Ethical Management of Speech among Kazak Nomads in the Chinese Altai

by

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Note on Transliteration

For transliteration of Kazak, I have devised my own system, using the Latin alphabet, as shown below. The rationale for using the present phonemic system is that it represents all the phonemes in the variety of Kazak spoken in Altai in a parsimonious way, without having to use any special symbols including umlauts.

Kazak Transliteration	**Approximate Pronunciation**
Back vowels, unrounded:	
a	similar to English "a" in "f<u>a</u>ther"
y	similar to English "y" in "s<u>y</u>ringe"
Back vowels, rounded:	
o	similar to English "o" in "f<u>o</u>rce"
u	similar to English "u" in "p<u>u</u>ll"
Front vowels, unrounded:	
a'	similar to English "a" in "<u>a</u>t"
e	similar to English "e" in "g<u>e</u>t"
i	similar to English "i" in "b<u>i</u>t"
ij	similar to English "i" in "sk<u>i</u>"
Front vowels, rounded:	
o'	similar to German "ö" in K<u>ö</u>ln
u'	similar to German "ü" in M<u>ü</u>nchen
Consonants:	
b (labial stop, voiced)	similar to English "b" in "<u>b</u>it"

p (labial stop, unvoiced)	similar to English "p" in "pull"
d (dental stop, voiced)	similar to English "d" in "duck"
t (dental stop, unvoiced)	similar to English "t" in "top"
g (velar stop, voiced)	similar to English "g" in "go"; pronounced as an affricate before or after a back vowel
k (velar stop, unvoiced)	similar to English "k" in "key"; pronounced as an affricate before or after a back vowel
z (dental fricative, voiced)	similar to English "z" in "zebra"
s (dental fricative, unvoiced)	similar to English "s" in "sell"
zh (alveopalatal fricative, voiced)	similar to English "j" in "jam"
sh (alveopalatal fricative, unvoiced)	similar to English "sh" in "ashy" postvocally; elsewhere, similar to English "ch" in "chin"
h (glottal fricative)	similar to English "h" in "hot"
m (labial nasal)	similar to English "m" in "march"
n (dental nasal)	similar to English "n" in "nose"
ng (velar nasal)	similar to English "ng" in "sing"
w (labial glide)	similar to English "w" in "work"
j (alveopalatal glide)	similar to German "j" in "Johan"
r (dental liquid)	similar to Italian "r" in "Roma"
l (dental liquid)	similar to English "l" in "light"

Using this system, I aim to represent Altai Kazak phonemically, rather than simply Latinizing the standard orthography (either the Cyrillic script used in Kazakhstan or the Arabic script used in Xinjiang). I use it to represent certain Chinese terms that appear frequently in Kazak speech. Also see Kirchner (1988) for an exact phonetic transliteration of a Kazak native from Altai, using IPA symbols.

Throughout my transcripts, I use the glossing conventions shown below, following

Straughn (2011) and Abish and Csato (2011).

List of Glossing Conventions

1	first person	GEN	genetive
2	second person	IMP	imperative
3	third person	INDIR	indirective
ABL	ablative case	INF	infinitive
ACC	accusative case	INTER	interjection
AOR	aorist	LOC	locative case
ASP	aspect marker	MOD	modal particle
ATTR	attributive	NEG	negative
CAUS	causative voice	NMLZR	nominalizer
CL	classifier	PASS	passive voice
COMP	complementizer	PAST	past tense
COND	conditional	PFV	perfective
CONJ	conjunction	PL	plural
COP	copula	PRES	present tense
CPST	converbial past tense	PROG	progressive
CVB	converb	Q	question particle
DAT	dative case	RECP	reciprocal voice
DIM	diminutive	REPORT	reportative
EMOT	emotive	SG	singular
EVID	evidential	TOP	topic marker
EXCL	exclamative particle	VIS	visual evidence
EXIST	existential	VOL	voluntative

For the sake of readability, I use common Anglicization of certain place names: e.g., Altai instead of Altaj or Altay; Urumqi instead of Urumchi; Kazakhstan, instead of Kazakstan. I use pseudonyms for the names of administrative units below the county level, as well as for the names of the people in my field site, to protect their identities.

For Chinese terms, I use the Pinyin system in use in the People's Republic of China. Where necessary, this work provides Chinese characters for certain terms that predate the Communist Revolution.

All translations provided in this dissertation are my own. However, Kağan Arık and Aigerim Bogyrbayeva provided corrections and suggested alternate interpretations.

Abstract

Grappling with cultural conceptions of what makes a good person and a bad person, this dissertation examines how one's moral character is communicated through speech and other signs in everyday interaction among the Altai Kazaks. In particular, I highlight the Kazak nomads' honorific speech as a powerful means through which they can invoke the morally loaded ideal of modesty and other related ethical categories. Relying primarily on participant observation, I conducted my fieldwork among Kazak nomads in the Altai Mountains of Xinjiang, China between 2012 and 2014. I analyzed the use of honorific/non-honorific alternants in varying contexts, together with their uptake or other consequences in discourse, as well as evaluative commentaries upon them. My analysis of the everyday interaction among the Altai Kazaks resulted in several findings. First, Kazak social relations are classed into those that require the use of honorifics and those that require non-honorific expressions; however, there are many "middle-range" relations in which both styles of communication are considered appropriate, allowing variation (by personality, mood, and social strategy) among different speakers in their use of deferential styles. These different types of social relations appear to be modeled on the traditional Kazak kinship structure, in which relative age, as well as the distinction between joking and avoidance relations, plays a significant role. Second, such stylistic variation is understood to be indicative of one's ethical qualities, rather than reflecting one's social-structural position. Perhaps due to the relatively simple grammatical paradigm of Kazak honorifics, the speaker's use of honorific forms can reveal little about his or her

sociological background. On the contrary, knowledge of all the grammatical forms in Kazak honorifics is considered to be attainable for every adult. Because everyone is supposed to know and control all the required linguistic forms, the speaker is held responsible for his or her linguistic choices, and thus subject to others' evaluations with powerful moral loadings, such as "overbearing," "humble", "sycophantic," "considerate," "childish," "patient," "lacking discipline," and the like. Moreover, this ethical dimension of one's linguistic (and non-linguistic) choices becomes all the more apparent in the aforementioned middle-range relations, where the speaker has a choice between multiple pragmatically possible options. In my research, I found ample evidence of discourse that evaluates the agentive choices made through particular linguistic (and non-linguistic) forms in particular contexts. Among Kazak nomads in the Chinese Altai, the communicative style one chooses to use in various social contexts, especially in the middle-range relations, is viewed in moral, rather than sociological, terms. Third, underlying the Altai Kazaks' variation in their communicative style and the evaluative discourse about it is the ethics of modesty. While studies of many other better known honorific systems have shown that the choice of "courteous" linguistic forms is often seen to reflect the speaker's aristocratic ancestry or affinity with the royal court, my ethnographic research finds that in Altai Kazaks' language ideology, the dominant cultural image of honorific speech is self-lowering 'modesty,' which includes such qualities as mildness, smallness, quietness, slowness, and maturity, while non-honorific speech is understood to express self-lifting 'arrogance,' which consists of harshness, largeness loudness, rapidity, and immaturity. I argue that the individual's ethical concern in Altai Kazak honorific speech is focused on displaying the image of the modest person at the moment of interaction, rather than on merely fulfilling certain sociologically prescribed obligations.

Introduction

Grappling with cultural conceptions of what makes a good person and a bad person, this dissertation examines how one's moral character is communicated through speech and other signs in everyday interaction among the Altai Kazaks. In particular, I highlight Kazak nomads' honorific speech as a powerful means for invoking the morally loaded ideal of modesty and other related ethical categories. The persistence of honorific speech among the Altai Kazaks today represents their everyday pursuit of ethical life under conditions of difficult changes since the late 1950s, such as the undermining of their traditional authority structure and the loss of many seasonal pastures to Chinese farmers. The Chinese state's "Develop the West" campaign since the late 1990s has enforced the sedentarization of herders and Chinese language education, which exposes the Altai Kazaks to a particular form of civilizing discourse (cf. Harrel 1995) to an unprecedented extent. In this part of China, the juxtaposition of Kazak, a language with systematic contrasts of honorific and plain morphemes, and Chinese, a language with almost no such morphological contrasts, provides Kazak-speaking herders with rich semiotic materials for ideological construction. Given the various contrasts found in their material surroundings, what for Kazak herders today constitutes a life well lived? My research explores what they perceive to be the concrete signs of one's ethical virtue, and how these signs are communicated in everyday social interaction.

Studying Honorifics as Ethical Action

Honorific speech has attracted scholarly attention in that it suggests an unmistakable link between language and social relations. As not all languages have honorifics, i.e., grammaticalized expressions of deference, it is often speculated that there exists some correlation between the presence of honorifics and certain forms of social stratification, e.g., royal courts and/or conventionalized class differences. The honorific speech of Kazak nomads I study in this work is of great anthropological interest because highly systematic honorific expressions are found in a presumably egalitarian nomadic society, directly challenging the common expectation. This raises several questions. Are the Kazak nomads not very egalitarian after all? What kinds of asymmetric relations are expressed in Kazak honorifics? Perhaps more importantly, what do these linguistic forms communicate besides social status? In other words, what motivates the Kazak nomads to actively engage in the give and take of honorific speech? Rather than postulating a direct connection between linguistic forms and social forms, my research views honorific speech as *social action*, in particular, *ethical action*. The linguistic does not merely reflect the social. People use language to actively shape their social world. In this study, I try to show that Kazak nomads use honorific speech to stage an ethical self.

One of the main debates in the study of honorifics has been that of social prescription and individuals' strategy. Ide (1989) famously argued that Japanese honorifics are "a set of social norms" (regulated by *wakimae* "discernment") that speakers are obliged to observe, rather than volitional strategies individual speakers can manipulate (See also Matsumoto 1989). According to Ide, "to behave according to *wakimae* (=discernment) is to show verbally and nonverbally

one's sense of place or role in a given situation according to social conventions, and discernment is conceived as a fairly prescribed system distinct from volitional politeness, a strategic conflict avoidance device prevailing in individualistic Western societies" (Ide 1989). Similarly, it has been assumed that Korean honorifics constitute neat 'closed sets' of linguistic forms that are applied obligatorily according to social convention, marking static age-rank or solidarity variables (Sohn 1986, Hwang 1990).

This claim of "obligation" has met challenges from many scholars. Despite native speakers' metapragmatic emphasis on the compulsory nature of the honorific speech, observation of honorific speech in natural conversation betrays a great deal of deviation or violation of what has been known to be norms and rules. In practice, honorifics are often employed with great creativity in the negotiation of shared understanding about ranked relationships between individuals and groups (e.g., Kim-Renaud 2001, Brown 2011; 2013; 2015, Park 2014 on Korean, Cook 1996; 1997; 1998; 2006; 2011; 2013, Okamoto 1997; 1999, 2004, Okamoto and Shibamoto-Smith 2016, Maynard 1997, Dunn 1999; 2005; 2010, Saito 2010, Shibamoto-Smith 2011, Geyer 2013, Masuda 2016 on Japanese; Izadi 2015 on Persian; Philips 1991 on Tongan; Keating 1998 on Pohnpeian; Keating and Duranti 2006 on Samoan and Pohnpeian). For example, they are used in presenting a public self (Cook 1996 on Japanese), framing particular genres, events, and domains of discourse (Philips 1991 on Tongan), distributing and achieving social power and status (Keating and Duranti 2006 on Pohnpeian and Samoan), and negotiating gender identities (Okamoto 2004 on Japanese). In these studies, honorifics are considered as an index of a wide range of socio-cultural meanings, rather than as a fixed marker of deference.

While an overly "prescriptive" view of honorifics cannot account for speakers' departure

from normative usage, reducing honorific speech simply as individual speakers' "volitional" interactional strategy seems to miss the moral significance attached to speakers' effort to speak deferentially in many of "discernment-honorifics" societies.

My research attempts to resolve the debate by focusing on social contexts in which the speaker's personality or individuality is highlighted through his or her choice of speech forms. I take honorific speech to be both obligatory and volitional. In my analysis, however, it is critical to distinguish contexts that require the use of honorific forms from those that require the use of plain forms; between these two types of 'obligatory' contexts, there exist what I call 'middle-range' contexts, in which both honorific and plain forms are considered appropriate, thereby allowing room for individual speakers' choice between options. Because speakers are given a choice, their speech patterns vary. It is in such contexts that we can empirically observe different speakers' varying tendencies to speak deferentially. My analytic focus, then, is this stylistic variation. Why do some people speak more deferentially than others? How is such stylistic variation evaluated by others?

Perhaps the most obvious finding in studies of honorifics is that the speaker usually chooses which honorific forms to use according to the perceived power relation between the speaker and the addressee (or referent). In their influential paper, Brown and Gilman (1960) succinctly conceptualize such relations as "power" and "solidarity." In this conventional view, the use of honorific (and non-honorific) forms is dictated by social contexts. Typically, the relative authority between the speaker and addressee becomes the independent variable, the choice of appropriate honorific forms being the dependent variable. As such, many studies of honorific speech mainly focused on laying out the social rules for using certain linguistic forms.

Such reified "contextual" factors were identified as a predetermined, autonomous social pattern governing the idealized speaker's normative honorific usage, or polite speech in general. In particular, the structure of authority in interaction firmly remained in the pristine realm of "context," unaffected by the enactment of "text," i.e., the interactants' use of honorific language, which in turn could only passively reflect the given structure of authority.

Another important finding of the studies of honorific speech is that the pragmatic effect of an honorific utterance crucially depends on native conceptions about honorific structure and usage – metapragmatics (Silverstein 1993) of honorifics – and about non-linguistic social patterns that are perceived to be relevant to and associated with honorifics. This concept of metapragmatics is widely applied by many researchers of honorific speech, notably Errington (1984, 1985, 1988, 1998) and Agha (1993, 1994, 1998, 2007). Such association is mediated by ideologically informed cultural stereotypes of the linguistic and the social. In other words, the indexical value of an honorific utterance cannot be adequately understood without considering the culture-specific language ideology that links "social forms" and "forms of talk" (Woolard 1998: 3).

Ideologies of honorific language (Irvine 1998) entail the stereotypes of linguistic categories (words, sentences, speech levels, prosody, etc.) and the stereotypes of social categories (persons, relations, activities, etc.). Interestingly, however, these stereotypes are not just about respect; they are always saturated with, and characterized by, other culturally significant ideas as well. Irvine notes that "[a]lthough all honorifics involve some notion of 'respect,' many questions still remain concerning what 'respect' (and respectful comportment) entails in particular sociocultural systems (1995:14)." Agha similarly observes that

"[m]etapragmatic stereotypes about honorific language…imbu[e] it with pragmatic values additional to the marking of respect and honor (1998: 152)."

In particular, many studies have noted that use of honorific forms not only marks the relations of "power" and "solidarity" among the interactants, but also signals something about the speaker's own qualities, hence speaker indexicality. For instance, honorific forms index the speaker's refinement and good upbringing whereas non-honorific forms connote one's vulgarity and poor conduct (e.g., Inoue 1979, Ide 1982, Errington 1988). These speaker qualities are usefully conceptualized as second-order indexicality (Silverstein 2003) of honorific speech.

Unfortunately, however, the discussion of second-order indexicality of speaker qualities in the study of honorifics seems to have narrowly focused on only certain kinds of speaker qualities: immediately recognizable socio-demographic information that indicates the structural position of the speaker. For example, the choice of honorific forms can be seen to reflect the speaker's aristocratic ancestry (e.g., Wang 1984, Errington 1984), gender (e.g., Ide 1982, Inoue 1979), or some stigmatized regional background (e.g., Agha 1998, Geertz 1960). In fact, honorific systems often do behave like sociolects, and this tendency is aptly summarized in Irvine's 1985 review article "Status and Style in Language." It is also true that the speaker's relative knowledge/control of honorific expressions is often a strong indicator of his or her social-structural position as demonstrated by Geertz (1960), Agha (1998; 2007), and many others. The underlying assumption here is that honorific expressions, knowledge of which is unevenly distributed among speakers, are typically heard in the speech of the elite group, and such statistical association between sociological categories and speech styles allows the use of honorifics to imply the speaker's privileged status. My point is that in many studies of honorifics,

the second-order indexicality is flatly equated with a "direct," unmediated correlation between the relative prestige of sociological categories (aristocrats, commoners, etc.) and the speech styles, thereby obscuring the crucial role of language ideologies mediating between social patterns and the indexical value of linguistic forms.

I suspect that researchers' over-reliance on elicitation methods has greatly contributed to this analytic reduction. In explicit metapragmatic comments produced during elicitation sessions, the native speakers are able to link honorific forms to only those types of social categories – immediately recognizable socio-demographic stereotypes, such as class, gender, age, religious associations, and the like. In contrast, other subtler personal qualities, e.g., modesty, assertiveness, deceptiveness, sincerity, judiciousness, carelessness, are much less readily associated with decontextualized linguistic forms in elicited statements. In order to discover such subtle associations, demographically less obvious but culturally more nuanced, the analyst must collect extensive instances of actual use of honorific speech in *specific* contexts (not just typical contexts) and attend to how the participants of a given interaction makes sense out of the speaker's deployment of a certain linguistic form in relation to the specific contextual features.

The studies of honorific systems have correctly shown that there is such a thing as normative use of honorific expressions, and language users do engage passionately in perpetuating the norm. Mistakes or deviations from the norm are corrected, and sometimes punished quite severely. Children in particular are given explicit instruction. The fieldworkers are often ridiculed or laughed at for their incomplete control of honorific expressions. Indeed, many studies of honorific speech have laid out detailed "predictive models" or "cognitive maps" for using which linguistic forms to use in which type of situation. And, of course, the most time-

efficient way to discover such norms is elicitation of the native speakers' metapragmatic statements.

Notably, Errington (1985) has proposed the concept of pragmatic salience, which itself is a predictive model for determining what kinds of honorific items are more likely to be subject to formal elaboration. In fact, it is quite remarkable that so much can be achieved in this elicitation-based model building project without closely looking at observational data. Despite the importance and usefulness of elicitation, however, such analytic orientation has some negative implications: it tends to present an overly schematic and static view of honorific speech patterns as if there is one correct, unmarked form appropriate for every conceivable situation, and as if every speaker shares that norm. It is only in the few exceptional studies that we find description of social, geographical, situational, and diachronic variation of honorific speech patterns (Wolff and Poedjosoedarmo 1982, Hill and Hill 1978). I would like to stress here that the most harmful aspect of this research tradition is that it ultimately reduces the speaker's act of choosing one linguistic form over the others to simple "conformity" to or "violation" of the idealized model.

In this light, my research engages more broadly with the emerging scholarship on morality and ethics in anthropology (cf. Foucault 1994, Laidlaw 2002, Asad 2003, Robbins 2004, Mahmood 2005, Hirshkind 2006, Rogers 2009, Yan 2009, Lambek 2010, Keane 2016). As many of these scholars point out, social scientific discussion of morality have placed too much emphasis on the individuals' conformity to the norms imposed by the collectivity; in fact, there is little room for moral evaluation when an individual is rigidly acting out of a script. Only when the individual is given choice between different courses of action, can the choice being made be seen as reflection of will, which is subject to moral judgment. In any actual instance of honorific

speech, the participants of the interaction clearly do much more than merely conforming to or violating the norm. Between conformity (or "discernment") and violation (or "volition"), there is a wide variety of what I call "middle-range situations," in which the speaker is given choice between different courses of action. When more than one linguistic form is deemed acceptable, the speaker's choice of one form over the others can be understood as various kinds of agentive and meaningful social action with heavy moral loadings: a containment strategy to maintain a responsible self (cf. Irvine 2011, Frekko 2011, Hill 1995, Keane 2010); a way to praise or blame other people's speech and action (cf. Voloshinov 1929, Duranti 1994, Irvine 1993, Shoaps 2007); a skillful performance of managing the emergent situation (cf. Bauman 1986; 1993); a verbal display of personality (cf. Sapir 1927, Hymes 1961, Friedrich and Redfield 1978, Irvine 1990, Besnier 1993, Carr 2010).

Researchers have found that an honorific system minimally consists of a set of honorific and non-honorific alternants. To this grammatical core system of honorifics, other semiotic items – both linguistic (e.g., prosody, rhetorical styles) and non-linguistic (e.g., gestures, gift exchange) – are often added in a fairly regular pattern (sometimes called co-occurrence relations) to constitute honorific registers (Irvine 1998, Agha 2007). Such register formation is of particular interest because it helps us to see how a discrete grammatical honorific system (i.e., a set of alternating deference indexicals) articulates with (or translates into) other modes of semiotic contrasts (e.g., status indexicals). As Irvine (1990, 1995) suggests, this complex process of articulation and translation operates on the basis of cultural ideas (images) of persons and their styles of speech (also see Irvine and Gal 2000). Agha (2005; 2007) also gives a similar proposal in his notion of register congruence. Despite its theoretical significance, however, honorific register formation seems to remain a poorly explored area of research. The study of honorific

register formation can be dramatically enriched by directly observing how various semiotic materials are aligned with core honorific items in actual interactions, and what sorts of pragmatic effects are achieved by this alignment (and misalignment) of signs-in-use.

This study also engages with anthropologists' longstanding fascination with nomadic pastoralists. A general consensus in the field is that pastoral economy tends to produce a largely egalitarian society (e.g., Barth 1961, Irons 1975, Barfield 1993, Khazanov 1994). Yet, it has been also noted that pastoral nomads exhibit a strong commitment to authority (e.g., Asad 1970, Edgerton 1971, Humphrey 1983, Sneath 2000). These apparently contradictory findings from various nomadic pastoral communities have puzzled scholars for decades. Rather than proving one and disproving the other, my research attempts to understand where these tendencies in nomadic society stem from. Empirical observation of honorific speech promises to reveal the actual processes in which authority is constructed, maintained, and negotiated in on-going social interaction among pastoral nomads.

Finally, the question of ethics and morality has come to the fore in the study of post-socialist Central Asia, including Xinjiang (or Chinese Turkestan). Positing an "ideological vacuum" created by the retreat of high socialism, some scholars have focused on various cultural strategies (sometimes called invented traditions) in people's self-interested pursuit of political and economic gain, often at the expense of communal good (Beller-Han 1998, Kandiyoti 1998, Nazpary 2002, Werner 1998, 1999, Schatz 2004). In contrast to this portrayal of an amoral world, anthropologists of religion have suggested that the proliferation of religious practices (sometimes called religious revivals) in Central Asia reflects some emergent forms of ethical values replacing socialist ideals (Privratsky 2001, Jessa 2006, Rasanayagam 2011, Louw 2007, Montgomery 2016,

Dubuisson 2017). To date, however, very few studies of post-socialist Central Asia have examined people's pursuit of ethical life in non-religious social contexts. As a result, the existing literature tends to give us a distorted view, in which ethics in Central Asia is either reduced to goal-oriented instrumentalism or relegated to a private search for meaning in the realm of the supernatural and otherworldly. My project remedies this analytic gap by exploring the ethics of speech in the everyday social interactions of Altai Kazaks outside explicitly religious settings.

Key Findings: Linguistic Construction of the Ethical

My analysis of the everyday interaction among the Altai Kazaks resulted in several findings. First, Kazak social relations are classed into those that require the use of the honorifics and those that require non-honorific expressions; but there are also many "middle-range" relations in which both styles of communication are considered appropriate, allowing variation among different speakers in their tendency to speak deferentially. Anthropologists have long been puzzled by the two contradictory tendencies found in nomadic societies, namely egalitarian orientation and strong commitment to authority. My dissertation helps clarify this puzzling problem by laying out different types of relations in which Kazak nomads express different degrees of deference. These different types of social relations appear to be modeled on the traditional Kazak kinship structure, in which relative age, as well as the distinction between joking and avoidance relations, plays a significant role.

Second, such stylistic variation is understood to be indicative of one's ethical qualities

rather than social-structural position. Previous studies have noted that the speaker's relative knowledge and control of honorific expressions are often a strong indicator of his or her social-structural position, as demonstrated by Geertz (1960), Silverstein (1979), Errington (1988), Agha (1998, 2007), and many others. In this regard, however, my research differs significantly. Perhaps due to the relatively simple grammatical paradigm of Kazak honorifics, the speaker's use of honorific forms can reveal little about his or her sociological background. On the contrary, knowledge of all the grammatical forms in Kazak honorifics is considered to be attainable for every adult. Because everyone is supposed to know and control all the required linguistic forms, the speaker is held responsible for his or her linguistic choices, and thus subject to others' evaluations with powerful moral loadings, such as "overbearing," "humble", "sycophantic," "considerate," "childish," "patient," "lacking discipline," and the like. Moreover, this ethical dimension of one's linguistic choices becomes all the more apparent in the aforementioned middle-range relations, where the speaker has a choice between multiple pragmatically possible options. In short, among Kazak nomads in the Chinese Altai, the communicative style one chooses to use in various social contexts, especially in the middle-range relations, is viewed in moral, rather than sociological, terms.

Third, the ethics of modesty underlies the Altai Kazaks' variation in their communicative style and the evaluative discourse about it. While studies of many other better known honorific systems (e.g., Wang 1984, Errington 1984) have shown that the choice of "courteous" linguistic forms often reflects the speaker's aristocratic ancestry or affinity with the royal court, my research finds that in Altai Kazaks' language ideology, the dominant cultural image of honorific speech is self-lowering 'modesty,' which includes such qualities as mildness, smallness, quietness, slowness, and maturity, whereas plain speech is understood to express self-lifting

'arrogance,' which consists of harshness, largeness, loudness, rapidity, and immaturity. The imagistic contrast of modesty and arrogance extends to the non-linguistic aspects of nomadic life. The honorific pronouns and suffixes are perceived to sound mild and delicate, resembling the speaker's gentle and 'little' character, which is often compared to the gentle breeze in the summer pasture or the mild taste of milk tea (an essential element in Kazak hospitality), as well as the tender mutton and soft bread served in small chunks in an elaborate meal. The bi-syllabic honorific possessive suffixes, typically spoken slowly and quietly, are also said to resemble the summer breeze and the relaxing atmosphere provided by a generous host, who never rushes his guest to leave. By contrast, the monosyllabic non-honorific forms are typically spoken quickly and loudly, and considered rough and forceful, resembling the strong wind in the winter pasture, the bitter taste of black tea, tough meat, and hard bread served in large chunks in a less elaborate meal, and the speaker-host's impatience, immaturity as well as crude and presumptuous character. All these imagistic associations, through rhematization processes (Irvine and Gal 2000) in the Altai Kazaks' language ideology of ethical speech, resonate with the pragmatic contrast of modesty and arrogance imbued in the honorific and non-honorific forms.

Fourth, this dissertation sheds light on how ethical meanings can be signaled in real time interaction. Although recent scholarship on ethics has suggested that ordinary interaction is a central site for ethical activities (cf. Lambek 2010), it remains largely unclear exactly how the ethical is kindled through interaction. My dissertation illustrates concrete communicative means through which people invoke ethics in the mundane flow of interaction. I stress that this is achieved mainly by bringing attention to the material qualities of certain sign forms. The Altai Kazaks can foreground the contrasting formal features of honorific and plain speech forms by various means: pronouncing honorific forms more slowly and softly than plain forms; repetition

of words with a certain final consonant that rhymes with either honorific or plain suffixes; using certain Chinese loan words exclusively in plain speech; differentiating non-verbal components of interaction (e.g., posture, seating arrangement, food and drink) to match with the chosen speech style. Such communicative labor produces cross-modal poetic effects broadly conceived (Lempert 2012), which then heighten attention to the palpable qualities of contrasting signs-in-interaction, thereby materializing otherwise abstract ethical categories like modesty and arrogance.

Fifth, this dissertation aspires to understand specific cultural processes in which ethical categories are produced and circulated. My analytic focus on sign forms and language ideologies enables me to trace out the "interdiscursivity" (Agha and Wortham 2005) of sign use, where signs are connected and likened with signs from other events. Found in distant and seemingly unrelated activities and institutions ranging from language socialization to hospitality routines to joking relations, the aforementioned imagistic contrasts and resemblances among the semiotic materials the Kazak nomads use (milk tea and black tea, soft speech and hard speech, etc.) create mutually reinforcing diagrams of ethical categories. I hope to demonstrate that culturally salient ethical categories in a given society are shaped, at least in part, by overlapping imagistic contrasts of readily communicated sign materials found in its landscape and soundscape.

Data Collection

The empirical data for my dissertation research was collected among Kazakh pastoral

nomads in the Altai Mountains area in Xinjiang, China between July 2012 and June 2014. I followed the seasonal migration route of Kyzyl Tas – a pastoral village of Kaba county, living with its herding families that move between their summer pastures in the Altai Mountains in the north and their winter pastures at Sawur Mountain in the south, near Tarbagatai. Along this migration route, a herding household normally used its pastures in three to five separate locations: one or two summer pastures, one or two spring/autumn pastures, and one winter pasture. I was able to observe and participate in the Kazak herders' everyday activities, while collecting ample recordings of their natural conversation. In my observation and recording of the Kazak herders' daily interaction, I focused on the actual use of honorific/plain alternants in varying contexts, together with their uptake or other consequences in the discourse, as well as evaluative commentaries upon them.

Every other week, I left the herding families for two days to stay in a hotel in the county town, where I could take a shower, do laundry, organize my recordings, and deal with bureaucratic issues before returning to the herders. Once in three months, I had to fly to Korea to obtain a new China visa in order to continue my research during the grant period. Due to the political sensitivity of the Xinjiang region, I occasionally had to travel to Altai, the prefectural capital, and to Urumqi, the regional capital, to secure a special permit for long-term residence in some of the pastures close to the international border between China and Kazakhstan. Altogether I lived with the Kyzyl Tas herders for about 10 months, and spent two months in Urumqi, conducting archival research at Xinjiang Academy of Social Sciences and Xinjiang Normal University.

This study is also based on my previous research on Kazak nomads in another location

(Korgas County) in Northern Xinjiang. The fieldwork was conducted for about 140 days in the spring and summer of 2005. This research resulted in my MA thesis (2006, Seoul National University). In preparation for this field research, I started studying the Kazak language in 2004 at Xinjiang University. Since then, I have been studying the language. In 2007 and 2008, I studied Kazak for one academic year at the University of Chicago. In 2009, I attended an intensive summer Kazak training program at Indiana University. In 2012, a few months before my dissertation fieldwork, I also had a one-month private tutoring session in Almaty, Kazakhstan and another month of one-on-one Kazak lessons at Xinjiang University.

After the doctoral fieldwork was completed, I was fortunate enough to hire an assistant to help me transcribe my recordings in 2016. My assistant was an undergraduate student at the University of Michigan, originally from Eastern Kazakhstan. Her hometown being very close to my field site in China, she spoke basically the same dialect Kyzyl Tas villagers spoke in my recordings. Our transcription projected lasted for about eight months between January and August 2016.

Organization of the Chapters

This dissertation consists of six chapters. The first two chapters are intended to provide historical and linguistic contexts of the social interaction I analyze in the later chapters. In Chapter One, I present a brief history of Kyzyl Tas, focusing on the changes in social organization of the Kazak herders since the 1880s. Chapter Two introduces verbal and non-verbal communicative

repertoire Kazak speakers utilize in expressing deference and modesty. Chapters Three, Four, and Five analyze actual speech in various social situations. I start with the instances of language socialization (Chapter 3) between adults and children, as well as among children, because these instances are some of the most straightforward explications of what good speech is and what a good person is. Chapter Four examines the use and non-use of deferential speech in varying social relations, mainly among adults, to explore the process of ethicalization. In Chapter Five, I turn to the institution of joking relations and discuss joking or "hard speech" as another crucial mode of ethical communication. Finally, Chapter Six is an attempt to integrate various types of signs discussed in earlier chapters into a single analytic framework – one that does not prioritize the verbal over the non-verbal, or vice versa.

Chapter 1

A Brief History of Kyzyl Tas Village

Kyzyl Tas is one of the pastoral villages (*muyecun* in Chinese) of the Kaba County, located in the Altai Prefecture – the northern most prefecture of Xinjiang. Bordering Kazakhstan to the west and Mongolia to the northeast, the Altai Prefecture is a constituent part of the Yili Kazak Autonomous Oblast, which in turn is subordinated to the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Like other pastoral villages in Altai, Kyzyl Tas has its seasonal pastures in several different locations, with the summer pasture area in the Altai Mountains in the north and the winter pasture area at Sawur Mountain in the south, near the Tarbagatai Prefecture. The village center is in its *iri-kara mal kystawy* – winter pasture area for large animals, i.e., cows, camels, and horse. From this village center, the wintering area for sheep and goats (*usak mal kystawy*) at Sawur is further to the south; the spring/autumn pastures are located midway between the villager center and the summer pasture area in the Altai.

The main mode of subsistence among the Kyzyl Tas villagers is animal husbandry. They are basically sheep and goat herders, but most of them also raise cows. Horses and camels are still important means of transportation, especially for the migration to the mountainous summer pastures. Out of the 122 households of Kyzyl Tas, 35 are nomadic herders; the rest (about 70 percent) of them are settled herders, who no longer practice arduous seasonal migration. All Kyzyl Tas herders, both nomadic and settled, have now houses in the village center area, where

there are the village government office, an elementary school, and a police station. Nomadic

herders spend only some part of the year in this area, usually in the late autumn/early winter

before their migration to Sawur, and the late winter on their way from Sawur to the spring

pastures. A settled herder tends to have more cows than a nomadic herder, as cows are generally

less mobile and less suitable for hilly mountain pastures, compared to sheep and goats. The

division between nomadic and settled herders, however, is not so clear-cut. Many of them are

mutually dependent. A nomadic herder often raises the sheep and goats of a settled herder, while

the latter can supply cow's milk or take care of the former's schoolchildren. Moreover, a settled

herder in one year can become mobile in another.

Kyzyl Tas is a multi-clan village. The villagers are from a number of exogamous,

patrilineal clans called *uruw* in Kazak. In general, clans are named after their apical ancestors.

There are some 17 Kazak clans in Altai, and the size of a clan in Altai in the early 20th century

varied from 300 to 1,500 households (or tents).[1] In Kyzyl Tas, the dominant clans are Kazybek

and Mungal, both belonging to the Kerej lineage of the Middle Horde (*Orta Zhu'z* in Kazak),

widely distributed in Northern Kazakhstan, Western Mongolia, as well as the Altai Prefecture of

Xinjiang, China. Before 1958, the clan in Altai was a corporate unit, with a hereditary leader who

controlled its communal pasture and labor force. Many place names in Altai, especially in the

northern half of the prefecture, still show various Kazak clan names, suggesting that clans were

territorial units in Altai's spring/autumn and summer pasture areas. Today the clan no longer

exists as a corporate unit. Rather, in certain limited domains of social life, the clan membership

functions as a point of reference in establishing genealogical distance among the Altai Kazaks.

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[1] An average household had about five members.

For example, when a young man of the Kazybek clan is getting married, Kazybek members in Kyzyl Tas are expected to contribute to his bridewealth, even if they are not closely related to him. When there is a conflict between members of the same clan, they tend to turn to a respected elder in the clan for mediation. But no clan elder is a political figure. The only political authorities among Kyzyl Tas villagers today are the village head (*cunzhang*) and the village party secretary (*shuji*).[2] For individual herders, the main significance of the clan lies in its capacity to provide a generative scheme for forging kin ties. The following table presents the distribution of major Kazak clans in each of the county-level administrative units of the Altai Prefecture.

Table 1-1. Distribution of Major Kazak Clans in Altai

Zhemenej County	Kaba County	Buwurshyn County	Altai City	Buwrultogaj County	Ko'ktogaj County	Shinggil County
Merkit Kazybek Shu'jinshaly Ijteli Zha'dik	Shybarajgyr Zha'dik Kazybek Najman	Zha'dik Tasbjike Shu'jinshaly Kazybek Sheru'wshi Kultajbolat	Bazarkul Shakabaj Barky Kazybek Shu'jinshaly Tasbijke Sheru'wshi Kultajbolat Karakas Najman	Kystawbaj Ijteli Merkit	Karakas Molky Sheru'wshi Ijteli Merkit Sarbas	Molky Shakabaj Bazarkul Sheru'wshi Sarbas

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[2] Both are Chinese terms. As of 2012, the village head is elected from locals, whereas the party secretary is selected from locals.

Although Altai Kazaks are often referred to in both China and Kazakhstan as "the most traditional Kazaks,"[3] Kazaks are relatively recent inhabitants in Altai. The Qing court considered the Altai area to belong to the local Mongol princes, and the Kazaks there were the tenants of the Mongols.[4] Kazak nomads started to inhabit the Altai Mountains area as early as 1760, following the Qing conquest of Dzungaria.[5] In 1825, there were some 2,000 Kazak tents in the Altai area.[6] It is said that Kazaks of the Zhantekej subtribe entered Kaba in 1865[7], and the Qing court recognized 3,000 Kazaks as residents of Kaba in 1882.[8] Starting in the late 1870, the rapid colonization of the Kazak steppe by Russian peasants (which peaked in 1909 in Semipalatinsk) also triggered eastward waves of Kazak migration into the Altai area.

As pastoral nomads, a large number of the Altai Kazaks until the mid-1880s maintained an east-west pattern of seasonal migration, spending winter months in the Chinese Altai and summer months near Lake Zaisan in today's Kazakhstan. In 1883, the current border between China and Kazakhstan was established. Following the 1883 Sino-Russian border treaty, many Kazak clans lost their summer pastures on the Russian side of the border and had to modify their seasonal migration routes. For instance, the Shybarajgyr clan was prohibited from migrating to their summer pastures in the Russian territory.

This chapter, then, traces the changes in the social organization of Kazak nomads at the

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[3] See Wang 1963: 30

[4] Zhang 1955: 50

[5] Saguchi 1985, Svanberg 1988: 111

[6] Nala 2010: 291-292. See also Mukamudkan 1998: 66

[7] Mukamudkan 1998: 72, Liu 2011: 91, HXZ 2004: 790. See also ADZ 2004: 146; 156; 171

[8] HXZ 2004: 790

local level since 1883. It has been noted that a successful mobile herding economy requires some degree of social organization larger than the individual household (cf. Sneath 2000, Williams 2002, Humphrey and Sneath 1996). The Kyzyl Tas herders have mobilized various cultural resources, especially kinship ties, to meet this requirement under Chinese rule. Due to the great impact of the People's Commune on their social organization, the Kyzyl Tas Kazaks' history can be divided into three time periods, namely the pre-Commune period (1883-1958), the Commune period (1958-1984), and the post-Commune period (1984-present).

1. The Pre-Commune Period (1883-1958)

The period between 1883 and 1958 includes the last eighteen years of the Qing dynasty, the Republican period (1912~1949), and the first decade of the Chinese Communist rule (1949~) in the political history of Xinjiang.[9] In Altai, this period is generally characterized by (1) the consolidation of Kazak dominance over Mongols, (2) the formation of the "customary" north-south pattern of seasonal migration, (3) the continuing prominence of clan leaders as the key political players, and (4) distant Chinese rule. It is worthwhile to mention some of the contemporaneous political events that shaped these general characteristics of the pre-Commune period Altai. Soon after Mongolia declared independence in 1911, there was an armed conflict (1912~1913) in the eastern part of the Altai district. Altai's Mongolian borders, at the east and north, did not seem to have consolidated until the first half of the 1920s, during which an

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[9] Xinjiang was made a province in 1884, and Altai became an administrative unit of Xinjiang only in 1919.

influential West Mongol separatist Dambijancan was assassinated (in 1922) and the Mongolian People's Republic was founded (1924).[10] In the west, following the 1917 October Revolution, the Civil War on the northeastern Kazak steppe near the Chinese border was coming to an end by 1921, when the retreating White Russian troops led by General Bakich occupied most of Altai for several months (mid-June to mid-September) before the Chinese and Soviet joint operation forced them to retreat to Mongolia in late September.[11]

With the Russians removed from Altai, then governor of Xinjiang Yang Zengxin focused his attention on its northeastern border with newly independent Mongolia. In order to secure the precarious Xinjiang-Mongolia border along the Altai range, Yang's policy in Altai was to turn his favor away from the Mongols and toward the Kazaks.[12] Formerly the tenants of the Mongols, the Kazaks were now allowed to carry arms, but the Mongols were not. According to Owen Lattimore's contemporary account, Kazaks during the mid-1920s plundered the Altai area almost unchecked, forming a "hostile racial barrier" between Mongolia and Xinjiang.[13] Thus, over the 1920s and 1930s, the longstanding Kazak-Mongol rivalry in Altai[14] gave way to Kazak dominance. From the 1920s onward, Altai was an undisputable Kazak land, while Mongols were increasingly pushed either to Western Mongolia or to the Hoboksair area, southwest of Altai,

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[10] Liu 2012: 70-72, Finke 1999: 105-16, Bawden 1968: 199; 244, Sanders 197: 45, Liu 2013: 34-46

[11] Liu 2013: 34, Rossabi 1975: 227, Clubb 1971: 196, Lamb 1966: 307, Zhang 1981: 1651, Yang 1961: 315-316

[12] Forbes 1986: 15, Zhang 1980: 2644

[13] Lattimore 1928:292-293, Lattimore 1929: 299, Lattimore 1930: 41, Lattimore 1950: 54-55

[14] Nala 2010: 291-296, Lattimore 1950: 54-55, Hong 1998: 78, Mukamudkan 1998: 69, Zhang 1955: 50; See also *Hasakezu Jianshi* 2008: 213

leaving the Altai's mountain pastures wide open to the Kazaks.[15] Back in 1917, Mongols were already greatly outnumbered by Kazaks in Altai, showing some 1:6 ratio (approximately 6,000 Mongols vs. 36,000 Kazaks),[16] but the numerical disparity is far more dramatic in the 1944 census, according to which the Mongol-to-Kazak ratio becomes 1:24 (less than 2,900 Mongols vs. nearly 70,000 Kazaks),[17] with the Kazak population augmented by two major waves of in-migration fleeing the man-made famines in Soviet Kazakhstan during the early 1920s and early 1930s.[18] As the Mongols were fleeing Altai,[19] the Kazaks gradually established the north-south pattern of pastoral migration we see today, in which most Kazak nomadic groups climb up to the alpine pastures in the north for the summer and come down to the well-protected pastures in the south for the winter.[20]

As I mentioned earlier, Kazak nomads in the Altai were organized into exogamous clans,

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[15] See ADZ 2004: 72

[16] Zeng 1978 [1936]: 495, Xie 1933: 341-343

[17] ADZ 2004: 157; 172

[18] Cameron 2010; See also Zhakyp 2000: 212, Olcott 1987: 159, Dreyer 1979: 199, *Hasakezu Jianshi* 2008: 216m ADZ 2004: 152

[19] Nala 2010: 254; See ADZ 2004: 175

[20] Later in 1939, Shang Shicai – the warlord governor of Xinjiang at the time – began his efforts to disarm the Altai Kazaks. The confiscation of privately owned firearms, including those used for hunting, instigated a series of Kazak raids on military posts and Chinese settlements throughout the Altai District between 1940 and 1945 (Chen and Chen 1999: 384; 387-390), Benson and Svanberg 1998: 51; 71-77, Nala 2010: 267, ADZ 2001: 16, *Hasakezu Jianshi* 2008: 218-220), Zhou 1947: 7-10, Zhang 1980: 4185-4224, 4319-4348). In September 1945, the Altai Kazak revolt joined force with the Soviet-supported East Turkestan Republic army and took control of the entire Altai District. While some rebel leaders from Eastern Altai turned against the new republic in 1946, Altai remained one of the three constituent districts of the East Turkestan Republic until the 1949 Communist takeover (Benson and Svanberg 1998: 77; 81). The Communist takeover of the Kazak areas in Northern Xinjiang was far from smooth. Between 1949 and 1952, there was a series of armed conflicts between Kazaks and the People's Liberation Army troops. Kazak opponents of the PLA were often accused of being "counter-revolutionary." Many Kazaks fled to Afghanistan and Pakistan, but some Kazak military leaders, most notably Osman Batur and Zhanymkan Ta'zhi, were eventually captured and executed by the PLA (see Jacob 2016).

each of which had its own territory of spring/autumn and summer pastures. During the winter, the Altai Kazaks generally formed smaller herding camps – a winter herding camp was typically an extended family which consisted of 3-5 households. These winter groups were concentrated in a few favored wintering grounds in the southern part of Altai, where clans did not have their communal lands. Instead, each extended family had its own winter pasture, which was not necessarily adjacent to the pastures of other groups belonging to the same clan. In their own pastures, these small herding groups spent the winter without much interaction with other groups. In the rest of the year, the herders were dispersed in much wider pastures up north, where the herding groups tended to be larger, and the clans generally had contiguous territories of communal pastures. For instance, the Sheru'wshi clan reportedly had 22 such herding groups (178 households in total) in the Ko'ktogaj County alone as late as 1953.[21]

During the Republican era, Northern Xinjiang in general, and the Altai District[22] in particular, was practically left to be governed by several levels of Kazak clan leaders called *ta'zhi*, *u'kirdaj*, *zalyng*, *za'nggi*, etc.[23]; these local leaders were appointed by the Republican government to administer the various subdivisions of the district. According to Xie Bin's contemporary account, there were 12 *ta'zhi*, 13 *u'kirdaj*, 22 *zalyng*, 79 *za'nggi* in Altai in 1917. The county heads in Altai were often, if not always, Kazak clan leaders.[24] According to this

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[21] The average herding group size is about 8 households. (HSLD 2009: 156)

[22] During the Republican era, Altai was various called as A Shan Dao ("Altai Mountains Circuit"), A Shan Qu ("Altai Mountains District"), etc., but I use "Altai District" to refer to this administrative unit during the Republican era.

[23] In Chinese, they were usually called *taiji* (台吉) , *zongguan* (总管) , *zaleng* (扎楞) , *zanggen* (藏根), respectively.

[24] It was only in 1941 that the current administrative division of Altai into 7 county-level units was fully formed. For instance, the first county in Altai was established in 1919, and Kaba was made a county in 1930.

administrative structure inherited from the late Qing era, each clan was ideally headed by a

hereditary *ta'zhi*, who controlled 1,000 to 3,000 tents. During the Republican era, while the

power of the *ta'zhi* was weakened, the clan leaders from the *u'kirdaj* or lower were appointed

leaders in different counties, each *u'kirdaj* having 300-600 tents, each *zalyng* over 100-200 tents,

and each *za'nggi* over 50-100 tents. The positions of *ta'zhi*, *u'kirdaj*, and *zalyng* were always

inherited, whereas those of *za'nggi* were held by persons who were sometimes chosen by the

people.[25] Major social functions in pastoral life, such as dispute settlement and management of

pasture, were fulfilled by the clan or "tribal system," which remained intact well into the 1950s.[26]

Thus, within a county (*awdan* in Kazak, *xian* in Chinese), the Kazak clan generally enjoyed a

considerable degree of autonomy from the Chinese rule at the district level and above.[27]

Starting from 1949, when Xinjiang was incorporated into the People's Republic, the

Chinese Communist Party began its famous migration project to introduce large numbers of Han

Chinese into Xinjiang. The new Han population consisted mainly of poor peasants from Central

and Coastal China and the solder-workers of the Production and Construction Corps (PCC,

bingtuan in Chinese), which established state farms throughout Northern Xinjiang.[28] In Kaba

County, for example, the Han Chinese population increased from a mere 76 in 1949 to 486 in

1958.[29] A PCC unit, the 185th Bingtuan, is also found adjacent to Kaba.

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[25] Myrzakan 2001: 41, Svanberg 1988: 120, Morrison 1949: 69, Barnett 1961: 273, Xie 1933: 341-343, *Hasakezu Jianshi* 2008: 200-201, ADZ 2004: 72. See also Brunnert and Hagelstrom 1912 [1910]: 450-451.

[26] Tsui 1996: 212-213

[27] See Benson and Svanberg 1998: 48, ADZ 2004: 72

[28] Benson and Svanberg 1998: 31

[29] HXZ 2004: 120

This demographic change was accompanied by the increase of farmlands and the decrease of grasslands; the newly cultivated areas in Northern Xinjiang tended to be located on the pasturages of Kazak herders.[30] Today, the farmlands of Kaba are concentrated in the well-irrigated former spring pasture area near the Kaba River. More than 16 farming villages are located in this area.[31]

Alongside the rapid influx of the Han population, the collectivization of the Kazak nomads was under way. Generally, pastoral coops were based on the winter herding groups. To be more precise, a pastoral co-op usually consisted of a number of winter herding groups who lived closely with one another. As such, a pastoral coop was not necessarily a single-clan unit. In the other seasons, these groups continued to migrate to the more remote seasonal pastures in the north, traditionally belonging to different clans, which in turn encompassed many "cooperatives" but usually did not coincide with officially recognized administrative divisions at the time. In each of the seven counties in the Altai Prefecture, there were three to ten clan groups with their own customary seasonal pastures. In Kaba, for example, there were four major clan groups, namely Shybarajgyr, Zha'dik, Kazybek, and Najman (Table 1-1).[32] During this period, clan groups' control over labor and pastures remained intact in practice. In this way, both the social organization and the territorial bases of the clan could be preserved in these early years of the CCP rule.

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[30] Moseley 1966: 34-35

[31] HXZ 2004: 52

[32] See HXZ 2004: 48, AJZ 2002: 68-69

2. The Commune Period (1958-1984)

During this period, Northern Xinjiang went through radical social changes. The clan of the Kazak herders ceased to operate as a unit of pastoral production. In Kaba, Kazak herders were reorganized into production teams and People's Communes. In 1959, 140 communes were reportedly established in the Ili, Tarbagatai, and Altai Prefectures.[33] In addition to the communes, the PCC already established 182 state farms throughout Xinjiang by 1960, and they were cultivating 1/3 of Xinjiang's arable land by 1961; by 1965, more than ten million *mu* had been reclaimed by the PCC.[34] Since the majority of the PCC were concentrated in Northern Xinjiang, their impact on the Kazak population was enormous.

In general, the commune system collectivized both herds and lands, which had belonged to clans and households. Animals and pastures were now the property of communes and production teams. In Kaba, at least two or three cooperatives became a production team, and a dozen production teams constituted a People's Commune. Today's Kaba residents call this period *Taj Kazan* "Giant Cauldron" implying the excessiveness of the collectivization drive. The establishment of the commune system undermined the clan-based social organization of the pre-Commune period, because neither production teams nor communes coincided with clan divisions. Now that the "basic unit of accounting" was the commune, the importance of the clan was greatly reduced: herders were now identified with the names of communes; labor and rewards

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[33] Mosley 1966: 46

[34] Benson and Svanberg 1988: 84

were no longer distributed along the clan lines.[35] Most importantly, the commune, not the clan, controlled communal pastures. For example, today's Kyzyl Tas Village was a production team in the Commune period. Its members were from multiple clans, mainly Kazybek and Mungal, a subdivision of Zha'dik (See Table 1-1). This production team belonged to the Happiness Commune, which consisted of a dozen production teams like Kyzyl Tas. Members of multiple clans assigned in a production team also meant that clan members were now dispersed into different production teams and communes, rather than camping together in their clans' spring/autumn and summer pastures as they did in the past. With their animals, pastures, and labor power divided across different production teams and communes, clan groups could not exist as corporate units.

Han migration into Xinjiang further accelerated, especially after the opening of the Lanzhou-Xinjiang railroad in 1959. Railroads facilitated not only the expansion of the Han Chinese population in border regions like Xinjiang, but also the integration of border regions into China proper. More Han population in the region meant more pasturelands turned into cultivated fields. In 1959 alone, 511,000 new immigrants arrived in Xinjiang.[36] The Han Chinese population in Xinjiang, which numbered around 200,000 before 1949 increased to 5,286,532 by 1982.[37] In Kaba, the Han population skyrocketed from 486 in 1958 to 18,143 in 1984.[38]

One of the fundamental changes that occurred in the pastoral areas of Northern Xinjiang during the commune period is the unprecedented growth of agriculture. As Tsui points out, the

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[35] Tsui 1996: 215-216

[36] Yuan 1990: 49-73

[37] Benson and Svanberg 1988: 32

[38] HXZ 2004: 120

commune system "was introduced from the start with a desire to gain access to use of the land in pastoral areas, and to make agriculture as important as livestock production."[39] It was estimated that since 1949, about 3 million hectares of grassland throughout Xinjiang had been turned to agricultural use through land reclamation, and most of this reclaimed land is located in Northern Xinjiang; a further 4.7 million hectare of grassland deterioration had occurred due to salinization, soil degradation, and sand encroachment.[40] As a result, agriculture appeared in nearly every county in Northern Xinjiang, and many Kazak herders were settled and assigned agricultural work.

The beginning of the Commune period coincided with the Anti-Rightist Campaign against "local nationalists" and the introduction of the Roman alphabet for Kazak. Between 1958 and 1961, practically all known Kazak clan leaders in Altai were purged and stripped of their wealth and control over their clan groups. The transition from clan herding to commune herding was complete. The Communist attack on the clan leaders in Altai is comparable to the assault on women's veiling in early Soviet Uzbekistan – the empire's cultural periphery, where Soviets discovered (and created) an emancipatory project in the veil.[41] Similarly, Chinese Communists targeted Kazak clan leaders in Altai as the ultimate oppressor of the laboring people. But in the first decade of the People's Republic, the Communist control of this ethnocultural frontier of China was far from secure, and the administration at the local level heavily relied on these hereditary clan leaders. In the late 1950s, Communists finally felt secure enough to eliminate them from the local political scene. By doing so, they fulfilled the self-made mission of pastoral

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[39] Tsui 1996: 215

[40] Bai 1983, Hou 1984 cited in Hoppe 1988: 237, Tsui 1996: 215

[41] Northrop 2004

emancipation, and simultaneously removed the final major obstacle to the collectivization of the area – the clan leaders' control of pastures.

In addition to the elimination of clan leaders, it was announced in 1958 that Kazak would be written in the Roman alphabet, instead of the traditional Arabic script. This switch was part of the larger Romanization effort of the PRC government, which applied not only to the minority languages but also to Mandarin Chinese. The overarching Romanization system, called Pinyin, was to enhance written communication across all nationalities of China, thereby embodying "national unity" (*minzu tuanjie*). In Stalinist terms, use of the Roman alphabet would facilitate the convergence of nations, an essential step toward the stage of Socialism, and therefore those who opposed this policy were reactionaries. In Altai, the new Roman writing (known as Zhangasha in Kazak, Xinwenzi in Chinese) began to be taught in Kazak elementary schools in 1961. It continued to be used until 1982, when the Xinjiang Language and Script Committee's decision to switch back to the older Arabic script was implemented.[42]

3. Post-Commune Period (1984-Present)

The 1984 dissolution of the communes in Northern Xinjiang resulted in further changes in the Kazak herders' social organization. Under the new Household Responsibility System, herds were privatized and pastures were allocated to individual households. The fragmentation of grasslands under the current Household Responsibility System, combined with the government

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[42] Benson and Svanberg 1998: 136; 174, Millward 2007: 258, Dwyer 2005, AJZ 2002: 62

promotion of intensive pen-feeding pastoralism and the Reduce Grazing Return Grasslands (*Tuimu Huancao*) project in the last decade, drastically increased grazing pressures on many seasonal pastures in Altai, exacerbating the degradation of grasslands.

The management of livestock production is now once again in the hands of Kazak herders themselves. However, there is an important difference between the pre-Commune pastoralism and the post-Commune pastoralism. In the pre-Commune period, it was the clan that managed the allocation of pastures. Today, pastures are controlled and allocated by the township (and village) governments that replaced the former commune. Whereas the pre-Commune clan organized cooperation among the member households on its communal pasturage, the post-Commune township government does not organize such activity. In fact, the pre-Commune clan and the Commune are similar in that both organized some degree of communal herding. By contrast, Kazak herders today are left without such institutionalized support for coordination among different households.

In order to optimize their use of pasture and labor, many Kazak herders do arrange what Tsui calls "co-herding,"[43] by which multiple pastoral households get together for a certain time of the year to form a herding camp that is larger than a single household. When forming a herding camp, Kazak herders, in the absence of a formal institution to facilitate inter-household coordination, mobilize their personal network, which includes kin ties. As a result, one frequently encounters a Kazak herding camp that consists of closely related kin, hence "the re-occurrence of co-herding between kin-linked households."[44] Some of such kin-linked herding

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[43] Tsui 1996: 219-220

[44] *Ibid*

camps are those of a single patrilineal clan, which in turn can indeed be seen as the revival of the

sub-clan camping unit *awul* of the pre-Commune period. The strengthening of kin networks –

and perhaps even "the revitalization of tribal consciousness"[45] –among post-collective era

herders has been widely recognized in Xinjiang as well as in other pastoral regions in Inner

Asia.[46]

As in other pastoral areas of the Altai Prefecture, each of the 68 herding households of

Kyzyl Tas was given its designated seasonal pasturages in 3 to 5 different locations in 1984. With

almost no exception, every mobile herding household of Kyzyl Tas today camps and moves in a

cluster, i.e., herding camp, consisting of two or more households, in any given time of the year. A

closer look at the composition of these mobile herding camps on each of the seasonal pasturages

of Kyzyl Tas Village shows an interesting pattern. While there are many single-clan herding

camps as in the pre-Commune period, there equally numerous herding camps composed of

affinal kin. All of the single-clan herding camps of Kyzyl Tas are either households of brothers or

households of grandsons of a common grandfather. Given the patrilineal inheritance practice

among Kazaks, the single-clan herding camps we see today resulted from the division of the

family pastures distributed in 1984 when communes were dissolved. By contrast, affine-based

herding groups are formed through active networking between co-herders. Typically, an affine-

based herding group consists of two families, whose heads are in one the two types of affinal

relations: (1) wife's younger brother – elder sister's husbands; (2) husbands of sisters (Chapter 5).

Moreover, the constituent families can be construed to be in such an affinal relation, as long as a

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[45] *Ibid*

[46] *Ibid*, Humphrey and Sneath 1996

linking kin member can be found in their respective clans. I emphasize this affinal co-herding as a central characteristic of the post-Commune period social organization. In the face of no institutional support for communal herding, some Altai Kazak herders have successfully expanded the range of pastures for their animals by informally creating affiinal herding partnerships, real or fictive, in different seasons.

Single-clan herding camps and affine-based herding camps differ not only in the relative expansiveness of their use of pasture, but also in the ways the herders communicate with their herding partners. In the former, the herding partners are brothers or patrilineal cousins, whose relations are usually asymmetrical according to the birth order. In the latter, relations are symmetrical, regardless of their age. As I will explore in the following chapters, these affinal herding partners have a communicative style that differs sharply from that of brothers or cousins.

4. Summary

Prior to 1958, the extensive clan group (uruw) was arguably the most important unit of sociopolitical organization among the Kazak herders in Altai. With the establishment of People's Communes, the clan ceased to function as such a unit; productive activities were assigned by the commune (and production teams) directly to the individual households. After 1984, the clan regained some degree of importance in pastoral production and other social activities. However, the clan in the post-Commune period is not a sociopolitical unit as it was before 1958, and it does not control pasture or labor as the commune did. The clan should be understood as part of

the individual herders' cultural resources, readily mobilized as a basis for interpersonal and inter-familial networking, as we have seen in the formation of seasonal affine-based herding camps among the nomads of Kyzyl Tas. In fact, it is more useful to view the clan as one kind of generative principle in the Kazak kinship structure, rather than viewing it as a discrete entity or system *per se*.

Finally, it should be also noted that the current administrative units, such as township (*xiang*) and village (*cun*), inherited the spatial boundaries and the constituent residents from the former communes and production teams. For this reason, the former commune membership, almost identical to the current *xiang* membership, is just as significant as the clan membership in the interpersonal relations among the Kazak herders today. In short, the kinship principles predating the commune work side by side with the divisions and identities inherited from the Commune period to facilitate social relations among today's Kazak herders in their effort to optimize their use of pasture and labor.

Chapter 2

Grammar of Respect and Disrespect

Kazak belongs to the Turkic language family, widely distributed in Eurasia from eastern Siberia to the Mediterranean. Like many other Turkic languages, Kazak has a system of honorifics within its paradigm of person forms. At the most basic level, it is a grammaticalized distinction between second-person plain forms and their honorific alternants, which were originally plurals, analogous to the European T/V distinctions.

Not all languages have a system of grammaticalized expressions of deference, but it is not a novel phenomenon among Turkic speakers. Such a system is found in the Orkhon Inscription in Central Mongolia – the oldest extant Turkic text dating from the eighth century. This chapter will describe various forms of grammatical and lexical repertoire of Kazak honorifics and their co-occurrence patterns, and examine some of the recurring patterns of normative and non-normative honorific usage.

It will be shown that there is a clear correlation between types of social relations and the degrees of linguistic deference deemed appropriate for varying social relations. This correlation is evidenced in normative patterns of honorific usage, which I group into the "general rule" and the "special rule." Admittedly, however, depicting them as "rules" can be misleading. Although these recurring patterns of use may seem like rules, the use of honorifics is far from

predetermined in advance of the talk in which they are used. As this chapter will show, honorific speech not only reflects the relative status relation between interactants, but also reshapes the context of the interaction through creative presupposition.

1. The Structure of Honorifics

The linguistic repertoires of Kazak honorifics can be classified into two kinds: grammatical and lexical. The former refers to person forms including personal pronouns, possessive suffixes, and predicative suffixes; the latter includes a range of terms of address. Each of the three subsets of the person forms has a two-way distinction – honorific and plain types – in the second person, while the terms of address are largely stratified into three classes according to the degree of respect. Under a certain co-occurrence rule, which will be examined later, the combination of the grammatical categories and lexical categories can be seen to produce four 'speech levels,' namely Plain I, Plain II, Honorific I, Honorific II. Within this structure of honorifics, the speaker's choice of one level or style over the others generally indicates the degree of deference to the addressee in conversation (Silverstein 1976).

1.1. Grammatical Honorifics

The primary function of the three grammatical categories of the Kazak honorifics, i.e.,

personal pronouns, possessive suffixes, and predicative suffixes, is to mark person. The personal

pronouns have first-, second-, and third-person forms, each of which has a distinction of singular

and plural. It is in the second person that honorific forms and plain forms are differentiated:

honorific second person singular alternates with plain second person singular; honorific second

person plural alternates with plain second person plural. Thus, second person pronouns are

divided into four forms: plain singular, honorific singular, plain plural, honorific plural. The

remaining two subsets of grammatical honorific repertoire – possessive suffixes and predicative

suffixes – also distinguish plain and honorific forms in a manner similar to personal pronouns.

Possessive suffixes that attach to nouns express the person and number of the possessor(s).

Predicative suffixes, combining with most types of predicates, both nominal and verbal, signal

person and number of the subject, and are often referred to as 'personal markers' or 'subject

representatives' in formal descriptions of the Kazak grammar.[47] The following tables show

various forms of personal pronouns, possessive suffixes, and predicative suffixes.[48] The

honorific repertoires (i.e., second-person forms) are highlighted in each table.

Table 2-1. Personal Pronouns

		singular	plural
first person		men	biz
second person	plain	sen	sender
	honorific	siz	sizder
third person		ol	odar

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[47] For more comprehensive description of the Kazak grammar, see Kirchner (1998), Bekturova and Bektureva (1996), and Geng (1989), Zhang (2004). See also Johanson (1998) and Poppe (1965) for grammatical descriptions of other Turkic languages as well as so-called Altaic languages in general.

[48] This presentation is based on the Altai dialect, which differs slightly from Standard Kazak.

Table 2-2. Possessive Suffixes

		singular	plural
first person		-m, -ym,-im	-myz, -ymyz, miz, -imiz
second person	plain	-ng, -yng, -ing	-daryng, -taryng, -dering, -tering
	honorific	-nygz, -yngyz, -ingiz	-daryngyz, -taryngyz, -deringiz, -teringiz
third person		-sy, -y, -si, -i	

Table 2-3. Predicative Suffixes – Type A[49]

		singular	plural
first person		-myn, -byn, -pyn, -min, -bin, -pin	-myz, -byz, -pyz, -miz, -biz, -piz
second person	plain	-syng, -sing	-syngdar, -singder
	honorific	-syz, -siz	-syzdar, -sizder
third person		-ø, -dy, -di	

Table 2-4. Predicative Suffixes – Type B

		singular	Plural
first person		-m	-k
second person	plain	-ng	-ngdar, -ngder
	honorific	-ngyz, -ngiz	-ngyzdar, -ingizder
third person		-ø	

Table 2-5. Predicative Suffixes – Type C

		singular	Plural
first person		-jyn, -ajyn, -jin, -ejin	-jyk, -ajyk, -jik, -ejik
second person	plain	-ø	-ngdar, -yngdar, -ngder, -ingder
	honorific	-ngyz, -yngyz, -ngiz, -ingiz	-ngyzdar, -yngyzdar, -ngizder, -ingizder
third person		-syn, -sin	

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[49] Different types of predicative suffixes attach to different verbal categories. For instance, Type A applies to present forms, Type B to past forms, and Type C to imperatives.

As can be seen above, second-person pronouns, second-person possessive suffixes, and second-person predicative suffixes are all further divided into plain forms and honorific forms. In other words, there always exists an obligatory selection between two choices, either plain or honorific, in using these second person forms.[50] Given this structural constraint, the speaker almost always has to decide the degree of respect when referring to something about the addressee (e.g., the addressee's possession, action, quality, or person, etc.). Summarized in the table below are the grammatical repertoires of Kazak honorifics.

Table 2-6. Grammatical Repertoires of Honorifics

		singular		plural	
		plain	honorific	plain	honorific
pronouns		sen	siz	sender	sizder
possessive suffixes		-ng, -yng, -ing	-ngyz, -yngyz, -ngiz, -ingiz	-daryng, -taryng, -dering, -tering	-daryngz, -taryngyz, -deringiz, -teringiz
predicative suffixes	type A	-syng, -sing	-syz, -siz	-syngdar, -singder	-syzdar, -sizder
	type B	-ng	-ngyz, -ngiz	-ngdar, -ngder	-ngyzdar, -ngizder
	type C	ø	-ngyz, -yngdar, -ngiz, -ingiz	-ngdar, -yngdar, -ngder, -ingder	-ngyzdar, -yngyzdar, -ngizder, -ingizder

During my fieldwork, Kazak speakers generally recognized two basic speech varieties –

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[50] In some linguistic descriptions, the Kazak person forms are represented as though there is the singular/plural distinction but no plain/honorific distinction in these second person forms. Notably in Kirchner (1998), for example, only two forms of second person pronouns – singular *sen* and plural *siz* – are shown in the Kazak pronominal paradigm. The plain/honorific distinction is simply absent in this description. I suspect that Kirchner's account is based on some historically attested variety of Kazak, quite different from the contemporary varieties spoken in Kazakhstan or China that I am familiar with.

sypajy ("polite," "delicate") and non-*sypajy*. The non-*sypajy* variety was sometimes referred to as *anajy tu'r* "ordinary variety" or *zhaj so'z* "casual (plain) speech", but more frequently as *katty so'z* "hard speech" contrasting with *zhumsak so'z* "soft speech" – another common label for the *sypajy* variety.[51] The main focus of this local conceptualization is the two-way distinction of plain and honorific morphemes described above. For example, a simple sentence like "Did you to go to your child?" can be said in the following two ways:

Siz bala-**ngyz**-ga bar-dy-**ngyz** ba?   [Honorific]
you(HON) child-HON-DAT go-PAST-HON INTE

Sen bala-**ng**-a bar-dy-**ng** ba?   [Plain]
you (PLN) child-PLN-DAT go-PAST-PLN INTE

1.2. Lexical Honorifics

Together with the grammatical categories discussed above, lexical categories also form linguistic repertoires of the Kazak honorifics. The lexical categories consist of a variety of terms of address including kin terms, personal names, and status titles.[52]

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[51] The *sypajy* variety is sometimes referred to as *kurmet so'z* "honor speech" or "respect speech"

[52] There is a term *kisi*, the honorific equivalent for *adam* "person." This pair, though clearly showing a plain/honorific contrast, is generally used for reference to a third-party, rather than for reference to the addressee. This, one could argue, is as an example of a referent honorific system in Kazak. The present analysis, however, focuses on linguistic items that communicate the speaker's respect (or lack thereof) toward the addressee in conversation.

The major kin terms used for address[53] in Kazak are: *ata* "grandfather," *apa* "grandmother," *a'ke* "father," *sheshe* "mother," *aga* "elder brother," *ta'te* "elder sister," *zhengge* "elder brother's wife". Of these seven terms, all except *a'ke* "father" and *sheshe* "mother" are extended to address metaphorically all kin types of ascending generations, as well as to kin of ego's own generation who are older than ego. For example, *ata* "grandfather" is used to address father's elder brother and *aga* "elder brother" is applied to father's younger brother. Further, these kinship terms are also used to address non-kin older than the speaker by approximately 3 years or more. Of course, the terms denoting 'male' (i.e, *ata* "grandfather," *a'ke* "father," *aga* "elder brother") are used to male addressees, while the terms denoting 'female' (i.e., *apa* "grandmother," *sheshe* "mother," *ta'te* "elder sister," *zhengge* "elder brother's wife") can only be applied to female addressees. Note that the primary meanings of all kin terms of address presented here denote either 'ascending generation' or 'seniority within ego's generation.' Quite predictably, then, personal names are only used when addressing people, kin or not, whose age is approximately equal to, or younger than, ego. Status terms such as *mugalym* "teacher, *bastyk* "leader," *ka'rija* "elder," *shal* "old man" are used somewhat less frequently than kin terms for respectful address.[54]

The most common terms of address among the Altai Kazak herders are *ata* "grandfather," *apa* "grandmother," *aga* "elder brother," *ta'te* "elder sister" and personal names, which in turn can be arranged into three grades across a scale of respectfulness: *ata/apa* (very respectful), *aga/ta'te* (respectful), and personal names (ordinary).

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[53] Kin terms of address appear to classify kin terms of reference, which are more numerous and subdivided.

[54] Certain borrowed Chinese terms of address are also used for special pragmatic effects, which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5.

1.3. Degrees of Deference ('Speech Levels')

When the grammatical honorific repertoires combine with terms of address, there are certain patterns (or rules) of co-occurrence among them, which may be viewed to yield three to four 'speech levels' of varying degrees of respect. First, within grammatical categories, honorific forms never co-occur with plain forms. (I have encountered only a few instances in which honorific and plain forms co-occurred in the same sentence; they all appear to be accidental mistakes, rather than intention manipulation of the degrees of deference.) Second, plain forms of grammatical repertoire cannot combine with the very respectful terms of address (i.e., *ata* and *apa*). With these constraints in co-occurrence, the two-way distinction of the grammatical repertoires and the three-grade terms of address are put together to produce three basic levels ('Plain I,' 'Honorific I,' and 'Honorific II'), and one additional level ('Plain II'). Since the additional Plain II, in which plain forms of grammatical items co-occur with respectful *aga* or *zhengge*, is used only in certain limited social contexts (which I will discuss later in this chapter), it is not classified as one of the basic levels in this analysis. The usage patterns of each speech level will be discussed in the following section. The table below shows these four 'levels' and their corresponding co-occurrence relationships among honorific items. Notice that such kin term usage and the underlying stereotypes of kin relations are based on tropic extension (Agha 2007) of a few elementary kin types.

Table 2-7. 'Speech Levels'

Honorific II	honorific pronoun	honorific possessive	honorific predicative	*ata*/*apa*
Honorific I	honorific pronoun	honorific possessive	honorific predicative	*aga*/*ta'te*
Plain II	plain pronoun	plain possessive	plain predicative	*aga*/*zhengge*
Plain I	plain pronoun	plain possessive	plain predicative	personal name

(*ata* and *aga* are for male addressees; *apa*, *ta'te*, and *zhengge* are for female addressees.)

As I mentioned earlier, Kyzyl Tas herders readily recognize the basic grammatical distinction between plain and honorific varieties (or 'levels'). And these two varieties can be further divided into two sub-levels, depending on the choice of terms of address, as Table 2-7 shows. Kazak terms of address, though not as salient a category in native metapragmatic discourse as the two-way grammatical distinction of *sypajy* and non-*sypajy*, nevertheless signal the differential degrees of respect toward the addressee, thus being closely integrated with honorific usage, as attested by many Kyzyl Tas herders when specifically asked about how to use terms of address.

2. Normative Use of Honorifics

In actual utterance, one needs to know not only the structure of honorifics, but also the norms of using honorifics in various social contexts. Selecting an appropriate level of respect in a given situation is an essential part of a speaker's 'communicative competence' (Hymes 1974) among the Altai Kazaks.

The social norms of Kazak honorific usage can be classified into (1) "general rule" and (2)

"special rule." These two "rules" indicate how various relations are defined and the appropriate level of deference is selected accordingly. The "general rule" is utilized in most social relations, while the "special rule" applies only when the participants of the conversation are in a joking relation.

2.1. General Rule

In most social relations among Kyzyl Tas herders, there is a certain consistent pattern of linguistic deference marking motivated by the addressee's position (or status) relative to the speaker, and this pattern is termed "general rule" in this study. The general rule of honorific usage is summarized in Table 2-8.

Table 2-8. General Rule of Honorific Usage

| | addressee's relative position to the speaker | |
	kin	non-kin
Honorific II	kin of the second or higher ascending generations, or the first ascending generation older than the speaker's parents	older than the speaker by approximately 25 years or more
Honorific I	the first ascending generation younger than the speaker's parents or the speaker's own generation older than the speaker	older than the speaker by approximately 3~25 years
Plain I	the speaker's own generation younger than the speaker or all descending generations	approximately of the same age with the speaker (within 3 years) or younger than the speaker

General Rule in Kin Relations

Since the lexical repertoires of Kazak honorifics are basically kin terms, it is useful to examine the honorific usage in kin relations first. From the speaker's point of view, if the addressee is of a descending generation, Plain I is used; if the addressee is of an ascending generation, either Honorific I or Honorific II is used. Within one's own generation, age is the key factor: Honorific I to the addressee older than the speaker and Honorific II to the addressee younger than the speaker. Within ascending generations, selection between Honorific I and Honorific II depends on the addressee's relative seniority to the speaker's parents: Honorific I to the addressee younger than the speaker's parents and Honorific II to the addressee older than the speaker's parents. After selecting a speech level, terms of address are further differentiated by the sex of the addressee in Honorific I (*aga* for male; *ta'te* for female) and Honorific II (*ata* for male; *apa* for female).

To one's own parents, however, one would typically use honorific forms of grammatical repertoires combined with *a'ke*"father" or *sheshe* "mother," which are not classified as either Honorific I or Honorific II in Tables 2-7 and 2-8. Rather, the expression addressed to one's own parents seems to be located somewhere in between Honorific I, using *aga* "elder brother" or *ta'te* "elder sister," and Honorific II, using *ata* "grandfather" or *apa* "grandmother." It is also to be noted that one should always adhere to the most respectful Honorific II to parents-in-law, who are not necessarily older than one's own parents.

Within this framework in mind, one can appropriately address most kin types by using one of the three levels (Plain I, Honorific I, Honorific II), according to the addressee's relative age, generation, and sex (see Table 2-8). The kin types[55] addressed by the most deferential Honorific II include FF, FM, FeB, FeZ, FeBW, FeZH, MF, MM, MeB, MeZ, MeBW, MeZH, WF, WM, HF, HM, etc. (with further distinction by sex: *ata* for male addressees; *apa* for female addressees); Honorific I is used to eB, eZ, FyB, FyBW, FyZ, FyZH, MyB, MyBW, MyZ, MyZH, WeB, WeZ, WeBW, WFyB, WFyZ, WMyB, WMyZ, HeB, HeZ, HeBW, HeZH, HFyB, HFyZ HMyB, HMyZ, etc. (with further distinction between *aga* for male addressees and *ta'te* for female addressee); Plain I is applied to yB, yZ, W, H, S, D, etc.. The following sentences are typical examples of honorific usage in kin relations:

Shaj ish-**ingiz**,   **ata**! (Honorific II)

tea   drink-IMP(HON)   grandfather

This is a sentence spoken by a daughter-in-law to her father-in-law, and can be translated as "Please drink tea, Papa!" An honorific predicative suffix *–ingiz* is used together with *ata*, literally "grandfather."

Aga,   ojna-j-**syz**   ba?   (Honorific I)

elder.brother   play-PRES-HON   Q

An 8-year-old boy asks his 12-year-old male cousin "Would you like to play [a card game]?" An honorific predicative suffix *–syz* is used with *aga* "elder brother."

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[55] Kin types notation used in this study is as follows: F (father); M (mother); S (son); D (daughter); B (brother); Z (sister); H (husband); W (wife); e (elder); y (younger).

A'bil,   mal-dar-**yng**   kandaj?   (Plain I)

A'bil (PN) livestock-PL-PLN   how

This sentence is translated as "A'bil, how are your livestock?" The speaker (65-year-old male) addresses his son-in-law's younger brother (36-year-old male) by a plain possessive suffix –*yng* and his personal name (A'bil).

General Rule in Non-kin Relations

The general rule in non-kin relations depicts a very similar pattern to that in the kin relations. Of course, the difference lies in the fact that in non-kin relations, selections of linguistic forms mainly depend on relative age of the addressee to the speaker, whereas in the case of kin relations, the generational factor is as important as age.[56] The three-grade structure of the general rule applies in most non-kin relations. Honorific II is used when the addressee is considerably older than the speaker, usually by 25 years or more.[57] Honorific I, still respectful, is used to persons who are older by more than 3 years but less than 25 years. Persons who are younger than the speaker are addressed by Plain I.[58] Actual examples of the general rule for non-kin relations are given below.

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[56] Here, clanship should be considered as a non-kin category, unless the addressee's exact kin relation to the speaker is known.

[57] This 25-year difference roughly corresponds to the age difference between parents and their child.

[58] People whose age difference is less than 3 years are usually considered to belong to the same age group (*kurdas*), and thus reciprocally exchange Plain I.

Bazar-ga   bar-dy-**ngyz**,   **ata**?   (Honorific II)

market-DAT   go-PAST-HON   grandfather

This sentence can be translated as "You went to market, Papa?" The 31-year-old female speaker uses an honorific predicative suffix *–ngyz* with *ata*, literally "grandfather," to the 58-year-old male addressee, who is 27 years older than herself.

Oj-dan   kashan   shyk-ty-**ngyz**,   **Ta'shen**   **aga**?   (Honorific I)

low.land-ABL   when   rise-PAST-HON   Ta'shen (PN)   elder.brother

A 53-year-old male asks a 59-year-old male named Ta'shen, "When did you move up from the low land, Elder brother Ta'shen?" Since the addressee is 6 years older than the speaker, an honorific predicative suffix *–ngyz* is used with *aga*, literally "elder brother." Note that the term of address used here, which takes the form of 'personal name (Ta'shen) + kin term (*aga*),' is considered by Kazak speakers as a kin term, rather than a personal name.

Sen-de   osy   zher-de   artyk   buzaw bar   ma,   **Shataj**?   (Plain I)

you(PLN)-LOC this   place-LOC   surplus   calf   EXIST   Q   Shataj (PN)

A 60-year-old female addresses a 43-year-old male by his personal name Shataj with a plain pronoun locative *sende* because the addressee is younger than the speaker. The sentence can be translated as "Do you have an extra calf (without its cow) here, Shataj?"

2.2. Special Rule

Although the general rule applies to most social relations, native Kazak speakers exhibit a

somewhat different speech pattern in certain special types of relations, which can be termed as

'joking relations.' To account for this important variation, this section introduces the "special rule" — the normative speech pattern found in joking relations.

Joking relations are usually defined in anthropological literature as specially designated social relations, in which one is allowed, or even required, to act impolitely to his or her partner (Radcliffe-Brown 1952[1940]). In Kazak, people in such relations are said to "joke with one another" (*kalzhyngdasuw*). This behavioral norm clearly affects honorific usage, and it is articulated in a tendency to use less respectful forms in joking relations even when the addressee is considerably older than the speaker. Unlike in the case of the general rule, Honorific I and Honorific II are not utilized in the special rule. Table 2-9 summarizes the special rule of Kazak honorific usage.

Table 2-9. Special Rule in Honorific Usage

	addressee's relative position to the speaker	
	kin	non-kin
Plain II	eZH, FyZH, eBW, or WeZH older than the speaker by 15 years or more	non-kin in joking relations older than the speaker by 15 years or more
Plain I	all kin in joking relations except the case above	all non-kin in joking relation except the case above

Special Rule in Kin Relations

As in many other societies, joking relations in the Kazak society are based on its

traditional kinship structure, and some of them may be metaphorically extended to non-kin relations that have features similar to joking relations among kin. Following is the list of the types of kin relations that are considered to be joking relations among the Altai Kazaks:

(a) *baldyz-zhezde* relation:

  WyB – eZH

  WyZ – eZH

  WeBS – FyZH

  WeBD – FyZH

(b) *kajyn ini – zhengge* relation:

  HyB – eBW

(c) *kajyn singli – zhengge* relation:

  HyZ – eBW

(d) *kuda – kuda* relation:

  SWF – DHF

  yBWeB – yZHeB

  SWeB – yZHF

  DHeB – yBWF

(e) *kuda – kudagyj* relation:

  SWF – DHM

  DHF – SWM

  yBWeB – yZHeZ

  yZHeB – yBWeZ

  SWeB – yZHM

  DHeB – yBWM

  yZHF – SWeZ

yBWF – DHeZ

(f)   *kudagyj – kudagyj* relation:

SWM – DHM

yBWeZ – yZHeZ

yBWM – DHeZ

SWeZ – yZHM

(g)   *kuda bala – kuda bala* relation:

eBWyB – eZHyB

(h)   *kuda bala – kudasha* relation:

eBWyB – eZHyZ

eZHyB – eBWyZ

(i)   *kudasha – kudasha* relation:

eBWyZ – eZHyZ

(j)   *bazha – bazha* relation:

WZH – WZH

The relations listed above are all regarded "equal" (*zhol teng*), and because of their equal status,

people in those relations normally exchange the least respectful Plain I. For instance, Plain I will

be used symmetrically between a woman and her husband's younger brother, regardless their age

difference. However, when speaking to eZH, FyZH, eBW, or WeZH, who is considerably older,

approximately by 15 years or more, than the speaker, Plain II is selected to acknowledge the

addressee's seniority despite their equal status in theory. In fact, the only difference between

Plain I and Plain II is that personal names in the former are replaced by either *aga* "elder brother"

(for eZH, FyZH and WeZH) or *zhengge* "elder brother's wife" (for eBW) in the latter.[59] The

following sentences are examples of honorific usage in joking relations among kin:

Shataj   aga,   **sen-der-ding**   telepon   no'mir   kansha?   (Plain II)

Shataj (PN) elder.brother you(PLN)-PL-GEN telephone number   how.much

This sentence can be translated as "Elder brother Shataj, what's your telephone number?" The
speaker (22-years-old male) addresses his elder sister's husband (43 years old) by Plain I. Since
the addressee is 21 years older than the speaker and is in a joking relation with the speaker, a
plain pronoun genitive *senderding* is used with *aga*, literally "elder brother" rather than with his
name (Shataj) alone.

Talap,   zhe-j-**sing**   ba? (Plain I)

Talap (PN) eat-PRES-PLN   Q

This sentence, spoken in a typical joking relation, can be translated as "Talap, do you [want to]
eat?" A 31-year-old female addresses her husband's younger brother (30 year old) by a plain
predicative suffix *–sing* with his personal name (Talap).

Special Rule in Non-kin Relations

      Some of the non-kin relations can also be considered joking relations, and follow the

pattern of honorific usage similar to the special rule in kin relations described above. For

example, a male speaker's older male friend's wife is often equated with the speaker's elder

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[59] There are a number of relations in the categories of (d), (e), and (f), in which joking seems to be one-sided rather
than mutual. Thus, a yZHF jokes with his SWeB and SWeZ; a yBWF jokes with his DHeB and DHeZ; a yZHM
jokes with her SWeB and SWeZ; a yBWM jokes with her DHeB and DHeZ. But the reverse is not true.

brother's wife (eBW, *zhengge*); a same-year-old friend's elder sister's husband may be addressed

like one's own elder sister's husband (eZH, *zhezde*). For ease of communication,[60] Kyzyl Tas

herders tend to create as many joking relations as they can among non-kin.

The special rule in non-kin relations exhibits a similar pattern as in kin relations. Non-kin

in a joking relation commonly use Plain I to each other. Only when the addressee is much older

than the speaker, usually by more than 15 years, Plain II is selected. Of course, within Plain II,

terms of address are further differentiated by sex of the addressee, i.e., *aga* "elder brother" for

males and *zhengge* "elder brother's wife" for females. The following examples are drawn from

natural conversations, the participants of which are in non-kin joking relations.

Kymyz   angsa-ma-j   tur-**syng**   ba,   **aga**?   (Plain II)

koumiss   yearn-NEG-PRES   PROGRESS-PLN   Q   elder.brother

A 43-year-old male speaks to a 59-year-old male: "Aren't you craving for koumiss [fermented mare's milk]?" The addressee is the speaker's same-year-old friend's *zhezde* (elder sister's husband), treated like his own *zhezde*. A plain predicative suffix *–syng* is used in this joking relation in a broad sense, but the age difference between them compels the use of a respectful term of address *aga* "elder brother."

Sen-ing   bije-**ng**   ba,   **Zhangabek**?

you(PLN)-GEN mare-PLN   Q   Zhangabek (PN)

A 35-year-old male speaks to a 41-year-old male. Zhangabek, the addressee, is a very close age-mate of the speaker's *zhezde* (eZH). The sentence can be translated as "Is that your mare,

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[60] Ease of communication, for these Kazak speakers, implies a sense of efficiency and intimacy, but more importantly it entails a display of the image of the playful person (sometimes called *kalzhyngbas* "joker") at the moment of interaction – itself an ethical concern. By contrast, the mode of communication involving the use of honorific forms is perceived to be "difficult" or "heavy" (*awur*), as I will discuss in Chapter 3.

Zhangabek?" Since they are in a fictive *baldyz – zhezde* (WyB – eZH) relation and their age difference is not significant, a plain pronoun genitive *sening* and a plain possessive suffix *–ng* are used with the addressee's name Zhangabek.

3. Non-normative Use of Honorifics: Creative Presupposition

Although the general and special 'rules' discussed above represent Kyzyl Tas herders' normative use of honorifics mainly according to the types of relations among the participants of conversation, these relation-based 'rules' do not always determine actual usage; they may be breached or partly moderated to redefine interactional context. I suggest here that honorific speech defines its interactional context primarily through deference indexes' creative presupposition (Silverstein 1976) of an alternative status relation between the speaker and the addressee.[61]

For example, a switch from plain to honorific forms typically presupposes the addressee's increased authority over the speaker. Sometimes a semantically unnecessary second-person possessive suffix is deliberately attached to a noun phrase (e.g., "if you look down *your* underneath") in order to exaggerate the asymmetrical status relation between the speaker and the addressee. Using a form more deferential than what the addressee would normally receive may

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[61] Paul Friedrich's classic study of nineteenth-century Russian pronominal usage provides telling instances of creative presupposition, which he terms "switching" and "breakthrough": in Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, "[Son'ja's] shift in status is signaled…by a switch in pronouns" at the very moment in which Raskolnikov says "I did not bow down to *ty*, I bowed down to all human sufferings"; in Tolstoy's *Resurrection*, *ty* for the prince and *vy* for the prostitute generate the sense of "special hostility, affection, or ambivalence" (Friedrich 1972: 292).

evoke a type of social context in which the addressee occupies a higher status position than the speaker's.

This is especially common in a social relation that can be differentially characterized in multiple normative frameworks.

Example 1. Shift in footing

Siz   de   bar-ma-dy-ngyz,   u'j-ge?
You (HON) also   go-NEG-PAST-HON   house-DAT
"You didn't go to the house either?"

Here, Nurda'wlet, a 37-year-old man addressed his former classmate Bakytgu'l, also 37 year old, in a very deferential way, using the honorific pronoun (*siz*) and an honorific predicative suffix (-*ngyz*). As classmates (*sabaktas*) and age-mates (*kurdas*), Nurda'wlet and Bakytgu'l would usually exchange symmetrical plain forms, but since Nurda'wlet married Bakytgu'l's husband's elder brother's daughter, Nurda'wlet was a nephew-in-law to Bakytgu'l at the same time. So, in this kin relation, Bakytgu'l was one generation above Nurda'wlet. Due to his dual identity, Nurda'wlet's choice between honorific and plain forms was closely associated with at least two distinct social frameworks – kin and non-kin relations. In this particular example, the switch to honorific forms for Bakytgu'l brought the kin relation into attention, foregrounding their generational statuses and situational formality. Nurda'wlet's question, then, presupposes that "I am now talking to you as your nephew-in-law." Far from merely reflecting certain contextual factors, this creative presupposition effectively transforms the entire interactional framework into

a new one that typically involves more asymmetrical status relation between the interactants.

This example demonstrates that one cannot predict the pragmatic value of an utterance solely from the language-external social context alone; rather, the real-time interplay of linguistic usage and social contexts must be taken into consideration (cf. Irvine 1993). As the example above shows, the status relation in honorific speech event can be re-contextualized and transformed into a new one mainly through creative presupposition of social indexicality. Now, how can the analyst determine specifically what sort of social framework is being presupposed in a given honorific utterance? Let us turn to the critical role of cultural stereotypes in linking the forms of speech and the forms of social frameworks.

4. Cultural Stereotypes

The pragmatic effect of an honorific utterance crucially depends on native conceptions about honorific structure and usage – the metapragmatics of honorifics – and about non-linguistic social patterns that are perceived to be relevant to and associated with honorifics. Such association is mediated by ideologically informed cultural stereotypes of the linguistic and the social. In other words, the indexical value of an honorific utterance cannot be adequately understood without considering the culture-specific language ideology that links "social forms" and "forms of talk" (Woolard 1998: 3).

Ideologies of honorific language entail the stereotypes of linguistic categories (words, sentences, speech levels, prosody, etc.) and the stereotypes of social categories (persons,

relations, activities, etc.). Interestingly, however, these stereotypes are not just about respect; they are always saturated with, and characterized by, other culturally significant ideas as well. Irvine notes that "[a]lthough all honorifics involve some notion of 'respect,' many questions still remain concerning what 'respect' (and respectful comportment) entails in particular sociocultural systems (1995: 14)." Agha similarly observes that "[m]etapragmatic stereotypes about honorific language…imbu[e] it with pragmatic values additional to the marking of respect and honor (1998: 152)."

As I have mentioned earlier, Kyzyl Tas herders readily recognize at least two basic speech varieties – honorific (*sypajy* or *zhumsak*) and plain (*anajy* or *katty*). Furthermore, the *sypajy* speech is thought of as "polite" and "sophisticated" and said to be "the words that honor people." According to most Kazak speakers I interviewed, it is generally heard as "soft," "elaborate," and "slow," and render the speaker "modest," "well-mannered," and "mature." On the other hand, the non-*sypajy* speech is considered to be "rude" and "crude." It sounds "hard," "simple," and "fast," thus "suitable for unconstrained conversations." In non-s*ypajy* words and sentences, such personal characteristics as "arrogance," "vulgarity," and "childishness" are believed to be revealed easily. Hence we find a fairly regular iconic pattern of linking linguistic features with personal characteristics (Irvine and Gal 2000).

The stereotypes of social persons constitute an important axis of the ideological system of sociolinguistic differentiation. For instance, due to the importance of polite speech in the folk theory of Kazak verbal ethics, the speaker's choice of appropriate linguistic forms indicates his or her own demeanor and ethical cultivation (Agha 1998; Silverstein 2003); the use of honorific forms may index the speaker's refinement and demeanor whereas plain forms may index one's

vulgarity and poor conduct. As Agha (1998: 152) suggests, native conceptions of honorific

language "formulate social standards by which individual acts of language use are judged." His

observation is worth noting here:

> Stereotypes of respect (and other relationships between interactants) are used to
> motivate stereotypes of the identity of individual(s) who fill discursive-interactional
> roles. For example, the tendency to speak "respect"-fully toward others cross-
> culturally motivates stereotypes of the "respect"-ability of self. (Agha 1998: 155)

In addition to social person types, the stereotypes of social forms also include those of

social relations and activities. Social activity types[62] categorically characterize situations and

conducts, e.g., propriety, intimacy, honor, shame, insult, casualness, hostility, degradation,

friendliness, irony, sarcasm, criticism, formality, informality, etc.. The 'informality' indexicality,

best illustrates the pragmatic effect of social activity types. In the remainder of this section, I will

focus on the workings of social relation types.

The stereotypes of social relations mainly consist of culturally salient, readily recognizable

categories of interpersonal dyads. In addressee-focused honorific systems like Kazak, stereotypic

interactional role structures are a central component of the ideological link between the

metapragmatics of honorific usage and conceptions of relative social rank, authority, and

structural positions between the speaker and the addressee. Different ideological systems have

different relational categories that are considered to "matter" in honorific speech.

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[62] I use the term "activity types" to capture categories of behavior imbued with different pragmatic effects and
evaluations.

In Kyzyl Tas herders' honorific speech, the culturally salient social relation types include various kin relations (e.g., 'father-son,' 'elder brother-younger brother,' 'mother-daughter,' 'elder sister-'younger sister') and non-kin relations (e.g., 'teacher-student,' 'older herder – younger herder,' 'village head – villagers') that involve asymmetry of generation, age, and occupation. In particular, the basic distinctions among kin relations are evidenced in the terms of address most commonly used in Kazak honorific speech – *ata* "grandfather," *apa* "grandmother," *aga* "elder brother," *ta'te* "elder sister" and personal names – which in turn can be arranged into three grades across a scale of respectfulness: *ata/apa* (very respectful), *aga/ta'te* (respectful), and personal names (ordinary). As a rule, most kin types of ascending generations (except for ego's own father and mother), as well as kin of ego's own generation who are older than ego, are addressed metaphorically by these four main kin terms. For example, father's elder brother is addressed as *ata* "grandfather" and father's younger brother as *aga* "elder brother." Notice that such kin term usage and the underlying stereotypes of kin relations are based on "tropic extension" (Agha 2007) of a few elementary kin types.

As such, the stereotypes of non-kin relations are built upon the trope of the stereotypic kin relations. Generally, the most respectful kin terms (*ata* "grandfather"/*apa* "grandmother") are used when the addressee is considerably older than the speaker, roughly by 25 years or more. Likewise, *aga* "elder brother" or *ta'te* "elder sister," applies to people who are older by more than 3 years but less than 25 years. Those of approximately the same age with or younger than the speaker are addressed by his or her personal name. Thus, we can see that non-kin relations are stratified into a tropic kinship-hierarchy paradigm.

Both kin and non-kin stereotypes are clearly at work in the previous example, when

Nurda'wlet switched to honorific forms to address Bakytgu'l. Even without using the term of address *ta'te* "elder sister" (or more precisely "aunt-in-law" in this case), Nurda'wlet was able to evoke his affinal tie with her as her nephew-in-law by switching to the more deferential, other-elevating *sypajy* speech with an honorific pronoun (*siz*) and an honorific predicative suffix (-*ngyz*). Upon the shift in footing (Goffman 1979), the interactional role structure was dramatically transformed from an egalitarian non-kin relation between age-mates (*kurdas*) into a generational hierarchy between in-laws. In other words, Nurda'wlet switched to the voice (Bakhtin 1981) of Bakytgu'l's nephew-in-law, thereby re-contextualizing their interactional framework. Such shift in footing or voicing enacts the cultural stereotypes of relational categories at the moment of interaction.

Furthermore, the distinction between joking and non-joking relations can be viewed as a stereotypic distinction among relational categories as well. Clearly established as a special subset within normative stereotypes of kin relations, some of the joking relations we have discussed in this chapter may serve as tropic models for non-kin relations that are perceived to have features similar to joking relations among kin. For example, a male speaker often regards his older male friend's wife in the same way he would treat his own *zhengge* (elder brother's wife):

Example 2. Turdy-A'li and Bakaj

Oj,   zhengge! Bu'gin Shataj   ket-ti,   sen   kal-dy-ng!
EXCL sister-in-law today   Shataj (PN) go-PAST3   you (PLN)   remain-PAST-PLN
"Hey, sister-in-law! Today, Shataj's gone, you're left (alone)."

Here, Turdy-A'li (28-year-old male) was talking to Bakytgu'l, 37-year-old wife of Shataj, a good friend of Turdy-A'li. He used an apparently non-*sypajy* joking register, addressing her by the plain pronoun (*sen*), a plain predicative suffix (*-ng*), and, most importantly, *zhengge* "elder brother's wife." Due to their age difference, Bakytgu'l would normally expect to receive honorific forms and a non-joking address term *ta'te* "elder sister." By calling her *zhengge*, a stereotypical joking term, Turdy-A'li in effect turned their otherwise formal, hierarchical interactional framework (younger male – older female) into a fictive *kajyn ini – zhengge* (HyB – eBW) relation, in which he could playfully make such an absurd, insulting comment as "Poor little lady, your husband left you today! What have you done to him last night?!"

Tropic manipulation of joking stereotypes may also apply to relations of unusual solidarity (e.g., very close friends of the same age) or extreme lack of respect (e.g., neighbors who disdain each other). For ease of communication, Kazak speakers tend to create as many joking relations as they can among non-kin. A similar pattern is also found in the Guugu-Yimidhirr case (Haviland 1979), in which the performative extension of relational categories may be achieved by the use of distinct registers.

5.   Honorific Register Formation

We have seen earlier that Kazak speakers can express three to four different levels of linguistic deference, based on the grammatical and lexical distinction of honorific repertoires. However, only the dichotomous distinction between *sypajy* and non-*sypajy* seems to be salient in

their reflexive models (Agha 2007). Although the further subdivision of the *sypajy* and non-*sypajy* varieties can be made analytically, and Kazak speakers do recognize it when asked specifically about how to use different terms of address, such finer distinctions tend to be blurred – or erased (Irvine and Gal 2000) – and lumped into the simpler binary opposition.

It is not because the finer distinctions are unimportant to the native speakers. Rather this simplification at the metapragmatic level appears to result in part from their tacit assumptions about the lexical repertoire, i.e., basic terms of address. First, the distinction between the Honorific I terms (*aga/ta'te*) and Honorific II terms (*ata/apa*) is so self-evident to Kazak speakers that it does not need to be emphasized explicitly. In other words, they always seem to know who their *ata*, *apa*, *aga*, and *ta'te* are. In kin relations, as described above, there is a well-defined scheme that groups different kin categories into these four. In non-kin relations, the distinction between *ata/apa* and *aga/ta'te* is made on the basis of their seniority relative to the speaker's father; there is usually no room for manipulation here. So, for instance, for Speaker X, Mr. Y will always be Y aga, and Mr. Z will always be Z ata; Mr. Y is both addressed and referred to as Y aga, and Mr. Z is both addressed and referred to as Z ata. In short, they are called so, because that is what they are in relation to the speaker.

Second, the distinction between Plain I and Plain II is not salient in metapragmatic discourse, because the Plain II level is ideologically made invisible. As we have seen above, Plain II consists of plain grammatical repertoires and the terms of address *aga* and *zhengge*, and this combination has a very limited scope of application – only when speaker and addressee are in a joking relation but the latter is considerably older than the former. Joking relations are so tightly associated with the use of personal names (and other non-respectful terms of address) that

the use of such kin terms as *aga* or *zhengge* is hardly recognized in Kazak speakers' discussions about joking relations. Moreover, Kazak speakers consider plain grammatical forms to go together with personal names (and other non-respectful terms of address) but *not* with these kin terms. The co-occurrence of plain grammatical forms and *aga/ta'te* is not only exceptional but also considered "incorrect" and therefore ideologically made invisible. Unlike the distinction between *aga/ta'te* (respectful) and *ata/apa* (very respectful), which my informants did recognize eventually, if not ready, during elicitation sessions, the possibility of plain forms occurring with *aga/ta'te* – not to mention *ata/apa* – in the same sentence was generally denied; when I presented some recorded instances of such co-occurrence, they called it "bad" (*zhaman*) or "wrong" (*kate*). As such, the contrast between the Plain and Honorific levels is highlighted while the further distinctions within them are erased (Irvine and Gal 2000).

In addition to the core grammatical forms and terms of address, Kazak speakers also employ a variety of linguistic and non-linguistic forms that constitute an honorific register – more precisely, a dichotomous system of contrast between plain and honorific registers. The remainder of this chapter will examine various non-core[63] politeness markers, both verbal and non-verbal, actively used by Altai Kazaks. These semiotic features include grammatical distinctions (e.g., singular/plural, past/perfect, confirmative/non-confirmative), lexical distinctions (e.g., Kazak kin terms/Chinese titles), prosody (e.g., loud/quiet, fast/slow), as well as smoking, growing of facial hair, serving of milk tea, tender meat, and soft bread, as well as seating arrangements in the tent.

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[63] My distinction between core and non-core forms is based on Kazak speakers' metapragmatic comments. The core forms are the expressions conventionally identified as honorific (*sypajy*) by the native speakers themselves; the non-core forms are the ones that are not readily identified as such.

5.1. First Person Plural as the "Humble I"

The distinction between singular and plural first person forms is often exploited as a part of the honorific repertoire, the plural being marked as "humble." In an interesting contrast to the "royal we" in English and other European languages[64], the first person plural, used to refer to the singular speaker, is considered to have a self-effacing pragmatic value, hence "humble I." Indeed, one of the common local terms for "honorific speech" is *siz-biz dew* ("to say *siz* and *biz*"): note that *siz* is the honorific second person singular pronoun, and *biz* is the first person plural pronoun, often used in honorific speech to further lower (*kishirej-* "lessen," "diminish") the speaker. Some Kazak speakers tend to use the humble first person plurals more extensively than others, and some hardly use them in their honorific speech. The humble first person forms include the first person plural pronoun (*biz*), possessive suffixes (-*myz/-ymyz/-miz/-imiz/-byz/-biz/-pyz/-piz*), and predicative suffixes (-*myz/-ymyz/-miz/-imiz/-byz/-biz/-pyz/-piz*). The use of the first person plural as the "humble I" among Xinjiang Kazaks is also reported in Arik (1999) and Clark (1958).

According to the Turcologist Kagan Arik, the use of the first person plural pronoun *biz* in Kazak and other Turkic languages denotes not only a plural subject, but also expresses a singular subject modestly. Thus, a Kazak wishing to be modest or humble would refer to him- or herself as *biz* (Arik 1999: 17ff). He notes that to say *biz* is considered more polite and humble while constantly referring to one's own self as *men* (singular) often gives the impression that the

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[64] The royal we and its equivalent in languages such as French and German is widely used to signal authority, being in charge, speaking at an official function and similar meetings. (Mühlhäusler and Harré 1990, also see Head 1978)

speaker is placing him- or herself above the audience.[65] In fact, his main consultant, a native Xinjiang Kazak, almost always refers to himself as "we" as an expression of his humility (*ibid* 33ff; 84ff).

Focusing on status relations among Xinjiang Kazaks, Clark writes of a routinized differentiation of first person singular possessive suffixes and first person plural possessive suffixes in reference to the speakers' juniors and seniors, respectively. Thus, ego referring to yB says *inim*, lit. "my younger brother," wherein the suffix *-m* represents first person singular possessive, and when referring to eB says *agamyz*, lit. "our older brother," where the suffix *–myz* represents the first person plural possessive, although ego is referring only to his or her own relationship to eB (Clark 1955: 100-101). Notice that the speaker's use of the plural possessive in this example is not marking deference to the addressee, who in this case is probably the ethnographer/interviewer, but rather marking deference for the referent, i.e., the speaker's elder brother.

Such use of the first person plural as a self-lowering expression is also found in Dhimal, a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in Nepal and West Bengal. According to King (2001:168-169), the deferential first person singular pronoun *kya* derives from the first person plural pronoun. Comparing this case to the European T/V systems, King explains that "just as plural second person forms serve as a distancing device, plural first person forms utilize the same mechanism to defocus the speaker." (*ibid* 170)

During my fieldwork, I observed many instances in which Kazak speakers use first person

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[65] This may be etymologically related to the adjective *menmen* "pompous," "arrogant," "haughty," "insolent," "self-important," as in the expression *menmen adam* "arrogant person," "haughty person."

plural forms to express modesty. In fact, one of the common metapragmatic terms for deferential speech is *siz biz dew*, literally "to say *siz* and *biz*," *siz* being the deferential second person pronoun, *biz* being the deferential first person pronoun. The following four excerpts from my recording illustrate the actual usage of these humble forms.

Example 3. Sisters in-law

Gu'lija: Ne gyp zhat**syng**, A'zen?

      What are you (plain) doing, A'zen?

A'zen: Nan pisirip zhatyr**myz**.

    We (or humble I) are baking bread.

In the excerpt above, Gu'lija asks A'zen a simple question "What are you doing?" as she enters A'zen's tent. Before Gu'lija comes in, there were three people in A'zen's tent: A'zen herself, her 4-year old daughter Ajdana, and I, the ethnographer. In her response, A'zen says that she is baking bread. When A'zen says "we," it probably refers to herself only and does not include her daughter or me, because her daughter is too little to participate in the baking task, and I am a guest, who is not supposed to do any work of the host. This highly respectful speech of A'zen can be explained by the fact that Gu'lija is her husband's elder sister. As an affine older than the spouse, Gu'lija is expected to be treated with extra politeness, and A'zen tries to meet the expectation by deploying a first person plural predicative suffix *–myz*, instead of its singular equivalent *–myn*. In short, this plural suffix is a part of A'zen's honorific speech oriented to her senior affine Gu'lija.

<u>Example 4. Almagu'l drinking black tea</u>

Almagu'l: **Siz** de kara shaj ishe**siz**?

You (honorific) too will drink black tea?

Men de kara shaj ishem.

I too will drink black tea.

Bu'rsu'gu'ni baryp sawa**myz**.

We (or humble I) will go and milk [the cows] the day after tomorrow.

The scene is in the house of Almagu'l. In order to understand this stretch of talk by Almagu'l, the

wife of the village head, speaking to Adaskan, an elderly village folk, we first need to be familiar

with the local custom of serving milk tea, a quintessential sign of hospitality. The host is always

expected to provide milk tea, rather than black tea, to the guest. When this expectation cannot be

met, the host should give some explanation for why milk tea is not available. As the village

head's wife, who is supposed to be a master of hospitality, she is doubly pressed to provide an

excuse when Adaskan came to Almagu'l's house just to have a chat. Almagu'l had been

exceptionally busy for the previous several days, dealing with a series of sudden visits of many

guests her husband invited, including me and my field assistant's family. Because there had been

too many guests, quickly consuming a huge amount of milk tea every meal, Almagu'l had

already ran out of milk by the time of Adaskan's visit. She was not even planning on milking her

cows until two days later. And this is exactly the explanation she gives to Adaskan. Notice that in

her second sentence, Almagu'l uses a singular form *men* to refer to herself, whereas a plural form

–myz appears in the third sentence. Using a plural form in the second sentence would have been

rather strange, because the second sentence is meant to be syntactically parallel to the first

sentence, and the "singular I" must be singled out as Adaskan's counterpart who also drinks

black tea. It is only in the third sentence that Almagu'l refers to herself in plural. Here, the first

person plural predicative suffix –*myz* must be seen as a self-effacing singular form rather than an

actual plural form. There is no risk of confusion because it is clear to everyone in the

neighborhood that Almagu'l is the only person in charge of milking cows in her family; milking

is typically a woman's job, and Almagu'l is the only woman in her family. Also notice that this

humble first person form is often used together with honorific second person forms, such as the

ones used in Almagu'l's first sentence (*siz*, -*siz*), directed to the addressee in the conversation, i.e.,

Adaskan.

Example 5. Nurgyjza referring to her brother-in-law

Altynbek: Sen A'dildi kim dejsing?

        What do you call A'dil?

Nurgyjza: Aga dej**miz**.

        We (or humble I) call [him] aga ("elder brother").

This example is quite similar to Clark's description of the use of the plural possessive for the

speaker's senior. In this conversation, I (Altynbek) am asking Nurgyjza how she addresses her

husband's elder brother whose name is A'dil. Her answer contains a first person plural

predicative suffix –*miz*, which renders the sentence "We say *aga*." Since my question is about

how she herself addresses him, it is unlikely that this plural suffix is representing anyone else but

herself alone. Her use of the first person plural predicative suffix –*miz* should be interpreted as a

modest expression of herself – a form of self-lowering in relation to her brother-in-law.

<u>Example 6. Rakymbaj being defensive</u>

Kanat: Byltyr nege bergensiz?

                   Why did you (HON) give [him the payment] last year?

Rakymbaj: **Biz** burunnan artyk berip kele zhatyr eken**biz**.

                   It turns out that we (humble I) have been paying too much since a long time ago.

                   Bul kalaj dep otur**myz** goj.

                   We (humble I) are wondering how [it happened], you know.

The excerpt above is from a heated conversation between an elderly herdsman Rakymbaj (in his late sixties) and a few of his neighbors (younger herdsmen in their thirties and forties) about the annual pasture protection fee. Rakymbaj thinks that the fee is too high and therefore he should refuse to pay until the fee is adjusted to a reasonable amount. Others, while eager to pay less, are more hesitant to dispute the established rate they have been paying for many years, because it may seem too arbitrary and unfair to convince the government-appointed pasture protectors[66] Kalyk and Sejil, who are in friendly terms with the Kyzyl Tas herders. In the excerpt above, Kanat, a headsman in his mid- thirties, challenges Rakymbaj with a polite but pointed question "Why did you pay that amount last year?" The implication is clear. As he has been paying for the current rate without questioning it, it may be unconvincing for him to argue now that the fee is unjustly assigned. Pressured to defend his position, Rakymbaj shares his inner feelings[67] with his audience: he himself is surprised to learn that he has been paying too much for a long time. The 'emotive' particle *eken* in his first sentence is often used by Kazak speakers to express

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[66] Their work is to ensure that no one grazes animals on the winter pastures of the Kyzyl Tas villagers during the other seasons.

[67] In Jakobson's term, this is an example of the emotive function of language. (cf. Jakobson 1960)

surprise, sudden discovery, relative novelty, irony, new knowledge without proper psychological preparation, perception contrary to one's expectations, and the like.[68] Moreover, his second sentence indicates that he is asking himself a rhetorical question "How [could it possibly happen]?" or "How [could I let that happen]?" At the end of the sentence, he uses *goj* – an exclamation particle that emphasizes the speaker's emotive stance[69] – to foreground his act of wondering. Thus, these two sentences should be interpreted as: "To my surprise, it turns out that I have been paying excessively from the past. I am indeed currently wondering how on earth it happened!" Given this pronounced focus on the speaker's emotion, then, it is very likely that the first person plural forms in Rakymbaj's speech here – the pronoun *biz* and the predicative suffixes *–biz* and *–myz* – all refer to himself alone but nobody else, and that this pluralization is an expression of his modesty, motivated by the circumstantial need to appear modest and reasonable, rather than greedy and self-serving, to defend his position persuasively. Notice also that his self-lowering here involves no other-raising. That is, his self-abasement is not taking place in relation to anyone in particular, neither his addressee nor any third-party referent.

5.2. *Kisi* vs. *Adam*

Kazak speakers use at least two terms to denote "person": *adam* (plain) and *kisi* (honorific). These two terms mark the speaker's deference for the referent or lack thereof. This two way

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[68] See Straughn (2011: 133; 141), Johanson (2000: 71; 82).

[69] See Straughn (2011: 136)

distinction parallels the plain/honorific differentiation in grammatical repertoires, but it differs in one important regard: the "person" who referred to by *adam* or *kisi* is not necessarily the addressee in conversation; he or she may well be a third-party referent. For example, in the following conversation, Kajrat, his wife Nurgyjza, and their neighbors Serik and Ku'lash are talking about Kajrat's elder brother's wife Mejramkan, who is not present in the scene. Among these four people present, only Kajrat uses *adam* to refer to Mejramkan, who is his joking partner; the other three, who owe respect for her, use *kisi* to refer to her. For Nurgyjza, Mejramkan is her husband's elder brother's wife. Serik and Ku'lash are unrelated to Mejramkan and much younger than she is (Serik by 13 years, Ku'lsh by 15 years).

Example 7. Mejramkan: *kisi* or *adam*

Kajrat: Mejramkan ol ekewi nagyp?

             What are Mejramkan and the other doing?

Ku'lash: Ol **kisi**ge ne bopty?

             What happened to that person (HON)?

Nurgyjza: Ol **kisi** sary maj zhep sodan awuryp kapty.

             That person (HON) ate butter and then got sick from it.

Kajrat: Majdan awurgan **adam** estigem osy eken.

             I've heard about a person (PLN) who got sick from butter; this is the one, apparently.

Nurgyjza: Bagana awuryp zhatyr degennen kejin bardym emes pa, ne bop kaldy dep.

             Just now, after [they] said she was sick, I went over, you know, to see what happened.

             Kehse dej ma? Kyzygyp sar maj zhep ap sodan song…

             Was it yesterday? [She] got overexcited, ate butter, and then…

Serik: Sol **kisi** ko'rinbej ketti goj.

That person (HON) disappeared [from our view]!

As we can see, Nurgyjza, Serik and Ku'lash use *kisi* to acknowledge Mejramkan's seniority, while Kajrat is entitled to use *adam* to refer to her as he is in a joking relation with her. This usage also neatly corresponds to their use of core grammatical repertoires (second person forms) in addressing Mejramkan: in all of the instances I have recorded during my stay in Kajrat's winter pasture (January and February 2013), Kajrat uses plain forms to her, while the other three use honorific forms to her.

5.3. Perfect Forms

When narrating past events, Kazak speakers tend to choose perfect forms over simple past forms in polite speech. Perfect forms are generally considered more deferential than their simple past equivalents. Such distinction seems to be grounded in the fact that the simple past is also a marked confirmative form, while confirmativity is unmarked in the perfect. In both Kazak and Uzbek, the linguist Christopher Straughn suggests, "[a] consequence of the confirmative meaning of the past tense is that speakers employ the perfect, the unmarked form, in order to avoid making strong claims about any event. Speakers…report that *the use of perfect sounds more polite or demure*, while the use of the past sounds authoritative or encyclopedic, or even bombastic……[S]peakers tend to prefer the simple past tense to refer to historic events because the speaker takes few risks in confirming the veracity of these events, especially when the truth

of these events is well known. Other events, however, can be subjectively judged, and by a choosing a marked confirmative form, the speaker may be committing to a statement that other participants in the discourse might disagree with." (Straughn 2011: 73, emphasis mine)

In the following example, an 11-year-old boy Darkan uses *ajtkan*, the perfect form of the verb *ajt-* "to speak" when he equates his cousin's impolite speech with that of his brother Meku'w, while setting himself apart from them and assuming a morally superior position of those who already know how to speak politely.

Example 8. Darkan's choice of a perfect form

Meku'w: Altynbek Korazbajyp

       Altynbek Korazbojyp (name of a famous singer).

Kajrat: Altynbek aga de!

       Say Altynbek aga [Elder brother Altynbek]!

Darkan: Sony ajtam. U'lken adam (xxxx)

       That's what I'm saying. [One's] senior [unintelligible]

Kajrat: U'lken adamga u'jtip ajtpajdy.

       One doesn't speak like this to [one's] senior.

       Zhaman bolady.

       It would be bad.

Darkan: Ana Kara Kyz da su'jtip ajt**kan**.

       That Black Girl spoke like that too.

Kajrat: U'lken adamdy aga dejdi.

       [One] calls a senior "elder brother".

       Myna syjaktyny bawur dejdi.

[One] calls the ones like this (referring to the baby in the next door) "younger brother."

Uktyng ba?

Understood?

This conversation is prompted by Darkan's 6-year-old brother Meku'w who mischievously utters the name of a famous Kazak singer Altynbek Korazbajyp.[70] Kajrat – the father – immediately corrects him by telling him to say Altynbek aga "Elder brother Altynbek"; it is because Altynbek is also my name, which Meku'w, as a much younger person, is not supposed to utter without a proper deferential title like *aga*.[71] After the father's instruction to use the deferential kin term *aga*, Darkan seconds him: "That's what I'm saying." The father emphasizes that it is bad to speak as Meku'w did to one's senior. Then Darkan adds that the "Black Girl" – his 9-year-old cousin Ajshyng who is not present in the conversation – also spoke in the same manner, drawing a line between the little ones who do not yet understand polite speech (i.e., Meku'w and Ajshyng) and the ones mature enough to understand it (i.e., Darkan himself and Kajrat). Kajrat continues to point out that different terms should be used depending on the referent's age relative to the speaker. When Darkan talks about his cousin's speech in the recent past, a perfect form (*ajtkan*) is used instead of a simple past form (*ajtty*). Given that he is setting himself apart from "impolite speakers," his choice of the perfect form is likely informed by the common understanding that perfect forms sound more polite than their simple past equivalents in describing past events.

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[70] His utterance is mischievous, given the presence of Altynbek – the ethnographer and guest by the same name – in the room.

[71] Korazbajyp is the Kazakhstani singer's patronym (Korazbaev), and does not constitute a proper title.

5.4. Evidential Particle *Eken*

Another linguistic device that expresses politeness is the particle *eken*. This particle has two main functions. First, as we have seen in Rakymbaj's speech, it functions as an "emotive" marker, expressing the speaker's emotions such as surprise, unexpectedness, etc.; it also functions as an evidential marker of non-confirmativity. When used in an interrogative sentence, this marking of non-confirmative meaning typically renders the question an indirect, polite one. Thus, Straughn (2011: 101) notes that questions in Kazak that employ *eken* are considered to be more polite, since the speaker does not inquire directly into facts, but the addressee's knowledge. The following two examples, both from Straughn (2011: 101-102), illustrate this politeness effect.

Example 9. What time is it?

Sagat   neshe   eken?

Time   how.much   EVID

"What time is it?"

This sentence – translated as "What time is it?" – is a common way to inquire about time in Kazak. Because it contains *eken*, it is comparable to the English question "Do you know what time it is?" The use of *eken* here renders the question more polite than the same question without it – *Sagat neshe?* "What time is it?"

Example 10. Public inquiry

Bakytzhan-dy   ko'r-gen-der   bar   ma   eken?

Bakytzhan-ACC see-PRF-PL   EXIST   Q   EVID

"Is there anyone who has seen Bakytzhan?"

This is an open question posed by a newspaper to the public, asking whether anyone knows the whereabouts of a missing child. As in the previous example, adding *eken* makes the question less direct and more polite.

5.5. Present-Future Forms vs. Optative Forms

In polite speech, Kazak speakers generally prefer first person plural present-future forms to first person plural optative forms. Thus, when proposing to sit down, for example, it is more polite to say *Otur-a-myz* "We [will] sit down" than to say *Otur-ajyk* "Let's sit down." In fact, one of the most common ways of inviting someone to a meal is to say *Tamak ishemiz* "We [will] eat food."

Example 11. Invitation to a meal

Tamak ish-e-miz.

Meal   drink-PRES-1 PL

"We [will] eat a meal."

This sentence above is a more polite way to invite someone to a meal than simply saying *Tamak ishejik* "Let's eat food." The latter is more commonly said when the speaker does not need to be polite with the addressee. As such, the first plural optative *–ajyk/ejik* is ususally replaced by *a/e* (present-future) + *myz/miz* (first person plural) when the speaker wishes to be polite.

5.6. Rhyme

In his extended comments on good speech, Rakymbaj once explained to me: "Well, if one speaks directly, words don't rhyme. Words don't come out smooth and beautiful." (*Ana tuwra ajtsa so'z kyjsyny kelmejdi. Majda, a'demi so'z bop shykpajdy.*) Some of the linguistic markers of politeness we have examined so far are also utilized by Kazak speakers to produce "words that rhyme." The phonological similarity between first person plural forms (e.g., *-miz*) and honorific second person forms (e.g., *-ngiz*) leads to the use of rhyme as an especially strong expression of deference or modesty. The aforementioned tendency to choose present-future forms over optative forms seems to be rooted in the perception that suffixes ending with *–z* (e.g., *-miz*) sound more polite than the ones ending with *–k* (e.g., *-ejik*). Also, the preference of perfect forms to simple past forms in polite speech similarly involves the choice of z-ending suffixes (e.g., *-miz*) over k-ending suffixes (e.g., *–ik*) when narrating a past action of a first person plural subject; perfect and simple past forms take different predicative suffixes (See Tables 2-3 and 2-4).[72] The repetitive

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[72] Thus, during the gathering to discuss the pasture protection fee mentioned above, I observed that Rakymbaj chose

use of similar-sounding morphemes often creates a poetic effect, which draws attention to the formal qualities of speech (Jakobson's poetic function), which in turn highlights the speaker's intention (Jokobson's emotive function). As I will elaborate in later chapters, this is a central linguistic means by which the speaker communicates his or her ethical character.

Consider the following example. A 43-year-old herdsman Shataj invites his 55-year-old neighbor A'len to have tea in his tent. He uses an honorific imperative suffix (-*ingiz*) and a first person plural suffix (-*miz*), creating a poetic effect.

Example 12. Shataj's invitation

Zhu'r-ing**iz**.

go-HON2SG

"Please go [to my place]."

Shaj ish-e-m**iz**.

tea   drink-PRES-1PL

"We [will] drink tea."

This proposal to go to his place to drink tea together consists of two sentences: the former is an honorific second person singular imperative form (*zhu'ringiz* "please go"); the latter contains a first person plural present-future form (*ishemiz* "we [will] drink"). Notice that both of these verb forms share a sentence-final /iz/. As for the second sentence in particular, the choice of the

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to say *Toguz bergemiz* (lit. "We've given nine"), rather than *Toguz berdik* ("We gave nine."), when asked how much money he paid in the previous year. The perfect form *bergemiz* consists of the verb stem *ber-* "to give" and two suffixes – the perfect marker –*gen* and the first person plural predicative suffix –*biz* (Type A).The merge of these two suffixes –*gen* and -*biz* often renders –*gemiz* in spoken Kazak. On the other hand, the simple past form *berdik* contains the past marker –*di* and the first person plural predicative suffix –*k* (Type B).

present-future form *ishemiz* ("we [will] drink") over the optative form *ishejik* ("let's drink")

exemplifies a common mode of communicating politeness, as we have discussed above.

Moreover, the continuous use of two polite verbal predicates (*zhu'ringiz* and *ishemiz*), together

with the rhyme they create, renders Shataj's invitation doubly deferential.

Such poetic effect can also be created dialogically, that is, across more than one speaker in

a stretch of conversation, forming a congruent pattern of role alignment (Agha 2005: 49). In a

card game at Kajrat's house on one winter night, for example, Kajrat and Bakyt were playing as

a team against three other twosomes. It was Kajrat and Bakyt's turn. They could either put down

a card or wait until the next turn. They had a quick exchange to make the decision:

Example 13. Bakyt and Kajrat playing a card game

Bakyt: Bas-a-myz.

      press-PRES-1PL

      "We [will] put down [a card]."

Kajrat: Bas-yngyz.

      press-HON2SG

      "Please put [it] down."

Just like Shataj in the previous example, Bakyt uses a present-future form (*basamyz* "we [will]

put down [a card]") instead of an optative form (*basajyk* "let's put down [a card]") in his

proposal to put down a card, rather than waiting until their next turn. The difference is that Bakyt

is almost 30 years older than Kajrat. As the most senior person in the room, Bakyt is by no

means expected to speak respectfully to Kajrat. Instead, this politeness marker should be viewed

as an expression of his modesty, which does not necessarily presuppose a higher status of addressee (or referent). Since Bakyt is known for his exemplary modest speech among Kyzyl Tas herders, he may well be simply talking in his habitual way. Or, he may be indirectly commenting on Kajrat's frequent use of plain speech that day to him and other guests who are younger than Bakyt but considerably older than Kajrat. Whatever his true motivation is here, however, the senior guest's polite speech seems to have ruled out plain forms from Kajrat's options. In response, Kajrat indeed uses an honorific imperative form *basyngyz* "Please put [it] down." To use its plain equivalent *bas* "Put [it] down" would have made him appear unthinkably hostile and impudent, contrasted with the senior person's use of a polite form *basamyz*. The resultant poetic effect, stemming from the repetition of the sentence-final */yz/*, serves to highlight the overall politeness and amiability of their interaction.

Let us briefly revisit Rakymbaj's exchange with Kanat, in which he defends his position by speaking modestly. Kanat asks why he paid the protection fee the previous year, and Rakymbaj answers that "I've been paying excessively for a long while now, it turns out." Notice that Kanat's question ends with a perfect marker *–gen* followed an honorific predicative suffix *–siz*, and Rakymbaj's answer ends with an emotive particle *eken* complete with a first person plural predicative suffix *–biz*.

Example 14. Rakymbaj revisited

Kanat: Byltyr   nege   ber-gen-**siz**?

            last.year   why   give-PRF-HON2SG

            "Why did you (HON) give [him the payment] last year?"

Rakymbaj: Biz burun-nan   artyk   berip   kele   zhatyr   eken-**biz**.

               We before-ABL excess   give-CVB   come-CVB   PROGRESS   EMOT-1PL

               "It turns out that we (humble I) have been paying too much since a long time ago."

As we can see, both Kanat and Rakymbaj are speaking very politely. Kanat's choice of the perfect form *ber-gen-siz* (give-PRF-HON) is even more deferential than its simple past equivalent *ber-di-ngiz* (give-PAST-HON). Likewise, Rakymbaj's use of plural forms (the pronoun *biz* and the predicative suffix *–biz*) instead of singular forms strongly suggests his intention to appear modest, polite, and reasonable, as we have discussed earlier. In addition to all of these, the juxtaposition of Kanat's question ending with *–siz* and Rakymbaj's answer ending with *–biz*, a prototypical instance of *siz biz dew* "to say *siz* and *biz*," creates a poetic effect, amplifying the politeness running through this highly crafted, careful verbal exchange.

5.7. Name Avoidance

A special form of linguistic politeness in Kazak is *at tergew* "name avoidance" by which married women are forbidden to address or mention by name their husband's senior relatives, including the name of his clan, which is usually the same as the name of its apical ancestor. In place of the real names, kin terms are used as terms of address; in reference, they use either kin terms or circumlocution. This name avoidance applies not only to the actual names of affines, but also to words that phonologically resemble those names. A married woman is expected to observe this taboo even when none of her senior affine is within ear shot. Thus, it should be

counted here as another type of politeness marker that indexes the speaker's modesty and respect

for her taboo affines, although it does not always mark respect toward the addressee.

For example, if the father-in-law's name is Sagat, meaning "watch/clock," the woman

would say *ku'n o'lshewgish* "day measurer," instead of saying *sagat*, to refer to a watch or clock.

If the husband's uncle has a name Sarybaj, she never says the word *sary* "yellow"; instead she

would say *shijkil* "light brown" to refer to the color yellow. In this way, she would use *shojun*

"cast iron" to replace *kazan* "pot"; *sokpak* "pathway" to replace *zhol* "road"; *kez-* "to wander" to

replace *kydyr-* "to visit"; *eki to'rt* "two fours" to replace *segiz* "eight" (Arik 1999: 40-41, Huang

2005: 99).[73]

Name avoidance is apparently an age-old practice. A nineteenth-century account describes

this Kazak custom as follows:

> An incident is related to a [Kazak] woman who wanted to say that a wolf had stolen
> a sheep and taken it to the reedy shore of the lake. Unfortunately the men of the
> family bore names corresponding to most of these words, and she was obliged to
> gasp out that 'in the rustling beyond the wet a growler gnaws one of our woolies.'
> (Schuyler 1966[1876]: 23)

My observational data suggest that Kazak women, when speaking to their name-avoidance

affines, invariably use honorific forms. Moreover, in addressing or mentioning them, they also

tend to use other linguistic markers we have been discussing so far. However, apart from

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[73] Similar name avoidance practices are found in many other parts of the world, e.g., South African Hlonipha (Irvine and Gal 2000); also see Fleming 2014.

respectful kin terms like *ata*, *apa*, *aga*, and *ta'te*, speakers usually do not share specific terms they use in relation to name avoidance, unless they are married into the same family.[74] Within the same patrilineal family, wives of brothers do share certain vocabulary as substitutes for the names of particular affines such as their husbands' parents, grandparents, and paternal uncles.[75]

5.8. Nicknames

We have seen that Kazak speakers prefer respectful kin terms in honorific speech, and personal names in plain speech. In addition to kin terms and personal names, there is another category – nicknames (*lakap*). Nicknames are subdivided into two kinds: diminutive nicknames and augmentative nicknames. Almost everyone has at least one diminutive nickname, but not everyone has an augmentative nickname. Diminutive nicknames are sometimes referred to in Kazak as *erkeletip ajtkan at* ("name called indulgently"). They are usually shorter than the original names, and often take nasal endings: e.g., Sha'keng (< Sha'rijpa), Da'ken (< Daryjga), Ajshyng (< Ajsa'wle), Bawkyn (< Bawurzhan), Mekeng (< Mejramkan), Akang (< Ahmet), Sekeng (< Serik), Zha'zen (< Zhazyjra), Ka'sing (< Kasymbek), Lazyng (< Lazat), Bakang (< Bakyt). Predictably, these diminutive nicknames are used to refer to one's junior or equal, and regularly co-occur with plain grammatical forms when used as terms of address. On the other hand, augmentative nicknames are usually employed to address someone intimately but

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[74] See Fleming 2014.

[75] Women married into the same clan also share a substitute term for the clan name. For instance, women married into the Ijteli clan use *ku'shik* "puppy" instead of *ijt* "dog" – a word that resembles the clan name. (see Clark 1955)

deferentially. They are usually shorter than the original names, and have distinctive endings such as –*ka*, -*ke*, -*ga*, etc.: e.g., Mu'ke (< Murat), Baka (< Bakyt), Altaga (< Altynbek), Seke (< Serik), Sa'ke (< Satbek), Ka'ke (< Kajrat), Zha'ke (< Zhakyp), Otaga (< Otan), Nu'ke (< Nurlan). To the best of my knowledge, only adult males have such names. This is probably related to the fact that their endings are reminiscent of male kin terms *aga* "elder brother" and *a'ke* "father". These nicknames are considered more respectful than original names, but less respectful than *aga* "elder brother" or [original name + *aga*].

5.9. Chinese Terms of Address

Altai Kazaks also use some terms of address borrowed from Chinese. In Kazak, these terms generally co-occur with plain grammatical forms, but almost never with honorific forms, due to their connotation of playful disrespect. Such connotation is quite ironic, as many of these terms are originally deferential titles in Chinese. Altai Kazaks consider these Chinese-style address terms to be an especially suitable mode of communication in joking relations. Some of the most common Chinese terms are: *laoban* "boss"; *shuji* "party secretary"; *duizhang* "team leader"; *cunzhang* "village head"; *xiangzhang* "township head"; *xiaozhang* "school principal"; *laoxiang* "fellow villager"; *xiansheng* "gentleman." In imitation of the Chinese practice of combining the addressee's surname (usually the first syllable of his or her name) and the title, Kazak speakers typically take the first syllable of the addressee's name and attach it in front of the Chinese title. For example, Murat would be called Mu Duizhang ("Team leader Murat"), and Bakyt would be called Ba Xiangzhang ("Township head Bakyt"). Of course, the addressee's actual social status is

irrelevant, as these titles are intended to sound funny and jocular rather than seriously respectful. In addition, Chinese kin terms *mama* "mother" and *baba* "father" are also frequently used by Altai Kazaks. As terms of address, *mama* and *baba* are not as playful as other Chinese titles, but they are still perceived as less respectful than their Kazak equivalent *sheshe* "mother" and *a'ke* "father." Since *mama* and *baba* often occur in children's speech and baby talk, it would probably be more accurate to translate them as "mommy" and "daddy" in contrast with *sheshe* "mother" and *a'ke* "father." Thus, it is common for a speaker to jokingly refer to the addressee's mother as *mama-ng* "your mommy."[76]

5.10. Generalized Use of Third Person Predicates

In addition to the Chinese terms of address examined above, Altai Kazaks also use a grammatical pattern they consider as characteristic of Han Chinese. In this pattern, a third person verb is chosen even when the subject of the sentence is first or second person. Originally, it is a typical grammatical mistake made by Han Chinese with limited knowledge of Kazak. Today, this grammatical mismatch is used not only in the speech of Han Chinese but also in that of Kazaks among themselves and with their Chinese neighbors. Similar to the case of Chinese terms of address discussed above, this 'subject-verb disagreement' pattern expresses playfulness and

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[76] In native Kazak lexicon, there exist words that are almost identical with these two Chinese kin terms. Frequently used in baby talk for an obvious reason, *mama* refers to "breasts." Moreover, *mama* is said to be a loanword word from Russian, also meaning "mother." But when it is used to denote "mother," Altai Kazaks all seem to regard *mama* to be a quintessential Chinese loanword. Although nearly obsolete in spoken Altai Kazak, *baba* is an archaic term for "grandfather," "forefather," "old man," etc., but it is also perceived predominantly as a Chinese loanword (cf. Abish and Csato 2011).

disrespect, and it is seen as a particularly appropriate style in baby talk as well as in speaking with one's joking partner. Consider the following example, in which Kanat uses this ungrammatical style with me.

Example 15. Kanat's ungrammatical sentence

Altynbek: Zha'nga'-gi   Erbol   degen   sen-ing   aga-ng   ba?

　　　　New-ATTR   Erbol (PN)   COMP   you(PLN)-GEN   elder.brother-PLN2SG   Q

　　　　"Is the one called Erbol [who was here] a moment ago your elder brother?"

Kanat: Aga-m.

　　　　elder.brother-1SG

　　　　"[He's] my elder brother."

Altynbek: Je…   Neshe   zhas   u'lken, sen-en?

　　　　INTER   how.many   age   big   you(PLN)-ABL

　　　　"I see. By how many years is he older than you?"

Kanat: Eki   zhas   u'lken.

　　　　two   age   big

　　　　"Two years older."

Altynbek: Eki   zhas?

　　　　two   age

　　　"Two years?"

Kanat: Ej,   Altynbek,   sen   ko'r-**di**   goj?*   ana…

　　　　INTER   Altynbek(PN)   you(PLN)   see-PAST3   EXCL   that

　　　　"Hey, Altynbek, you saw [him], right? That…"

In this conversation, Kanat and I are drinking tea and talking about his elder brother Erbol, who

just left the scene. I ask Kanat some questions about Erbol, to which he provides answers. Then

he asks me "Didn't you see him previously?" Clearly Kanat finds it strange that I do not

recognize his brother, whom I met the previous year, and ask these basic questions all over again.

Notice that in the last sentence, the subject is a second person pronoun *sen* ("you") while the

verb "saw" is in its third person past form *ko'rdi*, not its second person past form *ko'rding*. In

fact, this is one of the many instances in which Kanat spoke to me in this speech pattern during

my fieldwork. Thus, one possible interpretation here is that Kanat is identifying me with my Han

Chinese assistant,[77] who is well known for his ungrammatical Kazak. Or he may be deploying

this joking register to make fun of my poor memory, in effect posing as if he was my joking

partner. It could also be both.

As a joking register communicating playfulness and disrespect, this peculiar speech pattern

tends to appear in plain speech, but almost never in proper honorific speech. In this regard, it is

similar to diminutive nicknames and Chinese terms of address. But there is an important

difference: the indexical focus of the ungrammatical style is on the speaker, not the addressee.

While diminutive nicknames and Chinese terms of address primarily indexes little to no

deference accorded to the addressee ("You don't need to be addressed deferentially"), and

secondarily to the speaker's demeanor, the generalized use of third person verbs mainly points to

the speaker's playful, casual, and/or impolite manners ("I'm joking"), and only by implication

indexes disrespect toward the addressee. Thus, it is comparable to some of the politeness markers,

i.e., name avoidance, perfect forms, and "humble I" in that it is not primarily targeted to the

addressee.

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[77] During my fieldwork, his main job was to give me jeep rides between my field site and my supply town I visited once every other week. He was a local travel agent, knowledgeable of how to get to Kazak mountain pastures.

5.11. Volume and Rapidity

Verbal politeness is also measured by the volume and rapidity of one's speech. Speaking quietly and slowly is generally seen to express modesty, reserve, and deference, whereas loud and fast speech is thought to reveal arrogance, carelessness, and rudeness. Kazak speakers often use the idiomatic phrase *awuzy awuzyna zhukpaw* (lit. "not to have one's mouth (lips) adhere to each other") to express negative attitude toward a person who speaks rapidly without showing much thought.[78] As for the volume of speech, a loud speaker is commonly described as *ajgajlap so'jlejtin* "one who yells to speak"; a somewhat broader term is *katty so'z* (lit. "hard speech") – a cover term that refers to a range of undesirable characteristics of speech including loudness, rapidity, disrespectfulness, harshness, and haughtiness.[79] Perhaps the closest English approximation of *katty so'z* would be "talking down" as it seems to convey some of these connotations. Given these imagistic associations, then, plain forms and other markers of impoliteness are typically spoken loudly and quickly, whereas honorific forms and other markers of politeness are normally spoken quietly and slowly. However, it should also be noted that volume and rapidity are primarily indexical of the speaker's modesty or lack thereof. Hence, the other-elevating effect of slow and soft speech is secondary to its self-lowering effect.

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[78] See Mukan (2012)

[79] Thus, it is understandable that *katty so'z* is opposed to multiple metapragmatic terms, e.g., *zhumsak* so'z ("soft speech"), *zhyly ajtuw* ("to talk warmly"), *akyryn so'jlew* ("to speak slowly"), *majda so'z* ("refined speech"), etc., which are not mutually exclusive.

5.12. Non-linguistic Features

Kazak honorific speech is closely linked to a series of non-linguistic sign forms that communicate respect for seniority. For example, when an older person enters a younger person's dwelling, the latter stands up from his or her seat, initiates a greeting, and brings the older person to the seat of honor (*to'r*) before sitting down again. Depending on the degree of respect expected to be shown in a given relation, the younger one may choose to remain seated, but still has to initiate a greeting.[80]

To a certain extent, the interior organization of the tent parallels the status of its constituent members. Thus it is divided into two halves with the point of reference the *to'r*, opposite the door where the patriarch sits. The left side (from the *to'r*) is the women's and children's side, and the right side is the men's side. Ideally, family members and guests sit in the tent according to a definite arrangement with a descending hierarchy toward the door. Thus, an honored guest sits on the host's right, followed by adult family members and relatives according to seniority. The most senior woman – usually the patriarch's wife or his mother – sits on the patriarch's left, with female family members, guests, and children sitting according to status. In other words, where one is seated in the tent spatially indicates how much (or little) deference he or she is accorded to.[81]

Kazak herders also utilize various non-linguistic materials that are considered to possess

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[80] For example, a man can remain seated while initiating a greeting with his elder sister's husband, who is much older than himself.

[81] See Clark (1955: 113).

qualities similar to "soft-sounding" linguistic markers of politeness. They include warm milk tea, fine bread, tender meat, and comfortable seats. Used together with linguistic items, they are perceived to achieve imagistic congruence with one another, contributing to a coherent image of the speaker-host, described to be *ak-ko'ngil* (lit. "white-minded") and *kishi-pejil* (lit. "small-tempered" or "small-dispositioned"), both of which are translated as "modest," "polite," and "generous" at the same time. Conversely, black tea without milk, hard bread, stiff meat, and worn-out seats convey carelessness, disrespect, and stinginess, and they are seen to share similar qualities of "hard-sounding" words that express the speaker's lack of reserve and deference.

Smoking is often seen as a sign of disrespect. Although smoking is very common among Kazaks (nearly every adult male I know is a smoker), they strictly avoid smoking when their social superior is present. Thus, I have seen many instances in which young men stopped smoking when they encountered their parents, senior relatives, or neighbors of their parents' generation. Svanberg describes this Kazak prohibition against smoking as follows:

> A man may never smoke in the presence of his father or older brother, no matter how old he is himself. As soon as the father or older brother enters the room, the smoker immediately puts out the cigarette or hides it behind his back. Even adult married men did so when their brother came in……The smoker behaved as if he did not smoke at all, and the father or older brother pretended not to notice anything. Girls or adult women do not smoke in their brothers' presence, yet they do together with their sisters. Likewise younger married women may smoke in the company of their husbands, if none of his relatives are present......It is unthinkable that [a daughter-in-law] smokes in [her parents-in-laws'] presence, although they do together with women of the same age. (Svanberg 1989: 126)

Women of Kyzyl Tas rarely smoked, at least in my presence, and only elderly women seemed to smoke freely. But it is quite apparent that for both men and women, smoking primarily communicates one's lack of modesty, reserve, and deference in relation to his or her interactants. In fact, the tight indexical link between smoking prohibition and respect for age appears to be common in Central Asia.[82]

Kazak men in particular also have a prohibition against growing a beard and a mustache (*sakal-murut*) while their fathers are alive. For youg men, shaving their facial hair is an important mark of modesty and respect for their fathers. A young man with a mustache or a beard is commonly judged to be an immodest person even in the absence of his father. The Kazak ideal of modesty is well illustrated in a Xinjiang Kazak's native account of prohibition against growing facial hair, recorded in Arik (1999).

> If they grow one like that, this would be inappropriate…among us Kazaks, a person who has a father does not grow a mustache……A person with a father does not grow a mustache. Because this means that he is a child. This also means that you are young, since the beard and mustache have not yet grown……If your father has…a mustache, and if you grew one too, this would be like saying "I am age-equal…of my father"…if you have no beard or mustache, you are saying "I am still a child, I have a father, I am still young"…it has this meaning usually among the Kazaks. Among us, people with fathers do not grow mustache. If it is possible, we keep shaving it off. Then we have something like this: if you go somewhere together with your father, and you have a mustache but your father doesn't because his father [is alive and has] a mustache, they will give the tea to you [first]……In such a case, it would be [inappropriate] and your father might get angry…when we sit someplace with our father, we do not sit as equals with our father……This too is like a law…... (Arik 1999: 286-287)

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[82] In his work among Uzbeks, for instance, Liu (2002: 88) observes that "[t]he image of a young man passing in front of an elder while smoking a cigarette is deeply disrespectful."

For Kazak men, this prohibition against growing a mustache or a beard is somewhat comparable to the name avoidance rule for women. Just as a married woman cannot utter her senior affines' names (and words similar to the names) even in the absence of those senior affines, a young man with facial hair would be judged "immodest" even when his father is not present. By not growing a beard or a mustache, then, a man positions himself as a *kishi* ("junior"). Conversely, for a young man to have a mustache or a beard is to lack modesty or *kishi-pejil* (lit. "small temperament" or "junior disposition"). Thus, a man's facial hair indexically focuses on himself rather than on his interactants, just as a woman's name avoidance reveals more about her status and demeanor than about her interactants at a given moment.

In addition, there are numerous non-linguistic practices that signal deference for seniority. Just to give a few examples, when a young man on horseback encounters his uncle on horseback, he needs to dismount from his horse to extend his greeting to the senior relative. He is also expected to help his uncle mount and dismount from a horse. He must use both hands to receive something from the uncle. When visiting someone's home together, he always lets the uncle enter first. All these non-linguistic practices simultaneously mark the young man's modesty and deference to his uncle.

5.13. Dichotomous Enregisterment: "Soft Speech" and "Hard Speech"

This chapter has examined various linguistic and non-linguistic features that constitute

what we may call the Kazak honorific register system – a dichotomous paradigm of "soft things" and "hard things," both verbal and non-verbal. At first, some of these various features may not appear to be so neatly organized into a dichotomous paradigm. As I have noted earlier, they differ in their indexical foci. Some are addressee-focal. Others are referent-focal. Still others are primarily speaker/actor-focal. Moreover, the basic terms of address are stratified into three, instead of two grades. Analytically four 'speech levels' are recognized. How is this 'messiness' made into a tidier system? I suggest speaker-focal convergence and diagrammatic iconicity as key mechanisms that lead to the metapragmatic construction of the dichotomous paradigm.

In actual interactional context, disparate indexical foci of verbal and non-verbal features tend to converge into speaker/actor indexicals (cf. Agha 1998: 167). Consider the honorific second person pronoun *siz* affinal name avoidance, and the first person plural pronoun *biz*. In the case of *siz*, the focus of deference is unambiguously the addressee. It is simply impossible for *siz* to index deference for a referent, unless the referent and the addressee are one and the same person. In the case of name avoidance, the focus of deference is the referent, i.e., the affinal kin whose name cannot be uttered. By uttering a substitute term, the speaker marks her deference toward the taboo affine, who may not even be present in a given interaction. The first person plural pronoun *biz*, although often used to show deference toward the addressee, is primarily a speaker-focal index marking his or her modesty. This speaker indexical does not always entail deference toward addressee or referent. Then, what these three types of indexical signs have in common is their marking of self-lowering 'modesty' – the dominant cultural image of honorific speech in Altai Kazaks' language ideology. Other-raising forms in Kazak – both deference toward addressee (as in *siz*) and deference toward referent (as in name avoidance) – always imply a certain degree of self-abasement. When used together in interaction, they serve to

reinforce a coherent image of modest speech (*zhumsak so'z* "soft speech") and modest speaker (*kishi-pejil adam* "small-dispositioned person"). Conversely, uttering a taboo affine's name and choosing *sen* over *siz* and *men* over *biz* can achieve congruent indexicality of immodest speech (*katty so'z* "hard speech") and immodest speaker (*pang adam* "arrogant person"). Thus, as Agha (1998: 166) points out, this "higher-order system of demeanor indexicals [is] derived from the lower-order system of deference indexicals."

Once the indexical contrast of modesty and immodesty is established, the markers of modesty are seen to share certain qualities that are opposed to qualities shared by the markers of immodesty. For example, soft-sounding words like honorific forms and first-person plural forms are seen to resemble tender meat and mild milk tea; hard-sounding words like plain forms and first-person singular forms are thought to resemble stiff meat and bitter black tea. Furthermore, a majority of verbal and non-verbal features we have examined in this chapter invite a Kazak speaker to choose one out of two options, .e.g., *siz* or *sen*, *biz* or *men*, use or non-use of the name of a taboo affine. Through diagrammatic iconicity (Irvine and Gal 2000), one set of contrasts is seen to resemble another set of contrasts. For example, the *siz/sen* contrast is perceived to be similar to the milk tea/black tea contrast. In this dichotomous scheme, certain non-dichotomous distinctions – e.g., three-tier terms of address, four 'speech levels,' gradient scales of volume and rapidity – are simplified or schematized into dichotomous ones. Such imagistic contrasts and resemblances among the semiotic forms the Altai Kazaks use create overlapping dichotomous diagrams of morally-charged categories of signs and persons (e.g., modest speech vs. immodest speech, modest person vs. immodest person). Some of the representative semiotic contrasts are illustrated in the following paradigm.

Table 2-10. Dichotomous Paradigm of "Soft" and "Hard" Signs

register names	soft (*zhumsak*)	hard (*katty*)
2nd person pronouns	*siz*	*sen*
1st person pronouns	*biz*	*men*
terms of address	kin terms, augmentative nicknames	original names, Chinese terms, diminutive nicknames
past event narration	perfect forms	simple past forms
eken in interrogative	use	non-use
subject-verb mismatch	non-use	use
volume	quiet	loud
rapidity	fast	slow
meat	tender meat	stiff meat
tea	milk tea	black tea
bread	soft bread	hard bread
smoking	non-smoking	smoking
speaker/actor image	modest	arrogant

Chapter 3

Ethical Speech in Language Socialization

In order to understand specific cultural processes in which ethical categories are produced and circulated, I focus on sign forms and language ideologies to trace out the "interdiscursivity" (Agha and Wortham 2005) of sign use, where signs are connected and likened with signs from other events. In particular, the formal contrasts and resemblances among various semiotic materials – both linguistic and non-linguistic – are exploited by Kazak nomads in a wide range of activities and institutions. In this chapter and the following two chapters, we examine such diverse activities and institutions in which the contrast between honorific and plain speech is highlighted and mapped onto other kinds of morally loaded semiotic contrasts.

Let us begin with language socialization – perhaps no other activities or institutions among the Altai Kazaks would reveal the ideological link between formal qualities of speech and ethical categories more explicitly than language socialization, especially adults' instructions about proper honorific speech given to children. What are the things a child learns in language socialization? More specifically, what constitutes good speech and bad speech, and by extension a good person and a bad person?

In this chapter, I mainly discuss the idealized (or normative) use of language among Kazak nomads. Drawing from metapragmatic comments about good speech and a good person, mainly

in the context of language socialization, the chapter first presents idealized views of how one should talk. As I anticipated, these comments focus on the proper use of honorific pronouns and the ethics of modesty. Then I introduce some actual examples of adults' explicit instructions and interventions made in their conversation with children. In addition to this, there is also a pattern of indirect instruction, in which the speaker uses honorific terms of address (elder brother, elder sister, etc.) to refer to a third party, who is older than the one spoken to, but is actually younger than the speaker, in order to reinforce respectful language use. Then I present some of the actual speech patterns of Kazak children, including teenagers. These include not only the examples that fit the idealized pattern, but also the ones that deviate from it. I have included two interesting examples of child-mother interaction: in the first case, a child switches from honorific speech to plain speech; in the second, a child switches from plain speech to honorific speech. The last section of this chapter briefly discusses the metapragmatic concept of "heaviness" which plays a critical role in the inculcation of modesty in language socialization.

This chapter tries to grasp the basic understandings of good speech learned by the Altai Kazaks and the ways in which they are taught. From the metapragmatic comments regarding good speech, it is made clear that the focus of language socialization in the proper use of honorifics including some respectful terms of address. It is also established that their notion of respectfulness is primarily associated with the notion of modesty, which I argue is the central image of a good person in the Altai Kazaks' language ideologies. The proper ways of speaking are taught both directly and indirectly, and children can, and often do, break the normative patterns in actual conversation. By presenting the basic pragmatic knowledge learned in childhood, this chapter provides a foundation to better understand how adults use language in varying social contexts.

1. An Interview with Rashyjla

        The following interview was conducted by the author, whose Kazak name is Altynbek,

with a 60-year-old Kazak-speaking female herder Rashyjla. Another female Kazak speaker,

Arshyn, is also present in this interview, adding some interesting terminological points.

Example 1. Rashyla Interview

Altynbek: Sodan kejin, baladar so'jlegende,

   After that, when children are talking,

   kalaj so'jlese ursady?

   What way of speaking ends up getting scolded?

   Kalaj so'jlese oj, zhaksy bala dejdi?

   What way of speaking invites comments like "Oj, good kid!"?

Rashyjla: Bala so'jegende myjsaly

   When a child talks, for example,

   u'lken meni siz dep so'jlew kerek, siz!

   s/he needs to address me siz [HON 2P SG], siz [HON 2P SG]!

   Myjsaly kishirejip bala kishirejip, mejirbandykpen…

   for example, being modest, the child must be modest, with kindness…

Altynbek: Kishirejip?

   Being modest?

Rashyjla: Kishirejip

Being modest

Altynbek: Kishirejip…

Being modest…

Rashyjla: Kishirejip mejirbandykpen dejsing.

Being modest, with kindness, you say.

Mejirbandyk degen so'z…

What is meant by kindness…

Altynbek: Mejirbandyk…

Kindness…

Rashyjla: Mejirbandykpen so'jlejdi goj, magan.

[The child] talks with kindness to me.

Sonda zhaksy.

Then it's good.

Bizding Kazakta sen dep kabagyn tu'jip,

Among us Kazaks, if [the child], using sen [PLN 2P SG], knitting his/her brows,

ataga, myjsaly, a'kesine, sheshesine so'jlese

speaks to the grandfather, for example, to the father, to the mother

ol bala zhaman bala.

that child is a bad child.

Ol zhek ko'redi. Zhaksy bolmajdy.

[They] dislike him/her. It is not good.

Altynbek: Je….

Okay…

…

Rashyjla: Sensing ej degen so'z bolmajdy.

Saying "It's you [PLN 2P SG]" is not alright.

Onda bolmajdy.

Then it's not alright.

Ony zhek ko'redi.

[They] dislike it.

Kazak balaga osylaj ta'rbije beredi.

Kazaks give children such upbringing.

Altynbek: Mmmm….

Mmmm…

Rashyjla: Myjsaly myna, myna kelin

For example, this, this daughter-in-law (referring to Arshyn)

mening kajyn agamdyng kelini bop otur goj.

is my elder brother-in-law's daughter-in-law,

men shalymnyng, myjsaly, agasynyng kelini bop otur goj.

my husband's, for example, elder brother's daughter-in-law.

Sonda men urssam mynagan,

Then, if I scold her,

sen so'jtting, zhaman isteding, bu'jtting desem,

saying you did that, did it poorly, did this,

bir awuz so'z u'ndemejdi magan.

She doesn't say a single word [doesn't talk back] to me.

Men kandaj katajyp zhatsam u'ndemejdi.

No matter how harsh I am, [she] doesn't say anything.

Altynbek: Aa.

Ah.

Rashyjla: So'jtedi.

She does so.

Ata anany erekshe syjlajdy.

Very much respects her parents-in-law

Atany erekshe syjlajsyng.

You [should] respect [your parents-in-law].

Altynbek: Onda…syjlajtyn so'zder…

Then words to respect…

Rashyjla: Syjlajtyn so'zder. Siz! Kajda barasyz?

Words to respect. "Siz [HON 2P SG]! Where are [you] going [HON 2P SG]?"

"Men pa'lenpaj zherge baramyn. Ba'len wakytta kelem"…

I am going to such and such place, coming at such and such time…

Altynbek. Mmmm, mejirban…

Mmmm, kind…

Rashyjla: Mejirban.

Kind…

Altynbek: Kishirejip degen kandaj so'z?

What is meant by "being modest"?

Rashyjla: Kishirejip degen so'z?

Being modest?

Sol zha'ngegi so'z goj.

That is the word mentioned just now, your see.

Kishirejip degen so'z, myjsaly…

What is meant by being modest, for example…

sen degen so'z u'lken so'z. Sen dep biz ajtpajmyz.

The word sen [PLN 2P SG] is a huge word. We don't say sen.

Sen degen u'lken so'z.

The word sen is a huge word.

Siz degen so'z kishkene so'z.

The word siz is a small word.

Siz! Siz! Mine, kishkene so'z.

Siz, siz! Look, small word.

Altynbek: Aa…

Ah…

Rashyjla: Senderdiki…Bizding myna Kazak u'lken adamga sen dep ajtpajdy.

Yours…We Kazaks don't address seniors by sen [PLN 2P SG].

Onda anaw ko'rgensiz, zhaman. Zhaman.

If that happens, then [s/he is] without learning, bad. Bad.

Sen degen so'zdi ajtpajdy

[They] don't say the word sen.

Altynbek: Ko'rgen…

Ko'rgen…

Rashyjla: Ko'rgensiz dejdi.

"Without learning," it is said.

Ko'rgensiz degen…a'gi…ta'rbijesiz degen so'z.

"Without learning" means…well… "without upbringing"

Ta'rbije…ta'rbijesiz degen so'z…

Upbringing…it means "without upbringing".

Altynbek: Ta'rbije…

Upbringing…

Rashyjla: Ta'rbijesiz dejdi.

Without upbringing, it is said.

Ony Kazak ko'rgensiz dejdi.

Kazaks call it "without learning".

Ko'rgeni zhok, eshtengke ko'rgen zhok dejdi goj.

[S/he] has not seen, has seen absolutely nothing, they say, you know.

Altynbek: Onda siz dese…

Then, if one says siz…

Rashyjla: Siz dese zhaksy so'z.

If one says siz, it is a good word.

Mine. Mynanyng ta'rbijesi bar, zhaksy, siz dejdi dep…

Look. "This one has upbringing, good, says siz," they would say.

Siz degen kishkene so'z.

The word siz is a small word.

Altynbek: Ta'rbijesi bar dej ma?

One has upbringing, do they say?

Rashyjla: Ta'rbijesi bar dejdi.

One has upbringing, they say.

Altynbek: Mmmm…

Mmmm…

Rashyjla: Myjsaly Kazak tanymajtyn bir u'lken adam…

For example, a Kazak, [when encountering] someone unfamiliar

menen u'lken…

older than me…

men alpystamyn…bir zhetpistegi adam kelse…

I am sixty years old…if someone who's at seventy is coming…

sogan men siz dewim kerek.

To that person, I need to say siz.

Tanymasa…kim bolsa…sen dewge bolmajdy.

If unfamiliar…whoever that is….saying sen is not alright.

Altynbek: Je…

Oh…

Rashyjla: Siz degen so'z…ol tuwus kanaga karagan so'z emes.

The word siz…that word is not just for relatives.

Zhalpy adamdarga karagan so'z.

It is a word for people in general.

U'lken adamga siz dewmiz kerek.

To our seniors, we need to say siz.

Kishkene adamga siz desek onda bolmaj kalady.

If you say siz to a younger person, then it would be not alright.

Ol shamdanady, u'lkenmin be dep…

S/he gets irritated, saying "am I older?"

Altynbek: Kishkene adamga siz dese kalaj bolady?

How is it if one says siz to a younger person?

Rashyjla: …Kishkene adam shamdanady.

…The younger one gets irritated.

Altynbek: Shamdanady?

Gets irritated?

Rashyjla: Je, shamdanady.

Yes, gets irritated.

Renzhijdi degen so'z.

It means to be angry.

Altynbek: Endi…u'lkenderge siz demej…

Now…instead of addressing elders by siz…

Rashyjla: Sen dese shamdanady.

They get irritated if one say sen.

Altynbek: Sen dese…solaj bolsa da shamdanady…

If one says sen….if so, they get irritated too.

Rashyjla: Shamdanady, sen dese.

[They] get irritated, if one says sen.

Zha'nga'gi ko'rgensiz, ta'rbijesiz degen so'zdi ajtady.

[They would] say words like "without learning, without upbringing" just mentioned.

Altynbek: Je, je. Onda,

Yes, yes, then,

kishkenege siz dese de ko'rgensiz dej ma?

Do they say "without learning" when one says siz to a younger person?

Rashyjla: Ej, ol ko'rgensiz demej shamdap kalady goj.

Ej, s/he will surely get irritated, though not saying "without learning."

Men u'lken dep kapty.

"Said I was older"

O'zi jidejasy shamdanyp kalady.

His/her thoughts will be irritated.

Ol ko'rgensiz dep ajtpajdy.

[But] s/he would not say "without learning".

Altynbek: Sen degeni u'lken so'z…Siz degeni…

The word sen is a huge word…the world siz is…

Rashyjla: Kishi so'z.

Small word.

…

Altynbek: Onda kishi so'zdi zhaksy ko'redi goj.

Then they like small words, surely.

Rashyjla: Kishi so'z zhaksy ko'redi, kishi so'zdi.

They like small words, small words.

Siz degen so'z zhaksy.

The word siz is good.

Sypajy. Sypajy dejdi.

Polite. Polite, it is said.

Sypajy so'z dejdi.

Polite words, it is said.

Altynbek: Sypajy…

      Polite…

Rashyjla: Je, siz degen sypajy so'z.

      Yeah, the word siz is polite.

Altynbek: Onda sen degen…

      Then the word sen is…

Rashyjla: Sen degen katty so'z.

      The word sen is a hard word.

Arshyn: Anajy so'z degen tu'sinemeken?

      Would he understand what is called "crude word"?

Altynbek: Anajy so'z?

      Crude word?

Arshyn: Mmmm, sen degen.

      Mmmm, the word sen is.

Altynbek: A'! Anajy! Eki tu'r goj?

      Ah! Crude! [There are] two kinds, right?

Rashyjla: Eki tu'r, e.

      Two kinds, yeah

Altynbek: Endi, anajy so'zdi u'lken so'z dej ma?

      Now, are crude words called huge words?

Rashyjla: U'lken so'z.

      Huge words.

…

Altynbek: Zhanga…katty so'z dedingiz. Ja'?

      Just now, you said "hard words," right?

Rashyjla: Katty so'z.

      Hard words.

Altynbek Onda katty bolmagan so'z nemene dejdi?

        Then what is said about words that are not hard?

Rashyjla: zhumsak so'z ana siz goj! Siz!

        Soft word, that siz, you see, siz!

Altynbek: Zhumsak so'z?

        Soft word?

Rashyjla: Zhumsak so'z.

        Soft word.

Altynbek: Zhumsak so'jlewdi zhaksy ko'redi…?

        [They] like soft speech…?

Rashyjla: Zhaksy ko'redi.

        [They] like it.

        Zhumsak so'jew zhaksy.

        Soft speech is good.

        Kazak degen kalyk zhu'regi zhumsak kalyk koj.

        The Kazak people are the people with soft heart, you see.

        Zhu'regi zhumsak kalyk,

        people with soft heart.

        Erekshe. Sosyn zhumsak so'zdi zhaksy ko'redi.

        Very much so. That's why they like soft words.

Altynbek: Onda zhu'regi katty bolsa so'z katty bola ma?

        Then, if the heart is hard, will the words be hard?

Rashyjla: Katty bolady.

        [They] will be hard.

Of course, language socialization is not just about honorific speech, but their connection seems

to be quite strong for the Altai Kazaks. As we can see in this interview, Rashyjla, in her response to the initial question about good and bad ways of speaking to be taught to children, immediately points to the honorific second person pronoun *siz*, and some of the qualities associated with it, such as modesty and kindness. Then she goes on to contrast *siz* with *sen*, the plain second person pronoun, and tells us some of the negative pragmatic effects of using the plain form in a certain type of situations. After providing an example of respectful behavior, she reveals to us that in addition to the honorific pronoun *siz*, there is another important linguistic form to discuss, namely the honorific predicative suffix *-syz/siz*, found in *Kajda barasyz* (Where are you going?), in which the subject of the sentence *siz* is omitted whereas the predicative suffix *–syz* cannot be omitted. Apart from explaining how to talk according to the addressee's age relative to the speaker, the rest of the interview concentrates on the images or qualities, e.g., softness, small-ness, associated with two distinct speech styles, one of which Rashyjla refers to as *sypajy so'z* ("polite word" or "polite speech") quite consistently. Her metapragmatic comments tell us that this polite speech is a sign of one's good upbringing, as opposed to the lack thereof. Given that calling someone "lacking upbringing" is a very potent insult to any Kazak person, we can easily see why one's linguistic choice is constantly evaluated in moral terms. The interview ends with an interesting cultural claim that Kazaks are supposed to speak softly because they are soft-hearted people.

From the interview with Rashyjla, it can be established that there are certain normative patterns of speech according to the addressee's age in relation the speaker's; Kazak speakers recognize at least two distinct styles of speaking, one of which is called *sypajy so'z*; the distinction is made in the choice between specific morphemes such as pronouns and predicative suffixes in second person; as indices of good upbringing, the honorific forms like *siz* are likened

to such qualities as softness and small-ness. One of the core ethical values inculcated in language socialization process is self-lowering modesty.[83]

2. Explicit Instruction/Correction for Children's Speech

Kazak children master plain speech first. They are basically left "honorifics-free" until they turn 6 or 7, when parents begin to explicitly tell their child to use honorific forms. In general, seven-year-old boys go through circumcision, after which they are expected to help their fathers' herding tasks in the field. Similarly, girls older than seven are supposed to participate more in their mothers' housework in and around the tent. Both boys and girls after this age are no longer considered as toddlers to be indulged and pampered all the time; rather mature behavior is inculcated. Honorific speech is clearly a very important component of what the Altai Kazaks view as mature behavior. For children younger than six, however, it is generally considered too early to learn honorifics; corrections do occur occasionally but not persistently. For instance,

Example 2. Ka'sing the Three-Year-Old Boy

Ka'sing : Ma-gan kara-p   **tur**! (to his mother's elder sister Da'ken)

      I-DAT   watch-CVB   standPLN2SG

      Watch (plain) me [while you stand there]!

Zhaz'en: Ma-gan kara-p   tur-**yngyz**   de-p   ajt-pa-j-**syng**?

---

[83] As we have seen in Chapter 2, the act of "self-lowering" and "other raising" involves not just verbal forms, but also non-verbal forms, including bowing, dismounting from a horse, helping with mounting and dismounting from a horse, placing a cushion under an honored guest, as well as seating arrangement in the tent.

I-DAT watch-CVB   stand-HON2SG   say-CVB   speak-NEG-PRES-PLN2SG

Don't you say "Please watch (honorific) me"?

In this interaction, three people are present (other than the ethnographer, who is observing the interaction). They are a 3-year-old boy Ka'sing, his mother Zha'zen, and her elder sister Da'ken. Ka'sing is telling Da'ken to pay attention to his jumping across a puddle. In his utterance, the plain second person imperative verb form *tur* is used, rather than the appropriate honorific imperative verb *turyngyz* (*tur* + *-yngyz*), which his mother advises him to use. Although Zha'zen corrected her son in this one particular instance, she did not seem to have consistently instructed him to speak deferentially throughout my fieldwork period. Considering Ka'sing's age, both Zha'zen and his father thought that it was too early to teach him to use honorifics. On the other hand, their 8-year-old daughter Merwet was a competent user of honorifics, and I have never heard her make any mistakes.

The burden of learning honorifics usually falls upon children at the ages of 6 and 7. In the fall of 2012, I had a chance to observe a 6-year-old boy, who was going through the very initial stage of learning honorifics.

Example 3. October 5 in the Afternoon

Altynbek: Mynaw men.

this   I

This is me (looking at a picture).

Erasyl: Mynaw **sen**?!

this   youPLN

This is you?!

Kanat: **Siz**   **de**!   **Siz**   **de**!

youHON   sayPLN   youHON   sayPLN

Say (plain) **siz** (honorific you)! Say **siz**!

In this excerpt, Altynbek, the ethnographer, has just been invited to the family of Kanat, a nomadic herdsman in his thirties. After being served several bowls of milk tea, Altynbek shares his pictures from home. When Altynbek points to himself in one of the pictures shown to Kanat's family, saying "this is me," Kanat's 6-year-old son Erasyl jumps in and says loudly "This is you?" in astonishment, implying that the man in the picture looks incredibly different from the ethnographer he sees. Almost shouting "Say *siz*, say *siz*," Kanat intervenes immediately to correct Erasyl's inappropriate use of *sen* – the plain second person pronoun – which he should not have used for a guest who is even older than his father. The boy, however, does not produce the correct form himself, and the topic of the conversation changes.

Example 4. October 6 Before Breakfast

…

Ajbota: **Siz**   de-**seng-**shi!

youHON   say-COND.PLN2SG-EMPH

If you say (plain conditional predicative) *siz* (honorific you), [how great would it be?]

Kanat: U'lken-der-ge   siz   de-p   so'jle-j-di.

elder-PL-DAT   youHON   say-CVB   talk-PRES-3

One says *siz* (honorific "you") to elders.

The next day, before breakfast, Erasyl said something to me, again using a wrong second person form. (Still half asleep in bed, I failed to take note of what he actually said.) But the moment

Ajbota, Erasyl's older sister, says "*Siz desengshi*," I realize it is about honorifics, and hurriedly write down what is being said. Kanat, who is also only half awake, joins Ajbota in correcting Erasyl's mistake by saying "One says *siz* to elders." Again, Erasyl makes no attempt to produce the correct form himself, and they turn to some other topic.

Example 5. October 6 After the Breakfast (20 minutes later)

Kanat: Zhemis zhe-**ngiz**!

       fruit   eat-HON2SG

       Please eat (honorific imperative) fruit!

Erasyl: Zhemis zhe-**ngiz**!

       fruit   eat-HON2SG

       Please eat (honorific imperative) fruit!

After the breakfast, which took us about 20 minutes to finish, some fruit is served. As a gesture of hospitality, Kanat says politely to me "Please eat fruit," using *–ngiz*, an honorific imperative predicative suffix. Imitating his father's demonstration of respectful speech directed to an "elder," Erasyl finally utters a sentence with an appropriate honorific form. Here we can see one of the ways in which children can get started with honorific speech. Such achievement results from the concerted efforts of the multiple members of the family, especially the boy's father and elder sister in this case.

But more commonly, correcting children's speech involves some degree of reasoning behind proper forms of speech. In the following examples, Mejramkan corrects her 11-year-old nephew's speech in two separate occasions.

Example 6. Mejramkan talking to Darkan

Apa-ng   at-y-n   ata-ma!   Ujat   bol-a-dy.

Senior-aunt-PLN2SG   name-3-ACC   throw-NEG   shame   be-PRES-3

Don't utter your senior aunt's name. It would be a shame.

Example 7. Mejramkan correcting Darkan's speech to his Mother Nurgyjza

Nurgyjza: Darkan, ko'mir shak!

        Darkan coal   kindle

        Darkan, put coal on the fire (plain)!

Darkan: O'z-ing   shag-yp   al!

     self-PLN2SG   kindle-CVB take-PLN2SG

     Put [it] on the fire yourself (plain)!

Nurgyjza: Men tamak iste-j-in.

       I   meal   cook-PRES-OPT1SG

       I'm cooking a meal.

Mejramkan: O'zi-ng   shag-yp   al   de-p   ajt-kan   eken.

      self-PLN2SG   kindle-CVB   take-PLN2SG   say-CVB   speak-PRF   EMOT

      [I think I just heard him] saying "Put [it] on the fire yourself (plain)!"

      O'z-ingiz   shag-yp   al   de-p   bulaj   kara-j…

      self-HON2SG kindle-CVB take-PLN2SG say-CVB   like this turn-CVB

      Turning [to your mom] like this, saying "please do it yourself (honorific)"…

      Ijbalyk   degen   kajda,   sen-de?

      politeness COMP   where   youPLN-LOC

      Where is your politeness (plain)?

Nurgyjza: O'z-ing   shag-yp   al   de-j-di.

      self-PLN2SG   kindle-CVB   takePLN2SG   say-PRES-3

[He] says "Put [it] on the fire yourself (plain)!"

In Example 6, Mejramkan is telling Darkan not to utter the name of his potential mother-in-law, Bakytgu'l.[84] Following the Kazak custom of avoiding the names of certain affinal kin types, Darkan should just say the kin term *apa* "Senior Aunt" for her, rather than saying "Bakytku'l apa." Mejramkan adds that uttering her name would be a shame (*ujat*). In Example 7, Mejramkan tries to correct Darkan's use of a plain possessive suffix *–ing* to his mother Nurgyjza, and suggests he should have used its honorific equivalent *–ingiz* to her. She implies that this proper speech style also involves a certain posture toward his mother. Darkan's failure to speak deferentially to his mother is criticized by Mejramkan's rhetorical question "Where is your politeness?" (or "Where do you have something called manners?"). Nurgyjza supports this criticism by quoting Darkan's words in a disapproving tone.

In general, the Altai Kazaks seem to make great efforts to ensure that their children learn to express respect to elders. Honorific speech is a part of the larger respectful behaviors that Kazak children need to master as they grow older. For instance, Shataj, a 43-year-old herder, and his 37-year-old wife Bakaj recounted to me their own childhood experience of learning respectful behaviors.

Example 8. Shataj and Bakaj's narrative

When we were little, our parents taught us to respect (*syjla-*) elders and endear (*kurmette-*) young ones. If we did not do greetings (*sa'lem zhasaw*), or if we remained seated stiffly in the presence of a guest without standing up and bringing the guest to the seat of honor, the elders would beat us with a whip, scolding 'Where do you come from? Didn't you come out of your

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[84] Mejramkan is teasing Darkan by suggesting that he is attracted to the daughter of Baktygu'l.

parents? Why didn't you do *sa'lem zhasaw*?' To respect elders, one needs to greet them with two hands, assist them when they get off a horse, bring them to the seat of honor, prepare a wash basin, a pitcher, and a towel for them to wash their hands with, give them *sybaga* (best part of the meat served to honored guests), bring their horse and assist them mount the horse when they depart.

Although Shataj and Bakaj slightly digressed toward the end to talk more about how to treat guests, most of what they said applies to learning how to talk and act respectfully. Also note that various semiotic materials – verbal greetings, standing up, giving two hands, preparing a wash basin, a pitcher, and a towel, etc. – are linked with one another indexically, and deemed to resemble one another as mutually congruent signs of respectfulness. Furthermore, I suggest that language socialization is much more than simply learning certain rules of when to use what language forms; rather, it crucially involves learning to feel the indexical and iconic linkages among sign forms which materialize intangible ethical concepts like respect and honor.

3. Implicit Instruction: "Your Elder Brother So and So"

Parents' instruction about respectful speech, however, can sometimes be less explicit. Without directly ordering children to say this or that, parents are also able to remind them how to address people older than themselves. For example,

Example 9. Ku'lash Talking to Her Son Oraz

Oraz, mine	Darkan	aga-ng	kel-di.	kara-shy!	.
Oraz	here	Darkan	elder brother-PLN2SG	come-PAST3	lookPLN2SG-EMPH

Oraz, here your Elder Brother Darkan came. Look!

Example 10. Kajrat Talking to His Son Meku'w

1. A'dil   ata-ng-a   bar-yp   kel-shi,   sen!
    A'dil   senior.uncle-PLN2SG-DAT   go-CVB   comePLN2SG-EMPH   you
    Go to your Senior Uncle A'dil!

2. Ku'lash zhezhe-ng-e   bar-yp   bir   taba-sy-n   a'kel-shi!
    Ku'lash elder.sister-PLN2SG go-CVB   one   frying.pan-3   bring-PLN2SG-EMPH
    Go to your Elder Sister Ku'lash and borrow her frying pan!

Example 11. Altyn Talking to Her Son Pa'tijk

Altynbek aga-ng-a   Hanzusha   so'jle-seng-shi!
Altynbek elder.brother-PLN2SG   Chinese   speak-COND.PLN2SG-EMPH
[It would be good] if you speak Chinese to your Elder Brother Altynbek!

In the above examples, the basic strategy is the same: a parent refers to a person older than the

child by the [Personal Name + Kin Term + Second Person Possessive Suffix] formula. The only

difference between this formula and the actual term of address the child would use in addressing

the person mentioned is the second person possessive suffix attached to the term of address in the

formula. Thus, 2-year-old toddler Oraz would call his 11-year-old neighbor Darkan "Darkan aga"

(or Elder Brother Darkan); Kajrat's 7-year old son Meku'w would call his 40-year-old paternal

uncle A'dil "A'dil ata" (or Senior Uncle A'dil) and 25-year-old Ku'lash "Ku'lash zhezhe" (Elder

Sister Ku'la'sh); 8-year-old Patijk would call the 37-year-old ethnographer Altynbek "Altynbek

aga" (or Elder Brother Altynbek). When used as a term of address, such a kin term already

specifies the kind of relation between the speaker and the addressee. Notice that normally the

parents in the above examples would address them differently: 25-year-old Ku'lash, for instance, would have normally referred to 11-year-old Darkan simply as "Darkan" without attaching the kinship term *aga* to his name; thus "Darkan agang" (your Elder Brother Darkan) in her speech effectively serves as an iconic reminder for her son Oraz to address him "Darkan aga" respectfully.[85]

Improper use of address terms can have serious consequences. The following excerpt gives us a glimpse of it. This is from my informal interview with Nurgyjza, 29-year-old woman from Kyzyl Tas village, about how her younger relatives address her:

Example 12. Altynbek interviewing Nurgyjza

Altynbek: Zhezhe de-j-tin shygar?

    elder.sister say-PRES-HABIT probably

    [They] would probably call you Elder Sister?

Nurgyjza: Je.

    Yeah

    Yeah.

Altynbek: Ana… kim… Zhangyldar?

    That who Zhangyl-PL

    Well, then, [what about] Zhangyl [and her sisters]?

Nurgyjza: Zhezhe de-j-di.

    elder.sister say-PRES-3

    [They] say Elder Sister.

Altynbek: Zhezhe de-j ma?

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[85] Asif Agha (1998; 2007) aptly terms this phenomenon "transposition of the origo of deference."

elder.sister say-PRES3   Q

Do [they] say Elder Sister?

Nurgyjza: Je.

Yeah

Yeah.

Altynbek: Ana...Ajshyng?

That Ajshyng

Well, then, [how about] Ajshyng?

Nurgyjza: Zhezhe   de-j-di,   odar.

elder.sister say-PRES-3   they

They [all] say Elder Sister.

Altynbek: Zhezhe   dej   ma?

elder. sister   say-PRES3   Q

Do [they] say Elder Sister?

Nurgyjza: Je.   Zhezhe   de-me-se   o'le-di goj.   Tajak   zhe-j-di.

Yeah   elder.sister   say-NEG-COND3   die-3 EXCL   club   eat-PRES-3

Yeah. If they don't say Elder Sister, they're dead! They'll be beaten by a club.

Nurzhajna: So-ny   ajt-a-myn.   Ija', zhezhe?!

that-ACC tell-PRES-1SG yes   Elder Sister

That's what I'm saying, elder sister.

Nurgyjza: Tajak zhe-j-di,   onda.

club eat-PRES-3   then

They'll be beaten by a club, then.

My aim in this interview was to learn how Nurgyjza was usually addressed by her relatives

younger than she is, like Zhangyl and Ajshyng, her teenage nieces. Nurgyjza told me that her

younger relatives invariably addressed her as *zhezhe* ("elder sister"), one of the most common terms of address borrowed from Mandarin Chinese *jiejie* ("elder sister"). Note that among the Altai Kazaks, this term can be applied to any female addressee whose age is older than the speaker by less than 25 years, regardless of their actual kin relation. After a few turn-takings with me, Nurgyjza offered her insight into a possible consequence of failing to address her properly, saying "They'll be beaten by a club."[86] Immediately after this statement, Nurzhajna, another teenage relative of Nurgyjza's, who had been quietly listening to our conversation, jumped in to express her approval in a somewhat exaggerated tone. I suspect that it might have been quite uncomfortable for her to remain silent after her aunt's mentioning of punishment.

4. Some Speech Patterns of Children/Adolescents

When asked, Kazak speakers generally agree upon the pragmatic rule that one must choose honorific forms, rather than plain forms, when speaking to someone who is more than 3 years older. Actual instances of honorific speech in natural conversation, however, reveal a great deal of variation across different speakers. What might be considered as a general rule is not always observed; there are many "exceptions" to this rule. For instance, speakers differ in the level of deference shown to their own parents. Some choose to stick to honorifics all the time; some prefer plain speech; some oscillate between honorific and plain forms; some manage to stay in-between by mixing, for instance, plain grammatical forms with honorific terms of address.

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[86] But I am not certain that if it actually happens or happened in the past

Consider the following two examples spoken by 11-year-old Darkan.

Example 13. Darkan Talking to His Cousin Nurzhajna

Nurzhajna zhezhe,   karta ojna-j-syz   ba?

Nurzhajna elder sister (Ch.) card play-PRES-HON2SG   Q

Would you play (honorific) a card game?

Example 14. Darkan Talking to His Father Kajrat

Zhem   a'kel-e-sing?

fodder   bring-PRES-PLN2SG

Will you bring (plain) fodder?

Darkan uses an honorific predicative suffix –*syz* to his cousin 17-year-old Nurzhajna, who is only 6 years older than Darkan himself, as in Example 13. But interestingly, he uses plain forms like –*sing* to his father as in Example 14 above. In fact, use of plain speech to one's parents appears to be a widespread pattern among the Altai Kazaks today, as illustrated by the speech of Esbol, another teenager in the same herding community:

Example 15. Esbol talking to His Mother

1. Rakmet de-me-j-**siz**   ba?   Rakmet-ti **a'kel-**shi! [October 6, 2012]

   thanks say-NEG-PRES-HON2SG Q   thanks-ACC bring-EMPH

   Don't you (honorific) say "thanks"? Bring (plain)"thanks."

2. Tur-a   **tur**! [July 30, 2013]

   Stand-CVB   stand-PLN2SG

   Wait! (plain)

3. [Bala] ko'r-di-**ng**   ba? [August 2, 2013]

   [child] see-PAST-PLN2SG   Q

   Did you see (plain) [the child]?

4. Rakymet   de-p   ajt-pa-dy-**yng**   goj! [June 17, 2014]

   thanks   say-CVB   speak-NEG-PAST   EXCL

   You didn't say (plain) "thanks."

With the exception of the very first sentence, in which he uses an honorific predicative suffix -*siz*, all the other sentences contain plain forms. In other words, Esbol is more or less consistent with his choice of plain speech when he is talking with his mother. It is also important to note that the only example of Esbol addressing his mother by *siz* is found in one of my earliest recordings (from October 6, 2012), when I had just spent my first two days in Esbol's autumn pasture. As most Kazak speakers often do, Esbol had been staging a performance of extra-deferential speech in the presence of a new guest – the ethnographer – until this moment, at which he finally switched to his usual way of addressing his mother.[87] In fact, most Kazak speakers tend to speak more deferentially with their family members in the presence of a newly acquainted person. Esbol's regular use of plain forms to his mother also seems to suggest that parents are an "exception" to the pragmatic rule that people older than the speaker by more than three years should be given honorific speech. A large portion of Kazak speakers in Kyzyl Tas appears to follow this pattern, using plain forms to their parents and honorific forms to others who are more than three years older than themselves. As shown below, however, Esbol's speech pattern to his father Murat once again complicates this generalization.

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[87] Compare this switch to Example 17 below.

Example 16. Esbol talking to His Father Murat

1. At,   kongyr at   degen ko'r-di-**ngiz**   ba? [October 6, 2012]

   horse brown hose   COMP   see-PAST-HON2SG   Q

   Horse, did you see (honorific) [what they call the] brown horse?

2. Karta ojna-j-**syz**   ba? [July 30, 2013]

   card   play-PRES-HON2SG   Q

   Would you play (honorific) cards?

3. Koj   kama-p   tasta-j-**syz**   ba? [August 1, 2013]

   sheep encircle-CVB throw-PRES-HON2SG   Q

   Will you encircle (honorific) the sheep?

4. Bal   zhe-se-**ngiz**   bol-a-dy   eken. [June 17, 2014]

   honey   eat-COND-HON2SG   be alright-PRES-3 EMOT

   If you eat (honorific) honey, it will be alright [I just learned].

5. Onda   kashan   ko'sh-e-**sizder**? [June 18, 2014]

   then   when   move-PRES-HON2PL

   Then, when will you all migrate (honorific) [to the summer pasture]?

As we can see from these instances, Esbol consistently uses honorifics when speaking to his father. In fact, this boy is widely praised among the Kyzyl Tas herders for his respectful behavior, in particular his honorific speech toward his father. Thus it is difficult to generalize a single speaker's speech pattern directed to his or her parents. Yet, it does seem to be congruent with the general trend in which many Kazak speakers tend to be somewhat more respectful for their fathers than for their mothers in speech. For instance, Pa'tijk, an 8-year-old boy generally uses honorific speech to the both of his parents, but he occasionally uses plain speech when

conserving with his mother. The following example shows his switch from plain to honorific speech when he asks his mother Altyn to play a card game with him. Notice that the switch follows right after Altyn's evaluative comment "What a bad mouth!"

Example 17. Pa'tijk Switching from Plain to Honorific Speech

Pa'tijk: Onda….sen   ojna-j-syng   ba?

      then   youPLN   play-PRES-PLN2SG   Q

      Then…will you play (plain) [the card game]?

Altyn: Koj-shy!   Ne   degen   zhaman awuz-y!

      stopPLN2SG-EMPH   What COMP   bad   mouth-3

      Stop [it]! What a bad mouth!

Pa'tijk: Ojna-j-syz   ba?   Ojna-j-syz   ba?

      play-PRES-HON2SG   Q   play-PRES-HON2SG   Q

      Will you play (honorific)? Will you play (honorific)?

Altyn: Ojna-j-ym. (laughs)

      play-PRES-1SG

      I'll play.

Variation among different speakers is also easily found in the use of terms of address. Especially, Kazak children differ in how to address their parents. The difference is closely related to their exposure to Chinese language education, as well as differing parenting styles at home. For instance, Shataj, a 43-year-old nomadic herder, wanted to send his children to the Chinese school in the county town, but he could not afford the expenses for pre-schooling, which is deemed necessary for children whose mother tongue is not Chinese. In general, nomadic herders of Kyzyl Tas village spend most of their times in the mountains, where they have little chance to

interact with Han Chinese. Their children usually attend the Kazak school in the village center. On the other hand, farmers and settled herders interact with Han Chinese more frequently, and they tend to send their children to the Chinese school. It is also commonly said that the children from settled households (e.g., Na'zijgu'l) are less capable of using honorific speech than those of herders.[88] Similarly, Zhupar, the 11-year-daughter of Ba'zek, who is a veterinarian, once told me that "the children of herding families say *a'ke, sheshe* ("father, mother" in Kazak); we say *baba, mama* ["father, mother" in Chinese]", setting herself apart from herders' children. The general trend, then, is that settled Kazaks are more likely to be influenced by the Chinese language and its speakers, and their children tend to call them by Chinese terms of address.

5. Inculcating Modesty: A Brief Note on the Concept of "Heaviness"

This chapter has examined speech socialization in childhood. The crucial point I make in this chapter is that the use and non-use of honorific speech is an ethical practice. Before we turn to the next chapter, it is useful to note here that the Altai Kazaks' cultural conception of honorific speech as "heavy" work. Commenting on their practices of honorific speech, the Altai Kazaks often say that talking respectfully is like heavy lifting. By using honorific forms, one is said to be "lifting" (*ko'ter-*) the addressee, while "diminishing" (*kishirej-*) oneself. As if the speaker's verbal effort is supporting the weight of the addressee, this task of other-lifting and self-

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[88] This might be related to the general cultural orientation of settled households prioritizing their children's learning of Mandarin Chinese, and paying less attention to Kazak. As we have seen, proper use of Kazak requires a great deal of pragmatic knowledge. If parents do not pay enough attention to their child's mastery of the pragmatics of honorifics, the child is unlikely to be a skillful user of honorific speech.

diminishing is commonly thought of and felt as "heavy work" (*awur zhumus*) or "difficult work" (*kyjyn zhumus*). What makes it comparable to heavy lifting? I suggest that the act of self-lowering and other-raising is perceived to be psychologically burdensome. In what we may call Kazak speakers' folk psychology, every person is born arrogant and self-centered. It is only through conscious, continuous effort that one learns to lower him- or herself. Modesty is a central trait of a virtuous person who strives to live an ethical life. At the same time, honorific speech risks appearing to be a "sycophant" (*zhagympaz*) when plain speech is more appropriate. The challenge, then, is to overcome the innate self-importance and behave modestly without sounding like a flatterer. The notion of "heaviness" in learning Kazak honorifics provide a fertile ground for further ideological constructions about the linguistic forms, their usage, and the speakers. The notion of "heaviness" and variation among different speakers – those who do the lifting and those who do not – can be seen as the bases of the moral valence of honorific speech.

Chapter 4

Hierarchy, Equality, and the Arts of "Soft Speech"

It was a late afternoon in June, and I had an extended conversation with Sa'tbek, a Kyzyl Tas herder in his early seventies, in his tent at Sajlybaj Mountain. He was a close neighbor of Murat – my host at the time. Since he was the eldest person in the area, I wanted to ask him about how things were different in the past and what changes he noticed today. My initial question was simple and open: What are the differences between the past and the present? Sa'tbek told me an elaborate nostalgic narrative about how people and things changed since his childhood. In what follows, I present an abridged reconstruction of his narrative in a monologue form.[89]

Example 1. Sa'tbek's Narrative: "Mountains are Crowded and People are Arrogant

Today there are more people, more animals, but less grass to feed the animals. In the past, people didn't read much, but they were healthy. In the past, we didn't eat vegetable, and didn't drink alcohol either. We had customs, rules, and discipline then. For example, our parents didn't let us drink alcohol. People were more considerate and attentive to one another. People helped one another. People didn't do harmful things. People were meek (*zhuwas*) and wouldn't talk carelessly (*albaty so'jlemejdi*). Our parents always cautioned us against it by saying "It would be a shame" (*ujat bolady*). They told us "You need to treat seniors with deference and juniors with affection." We had that kind of upbringing. We were told "You should always give greetings, and

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you should never talk in front of an old man (*shal*). We were also told to use pleasant words and be modest (*kishipejil bol*). A modest person is a wise person (*akyldy adam*), and people praised such a person for not estimating himself highly (*o'zin zhogary sanamajdy*). Today, we live in the era of competition (*ba'seke zaman*). That means people have become difficult (*kyjyn*). They are not easy people (*ongaj adam emes*). A lot of people, estimating themselves highly, have become arrogant (*pang*). Back in the old era (*ko'ne zaman*), people were not like that. For example, there was a man called Sha'ripkan. He held many high positions in the government. People respected him very much. And yet, when he came to this place, he would speak to young women at cooking and ask them things like "How is your meal being cooked?" (**Sizding** *tamak-***yngyz** *kalaj pysyrady*?) despite his high status. To be modest is like that.

Sa'tbek provides a nostalgic comment about how people behaved modestly in the old era (*ko'ne zaman*), probably referring to some time before 1984, but things have changed in what he lamentingly calls the era of competition (*ba'sake zaman*). Most importantly, this narrative sets up a contrast between two ethical categories – *pang* ("arrogant") and *kishipejil* ("modest"). We can see that modesty is a metapragmatic concept closely linked to certain ways of speaking, such as "pleasant words" or "not talking carelessly." An exemplary modest person is Sha'ripkan who, despite his high social status, would speak to people of low status, like young women at cooking, about apparently insignificant, mundane matters like how the food was being made, in a self-deprecating manner. In the question he presumably addressed the women in honorifics – the honorific genitive pronoun *sizding* and an honorific possessive suffix *-yngyz*, and Sa'tbek reproduces Sha'ripkan's speech in a noticeably soft volume and slow speed. In this narrative, the fact that a person of such high status spoke in honorifics to humble people makes him even more respectable. As Sa'tbek suggests, honorific speech is ideologically associated with the speaker's modesty. At the same time, his lament about the "era of competition" implies a tension between two different modes of communication, one being more deferential than the other.

Of course, this ethic of modest speech is far from universal, and certainly not something

valued positively everywhere. For instance, an almost opposite sort of speech ethic is found in Katriel's (1986) study of Israeli "talking straight." Moreover, even in a society where people speak a language that has a system of honorifics, not every speaker would wholly accept the ideal of modest or respectful speech as the one projected in Sa'tbek's narrative, and in fact, some speakers find it oppressive (e.g., Hill 1998 on Nahuatl honorifics; Luong 1990 on Vietnamese honorifics; Errington 1984 on Javanese honorifics). One might also question the very connection Sa'tbek makes between deferential speech and certain ethical virtues by pointing out that other-raising, self-lowering polite speech is often used as a strategic means to some utilitarian ends, which have nothing to do with ethics *per se* and therefore there is nothing inherently ethical about honorific speech; it would be equally dubious to look for ethical virtues in some idealized pattern of language use when, in reality, speakers are simply following what is already socially determined.[90]   How, then, should we interpret Sa'tbek's story of moral degeneration? If, as he suggests, honorific speech is evaluated so positively, why would people today speak in increasingly arrogant manners? Whose language ideology does his narrative represent? More fundamentally, perhaps, how can apparently superficial matters of linguistic style display a person's inner qualities like modesty or arrogance? Thus, rather than assuming some essential link between speech styles and ethical categories, the present chapter explores the ethicalization of speech styles *as a process* – how stylistic variation in speech becomes an indicator of certain ethical virtues deemed to be internal to individual speakers; phrased another way, how people come to make moral judgments about someone on the basis of his or her use of linguistic forms.

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[90] In the introduction to *Ordinary Ethics*, Lambek (2010: 7) writes that "we locate the ethical…within specific events and histories, which then become no longer simply either the idealized reenactments of key scenarios or the cynical playing out of strategies and interests in competitive games of power and prestige."

In order to illustrate this process of ethicalization, I will focus on three aspects of honorific speech (and other related behaviors) in hierarchical, as well as relatively equal, social relations among Kyzyl Tas herders: (1) The presence of a wide range of social relations – what I call "middle-range relations" – in which both honorific and plain forms of speech are considered appropriate; (2) the perceived availability of all the honorific forms to every adult speaker; (3) the systematic conventionality of a Kazak cultural scheme linking speech varieties and images of persons.

1. Socio-Historical Conditioning: Middle-Range Relations

Under what social conditions can an individual's behavior appear as a mark of some ethical character? Commenting on the difficulty of studying linguistic display of personality, Sapir noted that: "Individual speech analysis is difficult to make, partly because of the peculiarly fleeting character of speech, partly because it is especially difficult to eliminate the *social determinants of speech*." (Sapir 1985[1927]: 543, emphasis mine) In a similar vein, the recent scholarship on ethics (e.g., Laidlaw 2014, Lambek 2010) points out that social scientific discussion of ethics have placed too much emphasis on the individuals' conformity to the norms imposed by the collectivity; in fact, there is little room for moral evaluation when an individual is rigidly acting out of a script. Only when the individual is given a choice between different courses of action can the choice being made be seen as reflection of will, subject to moral judgment. Then the question is: what are the social determinants of honorific speech among Kazak herders in the Altai? As honorific speech generally indicates an asymmetric relation

between the speaker and the addressee or referent, it is necessary to briefly overview the changes

in the authority structure among the Altai Kazaks since the 1950s and identify what could be

seen as the normative patterns of honorific speech today.

Sa'tbek's nostalgic statements in the beginning of this chapter must be understood in terms

of recent changes in the social hierarchy among Kazak herders in Altai. After all, why would

people speak increasingly arrogantly, if honorific speech is evaluated so positively? Although

Sa'tbek attributes this moral degeneration to the lack of good upbringing, there are more obvious

social factors affecting Kazak herders' speech behavior. First, the authority structure among the

Altai Kazak herders went through some dramatic transformation over the second half of the 20th

century. The clan-based kinship hierarchy was replaced by the commune hierarchy in the late

1950s. The communization process in Altai involved carefully getting rid of influential clan

leaders (hereditary tribal elites) from major clan groups in the area. The clan groups were

thoroughly reshuffled so that no commune or production team could consist of a single clan. The

leadership positions in communes and production teams were assigned primarily according to

seniority instead of the previous elite status in the clans. To prevent the re-emergence of the clan

hierarchy, even the section leaders (*zuzhang*) were rotated among different clan groups in the

production team. Rather than the traditional elite status, age became the main criterion for

leadership positions throughout the Commune period (1958-1984). The abolition of communes

and introduction of the Household Responsibility System in 1984 led to the fall of the commune

hierarchy. As Barfield observes of the Altai Kazaks, "the greatest dissatisfaction of the new

system was from party members who had been extremely powerful in the commune system and

found their authority greatly eroded when they lost their monopoly on the distribution of

commune jobs and property. *Formerly subservient commune members now ignored these*

officials and they complained it was becoming difficult to recruit young people for the government jobs that previously had been sought after." (Barfield 1993: 174-175, emphasis mine) Sa'tbek, too, laments this lack of subservience in younger herders; in the past, they were more respectful to senior herders, who were often also leaders of various ranks in the commune system.[91]

Second, my analysis of everyday interactions among the Altai Kazaks finds that Kazak social relations are classed into those that require the use of honorifics and those that require plain expressions; but there are also many "middle-range" relations in which both styles of communication are considered appropriate, allowing variation (by personality, mood, and social strategy) among different speakers in their use of deferential styles. Traditional Kazak kinship structures, which incorporate relative age as well as the distinction between joking and avoidance relations, play a significant role as cultural models, although they do not automatically determine usage. Note that Sa'tbek's nostalgic portrayals of the past focus on the requirements and forget the optional cases.

In general, Kyzyl Tas herders use honorific speech to the addressee who is older than the speaker by 15 or more years. In kinship relations, people vary greatly in their speech to their elder relatives, but they invariably choose honorific speech when speaking with spousal kin older than the spouse or any relative senior to their parents. Let us take a look at several instances of normative honorific speech.

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[91] In effect, it may be said that there was a sort of loose gerontocracy during the Commune period. Sa'tbek's nostalgia may well reflect his (and other senior herders') self-serving language ideology about good speech, which younger herders may find oppressive (cf. Hill 1998). As I will show in this chapter, however, it is the dominant language ideology among Kyzyl Tas herders.

Nurlan: **Siz** bitiretin sharuwa goj endi.

            [It is] a matter for you (HON) to settle, then!

Rakymbaj: Je.

            Yeah.

In Rakymbaj's winter house at Sawur Mountain, herdsmen representing several different families in the area are discussing issues regarding their pasture protection fees (*koruw aky*). Among them, Nurlan is 39 years old, and Rakymbaj is 69 years old. After hearing Rakymbaj's opinion on the matter, Nurlan comments that Rakymbaj should be in charge of settling it. Nurlan uses the honorific pronoun *siz* in addressing Rakymbaj, who is unrelated to him and 30 years older than he is.

Example 3. Nurgyjza and Da'ku'w

Da'ku'w: Duzdyk saldyng ba, mynagan?

            Did you put sauce to this?

Nurgyjza: Duz sap kojdym goj dejim, men.

            I think I've put salt.

            Kor'**ingiz**shi!

            Please see (HON) [if I did].

Nurgyjza and her mother-in-law Da'ku'w are cooking some meat. Da'kuw asks Nurgyjza

whether she put sauce in the meat. Nurgyjza thinks she put some salt in it, but still wants

Da'ku'w to double check. Nugyjza uses an honorific predicative suffix *–ingiz* in her speech to

her mother-in-law. As we have learned in Rashyjla's metapragmatic statements in the previous

chapter, a daughter-in-law's speech to her parents-in-law is a central focus of the ideology of

Kazak honorifics.[92] Nurgyjza's use of the honorific form succinctly illustrates the normative

speech pattern in this prototypical situation. Later that day, her husband Kajrat also adheres to a

similar speech pattern in his conversation with his maternal uncle.

There are also a range of social relations in which plain speech is required. Kyzyl Tas

herders normally use plain speech when the addressee is younger than or similar in age to the

speaker. In kinship relations, plain speech is used to relatives of descending generations and to

those who are younger than the speaker in his or her own generation.

Example 4. Nurbakyt and Murat

Nurbakyt: Nege bir eki bojlaktyng zhu'nin alyp kalmady**ng**?

          Why didn't [you] shear (PLN) one or two sheep's wool?

Murat: Zhu'n degen sasyp zhatyr emes pa, esikte?

          Wool is becoming rotten at the door, isn't it?

Nurbakyt is visiting her younger brother Murat. She asks him why he did not shear sheep's wool

the previous day. Murat explains that it is because he already had too much wool piled up near

the door of his tent as she can see. As his elder sister, Nurbakyt uses a plain predicative suffix –

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[92] A woman's relation with her father-in-law is a prototypical avoidance relation (cf. Chapter 5).

ng in her speech to Murat.[93]

<u>Example 5. To'lew and Da'ken</u>

To'lew: Kansha kele dej**sing**, **Da'ken**?

      How many kilograms do you say (PLN) [you weigh], Da'ken?

Da'ken: Alpys zheti.

      Sixty seven.

At her tent, Da'ken is having milk tea with her husband Murat and their neighbor To'lew. Both Murat and To'lew are 37-year-old men, while Da'ken is a 34-year-old woman. After Murat's mentioning of his weight, To'lew asks Da'ken about her weight. Her answer is quick and precise: 67 kilograms. As he is speaking to an unrelated addressee younger than himself, To'lew uses a plain predicative suffix *–sing* and addresses her by her personal name.

As we have seen above, there are relations in which the use of honorific speech is required, and the ones in which the use of plain speech is required. Between these two types of relations, however, there also exist "middle range relations" in which both styles of speech are considered appropriate, thereby allowing variation across different speakers. In these middle range relations, some speakers tend to speak more deferentially than others. My observational data suggest that Kazak speakers can choose between the honorific and plain styles when speaking with the addressee who is older than the speaker by 3 to 15 years, i.e., in middle range relations. In this

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[93] Murat's response here does not contain any marker of honorific/plain distinction. But in general, as observation suggests, he uses honorifics to address his elder sister Nurbakyt.

range, different speakers vary considerably in their tendency to speak deferentially. In kin

relations, one's parents and parents' younger siblings can be considered as addressees in middle

range relations, as Kyzyl Tas herders vary greatly in their choice between honorific and plain

forms when speaking to their parents and to their uncles and aunts who are younger than their

own parents.

My analysis of numerous actual instances of speech in natural conversation shows that in

the middle range relations, some speakers tend to speak more deferentially, while others tend to

speak less deferentially. For the sake of convenience, let me call the former "reserved speakers,"

and the latter "relaxed speakers." Murat – one of my main hosts during the fieldwork – is a good

example of a reserved speaker. When speaking to addressees who are more than 3 years older

than himself, he almost always chooses to use the honorific forms, and avoids the plain forms.

The following is a short excerpt from his conversation with Bolat, who is 9 years older than

Murat, when Murat first introduced me to Bolat's winter pasture in Sawur Mountain in January

2013.

Example 6. Murat and Bolat

Murat: Syrttaj birewder surajtyn bolsa **siz-den**… ana Altynbek zhatyr ma dep,

      If there is a stranger asking you (HON2SG-ABL) "is Altynbek there?"

      ko'rgem zhok dese**ngiz**.

      [you] should say (HON2SG) "I haven't seen him."

      U'jge kirmese, u'jden ko'rmese bitti.

      As long as they don't enter the house and don't see [him] in the house, it's alright.

Bolat: Zhemenej ko'rip kojady goj. Zhakyn emes pa?

[People from] Zhemenej may see [him]. [It's] close, isn't it?

In the conversation above, Murat addresses Bolat by the second person honorific pronoun (*siz*) and the second person honorific predicative suffix (*-ngiz*), politely cautioning Bolat to keep me (Altynbek) from too many eyes during my stay in his winter dwelling. Perhaps Murat was self-conscious in his use of honorific forms to the fellow villager Bolat simply not to make the suggestion sound too intimidating. Given the potential bureaucratic trouble the foreign researcher could cause in the mountain pasture at the international border between China and Kazakhstan, such intimidation was quite reasonable indeed. Whether or not this is the case in the conversation above, however, Murat was clearly choosing to mark his deference to Bolat, when the age difference between the two men is not great enough to compel him to do so. In fact, many people of Kyzyl Tas use plain forms in similar situations.

Murat's tendency to speak more deferentially than others is also evident in his speech to his parents. Likewise, this is mirrored in his 12-year-old son Esbol's respectful speech pattern to his seniors, especially to his own father Murat. Murat and his son's deferential attitude toward elders is well known and positively evaluated among the Kyzyl Tas herders. For example, I often heard Esbol praised by comments like *a'kesin sondaj syjlajdy!* ("He respects his father so much!"), which also implicates a major praise for the good parenting in his family. Murat's own speech pattern, as well as the way he guides his son's behavior in general, appears to reflect his high regard for people who are *bijazy* (which can be variously translated as mild, tender, soft, polite, gentle, refined, elegant, graceful, delicate, modest, quiet, careful) and dislike of people who are *do'reki* (crude, rough, coarse, unrefined, rude, boorish), as the following interview

excerpt show:

Example 7. Murat Interview 1

Murat: Bijazy adam degen akyryn so'jlejtin, orynymen so'jlejtin

A gentle person means someone who speaks softly, who speaks appropriately

Altynbek: Orynymen so'jlejtin….

Speaks appropriately…

Murat: Sondaj adam.

Such a person.

Altynbek: Zhuwas adam. [pause] Do'reki adam bolsa…

A docile person. [pause] What about a crude person?

Murat: **WA**, **WA**, **WA** dejtin adam, zhyndanyp.

Someone who goes "wa, wa, wa" [loudly], being wildly angry (losing his/her temper)

This interview is taking place on the very last day of my fieldwork, by which time I have identified *bijazy* and *do'reki* as some of the most common terms that Murat, as well as many others in Kyzyl Tas, use in judging people's behavior. When asked to compare the two evaluative terms, Murat first defines *bijazy*, and then goes on to describe *do'reki*. It is noteworthy that both of these terms focus on how one speaks. In particular, we can observe that these two descriptors are tightly linked to the habitual volume of speech, *bijazy* to quietness and *do'reki* to loudness.

Another example of a reserved speaker is Ykan, son of Sa'tbek, whose lament for "the age of competition" we examined earlier in this chapter. Ykan is a herdsman in his early thirties, who shows a clear tendency to speak deferentially in the middle-range relations. In the following

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conversation, taking place in Murat's tent, Ykan uses honorific speech to his fellow herder

To'lew, who is only 4 years older than Ykan. Murat and his wife Da'ken are also present.

Example 8. Ykan and To'lew

Ykan: Bar ma, koj**yngyz**?

        Did you find your (HON) sheep?

To'lew: Zhok.

        No.

Here, Ykan chooses to use an honorific possessive suffix –*yngyz*, instead of using its plain

alternant –*yng*, to mark his deference to To'lew. His deferential speech is also widely praised

among the Kyzyl Tas herders. Like his father Sa'tbek, Ykan seems to have internalized the moral

value of modest speech. In response to my inquiry about his conversation with To'lew discussed

above, his *bazha* (wife's sister's husband) Murat also depicts his speech in a positive light:

Example 9. Murat Interview 2

Altynbek: Osy u'jding Ykan bar goj?

        You know, Ykan of that house?

        Anaw ku'ni To'lew kelgende bylaj dedi:

        The other day when To'lew came, he said this:

        Bar ma kojyngyz dedi, ija?

        "Did you find your (HON) sheep?" Right?

        Myna To'lew Ykannan ondaj u'lken emes shygar?

This guy To'lew isn't much older than Ykan, I think?

Murat: U'lken goj.

He's older, isn't he?

Altynbek: Ko'p u'lken emes shygar?

Not that much older, I think?

Murat: [xxxx] u'lken. U'sh to'rt zhas u'lken.

[unintelligible] older. Three to four years older.

Altynbek: U'sh to'rt zhas u'lken, je?

Three to four years older, huh?

Nege kojyngyz dejdi, kojyng demej?

Why say your (HON) sheep, instead of saying your (PLN) sheep?

Murat: Ol To'lewge ajtkan so'z goj.

That's what he said to To'lew.

Altybek: Je, To'lewge.

Yes, to To'lew.

Murat.   Aaa. Siz degen so'z bolmaj ma?

Uh, isn't the word "you (HON)" appropriate?

[deleted]

Kalaj bolmasyn, siz degen zhaksy goj,

Whatever the situation is, isn't it nice [of him] to say 'you' (HON)?

U'lken bolsa da, kishi bolsa da.

whether someone's older or younger.

Syjlagandyk ol.

It's respectfulness

Altynbek: Syjlagandyk…

Respectfulness…

Murat: Siz degen so'z sypajy so'z degen sol.

This is what people mean when they say 'you' (HON) is a polite word.

Syjlagan so'z.

It's a word that respects.

In this interview, Murat explains that Ykan's word choice is not only socially appropriate but also morally right. He goes further to suggest that it is desirable to use honorific forms even when the addressee is younger than the speaker. This is obviously an exaggerated statement, and I witnessed no such usage in practice[94], but it should be noted that for many Kazak speakers, honorific forms themselves are imbued with a higher moral worth than their plain equivalents.

Among the female speakers, Altyn and Arshyn provide the best examples of reserved speakers. Altyn is the 31-year-old wife of Asan, who is one of my main hosts in Kyzyl Tas. In the following conversation taking place in her house, Altyn is offering yoghurt to Murat, a close friend, neighbor, and classmate of her husband Asan.

Example 10. Altyn and Murat

Altyn: [Ajran] Ish**ingiz**!

   Drink (HON) [yoghurt]!

Murat: Boldy.

   I'm fine.

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[94] The only exception is the case in which an old herdsman in his late sixties used honorific forms to a poor married couple in their mid-thirties and mid-twenties during the first month of my fieldwork. The couple was my host family at the time, and they also commented later that his speech was rather odd. I was not able to meet the old man again, and did not have a chance to investigate any further. My speculation is that he was paying respect to the younger man's noble lineage (*To're*), whose authority was long gone for a century. My presence may also have been a factor.

Although Murat is only 4 years older than Altyn, Altyn attaches to the verb *ish-* ("drink") an honorific predicative suffix *–ingiz* to show her respect for the addressee Murat. Given the small age difference between them and the closeness of the two families, it would have been perfectly acceptable for her to use plain speech to him, as many others in Kyzyl Tas do in such situations. For this particular case, I have no better interpretation than this: Altyn is simply making an effort to exercise her ideal of respectful speech as a part of her hospitality shown to her neighbor Murat, who is being served at her home. Her deferential speech pattern is noticeably reproduced in her 8-year-old son Pa'tijk (we encountered him in Chapter 3), whose pragmatic mastery of honorific speech is unparalleled among the children of his age in Kyzyl Tas.

A similar speech pattern is found in Arshyn, a 37-year-old female herder. She is praised by Rashyjla (encountered in Chapter 3) for her submissive behavior as the daughter-in-law in the family, and many of her neighbors also describe her as "a good person" (*zhaksy adam*). The following conversation between Arshyn and Bolat, who is 7 years older than Arshyn, is taking place in her house in Kyzyl Tas, a few days before her family's migration to its winter pasture.

Example 11. Arshyn and Bolat

Arshyn: Kajpa-**ngyz**ga zhat**yngyz**.

       Rest (HON) in your (HON) settlement area.

       Biz shygajyk.

       Let us go up [to the winter pasture].

Bolat: Je.

       Yeah.

Arshyn: mal**yngyz**dy alyp ap.

Taking your (HON) livestock.

What Arshyn is suggesting here is that Bolat, her husband's brother-in-law and herding partner, should stay home, while she and her husband O'men will take his livestock along with their own to the winter pasture for Bolat. The two families always form a herding group in their winter pastures at Sawur Mountain, but because moving to Sawur may be too difficult for Bolat's sickly youngest son, Arshyn is proposing that she and O'men will take care of his animals over the winter, so that he and his family can stay comfortably in his house located in the settlement area near Kyzyl Tas without having to migrate to his distant winter pasture at Sawur. Although Bolat is not taking the idea seriously, Arshyn's act of suggestion itself has a twofold ethical significance: it is not only a nice thing to say to him, but it also takes an ethical form. Despite the relatively small age difference between the two, Arshyn is using a series of honorific morphemes – the honorific possessive suffix (*-ngyz*) to the noun *Kajpa* (referring to his house in the new settlement area), the honorific predicative suffix (*-yngyz*) to the verb *zhat-* ("to lie down," "to rest"), and the honorific suffix (*-yngyz*) to the noun *mal* ("animal," "livestock") – in this transcript above. Her repetition of similar sounding morphemes in such a short stretch of talk (in a few seconds) creates a poetic effect and draws attention to the material quality of the repeated sound, which in turn accentuates the speaker's modesty and respectfulness.

But how can we be sure that the repeated occurrence of similar sounding morphemes here is the result of Arshyn's deliberate effort to create such an effect rather than a mere coincidence? A strong indication of her deliberation lies in the first sentence *Kajpa-ngyzga zhatyngyz* ("Rest in your place in the settlement area"). The first morpheme *kajpa*, which comes from Chinese *kaifa* "development," basically refers to the newly established residential area near Kyzyl Tas to make

many of the local herding families more sedentary. Because the area itself does not belong to anyone in particular, and because everyone present in the conversation above, including O'men and the rest of his family members, knows that Bolat has a house in the area, it is unnecessary in a practical sense to specify whose house in *Kajpa* she is talking about. A simpler and much more common (unmarked) way to say this without altering the degree of respect to the addressee is *Kajpaga zhat***yngyz** ("Rest in the settlement area"), which contains the honorific predicative suffix *–yngyz*, but not the honorific possessive suffix *–ngyz* attached to *kajpa* as in Arshyn's sentence above.[95] Therefore, rather than merely adhering to some routinized pattern of linguistic deference to the addressee, Arshyn's linguistic labor is most probably a willful choice she makes to intensify the poetic effect, thereby highlighting the speaker's own moral agency as a modest and respectful person.

Now let us take a look at some of the "relaxed speakers." The following conversation is taking place in the winter house of a 34-year-old herdsman Kanat. Also present are his 31-year-old-wife Ku'la, their neighbor Nurlan (39-year-old male) and his wife Zyjrash (37-year-old). Ku'la uses plain forms to Nurlan, who is 8 years older than she is.

Example 12. Ku'la and Nurlan

Nurlan: Alpys segiz shygar?

     Must be [nineteen] sixty eight?

Ku'la: Ojbajoj, alpys segiz bolsa

     Come on, if [she was born in] sixty eight,

     bir Bakytpen zhasty (xxxx) Bakytpen.

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[95] The omission of the possessive suffix does not result in a violation of the co-occurrence pattern.

[she would be] an age-mate with Bakyt, [unintelligible], with Bakyt.

Nurlan: Zhok, seksen neshe…

No, eighty something…

Ku'la: Zhoga, **sening** o'z**ing** zhetpis to'rt bop otursa**ng**

No, you (PLN) yourself (PLN) being (PLN) from seventy four,

Zhyndymy**syng**

Are you (PLN) crazy?

Nurlan: Menen kishi emespising sen?

Aren't you younger than I am? (addressing Zyjrash)

In this conversation, Ku'la and Nurlan are trying to figure out in what year Zyjrash was born. Zyjrash is also present in the conversation and about to reveal that she was born in 1977, but in this particular stretch of talk, she remains silent, perhaps playfully, not interrupting Ku'la and Nurlan for the moment. Here, Ku'la consistently uses various plain forms – the plain genitive pronoun (*sening*), a plain possessive suffix (*-ing*), a plain predicative suffix (*-ng*), and another plain predicative suffix (*-syng*) – to the addressee Nurlan, who is 8 years older than she is. When he first guesses that she was born in 1968, Ku'la laughs and points out that it is an overestimation, which renders Zyjrash as old as Bakyt, another Kyzyl Tas herder, who is much older than she actually is. When Nurlan tries again, guessing that Zyjrash was born in the 1980s, Ku'la also rejects the idea as an underestimation. In mentioning Nurlan's exact age while maintaining plain forms to him, Ku'la is in effect making a covert statement that the age difference between them is small enough to allow her plain speech; he is of her generation, if not of her age. Whether or not Nurlan is intentionally giving wrong answers is beside the point. For our purpose, it is sufficient to note that Ku'la's speech to Nurlan exemplifies a relatively relaxed

speech pattern, given that Nurlan is 8 years older than Ku'la.

A more conspicuous "relaxed" speaker is Kajrat, a Kyzyl Tas herdsman in his early thirties, who was one of my main hosts during the fieldwork. In the conversation below, Kajrat is speaking with Kenzhebek, an older herdsman in his late forties. The two men are fifteen years apart.

Example 13. Kajrat and Kenzhebek

Kenzhebek: [xxxx] Eee zhatady.

        [unintelligible] Yeah: [the sheep will] rest.

        Erbol-dyng kojy kosylmasa baska eshkim de kirmejdi.

        Unless Erbol's sheep get mixed up, no one's going to enter [that pasture].

        Al myna zherde oturasyng.

        Now, you dwell in this place.

        Ana belge de asyp ketse de tura zhu'giresing.

        If [your sheep] cross over to that ridge, you run straight [toward them].

        Myna belge de asyp ketse de tura zhu'giresing.

        If [they] cross over to this ridge, you run straight [toward them].

Kajrat: Da'l ajtty**ng**!

        [You] said (PLN) exactly!

Kenzhebek: Ony endi o'zing bil, birak.

        But you decide it yourself then.

        Mal bakkan adamsyng goj.

        You are a livestock breeder.

In Kajrat's tent, the two men are discussing the best grazing spot in Sajlybaj, one of the late spring/early summer pastures of Kyzyl Tas herders. As an older herder, Kenzhebek is offering his wisdom about the comparative advantages of different spots around Sajlybaj. After describing the benefits of the spot he thinks Kajrat should choose, such as his sheep staying peacefully and no one else's sheep conjoining his, Kenzhebek goes on to speak of the downside of the grazing area Kajrat has in mind: basically, his sheep would be restless, keeping him busy running after them all the time. On this point, Kajrat fully agrees with Kenzhebek. Kajrat's line *Da'l ajttyng* contains a plain predicative suffix *–ng*, attached to the verb *ajt-* "to say" and the past-tense suffix *–ty*. In his response, Kenzhebek adds that Kajart, as an experienced herdsman, should decide it himself. His response can be read as something like this: "If you think of yourself as equal to me and won't recognize my seniority, as implied in your plain speech, you don't need to take my advice. Aren't you just as knowledgeable as I am?" although it is impossible to tell what is really going on in Kenzhebek's mind. Even if this is indeed the case, Kenzhebek's response is not explicit enough to break the normal flow of conversation.

Just as the reserved speakers like Murat and Altyn influence their children Esbol and Pa'tijk to be reserved speakers, Kajrat's tendency to speak less respectfully than others also appears to breed a similar tendency in his sons Darkan and Mejrambek, who show markedly less respectful speech patterns compared to those of Esbol and Pa'tijk. In one instance, as we saw in Chapter 3, Darkan's disrespectful speech to his mother led his aunt Mejramkan to scold him, saying *Ijbalyk degen kajda, sende?* ("Where do you have something called politeness?"). Her metapragmatic comment on Darkan's speech is also an indirect criticism of his upbringing,

which in turn contributes to the low moral esteem[96] Kajrat enjoys in Kyzyl Tas.

In sum, after some dramatic changes in social organization in the second half of the twentieth century, the Altai Kazaks today continue to recognize certain types of relations in which one is expected to show deference to the other. These relations contrast with many other types of relations demanding more casual, non-deferential fashions of interaction. Between these two extremes of social relations, there exist many middle-range relations in which both deferential and non-deferential styles of communication are considered appropriate, allowing variation among different speakers in their tendency to speak deferentially. This stylistic variation within the middle-range relations is often taken to reflect individual speakers' intention rather than some rigid social rules of verbal interaction. As I will show, Kyzyl Tas herders' honorific speech patterns and metapragmatic comments suggest that people are generally judged in moral terms on the basis of their speech in occasions where there is more than one pragmatically acceptable speech form, the choice from which can be seen as an intentional act. Thus, a crucial element in the process of moral evaluation of speech – ethicalization of speech – is the elimination of what is considered socially determined.

2. Linguistic Conditioning: Shared Knowledge of Honorific Forms

As we have seen above, the addressee's age is practically the only sociological variable that affects whether the speaker uses honorific or plain forms in a given situation. There are in

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[96] This will be manifest in some of the metapragmatic discourse about Kajrat's speech habit later in the chapter.

fact some other social factors – notably social settings and routines as well as gender issues – that do seem to affect linguistic deference in interaction. For example, when hosting a guest, Kyzyl Tas herders tend to speak more deferentially than they usually do; women are more often expected to use honorifics than men are, as they are married into their husband's family, in which they are strictly deferential toward their senior affines. Compared to the addressee's age, however, these factors are either much less salient in metapragmatic discourse about honorific speech, or too much like social determinants to give rise to individual variation in interaction.

Furthermore, the Kazak herders of Kyzyl Tas, or Altai Kazak herders more generally, show very little social stratification to the extent that neither honorific nor plain speech is associated with any particular social group. In other words, it is widely thought that knowledge – and control – of honorific forms is equally distributed among all Kazak speakers, with the exception of small children who are still learning proper honorific speech. This is quite different from many case studies in which knowledge of honorifics is closely associated with some elite groups in society (e.g., Agha 1993; 1998; 2007, Silverstein1979; 2003, Errington 1984; 1988; 1998). In these studies, the speaker's control of the whole range of honorific forms reveals his or her elite social background such as affiliation with the royal court, aristocratic ancestry, or prestigious place of origin. Similarly, in Garfinkel's (1967: 47-48) famous experiment of extra politeness in speech, one of the responses was "What are you being so superior about?" suggesting that deferential speech style is commonly associated with high- status speakers. By contrast, my research finds no social group that presumably speaks "better" honorifics than others, thus leaving no room for such indexical link between sociological categories and speech varieties. Instead, all Kazak honorific forms are considered attainable for everyone. This perceived availability, in turn, renders the speaker's use of certain honorific or plain forms as a choice

among options, inviting other people's inference about moral intention behind the language use.

A crucial point here is that as a speaker indexical, Kazak honorific speech does afford the inference of the speaker's intention, rather than revealing his or her social-structural positions. In *Ethical Life*, Keane (2016: 85-86) observes: "In actual use, the flexibility and power of language depend, in part, on the role played by inferences. Not all inferences point to intentions (one can infer someone's hometown from their accent, for example, their education from their vocabulary, or their emotional state from their tone of voice), but many do." The perceived availability of honorific forms to all speakers – the near-universal "social domain" (Agha 2005; 2007) of users of honorifics – seems to induce the Kyzyl Tas herders to infer moral intentions from someone's use of honorific or plain speech. For them, Kazak honorific speech can function as an index of the speaker's ethical qualities precisely because they are not reading sociological facts off of it.

The tacit understanding that honorific forms are available to all speakers is in part grounded on the fairly regular, dichotomous paradigm of Kazak honorifics, shown in the following table (identical to Table 2-6 in Chapter 2).

Table 4-1. Grammatical Repertoires of Honorifics

		singular		plural	
		plain	honorific	plain	honorific
pronouns		sen	siz	sender	sizder
possessive suffixes		-ng, -yng, -ing	-ngyz, -yngyz, -ngiz, -ingiz	-daryng, -taryng, -dering, -tering	-daryngz, -taryngyz, -deringiz, -teringiz
predicative suffixes	type A	-syng, -sing	-syz, -siz	-syngdar, -singder	-syzdar, -sizder
	type B	-ng	-ngyz, -ngiz	-ngdar, -ngder	-ngyzdar, -ngizder
	type C	ø	-ngyz, -yngdar, -ngiz, -ingiz	-ngdar, -yngdar, -ngder, -ingder	-ngyzdar, -yngyzdar, -ngizder, -ingizder

Such clear morphological contrasts between honorific and plain morphemes seem to reinforce the sense that the speaker is given choice between the two contrasting speech styles. The speaker's intention is believed to act upon the need to choose between the two well-defined options in the publically available paradigm. "Consciousness finds itself inevitably facing the necessity of having to choose a language. With each literary-verbal performance, consciousness must actively orient itself amidst heteroglossia." (Bakhtin 1981: 295) The notion of conscious choice among multiple linguistic varieties is indeed a central element in the ethicalization of speech. In this light, Keane (2011: 175) writes that "[a] fully self-aware moral actor would thus seem to depend on the existence of differing, or even conflicting voices, and upon the possibility of moving among the different options afforded by semiotic form." (See Agha 2005 on "voice" and speech contrasts.) Kyzyl Tas herders imagine someone's moral intention to be located in the active choice from the 'heteroglossia' in the paradigm of honorifics, believed to be available to all speakers.

Moreover, when discussing honorific forms, my informants tended to focus on only one or two morphemes to refer to the honorific or plain speech style, depicting the paradigm as simpler and more schematic than it actually is. For example, they used the term *sen de-* (literally, "to say *sen*") to refer to the use of plain forms in general, and *siz de-* (literally, "to say *siz*") to refer to the use of honorific forms in general. This is illustrated in the following interview with Rashyjla, a 60-year-old female (see Chapter 3 for a fuller presentation of this interview).

Example 14. Rashyjla Interview 1
Altynbek: Sodan kejin baladar so'jlegende

After that, when children are talking

kalaj so'jlese ursady?

What way of speaking ends up getting scolded?

Kalaj so'jlese oj, zhaksy bala dejdi?

What way of speaking invites comments like "Oh, good kid"?

Ra'shijla: Bala so'jlegende myjsaly

When a child talks, for example

u'lken meni **siz** dep so'jlew kerek, **siz**!

s/he needs to say *siz* while talking to me who is older, *siz*!

Myjsaly kishirejip, bala kishirejip, mejirbandykpen.

for example, being modest, with kindness

She contrasts this with her negative depiction of plain speech:

Example 15. Rashyjla Interview 2

Rashyjla: Bizding Kazakta **sen** dep kabagyn tu'jip,

Among us Kazaks, if [a child], saying *sen*, knitting his/her brows,

ataga, myjsaly, a'kesine, sheshesine so'jlese

speaks to the grandfather, for example, to the father, to the mother

ol bala zhaman bala.

that child is a bad child.

Ol zhek ko'redi. Zhaksy bolmajdy.

[They] dislike him/her. It is not good.

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In the interview excerpts above, the underlying assumption is that speakers, even children, are able to decide which of the two speech varieties to use depending on their mood or intention. This implicit notion of choice among available options provides a crucial foundation for moral evaluations about the speaker, who is deemed responsible for deliberately choosing one over the other speech style.

Such tacit conception of choice among options available to every speaker can be glimpsed in other instances in which Kazak herders compare the two speech styles. In the following interview excerpt, Rakymbaj, a 69-year-old male herder, discusses a hypothetical situation of marriage negotiation to illustrate the pragmatic differences between the plain and honorific styles.

Example 16. Rakymbaj Interview 1

Rakymbaj: Myjsaly bir zherge kudalykka baryp,

For example, visiting someone's place for match-making,

aj, **sening** balangdy men algaj turym dese,

if one says, "Hey, I'm here to take your (PLN) child,"

ol…kishkene so'degej so'z…artyk so'z endi.

that's…a bit rude words…undue words now.

Sypajylykpen

With politeness,

sizding balamen bizding bala makuldasypty degen so'z…

saying something like "Your (HON2SG) child and our (1PL) child have agreed"

sypajy…ol anagan zhagymdy myjsaly…

would be polite…it is pleasant to that person, for example…

Altynbek: Zhagymdy…

Pleasant…

Rakymbaj: Zhagymdy.

Pleasant.

Endi anaw zhagymsyz.

Now that [other] one is unpleasant.

Do'reki ajttyng dejdi goj. Do'reki ajttyng dejdi.

They say "You spoke coarsely," you see. They say "You spoke coarsely."

Altynbek: Onda do'reki so'z dej ma?

Then, do they say "coarse words"?

Rakymbaj: E, do'reki so'z. Do'reki so'z degen so'z…

Yeah, coarse words. What is called coarse words…

anany…so'zding magynasy birdej bolganymen

that…although the meaning of the word is the same,

sonyng o'zi syjymdylygy bojynsha ajtpadyng dejdi goj.

they surely say "You didn't tell it according to its suitability."

As in the interview with Rashyjla, we can see that Rakymbaj's metapragmatic comments also focus on pronominal forms – *sen* and *siz* – and their pragmatic values. Here again, a tacit conception is that all speakers know both speech forms, from which they can freely choose; which style the speaker chooses to use is affected primarily by situational factors, rather than the speaker's sociological background. Having multiple options available "meaning the same thing," the speaker is morally responsible for "saying a word according to its suitability" in a given situation, suggests Rakymbaj. Later in the interview, he summarizes that it is wise to adhere to honorific speech, because plain speech risks appearing as a bad-tempered person:

Example 17. Rakymbaj Interview 2

Rakymbaj: Sonda endi katty ajtpaw u'shi'n

Thus, now, in order not to speak hard,

siz biz degen so'zdi…

[saying] the words *siz* (HON2SG), *biz* (1PL)…

sonyng ana u'lken zhagyna magynasyn tu'sindirip kep,

explaining (clearing up) the [words'] meaning on the whole,

ajtkaj oturgan ojdy ajtuw kerek koj.

one needs to tell the thought s/he is trying to tell, you see.

Ana shugul ajtyp kalsang

If you talk hastily (abruptly),

ananyng minezi zhaman edi, shugul zhawap kajtaryp tastajdy [xxxx]

[they will think] "that one's disposition is bad, [he] replies too hastily."

Notice that as a speaker indexical, plain speech – variously described here as *sen de-* "to say sen,"

katty ajt- "to speak hard," or *shugul ajt-* "to speak hastily" – is mainly seen as poor moral

conduct – a sign of personal deficiency, far from invoking some sociological category. Such

negative evaluations as having a bad temperament, he claims, can be avoided as long as one uses

the right kind of pronouns in conversation. It is also implied that the polite speech is considered

to be a kind of skill attainable through the speaker's deliberate efforts, patience, and moral

cultivation, which overcome the innate human qualities (untamed natures) like arrogance and

impulsiveness, revealed through the hardness and hugeness of one's speech. We might say that

variation in honorific speech across different speakers is taken up in folk psychological terms,

rather than folk sociological terms. In another extended conversation with me, Rakymbaj compared the two speech styles in terms of their different purposes or intentions of the speaker. He described plain speech as *kyskartyp erekeletip ajtkan so'z* ("words spoken having been shortened to act like a pampered child"), and honorific speech as *majdalap kurmet kyp ajtkan so'z* (words spoken having been made mild to show respect). Underlying all of his comments is the notion that the choice between these two speech varieties is made at will according to the speaker's own mood or intent in a given situation. Obviously, the paradigm of Kazak honorifics is more complex than a matter of merely switching between different pronouns as Rakymbaj's comments seem to suggest. The perceived simplicity of the paradigm, however, contributes to the ethicalization of honorific speech. A central point in this ideological construction is that the speaker is capable of – and therefore responsible for – choosing between the two well-defined speech varieties available to everyone.

Similar ideas are found in an interview with a younger herdsman Kanat and his wife Ku'la, both in their 30s. Although focusing more on predicative suffixes than on pronouns, Kanat and Ku'la's comments also seem to depict Kazak honorifics to be simple, attainable for everyone, and devoid of any obvious sociological speaker indexical.

Example 18. Kanat and Ku'la Interview 1

Altynbek: Kanat, beri kelshi! Birdeme surajyn dejim.

        Kanat, come here! I'd like to ask you something.

        A'lgi, zhanga oturganda,

        Well, just now [when people were] sitting,

        kejde iship al dejdi, kejde iship alyngyz dejdi.

[they] sometimes said "Drink" (PLN), sometimes said "Drink" (HON)

Onda iship al degen so'zding bir tu'ri goj.

Then, to say "Drink" (PLN) must be one kind of speech, right?

Iship alyngyz degen tagy baska bir tu'ri, ija'?

To say, "Drink" (HON) is yet another kind, yeah?

Kanat: Je.

(&Ku'a)   Yeah.

Altynbek: Ataw bar ma?

    Is there a name [for it]?

Kanat: Ataw zhok.

    There is no name.

Altynbek: Kandaj so'z dejdi? Nemene so'z dejdi?

    What kind of speech do [people] say it is? What speech do [they] say it is?

Kanat: Anaw…nemene so'z degende…

    That…as [you] say what speech…

    iship alyngyz, "yz" degen so'z, ana u'lken adamga syjlasymdy.

    "Drink'" (HON), saying -*yz*, that is polite [to say] to older people.

Ku'la: Syjlap ajtkan so'z

    Words said in a respectful way

We can see in this interview with Kanat and Ku'la that they also recognized two distinct speech styles, and that one of them is a more special one, appropriate for the older addressee. Kanat singles out a segment /yz/ of the honorific predicative suffix –*ngyz* as a central locus of linguistic politeness. This should be understood in relation with Rakymbaj's representation of plain speech as "words that are shortened." Indeed, many Kazak honorific suffixes are formally constructed

by attaching one syllable, either *yz* or *iz,* to their plain alternants (see Table 4-1). In such cases, plain forms are at least one syllable shorter than their honorific equivalents, e.g., *bardyng*, "you went" (PLN), *bardyngyz*, "you went" (HON); *dizeng* "your knee" (PLN), *dizengiz* "your knee" (HON). According to Kanat and Ku'la, while the polite speech style marks respect for seniority, the plain style is more appropriate for the addressee who is similar in age to the speaker. Thus, Kanat says:

Example 19. Kanat and Ku'la Interview 2

Kanat: Myjsal u'shi'n, otuz alty, otuz zhetige kelgen ekemiz zhasty bolsak, myjsal u'shi'n.

For example, the two of us who reached 36, 37, if we are of the same age, for example,

Shaj ish, u'j, zhe!

[we say] "Drink (PLN), oy, eat (PLN)!" (loudly)

The plain style is inappropriate, Ku'la adds, when speaking with older people.

Example 20. Kanat and Ku'la Interview 3

Ku'la': Endi u'lken adamga ish, shaj ish deseng

Now if you say "Drink" (PLN), "drink (PLN) tea" to older people

bir tu'rli estiledi emes pa?

doesn't it sound strange?

Kanat: Onda katty ajtkan so'z

Then they are hard-spoken words (words said strongly/loudly).

Ku'la': Katty ajtkan uksagan.

It's like hard-spoken words (words said strongly/loudly).

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Ish, zhep ish degen

Words like "Drink (PLN), eat and drink (PLN)"

u'lken adamga ajtuwga o'te kolajsyz goj.

[are] too inappropriate to say to older people, you see.

Toward the end of the interview, Kanat and Ku'la associate plain speech with ordinariness, haste, rapidity, and forcefulness:

Example 21. Kanat and Ku'la Interview 4

Ku'la':   A'dette u'jde Kanat ekewimiz

           Usually, at home, the two of us, Kanat and I

           u'j shajyngdy ishsengshi dep ajta salamyz.

           do say "oy, if [you] drink (PLN) your (PLN] tea!"

           Ol bola beredi.

           This is fine / This will do.

Altynbek: Sol nemene so'z dejdi?

           What is that speech called?

Ku'la':   Ol endi a'dettegi o'zimizding ajtylgan so'z goj,

           Now it's ordinary, spoken words of our own, you see.

           endi shajyngdy ish

           Now, "Drink (PLN) your (PLN) tea!"

           Ne gyp otursyng

           "What are you doing (PLN)?"

           Tez ishsengshi degen

           "Why don't you drink (PLN)" and such words

endi bir zhumus birdemege asyksa ajtylgan so'z uksagan.

now [are] like words said while busy with some work or something.

Tez tez iship zhumusyngdy iste degen uksagan.

like "Drink (PLN) quickly and do (PLN) your (PLN) work!"

myjsaly.

for example.

Altynbek: Ataw zhok?

No name?

Ku'la: Ataw zhok.

No name.

Altynbek: Ishingiz degen syjly so'z…

Saying "Drink (HON)" is a respectful word…

Kanat: Syjly so'z, sol so'z zhaksy so'z.

Respectful word, good word.

Ku'la':   Ishingiz, Shaj ishingiz,

"Drink (HON)," "Drink (HON) tea"

Nege iship almadyngyz degen so'zder syjly so'zder goj.

"Why didn't [you] drink (HON)" and such [are] respectful words, you see.

Altynbek: Syjly.

Respectful.

Ku'la':   Endi ish shajyngdy

Now, "Drink (PLN) your (PLN) tea!"

tez ishsengshi, shajyngdy degen so'z

"Won't you drink (PLN) quickly your (PLN) tea" and such

ol katangdaw so'z.

that's stiffer (stronger, more stubborn) words.

Altynbek: Katangdaw.

> Stiffer (stronger, more stubborn).

Ku'la':   Je. Tez ajtylgan so'z…

> Yeah. Words told quickly.

Kanat and Ku'la's comments confirm that any Kazak speaker is capable of deploying both honorific and plain forms according to different situations. Although honorific forms seem to require more care, compared to "quickly spoken" plain forms, the underlying implication is that every competent speaker knows and controls the both speech styles and is able to choose one or the other, depending on the age difference (and closeness) between the speaker and the addressee. Nowhere in these comments is an indication that someone's honorific speech repertoire may be restricted by his or her sociological background.

As evidenced in a number of interview excerpts above, the pragmatic knowledge of Kazak honorifics is believed to be equally distributed among speakers. The comments from the interviewees locate the key distinction between the honorific and plain styles in either pronominal or suffixal contrasts, implying that the speaker only needs to choose one or the other form. What are the conditions under which a certain linguistic form can be a sign of some ethical quality? One such condition, I emphasize, is this tacit conception of choice built into the way Kyzyl Tas herders think about their honorific speech. The notion of choice among options, then, is grounded in the perceived availability of the honorific forms attainable for everyone. None of my informants identifies any particular social group that presumably knows honorifics better than others. Such bracketing of the sociological renders the speaker's use of honorific or plain forms as a deliberate choice with intention, which is subject to moral evaluation such as "spoken without care," "bad-tempered person," or "being modest with kindness."

3. Cultural Conditioning: Prevailing Ethical Stereotypes Mapped onto Contrasting Registers

So far, our discussion of the ethicalization of speech has concentrated on the active, intentional aspects of speech, mainly against the backdrop of the socially determined aspects of speech. We have learned that in Kazak herders's conceptions of speech, the ethical is constituted through bracketing of the sociological. For them, honorific speech can have ethical significance, when the speaker, fully capable of using all the required linguistic repertoires, uses honorific or plain forms in a middle range relation with the hearer. In Kyzyl Tas herders' conception of language use, honorific speech can index some ethical virtue of an individual, because there exists a wide range of social relations in which the speaker is deemed responsible for willfully choosing between the honorific or plain speech styles, both of which are considered pragmatically appropriate and available to any competent speaker. When the speaker is not restricted by factors like some rigid social rules of language use or one's own sociological background, the reasoning goes, the speaker's linguistic choice must be an intentional act, which can be evaluated in moral terms.

Questions still remain, however. Even if we accept the intentionality of the speaker in choosing one linguistic variety over the other, it does not automatically follow that the intention behind the choice would be ethical. The intention may have nothing to do with ethics. People may well use polite language simply to save face or trick someone, for instance. Moreover, it is equally possible that plain speech is valued more positively over honorific speech. Indeed, as many studies of honorifics (e.g., Hill 1998) report, a community is often divided into those who

uphold honorific speech and those who find it oppressive. No linguistic form is inherently indexical of an ethical quality. Then, how does honorific speech come to be seen among Kyzyl Tas herders predominantly as a sign of some ethical virtues like modesty? Rather than trying to de-naturalize the indexical link between speech forms and ethical notions, my aim here is to examine how the link is made to seem natural to Kyzyl Tas herders. I will do so by highlighting the systematic conventionality of a Kazak cultural scheme linking speech varieties and images of persons.

Even when there is a choice among multiple speech styles, as in the Kazak middle-range relations, speakers are not free from the prevailing stereotypes associated with those varieties. Such associations are conventional. Recall, for example, Ykan's conversation with To'lew we examined earlier. Ykan used honorific speech to address To'lew, who is only 4 years older than Ykan. Although it would have been also appropriate for Ykan to address To'lew in plain speech, his use of plain forms would have conveyed a very different image of himself to the people present at the conversation, including To'lew, Murat, and Da'ken, because of the conventionalized association between forms of talk and images of persons. Regarding the conventionality of verbal communication, Sapir long ago pointed out:

For instance, you might have a certain kind of feeling, but if you have not quite the word to express it, you use an approximate expression for your feeling; and the person with whom you are communicating interprets you as having such-and-such a feeling, which he then imputes to a mysterious something in your personality. At that moment, you were at the mercy of the techniques of your language. You may not have been able to

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express quite what you wanted to express. So far, then, from your manipulating the cultural machine called "language," you were to a certain very significant extent being manipulated by it. (Sapir 1930: 214)

Similarly, he noted in another paper:

One finds people, for example, who have very pleasant voices, but it is society that has made them pleasant……This nuclear or primary quality of voice has in many, perhaps in all, cases a symbolic value. These unconscious symbolisms are of course not limited to the voice. If you wrinkle your brow, that is a symbol of a certain attitude. If you act expansively by stretching out your arms, that is a symbol of a changed attitude to your immediate environment. In the same manner the voice is to a large extent an unconscious symbolization of one's general attitude. (Sapir 1985[1927]: 537)

For Ykan, he could choose plain speech in the situation, but, as an individual speaker, he probably could not dissociate the speech form he used from the stereotypical image conventionally attached to it. Thus, the speaker's choice of a linguistic form over the others is usually taken by other people to be "a symbol of a certain attitude," quite separate from the real intention behind the choice.

Clearly, communication of ethical qualities greatly depends on the historicity of semiotic

materials that mediate it. In *Ethical Life*, Keane schematizes the process by which the ties between semiotic forms and ethical stereotypes are reproduced at different moments of interaction across time:

Each performance may, potentially, continue to stabilize the ties between verbal style and ethical type of or figure, these voices becoming easily available for appropriation and circulation by other speakers. In this way, to those who recognize them, the speech style and social type may come to seem to be bound together quite naturally……Voices are only recognizable if they evoke types, ethical figures that are actually or potentially known in other contexts beyond *this* particular moment of interaction. They do not vanish at the end of any given conversation. Conversely, those figures' reality depends on their recurrent invocation in concrete interactions and on their being recognizable by other persons. Like ancient gods, once people cease to make them offerings, they cease to exist. (Keane 2016: 155, see Agha 2005; 2007)

Such historicity is undoubtedly a very important component of the ethicalization of honorific forms. They have been used to invoke certain ethical categories, and people continue to use the same recognizable semiotic forms in order to communicate those ethical categories. But how can we be sure that a certain semiotic form consistently invokes a certain ethical type? Is the indexical consistency based solely on repetition? Or, to use Keane's metaphor, is it enough to keep making ancient gods offerings? In order for each invocation to be effective, it requires a language ideology that substantiates and naturalizes the indexical tie between a linguistic form

and an ethical category.

At the core of this ideological construction lies *systematic iconicity between different sets of contrast* – in particular, between contrasting linguistic forms and contrasting images of persons. It is important to note here that iconicity is built on contrasts. Thus, "a system of images of languages" (Bakhtin 1981" 416) is solidified by establishing contrasts among them. In "Discourse in the Novel," Bakhtin (1981: 361) notes that "the novelistic hybrid is *an artistically organized system for bringing different languages in contact with one another*, a system having as its goal the illumination of one language by means of another, the carving-out of a living image of another language." In the ethicalization of speech among Kyzyl Tas herders, the image of honorific speech is created on the basis of its contrast with the image of plain speech.

The imagistic contrast of honorific and plain speech styles is illustrated in the following two instances of talk. In the first example, Rakymbaj is negotiating with Sejil, who is trying to collect a pasture protection fee. To strengthen his position in the negotiation, Rakymbaj quotes government officials in a negative light. In the second example Rakymbaj is consulting with his close neighbor about pasture protection fee. This time, he approves what government officials say. Let us first take a look at his conversation with Sejil:

Example 22. Rakymbaj and Sejil

Rakymbaj: Al, **sender** renzhime**ngder**, koruw-akysyn ber**ingder**

      "Well, you (PLN2PL) [should] not be upset (PLN2PL).

      Koruw-akysyn ber**ingder**,

      Give (PLN2PL) the protection fee.

O da renzhimesin. Koruw-akysyn alsyn degeni.

Also may he not be upset; let him get the protection fee," [the officials] have said.

Ajtkan so'z so'z.

That's what they said.

Sejil: Biz, bizdiki de sol goj, endi.

That's also our…ours (what we're saying), now, you see.

Given that his main goal is to emphasize the unjustness of the fee, Rakymbaj quotes the government suggestion to pay the fee only to refute it later. Notice that all second person references in the reported speech are in plain forms. Now, consider his conversation with his neighbor Adal two days later, in which he approves the government's statement.

Example 23. Rakymbaj and Adal

Rakymbaj: Awuldyk zhaksy istep otur eken.

The township government is performing [handling it] well.

Adal: Osy kezde ma?

[You mean] these days?

Rakymbaj: Je. Toktam zhazyp kojdyk

Yeah. "[We] have written (1PL) a resolution.

o'zder**ingiz**ge ko'rsetemiz

[We would like to] show (1PL) it to you (HON2PL).

U'jlespejtin zherin alyp tystajmyz

[We will] eliminate (1PL) inappropriate parts.

Kosatyn zherin kosamyz dejdi.

[We will] add (1PL) parts [that need] to be added," they say.

In this conversation, Rakymbaj is clearly approving how the government invited herders' opinion before finalizing the resolution to handle the issue. In his quotation, the government staff is using honorific speech. Whether the government staff actually used plain or honorific forms is beside the point. The point is that in Rakymbaj's quotation of the government staff, the statement he approves is said in honorific speech, while the statement he disapproves of is said in plain speech. Rakymbaj's stylistic choices in these instances clearly illustrate that the positive image of a person who talks in honorific forms is "carved out" in contrast to the negative image of a person who talks in plain forms. As Irvine (1990: 128) emphasizes, these images of persons "form an organized set, as do the linguistic forms that display them."

What, then, constitute the positive and negative images of persons portrayed by honorific and plain speech styles? In metapragmatic comments from Kyzyl Tas herders, we can see that the formal contrast between honorific and plain varieties is mapped onto other kinds of contrast, especially the one between *kishipejil* (modest) and *pang* (arrogant), examined in the beginning of this chapter. The two sets of contrast are not only indexically connected; they are also seen to resemble each other, hence, rhematization[97] (Irvine and Gal 2000). Perhaps the most obvious evidence of this rhematization is that these sets of contrast are both conceptualized in two contrasting material qualities – softness (*zhumsak*) and hardness (*katty*). As Rashyjla claimed in her metapragmatic comments, honorific speech is a "soft" speech and modest people speak softly, because they are soft-hearted people; plain speech is a "hard" speech and arrogant people speak

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[97] Irvine and Gal initially used the term "iconization," but later changed their terminology to reflect better the role of the Peircean interpretant.

hard, because they are hard-hearted people. Other sets of contrasts often compared to that of "soft" honorific speech (and speakers) and "hard" plain speech (and speakers) include those between milk tea (*ak shaj*) and black tea (*kara shaj*); fine-wool sheep (*bijaz zhu'ndi koj*) and thick-wool sheep (*kylshyk zhu'ndi koj*); meek (*momyn*) and difficult to deal with (*kyjyn*); polite (*sypajy*) and rude (*turpajy*); warm (*zhyly*) and cold (*suwuk*); wise (*akyldy*) and idiotic (*zhyndy*); These contrasts are easily mapped onto more obviously metapramatic expressions, such "speaking slowly" (*akyryn so'jlew*) and "speaking fast" (*katty so'jlew*); "careful with words" (*so'zge ustamdy*) and "impulsive with words" (*so'zge tojpang*); "small words" (*kishi so'z*) and "large words" (*zhojan so'z*). Found in distant and seemingly unrelated activities, these imagistic contrasts and resemblances among the semiotic materials the Kazak herders use create mutually reinforcing diagrams of ethical categories. As such, "images of persons…become available as a frame of reference for one' own performance and for interpreting the performances of others." (Irvine 1990: 130)

Moreover, the "carving-out" of an image of a linguistic variety involves a wide range of semiotic materials – both linguistic and non-linguistic – that contribute to the imagistic "congruence" (Agha 2007) or "coherence" (Irvine 1990: 129) in interaction. For Kyzy Tas herders, speaking honorifics in actual interaction involves not just the core honorific morphemes (cf. Table 4-1), but also other linguistic and non-linguistic behaviors that appear to "cohere" with these grammatical forms, thus constituting the honorific register (Chapter 2). These semiotic forms include terms of address, first-person plural forms, greetings, gestures like bowing, seating arrangement, different parts of meat to be served to differentially ranked guests, and some avoidance behaviors directed to certain types of spousal kin – highly salient semiotic forms that we might call "historical objects" (Keane 2016).

It is this systematic conventionality of a cultural scheme that enables a certain linguistic form to consistently invoke a certain ethical virtue. Quite separate from a person's real moral intention, such conventions "nevertheless represent the resources the person has to draw on for [ethical] display, the terms in which his or her behavior will be interpreted by others" (Irvine 1990:131) in a given interaction. To demonstrate this point, we will take a close look at how Kajrat became an "idiot" among Kyzyl Tas herders.

Although Kyzyl Tas herders tend to refrain from reacting immediately to the relative respectfulness of some other adult's speech, one's recurring speech pattern does seem to be noticed and affect his or her reputation greatly. In other words, the way I talk reveals what kind of person I am. Toward the end of my fieldwork, I had an interview with Murat – my host at the time – to inquire specifically about Kajrat's use of plain speech to the experienced herder Kenzhebek we have in Example 13, as it is one of numerous instances in which his speech appeared less respectful than one would normally expect.

Example 24. Murat Interview 3

Altynbek: Mysaly men [xxxx] keshe Kajratka bardym, ija?

          For example, I [unintelligible] went to Kajrat yesterday, right?

          Barganda Kenzhebek degen kisi keldi.

          When I was there, someone called Kenzhebek came [to his place].

          Ol kyryk…elu'wge tajap kaldy, ija, Kenzhebek degen?

          He's forty…almost fifty, right, that Kenzhebek?

          Kajrat ogan sen dejdi eken.

          Kajrat says "sen" to him, I discovered.

Murat: Kajrat **zhyndy**[98] emes pa?

       Kajrat is an idiot, isn't he?

"To say *sen* (plain personal pronoun)" is one of the common native terms to refer to plain

speech. In this interview, when I tell Murat about my observation that Kajrat "said *sen*" to

Kenzhebek the previous day, Murat offers his evaluative comment that Kajrat is an "idiot"

(*zhyndy*). This metapragmatic label is consistent with Murat's evaluation of Kajrat in other

occasions. For example,

Example 25. Murat, Kajrat, and Altynbek

Altynbek: Myna kisi sening shesheng ba?

       Is this person your mother?

Kajrat: Je.

       Yeah.

Altynbek: Aty kim?

       What's her name?

Kajrat: Da'ku'w.

       Da'ku'w.

Altynbek: A?

       Huh?

Kajrat: Da'ku'w.

       Da'ku'w

Altynbek: Da'ku'w. Kanshaga keldi, ol kisi?

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[98] The Kazak term *zhyndy* can be both a noun and an adjective. Here, it can be various translated as "rude," "uncouth," "inappropriate," "careless," "disrespectful," "silly," etc..

Da'ku'w. How old is she?

Kajrat: Elu'w…neshede eken [xxxx]

            She is fifty…something.

Altynbek: Alpyska kelgen zhok?

            She hasn't turned sixty yet?

Kajrat: Kelgen zhok, a'li.

            She hasn't yet.

Murat: Zhyn kyldyng goj, shesheng zhasyn bilmej.

            You're doing something crazy, not knowing your mother's age!

            Zhyndy,[99] ja'? Sheshesining zhasyn bilmej….

            Idiot, right? Not knowing his mother's age…

Kajrat: Kajdan bile**di**? (laughing)

            How does [I] know?

Murat, Kajrat and the ethnographer Altynbek are resting in Kajrat's tent. Altynbek asks Kajrat

some questions about his mother, who briefly left the tent prior to this stretch of talk. When

Kajrat is unable to recall the exact age of his mother, Murat declares him crazy, and calls him

"idiot" (*zhyndy*). Kajrat playfully adds "How does [I] know?" (See Chapter 5 on the

ungrammatical use of third person verbs.) A few minutes later, Murat calls Kajrat *zhyndy* again:

Example 26. Murat, Kajrat, and Da'ku'w

Murat: Men ku'jewmin emes pa?

            I am a son-in-law, am I not?

---

[99] "crazy," "nuts," "silly," "inappropriate," "disrespectful," etc..

Kajrat: Oj, ishtengke zhok.

         Oh, no problem.

Murat: Siz istengiz.

        You (HON) do (HON) [the prayer].

Da'ku'w: Tilekter kabyl bolsyn. Alla axbar!

        May [our] wishes be fulfilled! Alla axbar!

Murat: Ku'jew bata iste dep oturgan sen **zhyndy**[100] ekensing, je?

        You (PLN) [are] an idiot, saying "Son-in-law, do the prayer!" Yeah?

Da'ku'w: U'ndemej oturgan-ga (laughing)

        To the one that's sitting quietly (laughing)

The conversation above is taking place when they are about to start eating. It is a convention that

the eldest man of the group is in charge of the pre-meal prayer, which is typically said in Arabic

at least partly. The ethnographer Altynbek is the eldest man present, but is implicitly ruled out as

a non-Muslim outsider. Murat would have been the natural choice, but as a son-in-law of the

Mataj clan, to which Kajrat belongs, Murat is supposed to efface himself in Mataj's house,[101]

and therefore refrain from such activities as saying a prayer or sitting on the seat of honor. Thus,

he refuses to take up the role and instead asks Kajrat's mother Da'ku'w to do the prayer. After

her brief prayer, Murat comments on Kajrat's absurd suggestion that Murat say the prayer in the

house of Mataj. Da'ku'w agrees by adding that Murat was behaving himself. In this interaction,

the main logic behind Murat's depiction of Kajrat as an idiot (*zhyndy*) is his suggestion that

Murat violate the pragmatic rule for a son-in-law.

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[100] "silly," "inappropriate," "out of place," "crazy," "nuts," "disrespectful," etc.

[101] This self-effacing involves using honorifics to any member of the clan older than his wife.

In fact, the same metapragmatic term *zhyndy* appears consistently in other people's evaluation of Kajrat as well. It seems to pick out something undesirable in his speech or other communicative behaviors, especially when he says or does things that deviate from the ideals of deference and modesty. Let us examine the following stretch of talk.

Example 27. Otan and Kajrat

Otan: Bershi, zhilik!

         Give (PLN2SG) [me] that section [of the meat]!

Kajrat: Zhok.

         No.

Otan: A'kel!

         Bring (PLN2SG) [it].

Kajrat: Zhok.

         No.

Otan: Men kesem, andagyny.

         I'll slice the one there

         Kajyn agang kesedi.

         Your (PLN2SG) elder brother-in-law will slice (it).

         kajyn agasynyng zhiligi eken, andagy.

         The one there is the elder brother-in-law's section [of the meat].

         O'zinge kesip ap…aj **zhyndy**, **zhyndy**[102].

         [You're] slicing [it] to yourself (PLN2SG)…oho, idiot, idiot.

         A'j ku'jewder a'j bilmejsingder, aa?

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[102] "rude," "inappropriate," "selfish," "out of place," "disrespectful," etc.

Oho, son-in-laws, oho, you (PLN2PL) don't know [things], huh?

Kajrat: Kese berem.

I'll keep slicing [it].

This conversation between Kajrat and Otan is taking place while they are eating meat at A'dil's winter house. In addition to Otan, A'dil and Kajrat are hosting several other guests, Nurlan, Kanat, and Serik, all close neighbors of theirs. As we learned earlier, Otan is construed as Kajrat's *kajyn aga* ("wife's elder brother," or "elder brother-in-law"). While Kajrat insists on slicing the meat himself as the youngest man in the host family, Otan tells Kajrat that there is a certain section of the meat that belongs to the *kajyn aga*, who should thus slice it. Kajrat is a fool to slice it to himself, says Otan. He also says to Kajrat and Serik that "You son-in-laws don't understand things" as Serik was also chastised mildly for talking too much in the presence of his *kajyn aga* Nurlan earlier during the meal. Here, Otan is appropriately addressing both Kajrat and Serik as *ku'jew* ("son-in-law"), because the terms for one's son-in-law and one's younger sister's husband are the same, and also because the son-in-law prohibitions apply in the presence of the wife's parents as well as any of her elder siblings and relatives.

All these instances in which Kajrat is labeled *zhyndy* seem to share one thing in common – Kajrat's departure from some idealized visions of communicative behaviors involving the notion of respect: his use of plain speech to Kenzhebek illustrates his tendency to speak less respectfully than other more "reserved speakers"; his failure to tell his mother's exact age when prompted may seem to disclose his lack of respect for his mother; his ignorance or disregard of the son-in-law avoidance rules about saying prayers and slicing meat compromises his overall pragmatic competence to present himself a respectful person.

The term *zhyndy* is used as both an adjective and a noun. Most commonly, it can be translated as either "crazy"/ "crazy one" or "idiotic" / "idiot" depending on the context of its use. But in the above examples where this term is used to describe Kajrat, it is better understood as "idiot" or "idiotic" in that characterizing someone as such is often a form of insult. More specifically, it connotes that the person labeled *zhyndy* is impulsive and undisciplined, has a rascally disposition, lacks good judgment, and behaves rudely.

In fact, the peculiar tendency of Kajrat to speak less deferentially than others can be explained by his father's premature death. His father Burlybaj died of an accident a year after Kajrat's marriage. He inherited his father's pasture and livestock. At the age of twenty-one, he suddenly became the patriarch of his entire family, often having to compete with other patriarchs from his father's generation, still active in herding. In order to assert himself among his father's peers, he developed his tendency to use plain speech to much older addressees. Also relevant is Kajrat's urge to present himself to his wife as a competent man with a wide social network among herders. Although they had been married for more than a decade, his wife Nurgyjza had not joined him in mobile herding for many years since the third year of their marriage, and he had a hard time persuading her that mobile herding was still viable. She joined him again only a year before I did my fieldwork. By using plain speech, he sought to minimize the social distance between him and his fellow herders.

Independent of what he actually intends in his plain speech, however, a Kazak cultural scheme that organizes speech styles and images of persons renders him an idiot and his speech idiotic. Both indexically and rhematically, the plain speech style is so tightly linked to the prevailing stereotypical of a morally negligent person – who is by nature arrogant, uncouth,

coarse, uncivilized, childish, impulsive, inattentive, clueless, silly, and the like – that it becomes difficult, if not impossible, for other people around him to interpret his speech behavior otherwise. Instead, his repeated instances of plain speech, together with other non-linguistic behaviors he habitually shows, serve to consolidate this negative reputation. So, how did he become an idiot? This organizational scheme of speech styles and ethical types made him *sound* like one.

Chapter 5

"Hard Speech" and Joking Relations

This chapter examines Kazak nomads' use of a series of linguistic expressions typically found in joking relations. These expressions can be grouped into a 'joking register' which contrasts sharply with the honorific register discussed in the previous chapter. Unlike the honorific register, this joking register is not the main focus of language socialization, but it is nevertheless an equally important aspect in adult social life, especially among male herders. There are ten types of joking relations that Altai Kazaks would readily identify among kin relations as *kalzhyngdasuw* ("to joke with each other"). It is shown that as long as the speaker and the addressee are construed to be in a joking relation, they are in a sense exempted from the ethical burden (often compared to "lifting heavy objects") of humbling themselves, and in fact expected to act in an unrestricted, self-imposing manner with each other. The formal features characteristic of the speech style among joking partners include plain pronouns and suffixes, diminutive personal names, certain Chinese loan words, and what I call subject-verb disagreement.

The main point I make in this chapter is that the linguistic features characteristic of joking encounters constitute a distinct speech style ("hard speech") that is in a sharp contrast with the "soft speech" style, suitable for expressing modesty in asymmetric relations as described in the previous chapter. Depending on contexts, these two contrasting styles are equally capable of

communicating one's moral character in social interaction, although the "hard" style projects self-assertiveness and playfulness as opposed to modesty and reserve. For Kazak speakers, knowing when to use hard words is at least as important as knowing when to use soft words. In fact, the hard speech style (or "the joking register") has gained some new significance in the recent years, as more and more herdsmen choose to form their herding groups with their joking partners (someone outside their own clans) rather than with their paternal relatives (someone from their own clans). Thus, for many herders today, hard speech is increasingly dominating the immediate soundscape within their herding camps, whereas soft speech remains the focus of careful attention in other socially important occasions beyond their herding camps, especially when they are with their clan members. Hard speech is useful precisely because of its ability to construe someone as a joking partner, thereby carving out an ethical domain that allows for unrestricted, less modest behavior.

1. The notion of *erkeletu'w*

Radcliffe-Brown long ago observed that a joking relationship entails mock aggression and expression of disrespect, expected to be performed mutually between joking partners. But what kind of behavior counts as "joking" here? It is important to note that joking behavior expected of joking partners is not just any kind of joking; it is more specifically an exchange of linguistic and non-linguistic aggression that would normally be too embarrassing in other contexts, i.e., in non-joking relations. And by definition, joking partners are not supposed to be offended by this mock aggression. Let us begin by looking at how Altai Kazaks conceptualize what we could

call joking behavior, the kind of behavior that would seem embarrassing in ordinary social interactions.

For many Altai Kazaks, the notion of *erkeletu'w* aptly captures the pragmatic effect of joking behavior, in that it conveys a sense of childish shamelessness, aggressive friendliness, and the lack of respect for seniority – all of which stand in as the polar opposite of maturity, reserved modesty, and respect for seniority communicated in honorific expressions. This metapragmatic concept can be variously translated as "to endear," "to indulge," "to domesticate," "to spoil," "to be affectionate," "to establish a familiar context," or "to be playful." Given that the verb *erkelet-* is the causative form of *erkele-* "to pamper," its literal translation is "to let [someone] pamper," which in actual interaction should therefore be interpreted approximately as "to act like a pampered child" or "to play on affection." Kyzyl Tas herders frequently use this term to describe the mode of communication typical among joking partners. Contrary to the ideals of modesty and respect for seniority in hierarchical relations, what is expected in joking relations crucially involves the playful display of mutual disrespect or lack of deference through the trope of conversation with a pampered child, who is allowed to act rudely. Thus, when there is some age difference between the interactants, the older person is supposed to take the role of 'the pamperer' and the younger person 'the pampered.' As a pampered child, the younger person is expected to explicitly ignore the older person's seniority, while the older person is expected to allow the younger person's disrespect by treating him or her as a pampered child. When two adults engage in this kind of talk, they do not in fact differ much from each other in their manners of speaking, because to a certain extent, they both speak like children: one is being a pampered child, while the other is not only treated as equal to that child, but also supposed to affectively indulge in the verbal exchange, using a child-like register. In essence,

they are playing babies. Notice also that joking partners' mutual disrespect is understood to be a form of endearment, by which they are not supposed to be offended, although in non-joking situations, being treated like a child would be extremely degrading and embarrassing for an adult Kazak herder in Altai.

What constitutes this child-like register? Although joking partners frequently speak of sexual matters explicitly, the joking register is generally considered to be similar to children's speech. The main formal features of the joking registers include: exclusive use of plain forms instead of honorific forms; use of diminutive nicknames and certain Chinese terms of address in place of conventional Kazak terms of address, especially respectful kin terms; and the deliberate violation of the subject-verb agreement rule. All these features are considered to be typical of children's speech. A child under the age of seven is not taught rigorously to use honorifics, and it is indeed quite rare to hear a child under seven using honorific forms. Children are usually addressed by diminutive nicknames, which are simplified versions of their full names. Typically, Chinese terms are frequently used by children, not just because they are more exposed to the Chinese language in general, but also because many Chinese terms are often thought to be easier to say than their Kazak equivalents.[103] It is assumed that children are simple-minded, self-centered, and too immature to understand the virtue of modesty, and therefore they naturally speak loudly in short words, and often fail to observe the subject-verb agreement rule, using a third person verb, simpler in form than first or second person verbs, when the subject of the sentence is first or second person.

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[103] This perception is in part rooted in the fact that many Chinese loanwords, mostly denoting modern concepts, are noticeably shorter than their Kazak equivalent. For example, the Chinese term for "refrigerator" is *bingxiang* (two syllables), whereas the Kazak term for it is *tongazytkysh* (four syllables). Such tendency contributes to the generalization that Chinese words are easier to say than Kazak words. (also see Abish and Csato 2011)

Before getting into the examples of joking repertoires, let me first present two instances in which Altai Kazaks deploy the metapragmatic term *erkelet-* to explain their speech behavior.

Example 1.Talk about the nick name Sha'keng

O'men: Sha'keng zhok. [xxxx]

        Sha'keng is not there.

Altynbek: Sha'keng degen ne?

        What is the "Sha'keng" you[just] said?

O'men: Ne degen bagana kempir.

        What [you're talking about is] the old lady who was here just now.

        Aty Sha'keng dejmiz.

        We call her name "Sha'keng."

        Sha'rijpa? Sha'keng dej salamyz.

        [You know her name] Sha'rijpa? We just call [her] Sha'keng.

Altynbek: Je, je.

        Yes, yes.

Rashyjla: Erkeletemiz de.

        [You should] say we pamper [her].

Arshyn: Ta'tem erkeletedi, men apa dejim.

        My *ta'te* [elder sister' referring to Rashyjla] pampers [her], I call [her] aunt.

Rashyjla: Kamelkannyng karyndasy goj, Kamelkannyng. Kanattyng…

        [She is] the younger sister of Kamelkan, you know, of Kalmelkan, Kanat's…

Arshyn: Apajy.

        [His] aunt.

Rashyjla: …a'kesining karyndasy.

        His father's younger sister.

This conversation is taking place in the winter house of O'men, a Kyzyl Tas herder in his late thirties, living with his wife Arshyn and his father's elder brother's wife Rashyjla. They are talking about their neighbor Sha'rijpa, using her nickname Sha'keng. Not realizing that the nickname refers to Sha'rijpa, I – Altynbek – ask O'men what Sha'keng is. O'men clarifies that it is another name of the elderly woman Sha'rijpa whom I just met a few hours earlier when she was visiting his house. But it is Rashyjla who explains to me the pragmatic value of using the name Sha'keng. The diminutive nickname Sha'keng is used to express a kind of endearment for Sha'rijpa. Notice that Rashyjla and O'men generally use the nickname, but Arshyn is not entitled to use it. As her joking partner, O'men can "pamper" Sha'keng, as she is a *zhengge* (elder brother's wife) for him. Rashyjla does the same, due to her seniority to (and her intimacy) with Sha'rijpa. On the contrary, Arshyn sticks to the respectful kin term *apa* "aunt" to mention her even when she is not present, because they are not joking partners in any sense, and the considerable age difference between them forbids Arshyn from using the "pampering" nickname of the senior woman.

The "pampering" effect, however, can sometimes be achieved without deploying the typical joking repertoire mentioned above. In the following conversation, it is in fact the use of an honorific kin term *aga* "elder brother" that triggered the jocular interaction among two men, A'dil and Altynbek. The conversation took place in the third week of my stay in the home of A'dil, and he had been addressing me – Altynbek – by plain forms and my personal name from Day One. When he suddenly addressed me by *Altynbek aga* "Elder brother Altynbek" in an exaggerated tone of voice and facial expression, thereby artificially elevating my status, it was clear to me that he was trying to be playful with me. It was further confirmed by the

metapragmatic comment by his father Rakymbaj, who, having heard our verbal exchange, applied the term *erkelet-* to represent what A'dil was doing with me.

Example 2. "Elder brother Altynbek"

A'dil: Altynbek aga!

           Elder brother Altynbek!

Altynbek: Oj, A'dil aga!

           Oh, Elder brother A'dil!

A'dil: Altynbek aga!

           Elder brother Altynbek!

Altynbek: Kajda barasyz?!

           Where are you [HON] going?

A'dil: Altynbek aga, men kyjga baram.

           Elder brother Altynbek, I am going to [shovel] the sheep dung.

Rakymbaj: Al, endi mynaw u'lken, sen kishi. Altynbek aga erkeletken so'z.

           Well, now, this one is the senior, and you are the junior.

           Altynbek aga erkeletken so'z.

           "Elder brother Altynbek" is a pampering word.

Here the interaction between A'dil and Altynbek can be best described as a playful exchange of undeniably deferential terms, although normatively such terms are reserved for me in addressing him, who is a few years older than I am. Rather than indicating a random switch to a subordinate or hyper-respectful attitude, A'dil's unusual deferential address signals a kind of breakthrough into a performance of verbal play to which I am invited. My reaction to his repeated use of *Altynbek aga* in this play consists of a deferential term of address *A'dil aga* and a brief question

that includes an honorific second-person predicative suffix *-syz* accompanied with an equally exaggerated tone of voice and facial expression to match his. Perhaps sensing the need for some metapragmatic explanation to the foreign researcher, Rakymbaj gives his assessment of his son's performance of excessive flattery as "pampering". In addition, this explanation may be sending me a secondary message like this: "A'dil just invited you to act like a pampered child, so you could have gone a little further than just repeating deferential terms." Whether this is indeed a hidden message or not, it should be clear that in general, the act of "pampering" basically implies playful endearment and lack of reserve and hierarchy between interactants. I should also emphasize that such performance of mutual equality between adults appears playful, rather than seriously offensive, only in so far as the status difference between the interactants is not too great (Recall Arshyn could not use the "pampering" nickname of Sha'rijpa).

2. Kazak Joking Relations

Joking relations are usually defined in anthropological literature as specially designated social relations in which one is allowed, or even expected, to act disrespectfully to one's partner (see Radcliffe-Brown 1965[1940]). In general, joking relations are thought to be found in social relations that facilitate alliances between persons or groups that experience a structurally generated sense of "separation and attachment" in functionalist accounts. Drawing from a wide range of ethnographic data, collected mainly from Africa, Oceania, and North America, Radcliffe-Brown suggests four of the most common categories of joking relations: (1) between affines (e.g., in the relationship of a man to the brothers and sisters of his wife); (2) between

cross-cousins; (3) between mother's brother and sister's son; (4) between grandparents and grandchildren.

Altai Kazks identify at least ten distinct types of relations (as shown below) which can be analytically described as joking relations. The Kyzyl Tas villagers interviewed explain that these relations allow "joking with each other" (*kalzhyngdasuw*). All of these relations are between affines and thus fit well into the first category of Radcliffe-Brown's classification. For example, a man is generally expected to exchange jocular insults with his elder sister's husband regardless of their age difference. Use of Kazak honorific speech clearly reflects such behavioral norms of *kalzhyngdasuw*, and it is articulated in a tendency to use less respectful speech among joking partners. What follows is the list of the types of kin relations that are considered to be joking relations among the Altai Kazaks (from Chapter 2):

(a)   *baldyz-zhezde* relation:

WyB – eZH

WyZ – eZH

WeBS – FyZH

WeBD – FyZH

(b)   *kajyn ini – zhengge* relation:

HyB – eBW

(c)   *kajyn singli – zhengge* relation:

HyZ – eBW

(d)   *kuda – kuda* relation:

SWF – DHF

yBWeB – yZHeB

SWeB – yZHF

DHeB – yBWF

(e) *kuda – kudagyj* relation:

SWF – DHM

DHF – SWM

yBWeB – yZHeZ

yZHeB – yBWeZ

SWeB – yZHM

DHeB – yBWM

yZHF – SWeZ

yBWF – DHeZ

(f) *kudagyj – kudagyj* relation:

SWM – DHM

yBWeZ – yZHeZ

yBWM – DHeZ

SWeZ – yZHM

(g) *kuda bala – kuda bala* relation:

eBWyB – eZHyB

(h) *kuda bala – kudasha* relation:

eBWyB – eZHyZ

eZHyB – eBWyZ

(i) *kudasha – kudasha* relation:

eBWyZ – eZHyZ

(j) *bazha – bazha* relation:

WZH – WZH

The relations listed above are all regarded as "equal" (*zhol teng*), and because of their

equal statuses, people in those relations normally exchange plain speech. By contrast, Kazak

speakers also recognize what we might call "avoidance relations" which are decidedly unequal,

requiring asymmetric use of honorific speech, as well as a variety of reserved non-linguistic

behaviors including avoidance of physical contact. All avoidance relations are between affinal

kin as well. Specifically, they include one's parents-in-law (WF, WM, HF, HM), and spouse's

elder siblings (WeB, WeZ, HeB, HeZ). Since avoidance is mutual, parents-in-law avoid son-in-

law (DH) and daughter-in-law (SW). Likewise, a married couple's elder siblings avoid their

younger sibling's spouse (yZH, yBW). Thus, one is in joking relations with spouse's younger

siblings whereas spouse's elder siblings are to be avoided.

A vivid native account of the joking behavior between *zhezde* and his wife's younger

siblings (*baldyz*) is found in Clark (1955: 97): "We play with [*zhezde*], throw him into the river,

put his saddle on backward, cut his stirrups, take camel's dung and string it in the form of a

necklace and put color one side of his mustache red, and other yellow and his beard green. We

force him to drink, pull his ears, and burn our *tangba* (brand) on his coat." Svanberg (1989: 125-

126) similarly notes that "the jokes may be harsh containing traditional forms of punishment,

such as, the rough *tokuldak* (giving a person a flick to his head), pouring ice cold water over him,

or nailing his shoes to the floor, but also more affectionate joking embracings or scorn and

general sneer." As for *zhezde*'s behavior toward his wife's younger sisters in particular, Clark

(*ibid* 97; 99) further reports that *zhezde*, in addition to exchanging practical jokes with them, "is

allowed to indulge in sexual play with [them]……This usually involves playing openly with

their breasts and body, and depending upon circumstances even sleeping with them, although this is officially frowned upon." Moreover, because joking relations in general are mutual, *zhezde*, in turn, has to "endure rough jokes, many insults, and tricks from his wife's younger sisters without becoming angry himself,"[104] and every time he visits his *baldyz*, "[w]hatever the real business of his visit, some initial time is used for some joking quarrels and teasing." (Svanberg *ibid*)[105]

This dichotomous framework of joking and avoidance with spousal kin, however, does not seem to apply to relations with the spouses of the siblings of the spouse, except the one between husbands of sisters, who, as joking partners, refer to each other as *bazha*. "Husbands of sisters," Krader (1963: 366) points out, "in a symmetrical fashion are not further differentiated as to seniority."[106] With this exception of joking relations with *bazha* (WZH), one has neither joking nor avoidance relations with his or her spouse's siblings' spouses, i.e., WBW, HBW, HZH. This implies that the husband of the elder sister has joking relations not only with the younger sister but also with her husband. The younger sister's husband, in turn, has a joking relation with the elder sister's husband, but, as we have discussed above, he remains in a strict avoidance relation with his wife's elder sister.[107]

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[104] As will be elaborated later, one of the most critical aspects of joking relations in general is that joking partners are not supposed to be offended by each other's mock attack.

[105] By contrast, interaction between senior in-laws and *ku'jew* or *kelin* is characterized by the avoidance of any reference to sex, physical proximity, and eye contact as well as asymmetric use of honorific speech. When, for example, a *kelin* encounters her parents-in-law, she must turn face away and not look at them, or leave room unless told to stay. Quite similarly, a *ku'jew* generally avoids being in the same room as his parents-in-law, and runs away (*kash-*) from them in case of a chance encounter.

[106] This appears to be another common type of joking relation in Central Asia. Among Chahar Mongols, for example, the relationship between the husbands of two sisters is "completely informal and reciprocal" (Vreeland 1962: 165).

[107] The wives of brothers, however, are never equal. The younger brother's wife must pay respect to the elder brother's wife, although this asymmetry does not seem to amount to avoidance. Perhaps the best explanation is that it results from the emphasis on the hierarchical relation between elder and younger brothers, and also from the

3. What Makes a Talk a Joke?

We have discussed the types of Kazak joking relations and some of the cultural logic underlying their classification. But how does a Kazak speaker actually go about joking with someone in a culturally appropriate way? First and foremost, some sort of joking relation needs to be established between the interactants. If they are in one of the affinal relations described in the previous section, they are joking partners who can start joking with each other at any time. Also, some of the joking relations among kin relations may be tropically extended to non-kin relations. For example, a male speaker often regards his older male friend's wife in the same way he would treat his own elder brother's wife (eBW, *zhengge*), as we have seen in the case of O'men and Sha'rijpa earlier in this chapter. Similarly, a same-year-old friend's elder sister's husband may be addressed as if he is one's own elder sister's husband (eZH, *zhezde*). During my fieldwork, I observed only a few moments in which a certain type of joking relation was explicitly mentioned during ongoing interaction (rather than during elicitation sessions) as a justification or precondition for a specific instance of joking behavior.

One morning, for example, I was sitting in the house of Kyzyl Tas village head Omar (40-year-old male). His 42-year-old wife Almagu'l was serving milk tea. On his way out of the house, Omar ran into a young woman named Na'zij (26 years old) who was just about to enter the house. Without any usual greeting for a visitor, he instantly put his arms around her waist and embraced

patrilocal residence rule for married women, rendering the wives of brothers more like consanguines than affines. As such, the relation between the two women replicates the hierarchical relation between their husbands.

her from the back, causing her to scream "Oh my goodness!" (*Ojbaj!*) Then he looked at me and said "This is my *baldyz*!" before releasing her. All this happened in a few seconds. Since Na'zij is younger than Almagu'l, and both women are from the same patrilineal clan, Na'zij counts as a *singli* (younger sister) for Almagu'l and thus a *baldyz* (wife's younger sister) for Omar. The village head must have felt compelled by my very presence to provide an explicit justification for his action in this situation: "I am doing what is expected of a *zhezde* (elder sister's husband) to his *baldyz* (wife's younger sister)."

In another instance, a 34-year-old herdsman Asan – then my host – made a fantastic claim that I was his wife Altyn's long lost clansman (a descendent of the Najman clan) from Korea, somehow falling into the category of *baldyz* (wife's younger brother) in relation to him. This was prompted when Altyn's 12-year-old cousin Estaj inquired about my relation with Asan and Altyn. In fact, Estaj himself was Asan's *baldyz* by virtue of being Altyn's junior clansman, and Asan's claim was a jocular response to Estaj, of course not to be taken seriously, as indicated by laughs from Altyn, also present in the conversation. In addition, it seems to me that this claim was simultaneously a covert justification for Asan's highly casual attitude toward me throughout my stay in his home, especially not using honorifics to me, despite my status as his guest a few years older than him.[108]

Example 3. Forging of an affinal tie

Asan: Mynaw…kazir mynaw Altyndarga tuwus. Najman, mynaw.

    This…now this one [Altynbek] is a relative to Altyn and her group. A Najman, this one is.

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[108] Asan's consistent use of plain form in addressing me can be viewed as an instance of creative presupposition (Silverstein 1976).

Estaj: Najman bola ma, mynaw?

    Is this one a Najman?

Asan: Najman, mynaw. Mynaw magan baldyz.

    A Najman, this one is. This one is a *baldyz* to me.

But in nearly every other instance I observed, a joking relation had already been established, and no reminder or restatement of it was necessary. Joking partners would simply start teasing each other practically whenever they wanted to, thereby re-enacting their joking relation. Besides physical teasing discussed earlier, joking partners engage in talk. The referential content of such talk typically involves sexual innuendos (between cross-sex joking partners), aggressive invitation to drink (usually between male joking partners) and jokes about a person's failures or shortcomings in appearance or character. For example, Nurlan (39-year-old male) and Mejramkan (41-year-old female) are in the *kuda – kudagyj* relation, i.e., yZHeB – yBWeZ. Being the elder siblings of a married couple, they can freely engage in verbal and physical teasing. At one party at Mejramkan's winter home, Nurlan greeted her by shouting "Hey, Mejramkan, come here!" This was a sexual innuendo between cross-sex joking partners, although she successfully avoided sitting next to him that day.[109] More commonly, the joker makes fun of the addressee's shortcomings or failures, as Nurgyjza (31-year-old female) said to her *kajyn ini* (HeB) Talap (30-year-old male) "Where have you been, loafer?" upon his return to their camp site after disappearing for a whole day, or as Kanat (33-year-old male) said to his voracious *zhezde* (eZH)

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[109] Also noteworthy is the fact that he used the plain imperative form of the verb *kel-* "to come", but still addressed her by her full name Mejramkan, rather than its diminutive version Mekeng. I am not certain why he did not call her Mekeng in this particular instance, but it may have been related to the fact that there was another person at the party by the name Mejrambek, who could also be diminutively called Mekeng. It is possible that Nurlan deliberately avoided this nickname in order to prevent confusion. Or, it is also possible that he wanted to ensure that he was just joking, rather than really trying to be intimate with her. In other words, Mekeng would have sounded too intimate.

Zheken (40-year-old male) "Enough, Zheken, don't eat a lot!"

Significantly, such institutionalized joking allows a Kazak speaker to directly criticize his or her joking partner's inappropriate behavior without compromising the amicability between them. Since Kyzyl Tas herders generally refrain from pointing out negative judgments about an adult person's moral qualities, unrestrained talk between joking partners constitutes a main social avenue through which ethical stereotypes are circulated. Let us revisit an example from the previous chapter, in which Murat (35-year-old male) criticized his *baldyz* (WyB) Kajrat (31-year-old male) for neglecting an important behavioral norm. More specifically, when Murat was visiting Kajrat's home for a meal, Kajrat invited Murat to perform a pre-meal prayer as he was the eldest male in the room besides me, a non-Muslim guest. Because a man is supposed to be quiet in the house of his in-laws (*kajyn zhurt*), strictly forbidden from doing things that would draw attention to himself, such as sitting at the seat of honor or performing prayers, Murat duly passed the task to Kajrat's mother Da'ku'w, who was also present. As Kajrat's *zhezde* (eZH), Murat did not hesitate to make fun of Kajrat's neglect of this avoidance rule by calling him *zhyndy* ("idiot"), a common term frequently used to describe someone morally negligent. In his portrayal, Murat himself is a virtuous son-in-law striving to exercise affinal avoidance in the house of his in-laws, while Kajrat is an ignorant, immature *baldyz* (WyB) who is still in need of basic moral education. This kind of joking is particularly effective in causing embarrassment because it conveys no respect for age and essentially equates the person described as such to a child.

Example 4. An open ridicule in a joking relation
Murat: Men ku'jewmin emes pa?

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I am a son-in-law, am I not?

Kajrat: Oj, ishtengke zhok.

            Oh, no problem.

Murat: Siz istengiz.

            You (HON) do (HON) [the prayer]. (looking at Da'ku'w)

Da'ku'w: Tilekter kabyl bolsyn. Alla ahbar.

            May [our] wishes be fulfilled! Alla ahbar!

Murat: Ku'jew bata iste dep oturgan sen zhyndy ekensing, je?

            Saying "son-in-law, do the prayer," you're an idiot, huh?

Da'ku'w: U'ndemej oturgan-ga (laughing)

            To someone that's sitting quietly

The judgmental descriptor *zhyndy* here can be variously translated as "silly," "foolish," "idiotic," "inappropriate," "out of place," "crazy," "nuts," "disrespectful," and so on, but none of these English equivalents accurately conveys the joking, almost affectionate, nature of the use of the Kazak term *zhyndy*. Rather than making a hard accusation, Murat can be seen as giving Kajrat a friendly slap on the back by using this word. The same goes for Nurgyjza's use of *kanggybas* ("loafer," "derelict") towards her brother-in-law Talap discussed above. My point is that this sort of interaction between joking partners is a central context in which negative judgments about a person can be expressed at all and someone's stereotypical image can be reproduced and circulated among these Kazak nomads, who rarely criticize someone directly in ordinary, non-joking contexts. At least among adults, personal criticism is almost never expressed directly except through jocular, playful interactions like the one between Murat and Kajrat.

Apart from such referential content, however, there are non-referential linguistic features

characteristic of the style of speech among joking partners. As I mentioned earlier, these features include plain forms (pronouns, possessive suffixes, predicative suffixes), diminutive nicknames, certain Chinese terms of address, and the deliberate violation of the subject-verb agreement rule. In many instances, joking partners rely solely on some of these indexical cues, rather than the content of the message, to signal that joking is taking place or that the interactants are in a joking relation.

Table 5-1. Plain Second Person Forms.

		singular	plural
pronouns		sen	sender
possessive suffixes		-ng, -yng, -ing	-daryng, -dering, -taryng, -tering
predicative suffixes	type A	-syng, -sing	-syngdar, -singder
	type B	-ng, -yng, -ing	-ngdar, -yngdar, -ngder, -ingder
	type C	-ø	-ngdar, -yngdar, -ngder, -ingder

Table 5-2. Diminutive Nicknames

diminutive nicknames	full names (original names)
Bakang	Bakyt
Sekeng	Serik
Akang	Ahmet
Sha'keng	Sha'rijpa
Zha'zen	Zhazijra
Ka'sing	Kasymbek
Lazyng	Lazat
Ajshyng	Ajsa'wle
Mekeng	Mejramkan
Bawkyn	Bawurzhan

Table 5-3. Chinese Terms of Address

lawshang	< laoxiang "fellow villager," "hometown friend"
shenshing	< xiansheng "mister," "gentleman"
lawban	< laoban "boss," "manager"
zong	< zong (zongjingli) "chief manager"
sunzhang	< cunzhang "village head"
shangzhang	< xiangzhang "township head"

Table 5-4. Subject-Verb Disagreement

Sen   ony   ko'rdi.   You   it-ACC   see-PAST-3   "You saw it."
Men   birak   urady.   I   all   punch-PRES-3   "I punches* them all."

In the following example, Murat uses a plain possessive suffix *–ing* when speaking to his 56-year-old *zhezde* (elder sister's husband) Sarkyt. They are discussing Sarkyt's choice of a sheep to sell. There is nothing particularly jocular in what they talk about in this brief conversation, but the joking relation between them finds its expression in Murat's use of a plain form to Sarkyt. It is especially noteworthy because the addressee is 21 years older than the speaker. In non-joking relations, such age difference usually requires the junior person to use honorific forms (see Chapter 4). As Sarkyt's *baldyz* (wife's younger brother), however, Murat uses this plain form, despite their considerable age difference.

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Example 5. Plain speech in a *baldyz-zhezde* relation

Murat: Semiz erkeg**ing** ba?

          [Is it] your (PLN) fat male [sheep]?

Sarkyt: Zhok, urgashy.

          No, female.

        Similarly, Murat has a 31-year-old *bazha* (wife's sister's husband) Ykan, who exchanges

plain forms with him. The two men are not only the husbands of sisters, but also herding partners

sharing pasture for three seasons a year. One day they were discussing their work plan for the

day in Murat's tent. Also present in the conversation were the two sisters Zha'zen (Ykan's wife)

and Da'ken (Murat's wife) as well as Esbol, a teen-aged son of Murat and Da'ken. The day's

work was to castrate male lambs and to shear all the grown-up sheep. A far more skilled

herdsman than Ykan, Murat volunteered to do both jobs all by himself. Ykan disagreed and

proposed that he shear the sheep and Murat sit next to him giving directions.

Example 6. Plain speech in a *bazha-bazha* relation

Murat: Magan aldymen kozy tartkyzsa**ng**, odan koj kyrykytsa**ng**

          You (PLN) should let me castrate the lambs first, and then shear the sheep.

Zha'zen: Onda kol**yng** tesilip kalmaj ma, birak?

          That way, won't your (PLN) hands all worn out?

Ykan: **Sen** kyryktpaj ak koj! Men kyrykyp oturajyn. **Sen** otursa**ng** boldy.

          You (PLN) don't shear [the sheep]. I'll be shearing [them]. You (PLN) just sit there.

Esbol: Eee, bylaj gyp, bylaj gyp dep

           Yeah, going "like this, like this"

Da'ken: Temek**ing**di tartyp, akyl**yng**dy ajtyp deshi.

            Smoking your (PLN) cigarette, telling your (PLN) wisdom

The general friendly atmosphere notwithstanding, there is hardly anything funny or jocular about the referential content of this conversation. The only indication of the joking relation between the two men is their mutual use of plain speech. Here I want to highlight Ykan's use of plain forms – the plain pronoun (*sen*), the plain negative imperative form *kyrykpaj ak koj* ("Don't shear"), and the plain predicative suffix (*-ng*) – directed to Murat, who is 4 years older than him. Viewed in isolation, this particular instance of plain speech may not seem all that remarkable, as their age difference is relatively small to begin with. Its true significance, however, becomes apparent when it is contrasted with his speech in other types of relations. Most notably, Ykan strictly adheres to honorifics when speaking to Da'ken, who is his *kajyn bijke* (wife's elder sister), thereby acknowledging his avoidance relation with her, even though she is merely one year older than him. For example, the previous day, Ykan and his wife Zha'zen were sitting with Da'ken in her tent, sipping their afternoon tea. Upon learning that Da'ken saw the calf he was looking for all morning, he asks where she went, dutifully using an honorific predicative suffix (*–ngiz*).[110] In response, she tells him the location.

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[110] Semantically, Ykan's question for Da'ken (*Kajda baryp keldingiz?* "Where have you been?") is in fact identical to Nurgyjza's question for her brother-in-law (*Kajda baryp kelding?*) examined earlier. The only difference is that Ykan uses an honorific predicative suffix *-ngiz*, whereas Nurgyjza uses its plain alternant *–ng* and calls her addressee "loafer" (*kanggybas*).

Example 7. Ykan's honorific speech to his wife's elder sister

Ykan: Kajda baryp keldi**ngiz**?

         Where have you (HON) been?

Da'ken: Sol kajkajgan zholda zhatyr eken ana.

         It [the calf] is on that hilly road, [I've just found out].

In another instance, Ykan was invited to a dinner at Murat's tent along with some of their close neighbors, including another 35-year-old herdsman To'lew. One of the things discussed during the 2- hour-long dinner was To'lew's lost sheep. Ykan used an honorific possessive suffix *–ynygz* to ask him whether he found the sheep yet.

Example 8. Ykan's honorific speech to a neighbor

Ykan: Bar ma, koj**yngyz**?

         Is your (HON) sheep there?

To'lew: Zhok.

         No.

This instance of honorific speech contrasts with Ykan's use of plain speech to Murat. Both Murat and To'lew are 35 years old. While 31-year-old Ykan uses honorifics to To'lew, the same age difference (4 years) is nullified between him and Murat by their joking relation. And as we have seen, Ykan also uses honorifics to his joking partner's wife Da'ken who is only one year older than him but in an avoidance relation with him. From these instances, we can schematize Ykan's speech pattern as follows:

Table 5-5. Joking / Avoidance Contrast

addressee	relative seniority	type of relation	choice of speech style
Murat	+4	joking	*Sen otursang boldy.* "You just sit there." (PLAIN)
Da'ken	+1	avoidance	*Kajda baryp keldingiz?* "Where have you been?" (HONORIFIC)

Table 5-6. Joking / Non-Joking Contrast

addressee	relative seniority	type of relation	choice of speech style
Murat	+4	joking	*Sen otursang boldy.* "You just sit there." (PLAIN)
To'lew	+4	non-joking, non-avoidance	*Bar ma, kojyngyz?* "Is your sheep there?" (HONORIFIC)

By rigorously differentiating his choice of linguistic forms, Ykan displays his fine assessment of varying situations and relational categories, thereby articulating a model of ethical personhood (moral cultivation). A system of formal contrast available in the language, like the one of the plain/honorific contrast, enables the speaker to contour the given conversation in highly distinctive ways, quite independently of the referential content of the conversation. And the same sort of linguistic affordance is also provided by other formal devices, such as the use of diminutive nicknames and certain Chinese terms of address (as opposed to more respectful Kazak terms of address) and the deliberate violation of the subject-verb agreement rule (as

opposed to the observance of it).

Let us briefly examine how the subject-verb "disagreement" works. In Altai, use of a third-person verb form for a first- or second-person subject in the given sentence has been a common grammatical mistake associated with Chinese speakers, mostly government officials and merchants, who try to speak Kazak. In recent years, the Altai Kazaks themselves started to imitate this stereotypically Chinese way of speaking. Today they use this ungrammatical pattern when they want to sound funny or to make fun of somebody. Because it is considered inherently foolish and playful, Kazak speakers view this mode of speech as particularly suitable in talking to joking partners or small children. For example, consider the sentence below, spoken by Da'ken to her *kuda* (yBWeB) and close neighbor Erbol when offering him *talkan* (a type of food made from roasted wheat) during his brief visit to her tent:

Example 9. An ungrammatical sentence uttered in a *kudagyj-kuda* relation
Talkan   zhe-me-j-**di**   ma,   Erbol?
talkan   eat-NEG-PRES-3   Q   Erbol (personal name)
"Doesn't [you] eat *talkan*, Erbol?"

Although the subject of the sentence is dropped, her utterance is evidently directed to the addressee Erbol. As the omitted subject here is *sen* ("you"), Da'ken would have said *"Talkan zhemej**sing** ba, Erbol?"* to be grammatically correct. However, given that they are in a *kudagyj – kuda* relation, her choice of the third-person predicative suffix *–di* over its second-person equivalent *–sing* appears even more appropriate pragmatically. Again, there is really nothing funny about the woman's dutiful act of offering food to a guest, apart from the minute

grammatical twist which points to the joking relation between the two.

4. The Emergence of a Joking Register

We have seen that certain linguistic forms can be used to signal a joking relation. As contextual cues, these various forms are used not only to indicate a joking relation between speaker and addressee, but also to frame the whole interaction as "funny," "playfully insulting," "intimate," "egalitarian," etc., even when there is no pre-established joking relation between the interactants. I argue that these linguistic forms constitute a loosely integrated emergent "joking register" on the ground that they achieve similar pragmatic effects.[111]

One example would suffice to demonstrate how such a form can actively bring playfulness into an interaction with no pre-established joking relation. In the following conversation, a Chinese term *lawshang* "fellow villager," "hometown friend" (< Ch. *laoxiang*) was used to generate a playful atmosphere, but no joking relation could be presupposed. One morning, I was sitting in Asan's house in Kyzyl Tas. I asked Pa'tijk, Asan's 8-year-old son, what time it was. His mother Altyn, a witty and quick-minded woman, interrupted and told her son to answer in Chinese. Accordingly, I asked him the same question again, this time in Chinese. The boy was still hesitating, and Altyn interrupted again, saying "Tell [your] *lawshang*! What time is it?" When the boy finally said in Kazak it was ten, Asan corrected his answer: "It's a quarter to eleven."

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[111] See Agha 2005; 2007 on enregisterment.

<u>Example 10. Altyn's use of *lawshang*</u>

Altynbek: Sagat kansha boldy, Pa'tijk?

> What time is it, Pa'tijk?

Altyn: Pa'tijk, neshe bopty? Hanzawsha ajt!

> Pa'tijk, what time is it now? Say in Chinese!

Altynbek: *Ji dian le?*

> What time is it? (Chinese)

Pa'tijk: …

> … (hesitating)

Altyn: Lawshang-ga ajtyp ber! Neshe boldy?

> Tell [your] hometown friend! What time is it?

Pa'tijk: On…on bop kojdy.

> Ten…it's ten now.

Asan: One birge on bes mijnuwt kaldy de.

> [You should] say it's a quarter to eleven.

The main reason Altyn told Pati'jk to answer in Chinese is that she wanted him to practice Chinese with the foreign guest speaking both Kazak and Chinese. But the choice of the Chinese term *lawshang* to refer to me demands a further analysis.

   Like her husband Asan, Altyn was rather creative in her dealings with me throughout my stay in their place at an early stage of my fieldwork. There was no readily available joking partner category she could plausibly project onto me. As Asan was already applying the category

of *baldyz* (wife's younger brother in this case)[112] to me, she could not possibly claim another affinal relation with "her own brother." Her solution was simply to ignore the age difference between me and herself, and treat me as her unrelated friend, rather than forging any consanguineal relation, which would imply some degree of hierarchy. Being only 6 years younger than me, she could conveniently treat me as her equal – a common practice among Kyzyl Tas herders when speaking to an unrelated friend similar in age. Thus, she adhered to plain speech and addressed me by my Kazak name Altynbek, thus maintaining a symmetric and amicable relation with me. It worked just fine until this moment in which she was directing her son's answer to me.

She could not just say "Tell Altynbek! What time is it?" for such use of an adult's personal name is considered too inappropriate. Normatively, when speaking to a child, one uses a relational term to refer to a third person – usually the term the child is supposed to use to address the person. If the person referred to is younger than the father of the child, either *aga* ("elder brother"; "junior uncle") or *ta'te* ("elder sister"; "junior aunt") must be attached to the personal name, depending on the sex of the third person. If the person is older than the child's father, either *ata* ("grandfather"; "senior uncle) or *apa* ("grandmother"; "senior aunt") follows the personal name, even if he or she is only one year older than the father.[113] Because of my seniority to Asan, then, I would be an *ata* for Pa'tijk, i.e., Altynbek Ata. But instead of saying "Tell Altynbek Ata! What time is it?" Altyn chose to say "Tell *lawshang*! What time is it?" to encourage Pa'tijk to give his answer.

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[112] My point here is that Asan managed to forge a mutually equal, friendly relation with me despite my seniority to him, however convincing his application of the particular category was.

[113] Only when the person referred to is a maternal relative, the choice is made according to the mother's age.

This borrowed Chinese term achieved multiple goals at once. It allowed her to avoid both the personal name (with no appropriate kin term attached to it) and the respectful kin term *ata*. By avoiding the personal name, she signaled her minimal recognition of her son's need to show respect to an adult guest. By not using *ata*, she also managed to avoid acknowledging my seniority to Asan (and herself), thereby consistently treating me as their equal. Moreover, her use of the term *lawshang* gave this multi-party interaction a distinctly casual and jocular flavor, which also helped relax the boy to finally utter his answer. For the boy in particular, this less conventional title represented his mother's endorsement of an easy, laid-back attitude, which probably counteracted his reluctance in what initially seemed like an on-the-spot test in spoken Chinese. It can be said that she instantly transformed the entire interaction from "an impromptu Q and A session with a guest" to "a playful chat with a hometown friend" by deploying this particular term.[114] Clearly there is something funny about this term.

Indeed, to varying degrees, similar pragmatic effects can be generated by all the forms that belong to what I call the joking register. Although some of them are more dependent than the others on the nature of the pre-existing relationship among the interactants, they are all capable of rendering the on-going interaction playful, relaxed, jocular, and casual. In other words, they are thought to convey similar meanings.

How do they come to have such pragmatic values? Most obviously, all these forms have one thing in common: they stand in opposition to forms that are used in proper respectful speech. Thus, there exist clear contrasts between honorific and plain forms; conventional deferential

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[114] Also relevant is the fact that adult speakers often insert Chinese words into their speech oriented to babies and small children. It is based on the Altai Kazaks' common conception that Chinese words are simpler than their Kazak equivalents, and therefore more suitable for babies and small children.

titles and casual terms of address (including both diminutive nicknames and some Chinese terms); agreement and disagreement of subject and verb. So, for example, certain Chinese terms like *sunzhang* "village head" or *shangzhang* "township head" are deemed suitable for addressing a joking partner, while equivalent Kazak titles like *bastyk* "leader," *ka'rija* "elder," *aga* "elder brother," *apaj* "aunt," and the like are preferred in deferential speech.

Although each of these forms has some referential aspect to it, the distinction made between each pair of contrast is basically indexical. However, this indexical distinction also goes through a further ideological elaboration, which groups various linguistic forms into two mutually contrasting styles of speech, namely, *zhumsak so'z* "soft speech" and *katty so'z* "hard speech": the former is considered to sound polite, considerate, humble, and other-elevating, while the latter is thought to sound rude, inconsiderate, arrogant, and self-elevating. Since the "soft" style has honorifics at its core, the "hard" speech is predictably associated with plain forms. We can also easily understand that diminutive nicknames are contrasted with deferential kin terms and likened to plain speech. But what about Chinese terms of address and the subject-verb disagreement? It is not so self-explanatory as to why these formal features are associated with the non-deferential "hard" speech, and contrasted to the polite "soft" speech. Providing a semiotic explanation for this will be the main focus of the following discussion.

5. Language Ideologies of Difference and Resemblance

For a fruitful semiotic account of the formal features associated with the joking register,

we can benefit from briefly shifting our attention to ideologies about the honorific register, because meta-narratives about X often shed light on fundamental aspects of what is not X. The folk theory of the Kazak honorific system tells us that the speaker's choice of linguistic forms indexes his or her demeanor and ethical cultivation, in addition to the basic status/solidarity relation between speaker and addressee. The use of honorific forms indexes the speakers' refinement and demeanor whereas plain forms index one's vulgarity and poor conduct (cf. Silverstein 2003).

The Kazak honorific forms are thought of as "polite" and "sophisticated," and said to be "the words that honor people." According to Kyzyl Tas herders, honorific forms are generally heard as "soft," "elaborate," and "slow," and render the speaker "modest," "well-mannered," and "mature." On the contrary, the plain forms are considered to be "rude" and "crude." They sound "hard," "simple", and "fast," thus "suitable for unconstrained conversations." In plain speech, such personal characteristics as arrogance, vulgarity, and childishness are believed to be revealed easily. Let us compare the following two sentences spoken to a hypothetical male addressee named Askar:

Askar **aga**, kamshy-**ngyz**-dy magan ber-**ingiz**! [Honorific]
Askar uncle whip-HON.POSS2-ACC I-DAT give-HON2
"Uncle Askar, please give me your whip!"

Askar, kamshy-**ng**-dy magan ber! [Plain]
Askar whip-PLN.POSS2-ACC I-DAT give-ø (PLN2)
Askar, give me your whip!

As can be seen above, the honorific speech is typically longer and grammatically more complex than the plain speech. As a rule, the former is spoken slowly and gently, while the latter is spoken quickly and loudly. Indeed, many Kyzyl Tas herders talk about the opposition of the *zhumsak so'z* "soft speech" and the *katty so'z* "hard speech" (cf. Haviland 1979).

Note that this language ideology contrasts polite and sophisticated speech with rude and crude speech, and interprets these linguistic styles as *iconically* representing the differential moral qualities of the speakers. As Irvine and Gal (2000) find, this rhematization process establishes imagistic correspondence between linguistic forms and the speakers' personal characteristics. For example, among the Kazaks, the image of soft speech matches the speaker's supposedly genteel, careful personality and unimposing attitude, whereas a hard speaker (i.e., loud speaker) is believed to act aggressively and imposingly, and, therefore, to have a selfish mind. Likewise, grammatically elaborate speech resembles a speaker's allegedly complex, grown-up thinking and delicate sensitivity to various social settings, while the image of simple speech is seen as similar to a simple-minded, immature person with little knowledge about relational and situational norms. Rhematization is based on such perceived resemblance between speech varieties and speaker types.[115]

In addition, the speaker's unequal control of the use of honorific expressions (cf. Agha 1998: 166) generally plays an important role in constructing the iconic stereotypes of the speakers. Adult Kazak speakers, in fact, do not seem to vary in their control of honorific

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[115] This semiotic process also seems to be at work in Agha's account of Tibetan honorifics (1998:191), in which certain "mixed," "imperfect" speech levels are stereotypically attributed to "unsophisticated country folk" in eastern Tibet.

expressions (Chapter 4), but Kazak children, who usually have no trouble with non-honorific speech, often make grammatical mistakes when using more complex honorific speech, especially in sentence-endings (i.e., predicative suffixes). Children's inadequate control of honorific forms, then, contributes to the rhematization process connecting the contrast of elaborate speech and simple speech with that of the mature and the immature.

This linkage between hard speech and immaturity is further reinforced by the practice of "pampering" discussed in the beginning of the present chapter. As children are thought to lack the mature mind required for proper deferential speech, their disrespectfulness is indulged. Likewise, joking partners disregard their age-based status, treat each other like children, and tolerate behavior that would normally be considered too rude and embarrassing between adults. Indeed Kazak speakers often deploy the same set of linguistic features in pampering of children and joking partners alike. For example, diminutive nicknames are typically used to address children or joking partners as a form of endearment that nearly always points to some child-like quality in the interaction.

I stress that such an iconic opposition between deferential and non-deferential speech is recursively projected onto the contrast between the elaborate use of the Kazak honorific system and the near-absence of such a category in Mandarin Chinese (the state language of the People's Republic of China), creating a sense of moral superiority among the "refined" (*sypajy*) Kazaks over the "coarse" (*turpajy*) Chinese. Analytically, this projection of one level of contrast to another level of contrast can be described as fractal recursivity (Irvine and Gal 2000).

Grammatical stratification of highly segmentable honorific and plain forms characteristic of Kazak is hardly found in Chinese. Such structural difference between the two languages is

readily recognized by the Altai Kazaks, who then interpret it through their native conceptual framework. In addition, the Kazaks also notice some more features in the Chinese language that further strengthen the ideological projection of the above-mentioned honorific/plain contrasts onto the inter-ethnic level of Kazak/Chinese contrasts.

Being an isolating language, Chinese tends to construct noticeably shorter sentences than those of Kazak, a typical agglutinating language. The contrast between a longer Kazak sentence and a shorter Chinese sentence coincides with the opposition made between the elaborate honorific speech (usually longer) and the simpler non-honorific speech (usually shorter) in Kazak. Consider the following examples, all of which can be roughly translated as "At the time you yourself didn't invite them."

Dang shi ni ziji mei qing tamen.   [Chinese]
That time you self not invite they

Sol kez-de o'z-**ing** olar-dy shakyr-ma-dy-**ng**.   [Kazak Plain]
that time-LOC self-PLN2 they-ACC invite-NEG-PAST-PLN2

Sol kez-de o'z-**ingiz** olar-dy shakyr-ma-dy-**ngyz**.   [Kazak Honorific]
that time-LOC you(HON) self-PLN2 they-ACC invite-NEG-PAST-HON2

"At the time, you yourself didn't invite them"

The perceived simplicity of Chinese is further strengthened by the lack of conjugation

according to person and number in the Chinese grammar. While Kazak verbs take different suffixes marking number and person (as well as the honorific/plain distinction in second person), no such formal distinction – neither inflection nor affixation – is made in Chinese verbs. The subject-verb disagreement pattern has its root in the Chinese grammar. Unaccustomed to the person distinction for verbs, Chinese speakers in the Altai, when speaking Kazak, have a tendency for a generalized use of third-person verb forms – which are typically simpler than first- and second-person forms—regardless of the person of the subject in a given sentence. For example, Kanat, a Kyzyl Tas herdsman in his early thirties known for his frequent mocking of such ungrammatical speech, once said to me "*Sen ko'rdi goj?!*" (You saw [him], right?!) This sentence contains a third-person verb *ko'r-di* (see-PAST3), which is formally simpler than its first- and second-person equivalents – *ko'rdi -m* (see-PAST-1) and *ko'rdi-ng* (see-PAST-2), respectively.

Moreover, unlike Kazak, Chinese is a tonal language, full of melodious syllables. To the Kazak ear, the Chinese are essentially loud speakers. This loud speech, in turn, evokes the image of hard and simple speech, generally associated with a childish personality and poor conduct, in the Kazak language ideology discussed above.

Precisely because of their "Chinese-ness," the borrowed Chinese terms of address and the Chinese-like ungrammatical style provide the Altai Kazaks with a perfect linguistic resource for making fun of somebody. For the Altai Kazaks, these expressions – hence Mock Chinese – can be doubly insulting. On the one hand, the speech that contains these features simply sounds rude, as it invokes loudness, simplicity, and aggressive imposition, associated with Chinese and plain speech. This renders the speaker a rude person. On the other hand, addressing someone with a

Chinese term or an ungrammatical sentence renders the addressee somehow similar to the Chinese who are imagined to be immature, selfish, crude, and inconsiderate, therefore lacking moral worth to be respected. Among the Altai Kazaks, for example, use of the Chinese term *shangzhang* ("township head") often equates the addressee with a stereotypical Han Chinese official, who would always try to teach Kyzyl Tas herders without even understanding how to behave himself properly.

As such an equation would predict, my data show that Chinese terms of address like *sunzhang* "village head, *dujzhang* "team leader," *shuzhyj* "party secretary," *lawban* "boss," *laoshang* "hometown friend" appear exclusively in Kazak plain speech. Furthermore, these borrowed Chinese terms are typically used to address joking partners, exhibiting an even tighter indexical link to joking relations than plain forms or diminutive nicknames do. At the most basic level, while plain forms point to an addressee's "non-seniority" to the speaker and a diminutive nickname expresses the speaker's endearment of addressee, these Chinese terms almost always signal a joking relation or jocular interaction.

The association of Chinese-ness with the violation of subject-verb agreement is also a strong one. As I mentioned earlier, it was originally a typical mistake made by Han Chinese with some limited knowledge of Kazak. Today, the subject-verb mismatch is not only found in the speech of Han Chinese, but also in that of Kazaks among themselves and with their Chinese neighbors. I find that this stereotypically Chinese way of talking is being adopted by Kazaks as a new expression of playfulness, disrespect, casualness, and condescension. The following examples demonstrate how this particular fashion of speaking can be used in a range of social situations.

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Example 11. I punches them all.

Esbol: Men birak ur-a-**dy**,   murun-nan kan   ag-a-dy   de-j-di.

I   all   hit-PRES-PAST3   nose-ABL blood flow-PRES-3 say-PRES-3

He says "I punches them all, blood pours out of the nose."

Murat: Sen-ing   murun aga-ng   dyr   et-kiz-ip-ti   goj.

You-GEN nose elder.brother-PLN ONOMAT do-CAUSE-CVB-3 EXCL

Your "nose" elder brother is snoring, you see.

In this conversation above, four people are present: Murat, his teen-ager son Esbol, Wang (my

Han Chinese assistant), and I. Wang is asleep, while Murat and Esbol are talking about Wang. I

am quietly listening to their conversation. Esbol mimics my Han Chinese assistant who once told

his epic tale of a fist fight, in which he took down a dozen of men, making their noses bleed. In

Esbol's reproduction of Wang's actual speech, a first person subject (*men*) is matched with a

third-person verb (*urady*), instead of its first person form (*uramyn*). This is a fairly accurate

portrayal of how Wang habitually speaks in Kazak. Through mimicking him, Esbol is making

fun of his boastfulness and his stereotypically Chinese way of talking. As this example shows,

the ungrammatical style is closely associated with certain images of Han Chinese.

Example 12. Zha'zen talking to her son Ka'sing

Zhe-j-sing   ba? Zhe-j-**di**   ma?

eat-PRES-PLN2SG   Q   eat-PRES-3   Q

Do you [want to] eat?   Does [you want to] eat?

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Zha'zen is asking her two-year old son Ka'sing if he wants to eat something. She repeats the same question twice, first in a grammatically correct sentence, followed by an ungrammatical one. In the second sentence, although the subject is dropped, it is clear from the first sentence that the omitted subject is *sen* (plain second person singular pronoun). As this instance illustrates, this subject-verb mismatch is frequently used in baby talk. As a form of baby talk, this speech style is perceived to be endearing, indulgent, foolish, playful, infantilizing, and condescending. Together with the association of Han Chinese, such pragmatic effects make it an especially appropriate mode of talking among joking partners (as we have already seen in Example 9).

Example 13. Asan teasing his friend Murat

Sen zhyndy eken-sing.   Ma-gan ajt-pa-j-dy.
you idiot   EMOT-PLN2SG   I-DAT tell-NEG-PRES-3
You're an idiot, it turns out.   [You] doesn't tell me.

Asan, a Kyzyl Tas herdsman in his mid-thirties, is teasing his close friend and classmate Murat. The first sentence is grammatically correct, using a second person subject (*sen*) and the second person predicative (*–sing*) to match. It is in the second sentence that Asan violates the agreement rule. Here he uses a third person verb *ajtpajdy* ("doesn't tell") for an omitted subject (*sen* "you"), pointing out that Murat should have told him what happened, but foolishly did not do so. Asan's use of the ungrammatical third person verb indexes jocularity and casualness running through their interaction.

The language ideology that assigns such pragmatic values (playfulness, disrespect, etc.) to these Mock Chinese expressions in Kazak is crucially based on the semiotic processes by which Kazak speakers make certain iconic links at several different levels. First, the lack of verbal conjugation in Chinese is likened to the unvarying use of the Kazak third person verb forms. Second, the relative simplicity of the third-person verb forms, compared to the first- and second-person forms, is seen to resemble the general lack of person-marking affixation in Chinese. Third, certain iconic links are made between linguistic forms used and the personal qualities they supposedly reveal, e.g., a simple linguistic form resembling the speaker's immature thinking. It is this multi-layered iconicity that makes the innovative performance of Chinese-ness through disagreement in person particularly effective.

Indeed, the Kazaks of Kyzyl Tas describe their Chinese neighbors as rude, shameless, disrespectful, selfish people, compared to the Kazaks themselves, who place great importance on modesty, generosity, shame, and honor. Such stereotypes of the polite Kazaks and the rude Chinese are well illustrated by a common phrase "Are you Chinese?" (*Kytajsyng ba?*) – a rhetorical question widely used among Xinjiang Kazaks when they scold children for their inappropriately "hard" speech and impolite behavior. In this local conceptualization, only those who have no moral cultivation would talk and behave like the Chinese.

On the basis of this ethno-linguistic stereotype, use of the Mock Chinese style in place of more conventional Kazak "soft speech" typically connotes cynicism, sarcasm, amusement, irony, ridicule, equality of status, and so on (cf. Basso 1979). The Altai Kazaks' adoption of the Mock Chinese expressions to show playfulness and disrespect is somewhat analogous to the Nguni languages' acquisition of the Khoisan click sounds to express "avoidance" and "linguistic

abnormality" (Irvine and Gal 2000). Here, the rhematized contrast between the Chinese and the Kazaks described above is projected onto the contrast between the Mock Chinese expressions (i.e. joking register) and the conventional Kazak soft speech (i.e., respect register) within the Kazak language.[116]

6. Discussion: A Cross-cultural Analysis of Kazak Joking Relations

In fact, we find the distinct pattern in Kazak relations – avoidance with spouse's elder siblings and joking with spouse's younger siblings – in many other societies of the world. In Central Asia, it is found among Yomut Turkmen (Irons 1975: 104-111), Chahar Mongols (Vreeland 1962: 164-166) and Dagor Mongols (*ibid* 240-244). In South Asia and Africa, speakers of Dhimal (a Tibeto-Burman language) and Thonga (a Bantu language) are also reported to exhibit this joking and avoidance pattern (King 2001: 165-166, Junod 1962: 245-249; See also Radcliffe-Brown 1965, Mauss 2013: 328). Anthropologists have tried to explain why spouse's elder siblings and younger siblings are treated so differently in many societies. Avoidance behavior with spouse's elder sibling seems easier to explain. As is the case among Kazaks, they are likened with parents-in-law, forming a category of senior in-laws (cf. Radcliffe-Brown 1965: 91-93, Murdock 1971: 367-368, See also Lowie 1920: 103).[117] Because the

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[116] A very similar recursive process is also found in the case of Tibetan honorifics (Agha 1998), where the imagined dialectal differences between the Kham and Lhasa varieties are re-contextualized to produce distinct speech styles among the Lhasa speakers.

[117] Also relevant is Krader's (1963: 263-264; 357-358) description of Kazak consanguineal relations, in which elder siblings, he points out, are "upgraded a generation" and "terminologically equivalent to the junior collateral kin in the ascending generation."

parents-in-law/children-in-law relations are prototypical avoidance relations, it is not surprising

that Ego is also in avoidance relations with spouse' elder siblings (WeZ, WeB, HeB, HeZ).

But what about joking behavior with younger siblings of the spouse? Some anthropologists

associate it with marriage practices as known as the junior sororate and junior levirate, in which

wife's younger sisters and husband's younger brothers are potential marriage partners for a man

and a woman, respectively.[118] For example, as Junod wrote of the Thonga, a man may inherit his

elder brother's wife as his own wife upon the elder brother's death. As potential marriage

partners, elder brother's wife (eBW) and husband's younger brother (HyB) could interact freely

in joking manners.[119] In accounting for cross-sex affinal joking relations, George Peter Murdock

(1949: 268-283) provided precisely this sort of explanation: one is in joking relations with his or

her potential marriage partners.[120] Similarly, commenting on the case of the Andaman Islanders,

Lowie (1920: 102) noted that

From there a single taboo is reported, that against social relations between a man

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[118] In *Kazak Social Structure*, Hudson (1964: 53) writes that "[b]oth the levirate and sororate were practiced in variable and attenuated forms by the Kazak…… [A]s a general rule when a man died his wife would marry his younger brother." He also writes that "[i]t is customary, though by no means obligatory, for a man to marry the younger sister of a deceased wife, provided of course that she were not already married to someone else……If a fiancée died before marriage her family was expected to substitute her younger sister." (*ibid* 54) In addition, Krader (1963: 246) notes that "[i]f the affianced boy and his family refused a marriage with a younger sister of the deceased girl, they forfeited the *kalym* [bridewealth] which they had already parted with."

[119] Recall Brant's (1948: 161) observation that "the joking relationship tends to obtain between relatives standing in a potential sexual relationship to each other." See also Mauss (2013: 328); Krader (1963: 345).

[120] "Patterned behavior toward siblings-in-law of opposite sex appears to depend almost exclusively upon whether or not preferential mating with such relatives is prescribed. All of the instances of license with WiSi and BrWi…occur in the presence of preferential sororate or levirate usages respectively. The higher incidence of joking with WiYoSi and ElBrWi merely reflects the preference for junior sororate or junior levirate." (Murdock 1949: 281) "The relative with whom one jokes or engages in wrestling or horseplay is not merely a potential future spouse but usually also a current sex partner." (*ibid* 282)

and his younger brother's wife; we are expressly informed that there is no restriction on intercourse between a man and his elder brother's wife. This rule, then, is directly connected with the co-existing form of marriage known as the junior levirate. For this people, at least, we may enunciate the principle that *social and sexual restrictions go hand in hand*, a conclusion adopted in more general form by Dr. Goldenweiser on the basis of Sternberg's unpublished Gilyak data and by Dr. Rivers as a result of his Oceanian researches. I would supplement this statement with another, viz., that *licensed familiarity generally obtains between potential mates*. (Italics original)

However, this leaves unexplained the joking relations with the same-sex junior affine: i.e., a man's relation with his wife's younger brothers (WyB) and a woman's relation with her husband's younger sisters (HyZ). Because wife's younger brothers and husband's younger sisters are not potential marriage partners, we need a different explanation. Junod (1962: 245-249) suggested that the joking behavior in cross-sex junior affinal relations (with WyZ and HyB) somehow extended to same-sex junior affinal relations (with WyB and HyZ), but it is rather hard to imagine that joking behavior with one's potential marriage partners can be applied to those who are not marriageable.

I believe that this can be explained in a more convincing and parsimonious way by applying Suzette Heald's notion of "affinal exaggeration" to the distinction between equal and hierarchical relations. In analyzing joking and avoidance among the Gisu of eastern Uganda, Heald (1990: 378-381) finds that consanguineal relations lie on a scale of intimacy and distance, ones within the same generation and the same sex (e.g., B/B, Z/Z) being most intimate, and ones between proximate generations and the opposite sexes (e.g., M/S, F/D) being most distant; this

behavioral differentiation among consanguines, Heald proposes, is exaggerated in affinal relations, rendering WB/ZH and HZ/BW more intimate than B/B and Z/Z, and WM/DH and HF/SW more distant than M/S and F/D.[121] Admittedly, this African case is very different from what we have been discussing. While Gisu differentiation of kinship behavior is primarily structured around the factors of generation and sex, our main concern here is the distinction made between elder and younger siblings of the spouse – that is, relative seniority within the same generation, regardless of sex. However, Heald's general idea of affinal exaggeration – the notion that "affinal relationships are exaggerated versions of consanguineal ones" – aptly captures the contrast between joking behavior with senior in-laws and avoidance behavior with junior in-laws among Kazaks and many others groups.

So, for example, a man's avoidance relation with a senior in-law (e.g., WF, WM, WeB, WeZ) is an exaggeration of a hierarchical, distant relation he has with his senior consanguine (e.g., F, M, eB, eZ), whereas his joking relation with a junior in-law (e.g., WyB, WyZ) can be viewed as an exaggeration of an equal, intimate relation he has with his same-year-old cousin, i.e., *kurdas*. We can see that the affinal exaggeration principle is at work here. Spouse's younger sibling is one's equal, and the elder sibling one's superior. Both being affines, then, one is more intimate and casual with the former than with a *kurdas*, while more distant and reserved with the latter than with a senior consanguine. This perspective enables us to see a joking relation one has with a younger sibling of his or her spouse simply as an 'exaggerated' equal relation, not necessarily as one between potential marriage partners.

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[121] Thus, "affinal relationships are exaggerated versions of consanguineal ones; intimacy is more intimate and respect more compelling…[B]rothers-in-law are more 'familiar' than brothers……In the opposite direction, the twin constraints of respect and sexual inhibition find their fullest expression in the absolute nature of *bumasala* avoidance between a man and his mother-in-law." (Heald 1990: 387)

In order to fully understand the contrast between these two kin categories, i.e., senior in-laws and junior in-laws, it is useful to note that a Kazak marriage establishes a number of symmetric and asymmetric relations between the family members of the bride and groom. Let us consider a hypothetical marriage between the bride named Anar and the groom named Berik. Anar has parents and four siblings – an elder brother, an elder sister, a younger brother, and a younger sister. Likewise, Berik also has parents and an elder brother, an elder sister, a younger brother, and a younger sister. In this marriage, the members of the two families are grouped into two tiers. For Berik and his family members, Anar's parents, elder brother, and elder sister form the upper tier, and Anar herself, her younger brother, and her younger sister form the lower tier. For Anar and her family members, then, Berik's parents, elder brother, and elder sister form the upper tier, and Berik himself, his younger brother, and his younger sister form the lower tier. It can be visualized as follows.

Table 5-7. Stratification of Affinal Kin

	Anar's Family	Berik's Family
Upper Tier	Father, Mother, Elder Brother, Elder Sister	Father, Mother, Elder Brother, Elder Sister
Lower Tier	Anar, Younger Brother, Younger Sister	Berik, Younger Brother, Younger Sister

Such two-tier stratification means that the two families acquire a set of symmetric and asymmetric relations between them. As juniors in the two families, Anar's lower-tier members

(AL) and Berik's lower-tier members (BL) have symmetric joking relations. As seniors in the two families, Anar's upper-tier members (AU) and Berik's upper-tier members (BU) also have symmetric relations, in which they often exchange strong jokes and playful insults. Between AL and BU and between AU and BL there exist rigid asymmetric relations in which avoidance behavior prevails. As Healds' model predicts, the degrees of intimacy and distance expected in these affinal relations are typically greater than those expressed within consanguineal relations.[122] Among the relations between "elders" of the two families, sometimes a great age difference exists between the elder siblings in one family and the parents in the other family. In such cases, acknowledging the age discrepancy, only the "senior elders" can joke freely with the "junior elders" while the younger ones are expected to be somewhat respectful for the older ones, rather than being fully equal and playful with them. Also the relations between one family's younger siblings with the other's parents or elder siblings, though undeniably rigid and asymmetric, do not amount to full-blown avoidance relations. Thus, the "exaggeration effect" in these relations appears to be limited.

Among these affinal joking and avoidance relations, the sharpest behavioral contrast is to be found in those involving spousal kin – joking with the spouse's junior siblings vs. avoidance

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[122] Thus, joking relations are those between Anar and Berik's yB (*zhengge – kajyn ini*); Anar and Berik's yZ(*zhengge – kajyn singli*); Anar's yB and Berik (*baldyz – zhezde*); Anar's yZ and Berik (*baldyz – zhezde*); Anar's yB and Berik's yB (*kuda bala – kuda bala*); Anar's yZ and Berik's yZ (*kudasha – kudasha*); Anar's yB and Berik's yZ (*kuda bala – kudasha*); Anar's yZ and Berik's yB (*kudasha – kuda bala*); Anar's F and Berik's F (*kuda – kuda*);Anar's eB and Berik's eB (*kuda – kuda*); Anar's eB and Berik's F (*kuda – kuda*); Anar's F and Berik's eB (*kuda – kuda*); Anar's M and Berik's M (*kudagyj – kudagyj*); Anar's eZ and Berik's eZ (*kudagyj – kudagyj*); Anar's eZ and Berik's M (*kudagyj – kudagyj*); Anar's M and Berik's eZ (*kudagyj – kudagyj*); Anar's F and Berik's M (*kuda – kudagyj*); Anar's eB and Berik's eZ (*kuda – kudagyj*); Anar's F and Berik's eZ (*kuda – kudagyj*); Anar's eB and Berik's M (*kuda – kudagyj*); Anar's M and Berik's F (*kudagyj – kuda*); Anar's eZ and Berik's eB (*kudagyj – kuda*); Anar's M and Berik's eB (*kudagyj – kuda*); Anar's eZ and Berik's F (*kudagyj – kuda*). Avoidance relations are those between Anar and Berik's F (*kelin – kajyn ata*); Anar and Berik's M (*kelin – kajyn apa*); Anar and Berik's eB (*kelin – kajyn aga*); Anar and Berik's eZ (*kelin – kajyn bijke*); Anar's F and Berik (*kajyn ata – ku'jew*); Anar's M and Berik (*kajyn apa – ku'jew*); Anar's eB and Berik (*kajyn aga – ku'jew*); Anar's eZ and Berik (*kajynbijke – ku'jew*).

with the spouse's elder siblings and parents. In Kazak, this contrast is most clearly reflected in the kin terms used by spousal kin to refer to the bride and groom. Hence, Anar is referred to as *kelin* ("daughter-in-law") by Berik's parents as well as his elder siblings, whereas his younger brother and sister refer to Anar as *zhengge* ("elder brother's wife). Likewise, Berik is referred to as *ku'jew* ("son-in-law") by Anar's parents and elder siblings alike, whereas her younger brother and sister refer to Berik as *zhezde* ("elder sister's husband").[123] In addition, it should be noted here that Anar's elder brother's children also refer to Berik as *zhezde*.[124] Put simply, one has avoidance relations with *ku'jew* and *kelin*, and joking relations with *zhezde* and *zhengge*.[125]

Overall, we have seen that the general model of affinal exaggeration quite neatly explicates the cultural logic of the behavioral differentiation in various Kazak kin relations. It also can be said that some diagrammatic iconicity (Irvine and Gal 2000) exists among overlapping sets of contrast: the contrast between senior and junior in-laws; the contrast between hierarchical and equal relations; the contrast between avoidance and joking. Moreover, given the centrality of different ways of speaking in different social relations, the behavioral distinction of avoidance and joking itself can be viewed, in essence, as a kind of language ideology prescribing that respectful speech should be more like respectful speech and casual speech more like casual

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[123] This seems to be precisely what Bacon (1958: 79) meant in her rather terse statement that "in *kelin* and [*ku'jew*] the spouses of children and younger siblings are classed according to sex and juniority to the speaker rather than to generation." Regarding the distinction between *kelin* and *zhengge* in particular, Krader (1963: 358) noted: "[T]he younger brother's wife and son's wife [i.e., *kelin*] are made identical in the kinship nomenclature, and these women one cannot marry……The wives of senior agnates [i.e. *zhengge*] bear a common term…and these ones one may marry, in conformity with the practice of the junior levirate."

[124] By the same logic, the groom's elder brother's children refer to the bride as *zhengge*. However, no joking relation seems to exist between *zhengge* and her HeBS or HeBD to the best of my knowledge. It may have been the case in the past, but at present, joking relation with *zhengge* are found exclusively within the same generation.

[125] The 'affinal exaggeration' principle spills over to the *bazha-bazha* relation, but not to the other relations with the spouses of the siblings of the spouse.

speech in accordance with situational distinction. And this language ideology tends to be at its full swing in situations where people become highly self-conscious about their speech, as they often do in many societies when conversing with affinal kin.

Chapter 6

Dwelling in Words:

Resonance of the Ethical

In this chapter, I will explore how ethical stereotypes are linked to formal features of language and other non-linguistic signs in nomadic life. The Altai Kazaks are surrounded by various kinds of distinctions, both linguistic and non-linguistic, which provide rich semiotic materials for ideological construction. For example, the contrast between different modes of production – herding and farming – is a kind of semiotic material, just as the difference between honorific speech and plain speech is one. Rather than treating one kind as somehow more fundamental than other kinds, I simply view them to be equally material and semiotic. In order to capture the link between linguistic contrasts and non-linguistic contrasts found among the Kazak nomads, this chapter attempts to rework the concept of landscape, especially in its relation to language, and illustrate how it can be applied to theorize certain semiotic processes by which culturally salient categories are produced and circulated.

Any ethnographer would agree that language and landscape are among the most essential things to master during one's fieldwork in order to have a grasp on what is going on there. The fieldworker needs to become familiar with the language spoken by the people being studied, and with the landscape inhabited by them. Yet, when it comes to theorization, we hardly agree upon

how to treat language and landscape in a single analytic framework. This is because of varying conceptions of the relation between the two.

Anthropologists' take on the theme of language and landscape can be sorted roughly into two perspectives, namely the language-centered view and the landscape-centered view. The language-centered view takes language to be an organizing scheme that brings meaningful order to the otherwise chaotic landscape. Landscape is often treated as a mere backdrop against which cultural meanings are projected in linguistic communication. Perhaps the best known study that takes this view is Keith Basso's 1988 paper "Speaking with Names." By contrast, in the landscape-centered view, language provides no more than mere labels attached to the already structured landscape. Meanings reside directly in spatial contrasts and spatial practices, while linguistic representations can sometimes confuse, or even deceive, the analyst attempting to discover the underlying unspoken cultural order embodied in the materials of landscape. Pierre Bourdieu, especially in his analysis of the Kabyle house (1990), appears to best exemplify the landscape-centered view.[126] In fact, most anthropological studies of language and landscape stand somewhere in between these two extremes represented by Basso and Bourdieu, depending on the relative weight attributed to the role of language in the production of a meaningful landscape.

Despite the recent efforts to reconcile these two ends of the spectrum, few anthropologists have come up with an effective analytic approach to language and landscape. Most, if not all, studies on this theme are unsatisfactory because they seem to be based on a couple of rather problematic assumptions: 1) the analyst must look for a cultural order that is directly mirrored,

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[126] Also see Myers (1991)

without conscious semiotic mediation, in the linguistic or spatial contrasts; 2) the function of language is limited to representation, by which people create a virtual world – imagined or remembered – where they can talk about entities and events that are not present, and therefore not directly perceivable, in the immediate surroundings of here and now. In this chapter, I address such limitations – and insights to overcome them – in the existing literature to propose a new approach that I call "anthropology of hearing." The new approach, inspired by Steven Feld's ethnography of sound (Feld 1982), will be applied to illuminate how various linguistic and non-linguistic materials in nomadic life are linked and configured to create and communicate powerful ethical categories for the Altai Kazaks.

Let me begin with a comparison of the two dominant perspectives – the language-centered view and the landscape-centered view – found in most studies on this theme.

1. Quest for Homology: Basso vs. Bourdieu

Keith Basso's 1988 paper on Western Apache place names is probably the best known study of language and landscape so far published. It also serves as the best example of anthropological work taking the language-centered view on this theme. Scholars taking this view tend to regard language as the primary locus of cultural meanings that are only secondarily projected onto the landscape about which it is spoken. Cultural categories that are important to the inhabitants of the landscape almost never escape linguistic manifestation, so that they can be verbally expressed and communicated. For someone who is not skilled in the language of its

inhabitants, the landscape may be nothing but a series of meaningless vistas. In essence, it is language that imposes a recognizable structure upon landscape, not the other way around. Thus, Basso writes:

> Ordinary talk, the ethnographer sees, provides a readily available window onto the structure and significance of other people's worlds, and so he or she begins to learn to listen. And also to freshly see. For as native concepts and beliefs find external purchase on specific features of the local topography, the entire landscape seems to acquire a crisp new dimension that moves it more surely into view. What earlier appeared as a circular sweep of undifferentiated natural architecture now starts to emerge as a precise arrangement of named sites and localities, each of which is distinguished by a set of physical attributes and cultural associations that marks it as unique (Basso 1988: 101).

It follows that the ethnographer's task is to search for linguistic patterns that show how to 'read' the landscape. For instance, Western Apaches use place names to evoke stories of their ancestors associated with certain physical locations in their environment, viewed from particular angles (Basso 1988). To be sure, such cultural images as the ancestral stories of wisdom remain unnoticed to someone who sees the landscape without understanding the verbal convention of its inhabitants. Just as different place names stand for different stories of wisdom among Western Apaches, the argument goes that linguistic forms represent conceptual contrasts mapped onto non-linguistic forms like landscape. For similarly minded scholars, language is the most useful key to such conceptual contrasts, because they are *unconsciously mirrored* in language. "For

whenever the members of a community speak about their landscape – whenever they name it, or

classify it, or evaluate it, or move to tell stories about it – they unthinkingly represent it in ways

that are compatible with shared understandings of how, in the fullest sense, they know

themselves to occupy it…….In talk about the landscape…cultural conceptions…are naively

placed on oblique display (Basso 1988: 101)." Simply put, landscape tells nothing significant

unless it is processed by linguistic representations, in which tacit cultural categories supposedly

reside.

On the other end of the spectrum lies the landscape-centered view. Bourdieu, with his

famous analysis of the Kabyle house (1990), may be considered to represent the most influential

perspective in anthropology that focuses on body and space as the central objects of study.

Generally speaking, his theory moves the analytic focus away from linguistic articulation to

bodily actions in concrete spatial arrangements. According to this view, the practical logic by

which people live is to be found in spatial practices and spatial contrasts, rather than in language.

As we can see in his examination of the Kabyle house as "a microcosm organized by the same

oppositions and homologies that order the whole universe (Bourdieu 1990: 277)," social

relations are mirrored in the ways in which the space is arranged and the body moves in it. The

spatial division of the house, together with spatial practices it affords, homologically corresponds

to the social division of its inhabitants:

The low, dark part of the house is also opposed to the upper part as female to the male.

Not only does the division of labour between the sexes (based on the same principle of

division as the organization of space) give the woman responsibility for most of the

objects belonging to the dark part of the house, the carrying of water, wood, manure, for

instance; but the opposition between upper part and the lower reproduces, within the

internal space of the house, the opposition between the inside and the outside, between

female space – the house and its garden – and male space (*ibid* 273-274).

It is noticeable that there is little room for language in his account of the Kabyle house.

Instead of bringing a meaningful order to the undifferentiated space, language provides mere

labels, usually put in parentheses, to the parts of the house and the associated activities that are

pre-linguistically structured and therefore observable to someone without much linguistic

knowledge. For instance, "The front of the main house, the one which shelters the head of the

family and which contains a stable, almost always faces east, and the main door –as opposed to

the low, narrow door, reserved for women which leads to the garden – is commonly called the

east door (*thabburth thacherqith*), or the street door, the upper door, or the great door (*ibid* 281)."

In the Bourdieusian analysis of space, language is generally given a minimal role of reinforcing

the cultural order that is supposed to be generated through bodily practices and spatial

arrangements. This approach has influenced a large number of anthropological studies, whose

key words typically contain 'embodiment,' 'spatiality,' 'lived experience,' and the like. In fact,

Bourdieu deliberately dismisses language in the anthropological study of space. Throughout his

writings, especially in *Logic of Practice* (1990), he shows a sense of contempt for "officializing"

or "synoptic" discourses. He argues that such synoptic discourses, widely found in works of the

structuralist traditions, are highly problematic, because they betray a distance from practical

activities that only the privileged can enjoy. For Bourdieu, native statements like "This is what

we do in January; that is how we negotiate bride-wealth" are reification or self-objectivization, typical of academics, but not something ordinary folks would ever do. In his view, real people just live but do not talk about themselves. This is rooted in Bourdieu's commitment to discovering the structuring structure that he calls *habitus*, dispersed through and embodied in concrete spatial practices and spatial contrasts, as opposed not only to the seamless, decontextualized synoptic representation of "the x people's worldview" and but also to the conscious manipulation and willful assertion of self-interest.

Interestingly enough, although the Bourdieusian anthropology places a central importance to non-linguistic spatial practices and thus differentiates itself from the language-centered view elaborated in Basso's work, these opposite approaches to language and landscape actually share their commitment to discovery of unconscious cultural order. Such similarity, I argue, stems from a certain biased understanding of semiotic forms. In this understanding, analytically useful semiotic forms are supposed to be direct reflection (or encoding) of the cultural world. For Basso, linguistic expressions reflect cultural categories; different place names correspond to different pieces of advice inherited from the ancestors. For Bourdieu, the spatial oppositions (e.g. upper and low) in the Kabyle house correspond to the important social distinctions (e.g. male and female). In short, semiotic forms, whether they are linguistic patterns or spatial contrasts, are understood to be mere labels directly corresponding to unconscious cultural categories, which in turn are to be discovered by the analyst. As I will elaborate later, we need to pay more attention to the crucial fact that both language and landscape have *forms*, and it is more useful to examine how people consciously engage with these semiotic forms in order to communicate with others, rather than to search for a homological correspondence between forms and the tacit meanings behind them.

In addition to this disregard of what may be termed semiotic consciousness, both the language-centered view and the landscape-centered view also share the simplistic conception of language as a means for representation. The former emphasizes language because of its unique power to utilize conventionalized symbols to imagine multiple objects that are not present and to conceptualize, or re-present (!), the relationship between them in a virtual space. Landscape becomes meaningful when language superimposes on it a virtual space full of symbolic imagination. In the example of Western Apaches, ancestral wisdom comes alive when a particular place name is uttered. The latter view, by contrast, downplays language *precisely because of its capacity to represent*. Unlike other types of signs, language allows representation of objects that are not present in one's immediate surroundings. Capable of removing our attention from here and now, language is accused of having little impact on the reality whereas non-linguistic signs, firmly grounded in real-world contiguity and resemblance, are considered to play a direct role in the making of reality. The front door of the Kabyle house is able to structure the gender relations because it faces east, not because it is called the east door. In both views, then, language exists to represent for better or worse, but they both ignore non-representational aspects of language, especially its poetic effect. In this chapter, it will be argued that the poetic function of language is a key element in envisioning a whole new model of landscape, in which people perceive words just as palpably as they do other spatial objects.

2. Beyond the Dichotomy

As we have noted so far, neither Basso nor Bourdieu succeeds in providing an effective

analytic framework for the study of language and landscape. Each of their approaches allows only a partial view on the subject matter due to its own limitations, some of which they have in common. Most anthropological studies of space can be located somewhere in between these perspectives, but only a very small number of studies have actually tried to come up with an alternative perspective that goes beyond this theoretical dichotomy.

Erik Mueggler's ethnography *The Age of Wild Ghosts* (2001) may be considered as a crafted effort to bridge the gap between Basso and Bourdieu reviewed above. Following Henri Lefebvre's (1991) tripartite model of *spatial practice*, *representations of space*, and *representational space*, Mueggler persuasively shows how spatial objects like houses are "practiced, conceived, and lived as technologies for producing differential social relations" (2001: 53-54; 92). The tripartite model works especially well in this ethnography in that it captures the transformative role of linguistic representation, like the healing ritual the Zhizuo residents perform, in the mutual shaping between the perceiving body and the lived space. Here, neither language nor landscape is the primary locus, or mirror, of culture. It is to be found in the continuous interweaving of body, language, and landscape. None of the three can be dispensed with in this generative process, demonstrated in the following passage.

[H]ouses provided a means for moving people along specific social paths with determined future. Social relations also emerged from domestic space through ritualized acts that sedimented expectations about the future into movements over thresholds or across courtyards……Most of such rites employed meticulous architecture of poetic language to lay out trajectories through domestic places……[T]his architecture provided

models for imagining the future paths of social relations. (Mueggler 2001: 65)

It is mainly in its novel conception of language that this study differs both from Basso's and from Bourdieu's. For Basso, language is an all-encompassing scheme that imposes a predetermined structure onto landscape; for Bourdieu, landscape has in itself a definite structure, to which language can merely attach labels. In Mueggler's ethnography, however, language neither frames nor is framed by landscape; language, as an instrument of human intention, is used to highlight certain desirable aspects of the landscape to promote "a smoother integration of body and place" (*ibid* 26). It is through language that body encounters a more inhabitable landscape – a representational space "in which sign and substance mutually inhered and where magic had its effects" (*ibid* 54). For example, language can conjure up "a vision of an ideal household, where…nurturance flows from the parents at the bed's upstream heads to the children and grandchildren at their downstream feet; generations flow the opposite way, as children gradually replace parents" (*ibid* 52). By highlighting people's active use of language in their effort to create a more inhabitable landscape, Mueggler's analysis starts to move away not only from the tyranny of language, but also from the tyranny of landscape.

Although it is a significant step forward from Basso and Bourdieu, Mueggler's approach has not fully escaped their limitations I have pointed out earlier. First, it seems to dive directly into meanings behind forms, while paying little attention to people's engagement with linguistic forms themselves. Second, language is equated to representation. In his account of "Sky Dog White Tiger" (*ibid* 42), for instance, Mueggler observes that it is *associated* with Mandarin Chinese and *represents* the authority of officialdom, but he does not delve into what the local

residents generally *think and talk about the language itself*, or what kind of *poetic effect* is created when Mandarin words are inserted into the verse. Then, how can we illuminate these deep-seated analytical blind spots in the study of language and landscape?

A major breakthrough is found in *The Perception of the Environment* by Tim Ingold (2000). In this pioneering work, Ingold proposes what he calls the dwelling perspective, which situates the human being "in the context of an active engagement with the constituents of his or her surroundings" (2000: 5). Here, I emphasize that language, too, is a constituent of one's surroundings. As I have noted above, people perceive language just as palpably as they do other parts of the landscape. Once language is firmly located in the perceptual world rather than in the realm of abstract ideas, we can begin to see how people engage with the linguistic forms they use. This important insight is crystallized in the following passage where Ingold compares speech to tool-using:

Both [words and tools] conduct a skilled and sensuous engagement with the environment that is sharpened and enriched through previous experience. The clumsiness of the novice in handling unfamiliar tools is matched, as every anthropological fieldworker knows, only by his incomprehension of spoken words. What the novice lacks, however, and the knowledgeable hand possesses, is not a scheme of conceptual representations for organising the data of experience but rather the perceptual sensitivity that enables him to discern, and continually to respond to, those subtle variations in the environment whose detention is essential to the accomplishment of ongoing activity. From this point of view…speech is not so much the articulation of representations as the embodiment of

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feeling. (Ingold 2000: 146, emphasis original)

As long as language is concerned, I notice, "the embodiment of feeling" or "the perceptual sensitivity" that Ingold discusses above unmistakably resonates with Sapir's notion of *form-feeling* (or *pattern-feeling*) elaborated throughout his writings. In *Language* (1921), Sapir notes "Both the phonetic and conceptual structures show the intuitive feeling of language for form." His notion of "pattern-feeling" or "the intuitive feeling of langue for form" is well worth revisiting here, because it locates language (and other semiotic forms as well) not in a reified society, but *between conscious individuals*, thereby helping us to conceptualize how people actually engage with semiotic forms like language. Rather than a shared system of symbols mirroring unconscious cultural categories, language for Sapir is an individual's medium (channel) of communication with other individuals. In other words, Sapir allows a room for individuals' conscious reflection on the linguistic medium they use for social interaction. Significantly, Sapir (1927:553) compares the pattern-feeling, intuitive knowledge of pattern, to the human capacity to make aesthetic judgment, making it clear that the locus of aesthetic intuition is the choosing individual. In his 1933 paper "The Psychological Reality of Phonemes," he similarly suggests that "subjectivity" is actually inescapably involved in the native's (and the analyst's) recognition of formal patterns.

For the purpose of our discussion, then, it is highly useful to bring the concept of pattern-feeling to Ingold's dwelling perspective. People's intuitive feeling for language develops in their intimate engagement with linguistic forms, that is, in *hearing and voicing concrete sounds*, rather than in representing concepts (cf. Keane 2013). If, as Ingold writes, "a place owes its character to

the experiences it affords to those who spend time there – to the sights, *sounds*, and indeed smells that constitute its specific ambience" (2000: 192, emphasis mine), it follows that by hearing and voicing the sounds of words, people simultaneously perceive and shape the landscape (or 'soundscape'). Indeed, the common model of language as a system of arbitrary symbols, detached from the experience of hearing the sounds of words, is comparable to the map stripped off of all the traces of the mapmaker's journey (de Certeau 1984: 120-121, see also Harley 1989). Now that language is viewed as a part of the perceptual world, it could even be argued that the perceiving body is given in hearing (and speaking), a kind of bodily movement which carries its own immanent intentionality (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 110-111). It is this hearing body, "wholly immersed, from the start, in the relational context of dwelling in a world (Ingold 2000: 409)," that engages with, and develops the feeling for, linguistic forms constituting its soundscape. I suggest that the notion of hearing body, actively attending to what a word sounds like, enables us to finally reach beyond the obsession with representation and unconscious meanings, and offers a fuller analytic view that sheds a new light on some significant yet underexplored aspects in the study of language and landscape, in particular, the poetic effect of language and the embodiment of semiotic consciousness for language.

Let us turn to Mueggler again. In his more recent works, Mueggler provides a practical insight for doing what I may call 'anthropology of hearing.' As a hearing body, the perceiving agent attends to how he or she hears sounds and to how he or she may be heard by other hearing bodies. In "The Lapponicum Sea" (2005), Mueggler observes the botanist Frank Kingdon-Ward's writing (and revising), through which he tried to regulate his own senses and affects, especially how to see the world he explored; In "Bodies Real and Virtual" (2011), he describes another botanist Joseph Rock's peculiar use of camera and gramophone in his struggle to control

how he could be seen in the gazes of the people encountered in his exploration. In essence, Kingdon-Ward tried to control his own eyes, while Rock did the eyes of others. Although both of these papers focus mainly on vision rather than hearing, Mueggler effectively shows that people make *conscious efforts* to fashion the ways in which they perceive and are perceived by their surroundings, and that such conscious efforts are often observable in their material practices including linguistic ones. So, for instance, "As Kingdon-Ward wrote each day's walk, he was teaching himself how to see the world – cultivating, as he would put it, his "eye for plants" – and as he walked, he was already writing, already finding, in each new step and each new plant, the words that would move his writing along" (Mueggler 2005: 466). For our study of hearing, then, we should look at what people do to cultivate their 'ear for words' (semiotic consciousness for language) and what kinds of sounds people actually hear and make in various linguistic practices (the poetic aspect of language).

3. Toward an Anthropology of Hearing: A Lesson from the Altai Kazaks

Merleau-Ponty (1962) reminds us that our bodies not only see the world but also are seen in the world. The same goes for hearing: our bodies hear the world and are heard in the world. An effective study of language and landscape must pay attention to the actual sounds the body makes and hears in the landscape and to the body's conscious responses to those sounds made and heard. More specifically, the ethnographer should focus on the poetic effects[127] generated by

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[127] What I mean by "poetic" here is the function of language that brings attention to its own form. (See Jakobson 1960)

a variety of sound contrasts available in the language(s) spoken in the field, and on the metapragmatic comments on such contrasts. In addition, I note, the poetic effects of language often involve non-linguistic components of the landscape, and that metapragmatic comments tend to exploit the iconic association between linguistic forms and non-linguistic forms.

Steven Feld's (1982) path-breaking work, *Sound and Sentiment*, demonstrates an ethnography that closely attends to sound and to the iconic associations people make between sonic qualities and human sentiments. Specifically, in his examination of the sonic dimension of the *gisalo* ceremony among the Kaluli people of central Papua New Guinea, Feld shows that bird sounds are metaphors of Kaluli sentiments. "At the pragmatic and semantic level, the musical code maintains the sonic structure of the *muni* bird call symbol, elaborated melodically into controlled phrases with pitch and temporal consistency, redundancy, and patterns. It is weeping that turns into a performed wept-song" (Feld 1982: 128) Feld also explores a metaphoric system of water imagery, in which specific melodic and rhythmic features are equated with varieties of water sounds. Thus, for instance, *gisalo* song voice should be like "the pulsating and continuous quality of water rushing over rocks." (*Ibid* 174) Drawing on Feld's insights, I suggest that attention to the poetic and metapragmatic aspects of language enables us to study language and landscape in a single analytic framework.

In what follows, I will show that this approach can help us better understand the link between linguistic and non-linguistic signs used by Kazak nomads in evoking ethical categories. Perhaps the most pronounced formal contrast in the Kazak language is the opposition between honorific forms and the plain forms. As I have described in Chapter 2, the grammatical categories involved in this contrast are pronouns, possessive suffixes, and predictive suffixes in

the second person. It may be useful here to take another look at some of the actual forms of these categories.

Pronouns: *sen* (plain) : *siz* (honorific)

Possessive suffixes: *-yng* (plain) : *-yngyz* (honorific); *-ing* (plain) : *-ingiz* (honorific)

Predicative suffixes: *-syng* (plain): *-syz* (honorific); *-sing* (plain) : *-siz* (honorific);

-sang (plain) : *-sangyz* (honorific); *-seng* (plain) : *-sengiz* (honorific);

-yng (plain) : *-yngyz* (honorific) ; *-ing* (plain) : *-ingiz* (honorific)

From these forms, we easily notice that the plain forms take either *-n* or *-ng* at the end, while the honorific forms uniformly take *–z* at the end. To generalize further, the formal contrast can be reduced to [word-final nasal : word-final z]. In addition to this, it is also noticeable that the honorific forms tend to have more syllables than their plain counterparts.

Now, these two kinds of contrast – the word-final consonants and the number of syllables – in the Kazak honorific system are readily mobilized to produce poetic effects when they are used in conversation. For instance, the Altai Kazaks often repeat nasal-ending words in plain speech, and repeat z-ending words in honorific speech. The question is: What does a z-ending, bi-syllabic honorific form sound like, compared to a nasal-ending, monosyllabic plain forms, to the Kazak ear? A direct answer is found in a number of metapragmatic expressions about the two speech styles. The most common Kazak terms referring to the honorific speech and the plain

speech are *sypajy* ('delicate') and *anaj* ('crude'). Kazak speakers describe honorific forms as *zhumsak so'z* ('soft word') and plain forms as *katty so'z* ('hard word'). Also, the honorific speech is described as *akyryn so'jlew* ('speaking quietly') and the plain speech *katty so'jlew* ('speaking loudly'). Furthermore, the honorific speech is considered *majdalap so'jlew* ("speaking in crumbled pieces") and the plain speech *zhoyan so'jlew* ("speaking in big chunks"). It is helpful to note here that Kazak herders often compare speech to wind. The honorific speech (the 'delicate' speech) is like the gentle wind that blows slowly and quietly whereas the plain speech (the 'crude' speech) is like the strong wind that blows fast and loudly. Here we can further observe that the elongated syllables of the honorific forms are linked to slowness, while the monosyllables of the plain speech are linked to fastness; the z endings of the honorific forms are linked to quietness and softness, while the nasal endings of the plain forms are linked to loudness and hardness.

I suggest that Kazak speakers frequently use these metapragmatic expressions in their everyday conversation to 'train their ear for honorifics.' Such metapragmatic practices are a powerful means of fashioning their intuitive feeling for the formal contrasts. Every time they say or hear a sentence like *Katty so'z ajtpa* ("Don't say hard words"), they are teaching themselves how to hear the sound contrast between the z-ending, bi-syllabic honorific forms and the nasal-ending, monosyllabic plain forms. Such direct engagement with the sound contrast produces the Sapiran form-feeling or 'semiotic consciousness,' which is reinforced in the actual use of the honorific and plain forms, often accompanied by non-linguistic constituents of the landscape.

Now imagine a Kazak host receiving a guest in his tent. In fact, Kazak speakers typically point to the indexical association between a proper occasion for serving guests and the honorific

forms of speech it demands. As we have seen in Chapter 5, a good host brings his guest to sit as the seat of honor (*to'r*) facing the door of the tent, serves milk tea, fresh bread, meat in small pieces, takes time to have extended, relaxed conversation with the guest, and always addresses the guest in honorific terms, which are generally spoken quietly and slowly. Each use of an honorific form by the host brings forth a poetic effect of "quieting," "softening," and "slowing down" the whole atmosphere. (By contrast, each use of a plain form creates the opposite effect of "loudening," "hardening," and "rushing" the atmosphere.) Notice that the perceived softness is congruent with the non-linguistic components of the scene such as the soft texture of the fresh bread, the small size of the pieces of meat, the mild taste of the milk tea (The perceived hardness of the plain speech resembles hard old bread, big chunks of meat, bitter black tea served without milk.) It is said that a "soft-hearted" (*zhu'regi zhumsak*) host says soft words and gives soft things while a 'hard-hearted' (*zhu'regi katty*) host says hard words and gives hard things. In short, poetic effects are produced by the congruent combination of the differential sounds of words (e.g., z-ending forms vs. nasal-ending forms), the volume and pace in which they are spoken (e.g., slow vs. fast), and the non-linguistic elements of the landscape (e.g., milk tea vs. black tea, small pieces vs. big pieces) which co-constitute the pragmatic context of the speech.

In particular, the "psychological reality" of the sound contrast between the nasal-ending plain forms and the z-ending honorific forms is extended to other kinds of linguistic contrasts in Kazak. Of the first person possessive suffixes, for instance, the plural forms have z-endings (e.g., *-ymyz*, *-imiz*) while the singular forms have nasal endings (e.g., *-ym*, *-im*); as I have mentioned in Chapter 2, the plural forms are considered *sypajy* ("delicate") and *zhumsak* ("soft") whereas the singular forms are considered *anajy* ("crude") and *katty* ("hard"). Significantly, the first person plural forms are used to refer to a singular speaker as self-lowering "humiliative we," expressing

modesty (see Arik 1999). Similarly, there are two words denoting "person": the 'delicate' form is *kisi* and the 'crude' form is *adam*; although *kisi* does not have a z-ending, *adam* clearly ends with a nasal consonant, therefore nicely fitting the broad scheme of [non-nasal : nasal].

Moreover, the same scheme of sound contrast seems to have a powerful influence on the way in which the Altai Kazaks use certain Chinese loan words within their plain speech. There is no Mandarin Chinese word that ends with a non-nasal consonant, except for the marginal case of the retroflex –r ending. That is, a word ends either with a vowel or with a nasal consonant (-n or -ng). This morphophonemic peculiarity of Mandarin Chinese sounds "hard" to the Kazak ear because of its iconic association with the nasal endings of the Kazak plain forms. The perceived hardness of the Chinese language, in turn, leads to the frequent use of certain Chinese terms exclusively in Kazak plain speech. In fact, Chinese terms rarely appear in honorific speech. In other words, Chinese terms sound too hard to be used along with the soft-sounding Kazak honorific forms in the same sentence. Of particular interest is the use of certain Chinese terms of address in joking relations. (e.g., a Kazak woman is supposed to tell "hard" jokes to her elder sister's husband in the plain speech regardless of the age difference between them. See Chapter 6.) The most commonly used Chinese terms are *laoban* ("boss"), *xiangzhang* ("township head"), and *duizhang* ("village head"). Of course, Altai Kazaks generally use these terms to jokingly address their fellow herders, not their actual bosses, township heads, or village heads, all of whom they normally address by the respectful Kazak term *bastyk* "leader." Notice that these Chinese terms all have nasal endings, which sound especially appropriate for hard jokes (*katty kalzhyng*). Adding more nasal-ending words helps the speaker produce a stronger poetic effect of hardening the plain speech, already full of hard sounds.

Finally, the Chinese language seems to be indexically associated with the noisiness of the township area, always crowded by the speakers of Chinese. For many Kazak pastoral nomads, travelling from their peaceful mountain pasture to the bustling township area entails hearing all kinds of noise from people arguing and bargaining in the market, to cars honking and telephones ringing in the street, to the ear-numbing firecrackers celebrating Chinese weddings at the restaurants. Of course, Kazak nomads cannot escape hearing (and often also speaking) Chinese once they are in this area. The word-final nasals, characteristic of the Chinese language, make this cacophony even louder.

It is through hearing and making actual sounds and actively commenting on those sounds that Kazak speakers fashion themselves and the soundscape they dwell in. The focus on the poetic and metapragmatic aspects of language reveals that people engage with language consciously and intimately as a palpable constituent of the landscape. As I hope to have demonstrated above, language not only represents a virtual world of unconscious categories, but also constitutes a dwelt-in world of perceptual materials. Invocation of ethical categories is achieved mainly by bringing attention to the very materiality of specific sign form. The Altai Kazaks can foreground the contrasting formal qualities of honorific and plain speech forms by various means: pronouncing honorific forms more slowly and softly than plain forms; repetition of words with a certain final consonant that rhymes with either honorific or plain suffixes; using certain Chinese loan words only in plain speech; differentiating non-verbal component of interaction (posture, seating arrangement, food and drink) to match with the chosen speech style. Such communicative labor, I argue, produce cross-modal poetic effects broadly conceived (Lempert 2012, 2013), which then heighten attention to the palpable qualities of contrasting signs-in-interaction, thereby materializing otherwise abstract ethical categories like modesty and

arrogance.

Focus on the metapragmatic comments on these formal contrasts producing poetic effects enables us to trace out the "interdiscursivity" (Agha and Wortham 2005) of sign use, where signs are connected and likened with signs from other events. Found in distant and seemingly unrelated activities and institutions, the aforementioned imagistic contrasts and resemblances among the semiotic materials the Kazak nomads use (milk tea and black tea, soft speech and hard speech) create mutually reinforcing diagrams of ethical categories. A lesson from the Altai Kazaks I would like to highlight is this: culturally salient ethical categories in a given society are shaped, at least in part, by overlapping imagistic contrasts of readily communicated sign materials in its landscape.

4. Summary

In this chapter, I have tried to refashion the theoretical concept of landscape in relation to language in order to better capture the link between various sign forms Kazak nomads use to evoke ethical categories. Most anthropological studies on this theme fail to provide an effective analytic framework due to their preoccupation with the representational function of language and with the discovery of the unconscious cultural order presumably mirrored in linguistic or spatial contrasts. In order to overcome these limitations, we need a new perspective that views language as a part of the perceptual landscape, rather than as a means of representing abstract meanings. As such, we begin to see the 'hearing body' that intimately engages with linguistic *forms* that

constitute the landscape it inhabits. By attentively hearing (and voicing) the concrete sounds of words and actively commenting on those sounds, the hearing body simultaneously perceives and shapes the landscape. In order to fully account for these aspects, the ethnographer should concentrate on the concrete sound contrasts available in the language(s) spoken in the field, the differential poetic effects generated by the contrasts involving the non-linguistic components of the pragmatic context, and the metapragmatic practices regarding such contrasts. Focus on the texture of the sounds heard and voiced by the people being studied shows that Kazak nomads evoke the ethical by foregrounding the materiality of certain sign forms, in particular, contrasts and resemblances among them.

Conclusion

      This dissertation has examined how one's moral character is communicated through speech and other signs in everyday interaction among the Altai Kazaks. In particular, I highlight the Kazak nomads' honorific speech as a powerful means through which they can invoke the morally loaded ideal of modesty and other related ethical categories. In a sense, the persistence of honorific speech among the Altai Kazaks today represents their everyday pursuit of ethical life under conditions of difficult changes since the late 1950s, such as the undermining of their traditional authority structure and the loss of many seasonal pastures to the Chinese farmers. The Chinese state's "Develop the West" campaign since the late 1990s has enforced sedentarization of herders and Chinese language education, which expose the Altai Kazaks to a particular form of civilizing discourse (cf. Harrell 1995) to an unprecedented extent. The herding community I chose to study exhibits varying degrees of sedentarization and exposure to Chinese language education. In this region, the juxtaposition of Kazak, a language with systematic contrasts of honorific and non-honorific morphemes, and Chinese, a language with almost no such morphological contrast, provides Kazak-speaking herders with rich semiotic materials for ideological construction. Given the various changes and contrasts found in their material surroundings including landscape as well as soundscape, what for Kazak herders today constitutes a good person and good life? My research is an exploration of what they perceive to be the concrete signs of one's ethical virtue, and how these signs are communicated in everyday

social interaction.

My analysis of the everyday interaction among the Altai Kazaks resulted in several findings. First, there exist some asymmetric relations among them that require the use of honorifics and other expressions of deference. Until the late 1950s, the Altai Kazaks were organized into a number of well-defined clan groups called *uruw*, each of which had its own chief or clan leader. During the collectivization campaign in the late 1950s, practically every known clan leader was persecuted, or at least stripped of his wealth and power, and the clan group lost its function as a meaningful economic and political unit. Even after the decline of the clan group and the disappearance of the clan leader, who was the center of authority in the given clan group, knowing one's clan membership remained of paramount importance in their exogamous marriage practices. Moreover, despite the absence of the clan leader, the Altai Kazaks continued to recognize some types of relations, both within and outside one's clan, in which one is expected to show deference to the other. These relations are readily observable today, and they contrast with many other types of relations demanding more casual, non-deferential fashions of interaction, which may have led some scholars to believe that Kazak nomads are inherently egalitarian in their orientation. My dissertation clarifies this confusion and lays out the types of relations that require expressions of deference and the types of relations that require expressions of non-deference. And more importantly, between these two extremes of social relations, I find that there exist many "middle-range" relations in which both deferential and non-deferential styles of communication are considered appropriate, allowing variation among different actors in their tendency to act deferentially. These different types of social relations appear to be modeled on the traditional Kazak kinship structure, in which relative age, as well as the distinction between joking and avoidance relations, plays a significant role.

Second, such stylistic variation is understood to be indicative of one's ethical qualities, rather than reflecting one's social-structural position. In studies of honorifics, it has been noted that the speaker's relative knowledge and control of honorific expressions is often a strong indicator of his or her social-structural position, as demonstrated by Geertz (1960), Silverstein (1979), Errington (1988), Agha (1998, 2007), and many others. In this regard, however, my research differs significantly. Perhaps due to the relatively simple grammatical paradigm of Kazak honorifics, the speaker's use of honorific forms can reveal little about his or her sociological background. On the contrary, knowledge of all the grammatical forms in Kazak honorifics is considered to be attainable for every adult. Because everyone is supposed to know and control all the required linguistic forms, the speaker is held responsible for his or her linguistic choices, and thus subject to others' evaluations with powerful moral loadings, such as "overbearing," "humble", "sycophantic," "considerate," "childish," "patient," "lacking discipline," and the like. Moreover, this ethical dimension of one's linguistic (and non-linguistic) choices becomes all the more apparent in the aforementioned middle-range relations, where the speaker has a choice between multiple pragmatically possible options. As the recent scholarship on ethics points out, social scientific discussion of ethics have placed too much emphasis on the individuals' conformity to the norms imposed by the collectivity; in fact, there is little room for moral evaluation when an individual is rigidly acting out of a script. In my research, I found ample evidence of discourse that evaluates the agentive choices made through particular linguistic (and non-linguistic) forms in specific contexts. In short, among Kazak nomads in the Chinese Altai, the communicative style one chooses to use in various social contexts, especially in the middle-range relations, is viewed in moral, rather than sociological, terms.

Third, underlying the Altai Kazaks' variation in their communicative style and the

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evaluative discourse about it, I argue, is the ethics of modesty. An important finding in studies of honorifics is that ideologies of honorific language are not just about respect (Irvine 1995, Agha 1998). Rather, they are saturated with, and characterized by other culturally significant ideas. While studies of many other better known honorific systems (e.g., Wang 1984, Errington 1984) have shown that the choice of "courteous" linguistic forms is often seen to reflect the speaker's aristocratic ancestry or affinity with the royal court, my ethnographic research finds that in Altai Kazaks' language ideology, the dominant cultural image of honorific speech is self-lowering 'modesty,' which includes such qualities as mildness, smallness, quietness, slowness, and maturity, while non-honorific speech is understood to express self-lifting 'arrogance,' which consists of harshness, largeness, loudness, rapidity, and immaturity. From such pragmatic values of honorific speech, in addition to the marking of respect and honor, we begin to see why some Altai Kazaks tend to speak more deferentially than others. Moreover, the morally loaded contrast of modesty and arrogance, vivified with the associated qualities, extends to the non-linguistic aspects of nomadic life in general. The honorific pronouns and suffixes are perceived to sound mild and delicate, resembling the speaker's gentle and 'little' character, which is often compared to the gentle breeze in the summer pasture and the mild taste of milk tea, an essential element in Kazak hospitality, as well as the tender mutton and soft bread served in small chunks in an elaborate meal. The bi-syllabic honorific possessive suffixes, typically spoken slowly and quietly, also resemble the summer breeze and the relaxing atmosphere provided by a generous host, who never rushes his guest to leave. By contrast, the monosyllabic non-honorific forms are typically spoken quickly and loudly, and considered rough and forceful, resembling the strong wind in the winter pasture, the bitter taste of black tea, tough meat, and hard bread served in large chunks in a less elaborate meal, and the speaker-host's impatience, immaturity as well as crude and

presumptuous character. All these imagistic associations, through rhematization processes (Irvine and Gal 2000) in the Altai Kazaks' language ideology of ethical speech, resonate with the pragmatic contrast of modesty and arrogance imbued into the honorific and non-honorific forms.

Although recent scholarship on ethics has suggested that ordinary interaction is a central site for ethical activities (see Lambek 2010), it remains largely unclear exactly how the ethical is kindled through interaction. My dissertation illustrates concrete communicative means through which people invoke ethics in the mundane flow of interaction. I stress that this is achieved mainly by bringing attention to the very materiality of certain sign forms. The Altai Kazaks can foreground the contrasting formal qualities of the honorific and non-honorific speech forms by various means: pronouncing honorific forms more slowly and softly than non-honorific forms; repetition of words with a certain final consonant that rhymes with either honorific or non-honorific suffixes; using certain Chinese loan words exclusively in non-honorific speech; differentiating non-verbal components of interaction (e.g., posture, seating arrangement, food and drink) to match with the chosen speech style. Such communicative labor produces cross-modal poetic effects broadly conceived (Lempert 2012), which then heighten attention to the palpable qualities of contrasting signs-in-interaction, thereby materializing otherwise abstract ethical categories like modesty and arrogance.

This dissertation aspires to understand specific cultural processes in which ethical categories are produced and circulated. My analytic focus on sign forms and language ideologies enables me to trace out the "interdiscursivity" (Agha and Wortham 2005) of sign use, where signs are connected and likened with signs from other events. Found in distant and seemingly unrelated activities and institutions ranging from language socialization to hospitality routines to

joking relations, the aforementioned imagistic contrasts and resemblances among the semiotic materials the Kazak nomads use (e.g., milk tea and black tea, soft speech and hard speech, etc.) create mutually reinforcing diagrams of ethical categories. I hope to have demonstrated that culturally salient ethical categories in a given society are shaped, at least in part, by overlapping imagistic contrasts of readily communicated sign materials found in its landscape and soundscape.

Directions for Further Research

The present study has opened up a number of research directions. First, more language-focused ethnographic work on pastoral nomads is needed in order to better understand the question of authority in nomadic society. A strong commitment to authority seems to co-exist with an egalitarian orientation among the Altai Kazak nomads. My research suggests that their commitment to authority is closely linked to the linguistic deference to seniority and the ethics of modesty, while the joking register and certain related cultural notions, such as "pampering" or the risk of appearing to be a "sycophant," foster egalitarianism in many types of social relations. How is authority constructed and negotiated in other nomadic societies? A very fruitful comparative case study would be to examine honorific speech among Mongol nomads. Mongols and Kazaks are said to be similar in their traditional social organization (Krader 1963). For instance, affinal name avoidance discussed in this dissertation is also reported among Mongols (Humphrey 1978). The Mongolian language also has honorifics, but unlike the relatively simple,

grammar-based honorifics in Kazak, Mongolian is known for its system of lexical honorifics (Poppe 1970). What kinds of authority relations are linguistically constructed among Mongol nomads? Does their honorific speech also communicate modesty and respect for seniority? Does the lexical elaboration of Mongolian honorifics lead to an uneven distribution of competencies in honorific use across speakers? What is the dominant cultural image expressed in Mongolian honorifics? More generally, how does honorific speech relate to the ordering of spatially dispersed social networks among mobile herders?

Second, my research, along with Obana's (2017) recent work on Japanese honorifics, has shown that honorific speech can be productively studied as linguistic display of personality. Long-term ethnographic research focused on variation in honorific speech across a population promises to go beyond the research tradition in both sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology, whereby speech variation is inevitably seen to index some macro-sociological distinction, such as class, gender, ethnicity, or place of origin. Honorific use that communicates personal qualities, such as those of an "egalitarian professor," or a "self-controlled and intellectual detective" (Obana 2017: 306-307), is only beginning to be explored. Much more work is needed in this direction.

Third, another exciting area of research in the study of honorific speech is language socialization (cf. Ochs 1988). Recently, a growing body of research on socializations of honorifics (Shohet 2010; 2013 on Vietnamese, Howard 2007; 2012 on Thai, Burdelski 2013 on Japanese) is starting to show that honorific forms are used to cultivate embodied cultural ideals of comportment and/or social order. In particular, cross-cultural research focusing on metapragmatic terms central to socialization of honorific speech, especially terms pertinent to the

culture-specific notions of maturity and immaturity, will shed a new light on the role of language use in generating culturally variable conceptions of what it is to be a good person and what constitutes a life well lived.

Lastly, more serious attention to the sound qualities of speech styles is needed. As I demonstrated in Chapter 6, much can be gained by closely examining how language users engage with the concrete sound qualities of linguistic forms. Recent scholarship on the pragmatics of qualia (Gal 2013, Harkness 2013; 2014; 2015) is pointing to a promising direction along this line of inquiry. In addition, a number of ethnomusicologists, or "anthropologists of sound," have recently produced very interesting work that integrates the human voice into the soundscape in, for example, Tuvan nomadism (Levin 2006). What remains to be done is rigorous research on the perceived qualities of linguistic forms and the ways in which linguistic forms interactionally configure with non-linguistic sign forms to create the effect of register congruence (Agha 2005; 2007), or imagistic fit, in diverse ethnographic settings.
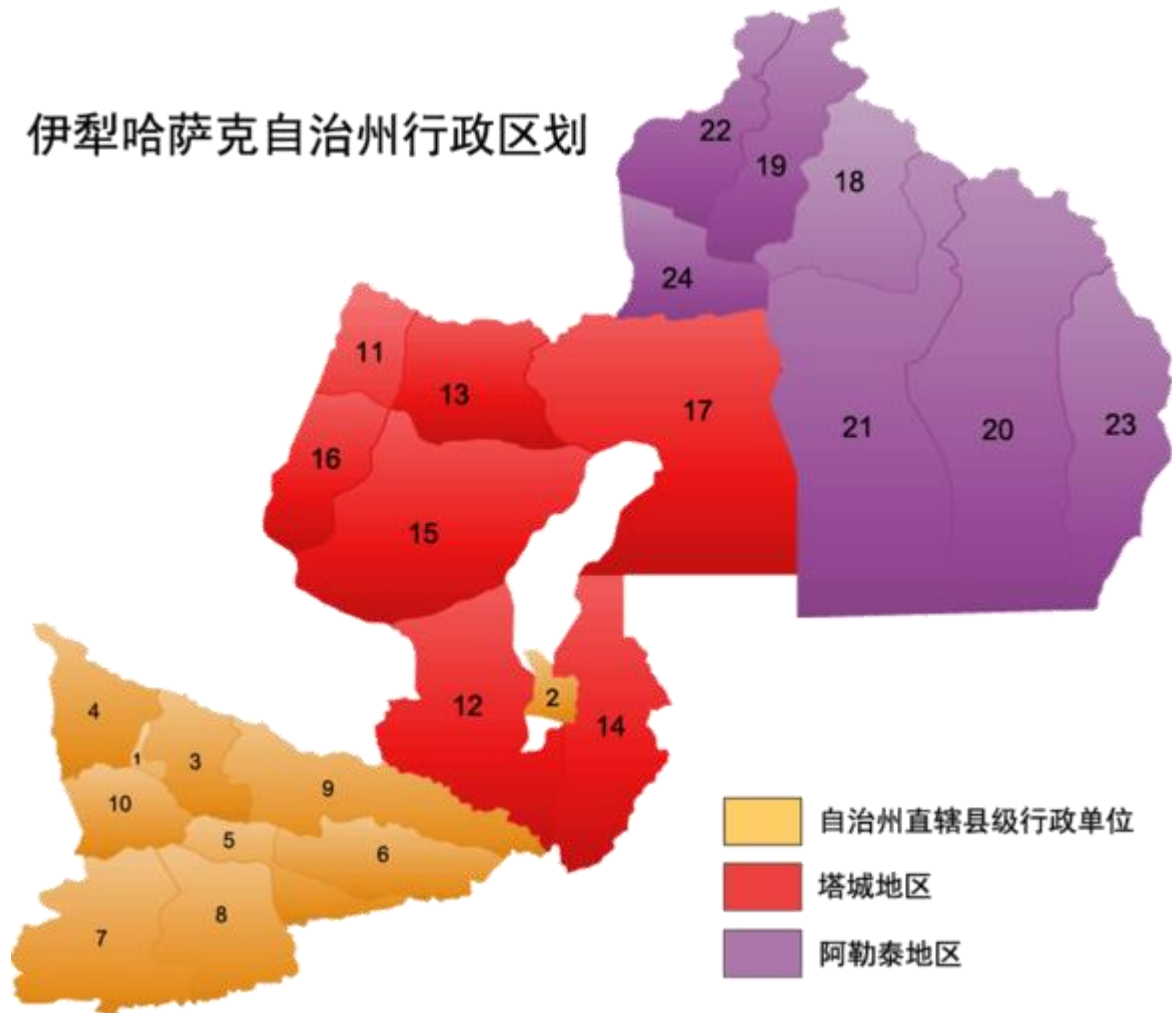
Appendix

(Maps and Figures)

Map1. Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region

(https://www.britannica.com/place/Xinjiang/images-videos)

Map 2. Altai Prefecture (red) in Ile Kazak Autonomous Oblast (light red) and Xinjiang (orange)

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Altay_Prefecture#/media/File:China_Xinjiang_Ili_Altay.svg)

Map 3. Administrative Division of Ile Kazak Autonomous Oblast (Altai Prefecture in purple: 18. Altai City; 19. Buwurshyn County; 20. Ko'ktogaj County; 21. Buwrultogaj County; 22. Kaba County; 23. Shinggil County; 24. Zhemenej County)

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ili_Kazakh_Autonomous_Prefecture)
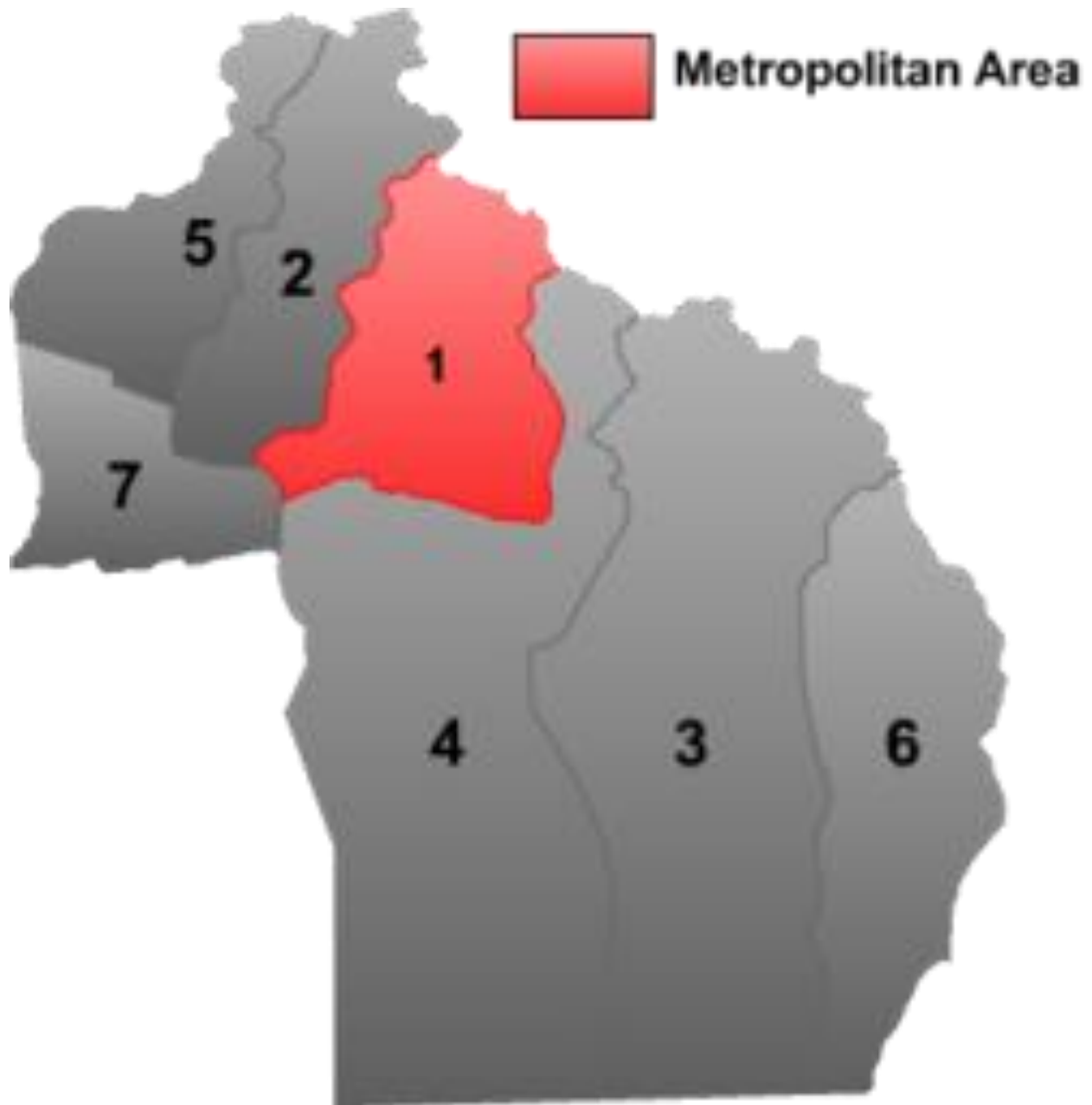
Map 4. Administrative Division of Altai Prefecture (1. Altai City; 2. Buwurshyn County; 3. Buwrultogaj County; 4. Ko'ktogaj County; 5. Kaba County; 6. Shinggil County; 7. Zhemenej County)

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Altay_Prefecture)

哈巴河县地图

哈巴河县在新疆的位置

乌鲁木齐

哈巴河县
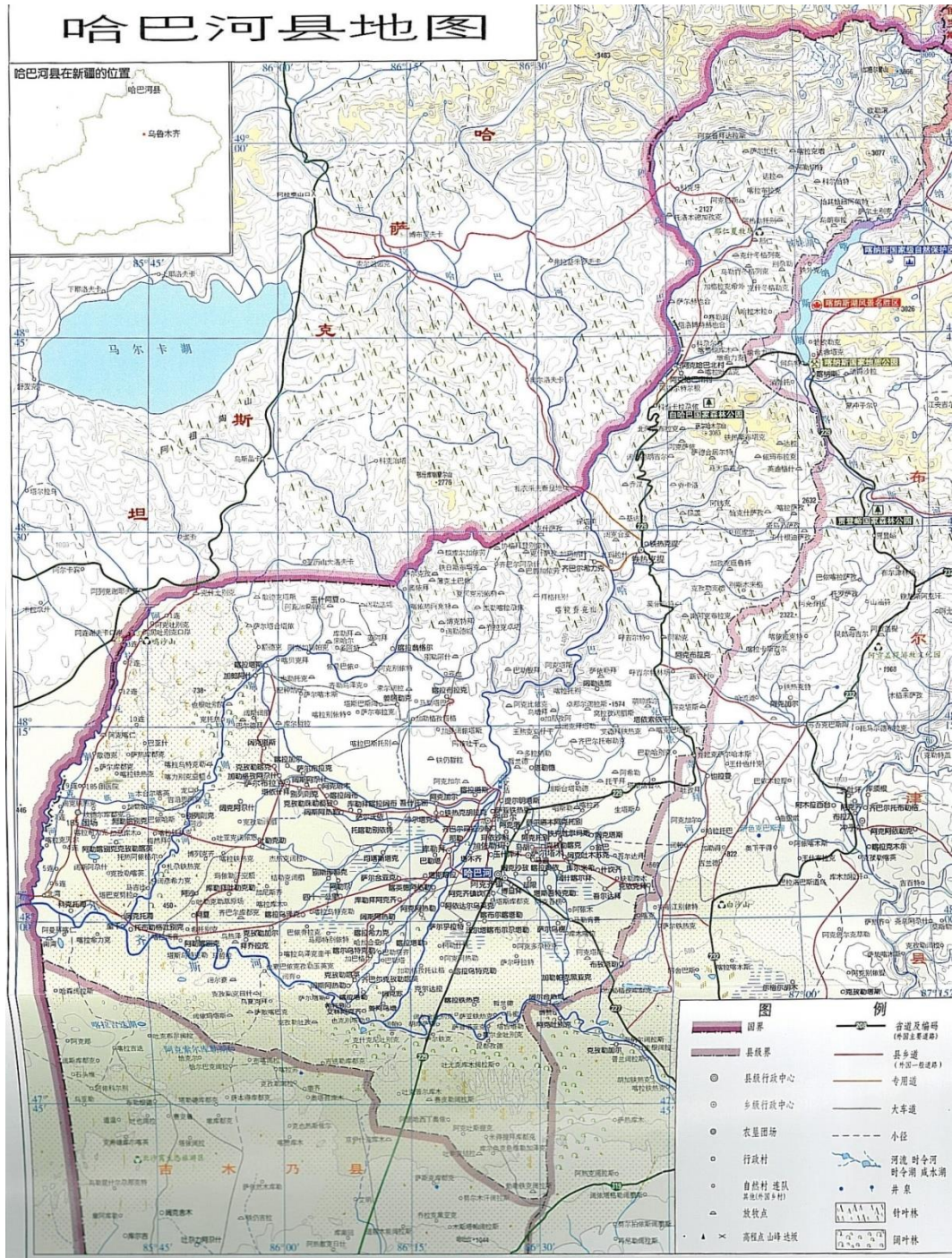
Map 5. Kaba County

(*Habahe Xian Zhi* [Kaba County Gazetteer] 2004)

Figure 1. Kazak tent at a summer pasture at Teris-Akkan, Buwurshyn County (July 29, 2012)

Figure 2. Replacing horseshoes (September 13, 2012)

Figure 3. Ukan and Maksat's migration to autumn pasture 1 (September 22, 2012)

Figure 4. Ukan and Maksat's migration to autumn pasture 2 (September 22, 2012)

Figure 5. Ukan and Maksat's migration to autumn pasture 3 (September 22, 2012)

Figure 6. Ukan's autumn pasture (September 23, 2012)

Figure 7. Kanat slaughtering a goat at his autumn pasture (October 5, 2012)

Figure 8. Kanat's autumn pasture (October 6, 2012)

Figure 9. Kurban feast at the village head's house (October 26, 2012)

Figure 10. A camel wondering in a village road (November 21, 2012)

Figure 11. Murat slaughtering a cow for the winter (December 1, 2012)

Figure 12. Winter houses at Sawur Mountain (January 21, 2013)

Figure 13. Nurzhajna and her aunt Nurgyjza at a meal (January 23, 2013)

Figure 14. Nurzhajna cooking and boiling snow (January 29, 2013)

Figure 15. A'dil driving camels at Sawur Mountain (January 29, 2013)

Figure 16. Kajrat driving sheep at Sawur Mountain (February 2, 2013)

Figure 17. Ku'la embroidering a syrmak (colored-felt)

Figure 18. Men resting (February 4, 2013)

Figure 19. Children playing (February 4, 2013)

Figure 20. Shoveling sheep dung at Sawur Mountain (February 5, 2013)

Figure 21. Summer pasture at Shargulagan (July 30, 2013)

Figure 22. Murat's summer log house at Shargulagan (July 31, 2013)

Figure 23. Da'ken and her son Esbol at Shargulagan (August 2, 2013)

Figure 24. Esbol sleeping in the tent (June 17, 2014)

Figure 25. Altynbek showing Da'ekn his videorecorder at her tent (June 17, 2014)

Figure 26. Murat and his son Esbol at Sajlybaj (June 19, 2014)

Figure 27. Murat and Kanat smoking (June 20, 2014)

Figure 28. Murat's pasture at Sajlybaj (June 22, 2014)

Figure 29. Late spring/early summer pasture at Sajlybaj (June 22, 2014)

Figure 30. Da'ken milking a cow (June 24, 2014)

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