечто, исходящее от воли Всевышнего или судьбы. Наиболее частотные метафоры репрезентируют образы «света», «птицы», «удачи» и «дара», отражающие общее культурное представление о непостоянстве счастья. Например, в казахских и турецких пословицах счастье часто описывается как нечто временное, «летающее» или «приходящее и уходящее» в зависимости от духовной или социальной гармонии человека. Важную роль в формировании концепта «счастье» играют историко-философское мировоззрение и традиционный образ жизни тюркских народов. В кочевом укладе жизни представления о счастье основаны на идеях гармонии с природой, уважения к старшим и смирения перед судьбой. Существенное влияние оказал и ислам: в мусульманской картине мира истинное счастье понимается как духовное спокойствие и обретение благоволения Аллаха. Например, у казахов широко распространены парамии: «Сабыр түбі – сары алтын», «Қанағат – қарын тойғызар», где счастье ассоциируется с терпением, довольством и духовной зрелостью. Для многих тюркских народов счастье — это не личное достижение или внешняя атмосфера комфорта, а гармоничное существование с природой, родом и Всевышним. Автор статьи приходит к выводу, что концепт «счастье» прочно укоренён в культурном сознании четырёх тюркских народов — казахского, кыргызского, узбекского и турецкого, выступая не только как языковое явление, но и как знак национальной идентичности, коллективных ценностей, исторического опыта и культурной картины мира.

**Ключевые слова:** тюркские языки, концепт, счастье, лингвокультурология, когнитивная лингвистика, межкультурное сравнение, метафорическая модель, когнитивный модуль, пословицы, поговорки, эмоции,

## Introduction

The concept of happiness has been central to philosophical and societal reflection across cultures throughout history. It is a deeply personal and nuanced experience, often situated at the intersection of inner peace, pleasure and a sense of purpose in life. As Anna Wierzbicka (2004) observes, 'Happiness is a culturally formed concept that cannot be understood without reference to the worldview and social norms of a particular community' (Wierzbicka, 2004: 36). Although happiness appears to be a universal human emotion, its definitions, expressions and underlying values are influenced by particular linguistic and cultural contexts.

In Turkic-speaking communities, for example, happiness is closely tied to conventional worldviews, religious beliefs and ancient collective practices. Each society within the Turkic world has its own unique interpretation of happiness. Language plays a pivotal role in this system, serving not only as a means of expressing emotional states, but also as a vessel for cultural memory and continuity. Through idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and traditional metaphors, languages such as Kazakh, Turkish, Kyrgyz, and Uzbek hold and transmit culturally embedded notions of happiness. This perspective is grounded in the belief that language not

only reflects emotional experiences, but also actively shapes how people understand and pursue them. For instance, 'baqyt' in Kazakh or 'mutluluk' in Turkish signify more than just happiness. They carry specific cultural connotations, including affiliation with fate (tağdyr), divine will, familial harmony, and material stability. Therefore, a linguocultural approach to the study of happiness in Turkic languages not only recognises the variety of emotional expression, but also the deeper cultural logic that informs emotional life. Understanding how happiness is expressed through language can contribute to a richer understanding of cultural psychology, emotional cognition and interethnic communication. It sheds light on how members of Turkic societies experience, describe and strive for happiness within their personal cultural narratives.

Along with other multidimensional conceptualisations of reality, happiness is conditioned by national concepts and cultural values, which differ substantially from one society to another. Investigating the relationship between language and culture helps us to understand how different groups think about and define happiness, and how this concept is maintained and passed down through language models. In analysing the way concepts such as happiness and other abstractions are structured in the human mind. One obtains a clearer idea of what cultural conceptual architecture encompasses.

This study focuses on the structure and cultural development of happiness in different Turkic languages. Drawing on comparative linguocultural analysis, It compares language and culture to reveal how happiness is expressed in Kazakh, Turkish, Kyrgyz and Uzbek words, sayings and proverbs. The study examines the ideas, metaphors, and meanings of happiness, and how these reflect shared values and morals within Turkic-speaking groups. Drawing on knowledge from the fields of cognitive linguistics, cultural studies and paremiology, this study sheds light on how emotions are encoded in language and structured by cultural contexts. The emotional experience of happiness, for example, is not universal, but is instead heavily influenced by a group's historical past, religious beliefs, and social values. The article demonstrates that, within the Turkic cultural setting, happiness is more than just a psychological or individual experience. Rather, it is a linguistically embedded, culturally constructed experience. By focusing on how happiness is conceptualized and expressed in Turkic linguistic cultures, the study aims to raise awareness of the cultural logic that governs emotional life, thereby contributing to cross-cultural sensitivity in language and emotion studies. The scientific novelty of this study lies in its comprehensive analysis of the concept of 'happiness' in the phraseology of Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uzbek and Turkish. It identifies semantic differences between languages and demonstrates how historical and cultural factors shape the ethnocognitive understanding of happiness.

### **Materials and research methods**

This study is grounded in a qualitative research paradigm, enabling a thorough evaluation of the internal structure, semantic layers and cultural foundations of the concept of happiness in Turkic languages. A linguocultural and cognitive-comparative approach has been adopted as the methodological framework through which to investigate the linguistic aspects of happiness and its conceptualization in Turkic-speaking communities. The study focuses on Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uzbek and Turkish. These languages were selected as they represent different branches of the Turkic language family, enabling us to identify both common and divergent features in the understanding of the concept of 'happiness'. They also share similar cultural

and religious backgrounds, primarily within the Islamic tradition. Kazakh is used as a point of reference; the other languages are used for comparison and to identify common features or national variations in interpretation.

The research materials consist of linguistic data from collections of proverbs and idiomatic expressions in the aforementioned languages, with examples drawn from Suiyerkul and Chakyroglu (2014), Madayev (2010), Tezcan Aksu, Akalın and Toparlı (2023), Qazaqtyn Etnografiyalıq Kategorialary, Ugymdar Men Ataularynyn Dasturly Zhuyesi (2011), Sadalova (2002) and Sevortyan (1974). This study examines happiness using Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). This helps us to identify metaphors and symbols associated with happiness. Common metaphors such as 'light', 'bird', 'fate's gift', and 'divine blessing' appear in various Turkic languages. By examining proverbs, this study provides insight into the cultural aspects of expressing, preserving, and transmitting happiness through the Turkic language and culture.

### Research background

Although the concept of happiness is perceived differently across cultures, it has been widely studied from cognitive linguistic, intercultural communication and psycholinguistic perspectives, particularly in terms of its meaning and conceptual structure. A few studies have attempted to reveal the universal and cognitive basis of happiness as a concept. Prominent researchers in this field include Anna Wierzbicka, Cliff Goddard and Zhengdao Ye. Wierzbicka has conducted comparative studies on the concept of happiness in different languages. Based on the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) theory, she argues that the English term 'happiness' has no direct equivalent in many other languages. In her view, 'What English speakers call "happiness" is not a universal human concept. It is culturally constructed and shaped by individualistic ideology' (Wierzbicka, 2004: 36). Her work highlights the culturally embedded nature of emotional concepts and emphasizes the limitations of assuming universal definitions across linguistic boundaries. Building on the same NSM framework, Cliff Goddard and Zhengdao Ye have conducted comparative studies on the representation of emotional concepts such as 'happiness' and 'pain' in various languages. Their research includes semantic explications in English, Chinese, French, Malay and other languages, offering detailed cross-cultural comparisons of how these deeply personal experiences are expressed and understood (Goddard & Ye, 2014).

The concept of 'baqyt' in the Kazakh language is deeply ethnolinguistic in origin and reflects national values. It is often strongly associated with communal, familial and traditional cultural values. In her work, S. Abdramanova emphasizes the close link between the concept of 'baqyt' and the Kazakh worldview. She analyzes the notion of happiness through commonly used metaphors, idiomatic expressions, and proverbs, noting: "In the Kazakh understanding, happiness is linked to spiritual harmony, inner peace, and well-being... This is reflected in the semantic fields of words like 'heart', 'luck', and 'fate'" (Abdramanova, 2022). In her 2023 monograph published by Brill, Abdramanova further explores the concept of "heart", revealing its semantic and conceptual ties to happiness, joy, and the inner world (Abdramanova, 2023). Similarly, B. Suiyerkul and A.K. Chakyroglu offer a comparative ethnolinguistic analysis of the verbal representations of happiness and unhappiness in Kazakh proverbs and sayings (Suiyerkul & Chakyroglu, 2014).

In contrast, within English-speaking cultures, happiness is more often associated with psychological well-being, personal achievement, and self-actualization. R. McLellan and colleagues (McLellan et al., 2022) have examined youth perceptions of happiness in Kazakhstan using both emic (culture-specific) and etic (universal) frameworks. Likewise, E.B. Hajdukova and her co-authors have studied cross-cultural understandings of happiness, analyzing how the concept evolves and is interpreted within specific cultural contexts (Hajdukova, Winter, & McLellan, 2017).

Research into the concept of happiness is also a key area of study in Russian linguocultural research. Karaulov introduced the idea of the conceptsphere, emphasizing that every culture maintains key concepts through language (Karaulov, 1987). E.A. Stefanova has also made a valuable contribution to this field by examining the metaphorical representations of happiness in Russian and English and identifying significant cultural differences in the expression and understanding of the concept (Stefanova, 2019).

Research into the concept of happiness in Turkic languages is grounded in a rich ethnolinguistic and cognitive foundation. Key resources such as the four-volume Ethnolinguistic Dictionary of the Kazakh Language and the Kazakh-Russian Phraseological Dictionary with Ethnolinguistic Interpretation offer extensive documentation of lexical units, idioms and proverbs that capture local notions of well-being. Z.K. Derbisheva's monograph, *Fundamentals of Linguocognitive Comparison of Languages* (2020), offers a comparative framework analyzing the word 'Bakyt' in relation to the Kyrgyz language, highlighting its universal and culture-specific features.

These works collectively lay the groundwork for comprehending the semantic and cognitive dimensions of happiness in Kazakh and related Turkic languages. However, the current study aims to build upon this body of knowledge by identifying novel patterns and cross-linguistic insights that remain unexplored.

## Analysis

According to the traditional understanding, *baqyt* is a special gift or opportunity given by the Creator to an individual. It is the fulfilment of a person's goals and aspirations and the attainment of prosperity. It also refers to the special feeling of joy that indicates one has achieved happiness. In the Kazakh worldview, the durability of *baqyt* is primarily associated with wisdom. (Kazakh Ethnographic Categories, Concepts, and Names, 2011: 738).

The Kazakh word *baqyt* (happiness) is part of the broader Turkic lexical heritage and traces its origin to the Old Turkic root “*baq*”, combined with the productive noun-forming suffix “-yt/-it”. In Old Turkic, “*baq*” conveyed a cluster of meanings such as “blessing”, “luck”, “abundance”, “success”, and “divine favor”. According to Severtian (1974), “*baq*” in ancient Turkic sources denoted goodness, fortune, blessing, and prosperity. In the Orkhon-Enisei inscriptions (8th century), it appears with meanings such as “state prosperity” and “the grace of Heaven (Tengri)”. The Tonyukuk and Bilge Qaghan inscriptions often mention “*baq*” along with “*qut*”. “*Qut*” is like a blessing or good luck from the gods. This illustrates how they believed the gods granted good fortune to individuals and groups. In the traditional Turkic worldview, ‘*baq*’ is not just a personal feeling or mindset, but a culturally significant concept that encompasses both individual and societal well-being. It is closely related to sacred assets, particularly Tengri (the Sky God), as well as to ethical and moral living. Only those who are virtuous and righteous, and who live in harmony with their community, are

believed to deserve true and lasting 'baq'. This notion is embedded in numerous expressions from Kazakh oral culture, such as: *qutty meken* (a blessed homeland), *qut daryǵan jer* (land graced with sacred energy), *baq qonǵan shańyraq* (a household upon which fortune has descended). The word *baqyt* and its derivatives appear in various forms across other Turkic languages. For example, in Kyrgyz, *bakyt* means “happiness”, and *baktuu adam* refers to a happy or fortunate person. Common phrases include *bakyt quşu* (the bird of happiness) and *bakty bar adam* (one who has luck). In Tatar, *bähet* denotes “happiness”, and *bähetle* means “fortunate” or “happy”. Proverbs like *Bähet – sabırda* (Happiness lies in patience) reflect ethical dimensions similar to Kazakh usage. In Uzbek, the term *baxt* means “happiness”, and expressions like *baxtli hayot* (a satisfied existence) or *baxtli inson* (a glad person) are broadly used. Uzbek additionally shares the idea of *baxt qushi* (the chook of fortune), highlighting symbolic continuity. In Modern Turkish, the time period *baht* (of Persian-Arabic beginning) is used more often than not to mean “fate” or “good fortune”, whilst *mutluluk* is the same old phrase for “happiness”. However, lines of the older idea remain in expressions like *bahtı açık insan* (a person with open/favorable fate) and *baht dönmesi* (alternate of fortune).

In ancient Turkic cosmology, happiness was considered a sacred gift from *Tengri*, the Sky God, closely linked with *kut*, or spiritual-moral vitality (Tekin, 1968). A person possessing *kut* was morally upright and in harmony with both society and nature, whereas losing it led to spiritual and social imbalance. This moral dimension is reflected in Kazakh, “*Baqyt jurekten*” (happiness depends on the purity of the heart). With the spread of Islam, happiness incorporated the Arabic concept of *sa‘āda*, emphasizing inner peace, ethical conduct, and alignment with divine will. In Uzbek literature, happiness is described as “*qalb tinchligi va Alloh roziligida bo‘lish*” (peace of heart and God’s satisfaction) (Madayev, 2010), while Turkish proverbs, such as “*Mutluluk paylaştıkça çoğalır*” (happiness multiplies when shared) (Türk Atasözleri Sözlüğü, 2007), underline the importance of social harmony. Among northern Turkic peoples with shamanistic traditions, happiness retained a cosmic and communal dimension. Words such as *sakhtyga* (Khakass, “clarity, brightness”) and *kuunak* (Altai, “joyful, harmonious state”) (Sadalova, 2002) emphasize balance with nature, ancestral spirits, and community. These examples demonstrate that while the core idea of happiness is recognized across Turkic languages, its verbalization and cultural encoding vary depending on historical, religious, and ecological contexts, highlighting the deeply ethnocultural and cognitive nature of the phenomenon (Derbisheva, 2020).

In Turkic mythological and poetic traditions, *baq* is frequently personified as a living, autonomous force. Phrases such as *baq qonu* (fortune has arrived), *baq ushu* (fortune has flown away), or *baq ayyrılı* (loss of fortune) depict *baq* as a bird-like entity, echoing the image of the bird of happiness. The Kazakh proverb *Baq qonǵan er oñalar, baq taıǵan er tonalady* (a man blessed with fortune prospers; a man abandoned by fortune is stripped of everything) exemplifies this worldview.

In Kazakh culture, the concept of *baqyt* is often evoked in relation to spiritual entities such as *Qyzyr Ata*, *Arwaq* (ancestral spirits), or *Kieli qut* (sacred grace). Such associations further underscore the perception of happiness as not only emotional or material but spiritual in essence, a cosmic gift that one must be worthy of receiving. Expressions like: *Baq qonu* – (Fortune arrived), *Baq taidy* (Fortune turned away), *Baq bermedi* – (he/she was not granted divine favor) convey the belief that happiness is not fully within human control, but rather, comes from beyond, from Heaven, destiny, or the spirits. Phrases such as 'baqytty jan' (lucky person) and 'baq ashyldy' (happiness came to be) demonstrate a sense of inner and social



harmony. This suggests that happiness is not just a gift; it can also manifest when one is in tune with their culture and morals.

In Kazakh sayings, *baqyt* is often seen as a mysterious and random force. It's difficult to grasp, fleeting, and under the control of fate. Many idioms and proverbs reinforce the idea that happiness is not something you can work for.

Consider the following examples: *Baqyt qusy qondy* (The bird of happiness has landed) – a metaphor for sudden, unearned good fortune. *Baqyt köktemgi bult siyaqty, ol körgeñ tüstey, usqan qustay öte shyğady* (happiness is like a spring cloud – like a dream, like a flying bird, it quickly passes). *Baqyt shybyn siyaqty – birde gülge qonady, birde könge qonady* (happiness is like a fly – it may land on a flower, or on dung). *Baq adassa, batpaqta qonady* (if fortune is lost, it lands in the mud). *Baq tazdyñ basyna, pushiqtyñ murnyna qonady* (fortune lands on a bald man's head or on a crooked nose). *Baqyttyñ közi soqyr: ne tazğa, ne aqly azğa qonady* (happiness is blind – it may land on a fool or someone undeserving). *Baq keide taýyp qonady, keide aýyp qonady. Taýyp qonsa, eskertedi, aýyp qonsa esirtedi* (sometimes fortune lands correctly and teaches; sometimes it lands wrongly and deceives).

These vivid metaphors contribute to the broader concept of *baq* as an unpredictable, almost living force, a grace from above that cannot be earned or held onto. The recurring motif of the bird (*qus*) is particularly symbolic, emphasizing the transient, fragile and elusive nature of happiness. It may also appear suddenly, but vanish just as quickly. Such phraseological units suggest that happiness is not entirely within an individual's control. Expressions such as '*Baq taidy*' (fortune turned away) and '*Baq bermeidi*' (was not granted fortune) imply a theological or cosmological basis, namely the idea that *baq* is connected to *jazmysh* (destiny), which is predetermined and external. Conversely, phrases such as '*Baqytyn taptı*' (found happiness) suggest that, although happiness is elusive, it can be discovered through moral living, family harmony, or meaningful labor.

The cultural encoding of *baqyt* in proverbs also reveals a strong connection to collectivist values and spiritual ideals. For example: *Baqyt bailyqta emes, birlikte* (happiness is not in wealth, but in unity) emphasizes communal well-being over material success. *Baq qonsa – baqyr tastan nur shashar* (if fortune arrives, even a dull stone will shine) conveys the transformative power of grace. *Qūdaı baq bergenge, aqyl da, dāulet te qonady* (to the one whom God has granted fortune, wisdom, and wealth will follow) reinforces the sacred origin of *baq*.

Similar expressions exist in other Turkic languages, reinforcing the cross-cultural understanding of happiness as an external, divine, or fate-bound force. For instance, In Kyrgyz, *Bakyt qushu keldi* (The bird of happiness has come) mirrors the Kazakh image. In Tatar, *Bähet keşe kütelmägändä kilä* (Happiness comes when it is least expected) highlights its suddenness. And in Uzbek, *Baxt kutilmagan paytda keladi* means good comes unexpectedly, which shows they have a similar belief that things are kind of predetermined.

For many Turkic peoples, happiness is not a worldly state of ease or personal accomplishment, but rather an inner harmony with nature, family and God. This philosophy stems from the nomadic and collectivist origins of Turkic culture, in which individual well-being is inextricably linked to communal and cosmic harmony. In Kazakh society, '*baqyt*' (happiness) is closely connected with patience, gratitude and self-control – virtues that promote spiritual and social balance. Proverbs such as "*Sabyr tübi – sary altyn*" (the end of patience is gold) and "*Qanağat – qaryn toiyğazar*" (contentment fills the stomach) express the idea that true happiness arises from inner peace and self-control rather than material wealth. In Kyrgyz

tradition, the concept of bakt also embodies patience and moral resilience. Proverbs like “*Sabyrdyn tübü – sary altyn*” (the end of patience is gold) and “*Yrys – el menen*” (prosperity is with the people) emphasize the interconnection between personal and communal happiness. The term yrys in Kyrgyz means both “blessing” and “happiness,” linking it to divine grace and moral behavior. In Uzbek, happiness (baxt) is often seen as a divine gift or the favor of fate: “*Baxt – Yaratganning inoyati*” (happiness is the Creator’s grace) and “*Shukr qilgan – baxt topgan*” (he who is grateful finds happiness) show that gratitude and humility lead to well-being. In Turkish culture, happiness (*mutluluk*) is viewed as inner peace and moral purity rather than material abundance. Proverbs such as “*Kanaat eden mutlu olur*” (he who is content is happy) and “*Sabreden derviş muradına ermiş*” (the patient dervish attains his desire) reflect a Sufi understanding of happiness as a spiritual state achieved through patience and submission to God’s will. Thus, in the four Turkic languages: Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uzbek and Turkish, which represent the Kipchak, Kyrgyz-Kipchak, Karluk and Oghuz branches respectively, happiness is conceptualized as moral and spiritual harmony. Proverbs reveal that, in the Turkic worldview, happiness is not a fleeting emotion, but rather the result of patience and gratitude, as well as living in accordance with divine and social order.

These proverbs are not just old bits of wisdom; they are like cultural books that preserve and pass on national ideas. They inform us that, in Kazakh and other Turkic cultures, happiness is akin to spiritual balance, a gift from a higher power, and is tied to doing what is right and maintaining order. Based on this paremiological and textual material, several core cognitive models of 'baqyt' emerge, which will be analyzed further in the following section.

1. Cognitive Model: Happiness as “Qut” or “Näsip”. In the Kazakh conceptual framework, happiness is often understood through the lens of “qut” (sacred grace or divine aura) and “näsip” (heaven-sent portion or allotment). These terms reflect the idea that happiness is not always earned, but rather a form of divine benevolence. This concept aligns closely with a broader Turkic view, in which the sacred and the worldly are interwoven.

The proverb “*Baq qaida barasyń? – Baғы jańğańğa baramyn*” (where are you going, happiness? – I go to the one whose fortune is rising) illustrates the idea that happiness gravitates toward the morally or spiritually deserving. Similarly, “*Quty bar jigittiń isi oń bolar*” (the one blessed with qut will succeed) indicates that grace, or qut, predestines a person for prosperity. Such expressions also appear in other Turkic languages. In Kyrgyz, for example, the word nasip appears in the phrase “*Nasibin bergen Alla*” (God has granted his share), signifying divine providence. In Uzbek, the saying “*Har kimga nasib qilgan rizq bor*” (everyone has their destined sustenance) reflects a shared notion that happiness, livelihood, and success are preordained.

Kazakh expressions such as ‘*Baq qonsa, tas ta soileidi*’ (‘when fortune arrives, even the stone speaks’) and ‘*Qutty qonaq kelse, qoi egiz tabady*’ (‘when a blessed guest arrives, even the sheep give birth to twins’) emphasize the transformative, almost miraculous nature of ‘baq’. In these expressions, ‘baq’ and ‘qut’ are not only portrayed as spiritual essences, but also as agents capable of altering the physical world. This cognitive model of happiness emphasizes the passive role of the individual as a vessel to receive happiness rather than as its main architect. Phrases such as ‘*Täńir bergen baqty pende tartyp ala almaydy*’ (‘no one can take away the happiness given by God’), ‘*Asqan sululıqtan az ǵana baqyt artyq*’ (‘a little happiness is worth more than great beauty’) and ‘*Taýdaı talab bergense, barmaqtaı baq ber*’ (‘Better a fingertip of fortune than a mountain of ambition’) further consolidate the idea of happiness

as a resource dispensed by God – rare, unpredictable and more valuable than physical gifts or intellectual capacities.

2. Cognitive Model: Happiness as “Light” or “Radiance”. In poetic and literary traditions throughout Turkic cultures, happiness is often depicted as a moderate radiance or luminous glow. This metaphor highlights the spiritual nature of happiness and its connection to emotional well-being and moral virtue.

In Kazakh, the phrase “Kózime baqtyń nury úrildi” (tears of happiness welled in my eyes) poetically links emotion and radiance, portraying happiness as something that shines from within. Similarly, “Baqyt degen – nurlı kóńil, arym taza ómirim” (happiness is a radiant soul and a life of pure conscience) equates happiness with moral integrity and inner luminosity. Other expressions, inclusive of “Baqyttyń shýaǵyna bóleńdi” (bathed in the radiance of happiness) or “Núrly kúnimdey baqyt” (happiness like my vibrant day), evoke warm temperature, beauty, and religious comfort. These metaphorical constructions suggest that, in this worldview, happiness is not achieved through material gain, but through emotional and moral harmony.

Similar imagery exists in other Turkic languages. In Turkish, “Mutluluk içten gelen bir ışıktır” (happiness is a light that comes from within) reflects a similar conception of happiness as a radiant inner radiance. In Kyrgyz, “Baktuu adam nur chachat” (a happy person spreads light) reflects the same belief that emotional radiance is a sign of well-being. In this model, happiness appears to be both aesthetic and existential: it is a lightness of being, calmness of mind, and a purity of soul. It is also implicitly social. A person who is “radiant” with happiness uplifts those around them, reflecting the communal values embedded in Turkic cultures.

3. Cognitive Model: Happiness as “Mūrat / Asu / Climbing to Heights”. In some texts, happiness is conceptualized as climbing a mountain, conquering great peaks or achieving one's life goal ('mūrat'). In this model, baqyt (happiness) is associated with spiritual ascent, noble aspirations and a sense of purpose in life. For instance, “Baqyt – qol jetpes shyń emes, júrekpen tabatyn shyń” (happiness is not an unreachable peak, but one found with the heart), portrays happiness as requiring emotional depth rather than physical achievement. 'Baqyt asuyn ekiniń biri baǵyndyra almaıdy' (not everyone can conquer the peak of happiness) portrays happiness as an aspirational state that must be earned through a process of striving. Although this model emphasizes personal striving and progress, baqyt is still depicted as an external entity, a distant objective rather than an internal state.

In Kyrgyz, happiness is often linked to purpose and destiny, as in the phrase 'bakyt – Maksatyna jetken adamdyn abaly' (happiness is the state of someone who has achieved their goal). Similarly, the Uzbek word saodat (prosperity/blessedness) is traditionally associated with fulfilling one's destiny (taqdir), particularly in religious or poetic contexts. In Turkish, metaphorical expressions such as 'mutluluga giden yol' (the road to happiness) and 'zirveye ulasmak' (reaching the summit) echo the mountain imagery of life's challenges and internal aspirations. These cross-Turkic examples demonstrate that happiness is generally considered to be the outcome of moral, spiritual and emotional achievement rather than a given state.

4. Cognitive Model: Happiness as “Health, Family, and Material Wealth”. In Kazakh culture, a widely accepted cognitive model presents happiness as being dependent on health, family and material well-being. One of the most well-known proverbs states: “Birinshi bailyq – densaǵlyq, ekinshi bailyq – aq jaǵlyq, úshinshi bailyq – on saulyq” (the first wealth is health, the second wealth is a pure spouse [symbolized by the white headscarf], and the third wealth is livestock), positioning health as the foundation of happiness, followed by family

harmony and material security. Another proverb says: “Tórteýi túgeldiń tóbesinde úi bar, tórteýi túgel bolmasa – kúii bar” (one whose four values are complete lives in harmony; if not, they suffer). Here, the “four values” are often interpreted as wisdom, health, children, and property (sometimes also as a faithful spouse, contentment, health, and faith). These values together form the holistic image of happiness in traditional Kazakh society. Family is often at the center of this understanding. For example: “Ata – asqar ta’y, ana – baýyryndaғы bulaq, bala – jaғasyndaғы quraq” The saying 'The father is a lofty mountain, the mother a spring beneath it, and the child the reeds along its banks' illustrates the familial hierarchy and emotional roles: the father as a protector, the mother as a source of compassion, and the child as a symbol of future hope. 'Bala – adamnyń baýyr eti' (a child is the flesh of one's being) highlights the deep emotional and cultural value placed on children. 'Baq qonatyn adamnyń uly epti, qyzy kórikti bolady' (the one blessed with fortune will have a clever son and a beautiful daughter) shows that prosperous offspring are seen as a sign of divine favor. Even physical well-being is metaphorically equated with happiness in poetic traditions. The zhyrau (traditional Kazakh poets) expressed this vividly: "Eki kóziń oñana – Jakut emei nemene? Eki qolyń oñana – Baqyt emei nemene?!" (If your hands are healthy, is that not happiness?!). If your hands are healthy – is that not happiness?!", equating the vitality of one's senses and body with true happiness. In this model, baqyt is rooted in tangible aspects of life, such as physical health, familial harmony and material sufficiency, all of which are considered blessings that contribute to a fulfilling human existence.

Turkish proverbs such as 'Saglik varlik, varlik saglikla olur' ('wealth is health; wealth is possible through health') reflect the prioritisation of health as the foundation of happiness. Similarly, 'Ev alma, komşu al' (don't buy a house, buy a neighbour) highlights the importance of harmonious social and familial environments. In Uzbek, the phrase 'Farzand – ko'ngil shodligi' (a child is the joy of the heart) reflects the deep emotional investment in family as a source of happiness. In Kyrgyz, the phrase 'baylyk emes, yntymak – bakyt' (not wealth, but harmony is happiness) indicates that social and family cohesion are considered more important than material gain. Happiness is often defined across Turkic languages through a combination of communal, bodily and economic well-being, forming a culturally rich and interconnected framework.

5. Cognitive Model: Happiness as “Mutual Respect and Unity”. In traditional Kazakh oratory, 'baqyt' (happiness) is usually described in terms of interpersonal harmony, respect and social concord. It is more of a shared public mood than an internal state. A well-known folk saying beautifully illustrates this: 'Baqyt – qolğa qonğan qus. Bailyq – qolğa ústağan buz. Qus úship ketedi, muz erip ketedi, dúnieniń qyzyғы sizben biz’ (happiness is a bird that lands in your hand; wealth is ice you hold in your hand; the world's wonder is you and me). Wealth is ice you hold in your hand. The bird flies away and the ice melts, but true joy in life is found in meaningful relationships with others”. This proverb portrays happiness not in possessions or status, but in meaningful relationships between people. Other proverbs emphasize this collective, relational nature of happiness: 'Jyrtq jerdi jel tabar, shyn baqty el tabar' (the wind finds the torn cloth; true happiness finds the community) suggests that true happiness resides in national unity and social harmony. 'Yntymak bar jerde baqyt bar' (where there is unity, there is happiness) and 'Tatu údiń baqty tasyr, Araz údiń yrysy qashar' (a peaceful home is full of happiness; a quarrelsome home lacks prosperity) further emphasize this idea. These sayings reflect the deeply rooted belief that happiness is sustained through yntymak (unity)

and sülástyq (mutual respect). In this model, baqyt is a product of the community and shared values, rather than the pursuit of individual happiness.

Similar values are placed on social cohesion and mutual respect in Turkish expressions such as “Birlikten kuvvet doğar” (strength comes from unity) and “Huzurlu aile, mutlu hayat” (peaceful family, happy life). In Kyrgyz, 'Birinci baylyk – yntymak' (the first wealth is unity) and 'El yagyn – baqtyn kayrasy' (good neighbours are the source of happiness) reinforce the idea that social harmony is key to happiness. Uzbek proverbs such as ‘Oila tinchligi – baxt kaliti’ (family peace is the key to happiness) also echo this communal perspective.

6. Cognitive model: Happiness as 'Power or social status'. In another model, baqyt is linked to bilik (power), authority and high social status. Certain proverbs convey the idea that happiness or fortune can elevate even the most ordinary individual to a position of influence: 'Shybynnyñ basyna baq qonsa, Samuryq kelip salem beredi' ('If a fly is blessed with fortune, even the Samruk bird will greet it') and 'Basyna túrymtai baqyt qonsa, Samuryq qyzmet eter panasynda' ('If fortune lands on a small bird's head, even the mighty Samruk will serve it'). These proverbs demonstrate that when someone is blessed with baqyt, even the powerful show deference. Happiness is equated with social elevation. Other expressions highlight the conditional and unstable nature of such happiness: 'Baqy taıǵan adamdy túsin it qabar' (A person who has lost their fortune will be bitten by a dog even while riding a camel) and 'Basyna baq qonarda, elden asqan danasyñ' (When fortune smiles upon you, you seem wiser than all). When fortune leaves you, you return to your true self). When it leaves, you return to your true self). These sayings reflect the transient nature of happiness based on power, showing how quickly one's social image can change with the presence or loss of fortune. The proverb, 'Ózi qara bolsa da, Baq daıletin saı bolsa, Jer jarady qańqyly' (Even if a person is of humble origin, if they are blessed with fortune and wealth, their voice will echo across the land), implies that fortune – here represented by 'baq' (fortune) and 'däulet' (wealth) – can transform a person's societal standing regardless of their background. In this context, happiness is not an internal, spiritual state, but an external status connected with social power, riches, and honor. Although transitory and contingent, it can completely redefine one's destiny.

In Turkish, the idea of happiness being linked to status is reflected in sayings such as 'Şans kapıyı çalınca' ('When luck knocks on the door'), which implies social advancement through good fortune. Kyrgyz proverbs such as 'Baktyty koldon al' (Take happiness by hand) emphasise seizing social advantage, while Uzbek expressions such as 'Boylik baxtning kalitidir' (Wealth is the key to happiness) connect wealth and happiness directly. Across Turkic cultures, the idea of happiness as social power and status is widely recognized, yet it is often considered fragile and impermanent.

7. Cognitive Model: Happiness as 'Labor and Knowledge'. In Kazakh cosmology, happiness (baqyt) is also considered the natural result of relentless effort and intellectual development. Here, humans are not passive recipients of fortune, but active agents who find happiness through unceasing toil, education and self-improvement. Baqyt is never viewed as an arbitrary favor of luck, but rather as the fair reward for purposeful endeavor. This concept is reflected in proverbs such as: 'Baqyt kılty – eńbekte' (the key to happiness lies in hard work) and 'Eńbek pen baqyt egiz' (labor and happiness are twins). These proverbs both confirm the direct relationship between work and personal satisfaction. Intellectual capacity is also essential in achieving enduring happiness. Cognitive competence also plays a crucial role in securing lasting happiness. 'Aqyl qonbaǵan zhigıtke baqyt ta qonbaıdy' (wisdom and happiness go hand

in hand), and 'Bílím – baqtyn zhermetin qazyǵy, bılımsız baq – aldakimniń azyǵy' (knowledge is the stake that holds happiness in place; happiness without knowledge is someone else's gain). These expressions suggest that wisdom and education are the foundations of lasting happiness. Without them, fortune is fragile and fleeting. Intellectual and communicative competence are also linked to happiness: 'Bas – baq, aýyz – darbaza, söz – samal' (the head is happiness, the mouth is a gate, and the word is a breeze).

In this poetic metaphor, intellect (bas), expression (söz), and communicative grace are valued as core enablers of well-being. The metaphor suggests that a wise mind and eloquent speech are essential for a fulfilling life. According to this model, happiness is not an elusive or external force, but rather the logical consequence of merit, diligence and acquired knowledge. The individual is empowered – the master of their own destiny, actively forging their path to happiness through meaningful work and intellectual development.

Turkish proverbs such as 'Emek olmadan yemek olmaz' ('No food without labor') and 'Bilgi mutluluğun anahtarıdır' ('Knowledge is the key to happiness') illustrate the close relationship between effort, knowledge, and happiness. Similar values are underscored in Kyrgyz sayings such as 'Eñbek – baqtyn asası' (labor is the basis of happiness) and 'Bilim – baqtyn tushtuk chyraghy' (knowledge is the lamp of happiness). Uzbek proverbs such as 'Mehnat baxt kalitidir' (Labor is the key to happiness) further confirm this widespread cultural model among Turkic peoples.

## Results

The representation of the concept of 'happiness' in the Kazakh language is rooted in the historical development, worldview and national psychology of the Kazakh people. Although the notion is considered the most precious ideal in Kazakh, qualitative research has revealed that its linguistic expression, semantic structure and conceptual models differ significantly from those of other languages. The ontological knowledge of happiness, or its cognitive foundation, varies from culture to culture. In Old Turkic inscriptions, such as the Orkhon-Yenisei texts, 'baq' meant 'qut' (divine grace), state felicity, or God's grace. This study identified seven distinct cognitive models of 'happiness' in Kazakh, based on an analysis of proverbs, idioms, common expressions and culturally embedded phrases. In the Kazakh worldview, happiness is perceived as a divine, spiritual, and mysterious gift. It is often associated with fate, 'qut' (divine blessing), and sacred power. Here, people tend to see themselves as recipients rather than creators. In the Kazakh language, happiness is considered to come from outside, from God, fate, or destiny. It is described as something that comes and goes suddenly and has a mystical and unstable nature. Happiness is seen as light, a blessing, a bird, a guest, a gift of fate and abundance. Emphasis is placed on collectivism, tradition and spiritual values, such as family, unity, health, descendants and divine blessing. According to the Kazakh cultural concept, a person must be worthy of happiness, but cannot control or attain it by their own willpower. Rather, happiness is a spiritual reward conditioned by moral and ethical behavior.

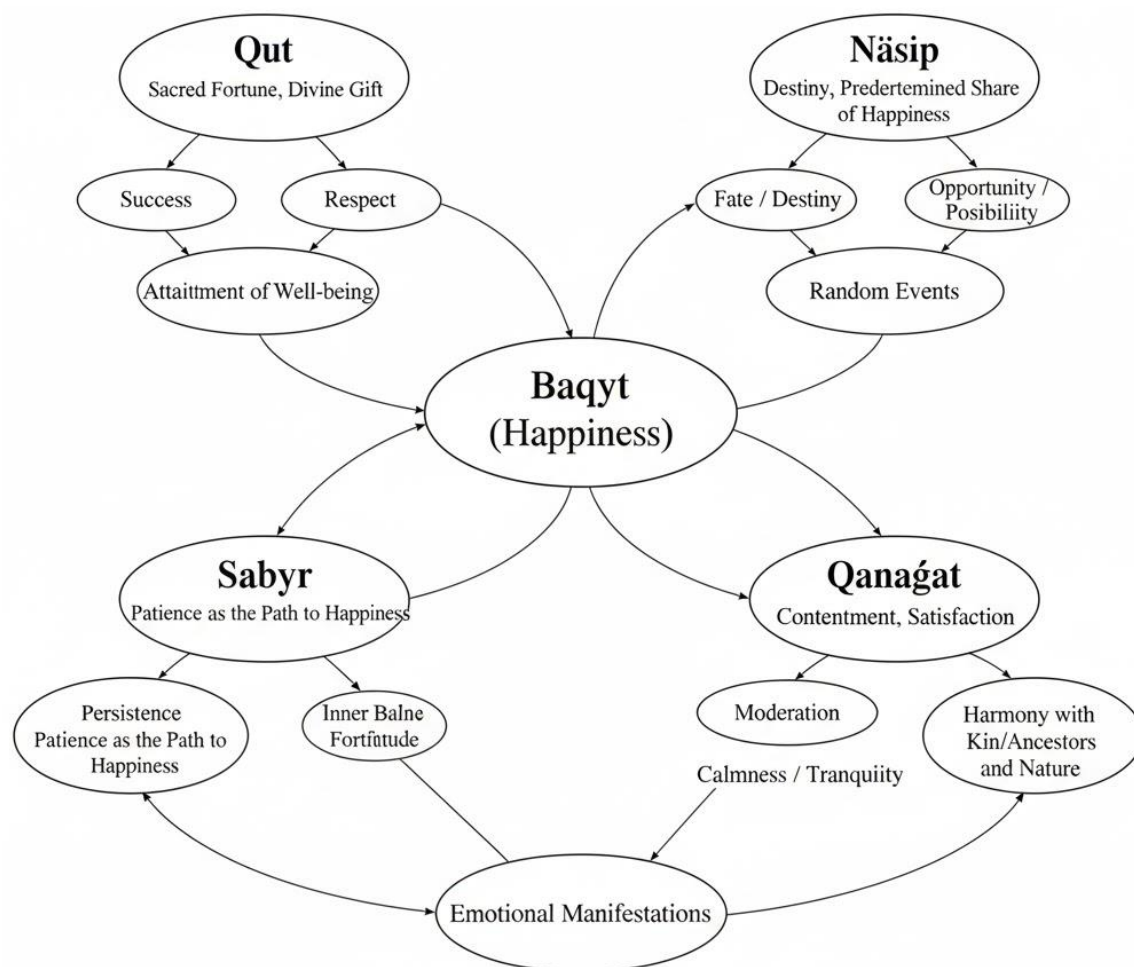


Fig. 1. Cognitive Representation of Baqyt (Happiness). (Z.B. Kulmanova).

1-сур. «Бақыт» ұғымының когнитивтік репрезентациясы. (З.Б. Құлманова).

Рис. 1. Когнитивная репрезентация понятия «Бакыт» (Счастье). (З.Б. Кулманова).

The cognitive representation of 'Baqyt' illustrates the concept of happiness in Kazakh and Turkic cultures. It is a combination of divine favor, personal virtues and social harmony. At its core is Divine Grace (Qut/Näsip), reflecting the belief that happiness is a gift from the Creator. Living ethically, being patient and cultivating wisdom can help to make happiness last. Strong relationships with family and community are vital for emotional well-being. While material comfort and a stable livelihood contribute to life satisfaction, they are balanced with spiritual and moral values. Good health enables people to fully enjoy life, and cultural expressions such as proverbs and sayings pass these ideas of happiness on from one generation to the next. In Kazakh society, however, 'happiness' can also be attributed to status, power, or prestige. Here, happiness is something that enhances one's status, giving one power over others and commanding respect and authority. In this case, it is the possession of *happiness* that makes the subject powerful, and happiness is normally perceived as a privileged and lucky gift. This dual understanding reflects the blend of spiritual and moral values with a social and collective orientation that is characteristic of traditional Kazakh thinking.

### Turkic parallels:

In Kyrgyz, 'baktuu' means 'happy' and 'bakt' means 'happiness'. Similar to the Kazakh language, happiness is often seen as a blessing and a matter of fate. The idea that happiness is linked to divine favor and moral behavior is also shared. In Tatar, 'bähet' (happiness) and 'bähetle' (happy) reflect a similar notion of happiness as fortune and blessing. Expressions such as 'Bähet – Allahnıñ büläge' (happiness is a gift from God) highlight the sacred nature of happiness. In Uzbek, the word 'baxt' refers to both happiness and fate. Proverbs such as 'Baxt – Xudoning marhamati' (happiness is God's mercy) emphasize its divine origin. Happiness is often viewed as destiny or a blessing bestowed upon the worthy. In Turkish, the older term 'baht' refers more to fate or destiny, while 'mutluluk' is the modern equivalent of happiness and is more connected to inner satisfaction. Turkish proverbs such as "Bahtın açık olsun" (May your fortune be bright) imply a strong link between happiness and fate, good fortune or divine will. Additionally, expressions such as 'Birlikten kuvvet doğar' (strength comes from teamwork) reflect the communal and social nature of happiness, which is consistent with Kazakh values. These examples illustrate that, throughout Turkic cultures, happiness (baqyt/baht/bakt) is often understood as a gift from above, inseparable from moral characteristics, harmony within the community, and spiritual equilibrium. It transcends the emotional experience of any individual, embedding itself deeply in collective values, destiny and sacred culture. The concept of 'happiness' (baqyt/baht/bakt) in Kazakh and other Turkic languages has ancient cultural and religious roots. It is predominantly considered a divine, fated, and communal phenomenon rather than a purely personal emotional state.

The figure below summarizes the seven key cognitive models of happiness identified in Kazakh and reflected across several Turkic languages through proverbs, idioms and cultural expressions.

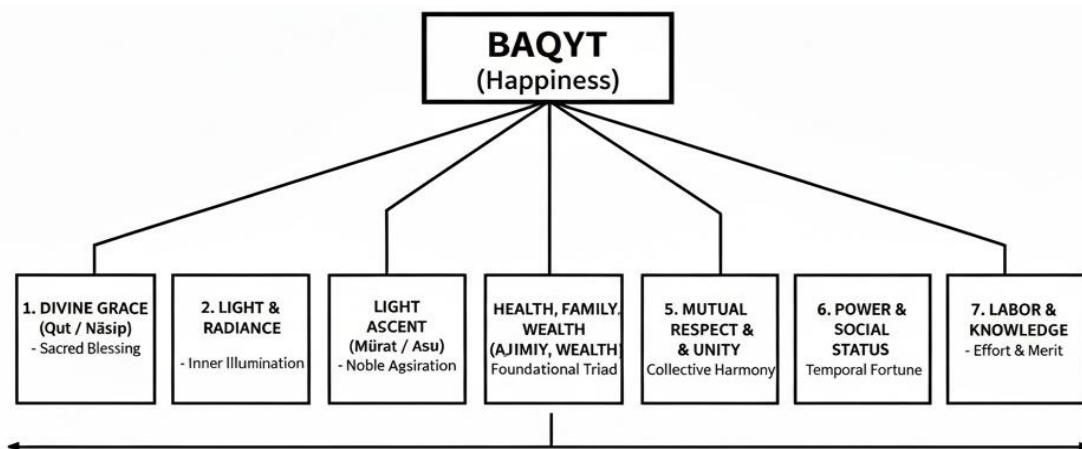


Fig. 2. The Seven Cognitive Models of Baqyt (Happiness). (Z.B. Kulmanova).

2-сур. «Бақыт» ұғымының жеті когнитивтік моделі. (З.Б. Құлманова).

Рис. 2. Семь когнитивных моделей «Бакыт» (Счастье). (З.Б. Кулманова).

This model illustrates the multidimensional nature of 'Baqyt' (happiness) in the Kazakh and wider Turkic worldview. Rather than being a single, fixed state, it is understood as the integration of seven distinct yet interconnected cognitive models derived from oral traditions and linguistic practices. The model is hierarchically structured, with *Baqyt* at its apex and branching into seven core elements that collectively define individual and communal



well-being. These elements range from divinely granted gifts (Grace/Fate) and personal accomplishments (Labor/Knowledge) to social harmony (Unity).

The divine and fate-driven perspective dominates Kazakh and broader Turkic cultural knowledge, in which happiness is considered a blessing or gift from a higher power (e.g. Tengri or God). Happiness is often described as light, a bird, or a sacred guest, symbolizing its elusive, brief, and non-secular nature. The social and communal aspect is surprisingly emphasized, with happiness being seen as rooted in solidarity, mutual respect, and family harmony. In some Turkic languages, including Kazakh and Tatar, happiness is associated with power and social status, highlighting the cultural significance of status and recognition. Labor and knowledge are recognized as practical paths towards happiness, emphasizing the value of effort and expertise in achieving well-being. Across Turkic cultures, happiness remains deeply intertwined with moral conduct, destiny, and cultural values, setting it apart from more individualistic, psychological interpretations found elsewhere.

### Conclusion

Although happiness is a universal phenomenon, the way people define it varies drastically based on culture, language and history. In Turkic societies, happiness is not just an inner state of mind or something one can seek. It is much deeper and more social. It stems from a nomadic way of life, nature worship, and a strong connection to religion, family, and society. Old Turkic literature, such as the Orkhon inscriptions, used the word 'baq', meaning 'qut', which refers to sacred grace or divine favor. This offered religious legitimacy, protection and harmony from forces above humans. Even in modern Turkic languages such as Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Uzbek, the concept of joy has a mystical or sacred implication. It can be bestowed by fate, ancestors, or God, and it can disappear as quickly as it appeared. In Turkic languages in general, happiness is often described as a bird, a guest, or a beam of sunlight. Such metaphors demonstrate how fleeting and unpredictable it can be. However, they also highlight what is of the greatest importance: family, proximity, health, children, peace and moral living. Sayings such as the Kyrgyz Bailyk emes, yntymak – baqyt (not wealth, but unity is happiness) require no interpretation. The idea that happiness is found in harmony, not riches, speaks volumes. This is in stark contrast to the contemporary Western view, in which happiness is primarily an individual achievement or state of mind. In Turkic cosmology, happiness is a privilege representing one's standing in the world, relations, behavior, and faith (Sagatova & Nurligenova, 2020).

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