

REVIEW
of the official reviewer for dissertation work

Rakhiya Toxanbayeva Kuantkanovna on the theme "Linguo-semantic and cognitive characteristics of legal discourse: on the materials of the English language" presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the specialty "8D02306 – Foreign Philology".

№	Criteria	Eligibility (one of the options must be checked)	Justification of the position of the official reviewer
1.	The topic of the thesis (as of the date of its approval) corresponds to the directions of development of science and/or state programs	1.1 Compliance with priority areas of science development or government programs: 1) The thesis was completed within the framework of a project or target program financed from the state budget (indicate the name and number of the project or program) 2) The thesis was completed within the framework of another state program (indicate the name of the program) 3) The dissertation corresponds to the priority direction of the development of science, approved by the Higher Scientific and Technical Commission under the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan (indicate the direction)	Rakhiya Toxanbayeva Kuantkanovna's dissertation on the theme "Linguo-semantic and cognitive characteristics of legal discourse: on the materials of the English language" corresponds to the priority area "Research in the Field of Social and Human Sciences" approved by the Higher Scientific and Technical Commission under the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The dissertation was completed in accordance with the Concept for the Development of Higher Education and Science in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2023-2029.
2.	Importance for science	The work makes/does not make a significant contribution to science, and its importance is well disclosed/not disclosed	The work makes a significant contribution to science, and its importance is well disclosed. Rakhiya Toxanbayeva Kuantkanovna's research on "Linguo-semantic and cognitive characteristics of legal discourse: on the materials of the English language" presents a deep and well-founded analysis of legal language. The study offers valuable insights into how meaning is constructed and understood within legal discourse, combining linguistic and cognitive approaches. By focusing on English-language legal materials, the author highlights practical implications for legal

			interpretation, translation, and communication. The relevance of the research is clearly explained, and its theoretical and practical significance is convincingly justified.
3.	The principle of independence	Self-reliance level: 1) <u>High</u> ; 2) Medium; 3) Low; 4) No independence	R.K. Toxanbayeva's dissertation demonstrates a <u>high level</u> of independence, which is confirmed by the research results obtained and tested in a number of the author's publications, as well as by the absence of any borrowing from other sources.
4.	The principle of inner unity	4.1 Justification of the relevance of the thesis: 1) <u>Justified</u> ; 2) Partially justified; 3) Not justified.	The relevance of the thesis is well <u>justified</u> . The study addresses an important aspect of linguistic and cognitive analysis by exploring the principle of inner unity within legal discourse. In legal communication, coherence and semantic consistency are crucial for accurate interpretation and effective application of the law. By focusing on the inner unity of legal texts, the thesis sheds light on how legal meaning is constructed and maintained across various contexts. This topic is highly relevant in today's globalized world, where multilingual legal interaction and cross-border legal understanding require deep linguistic precision. The justification is supported by theoretical foundations and practical implications, making the research timely, necessary, and of scientific value.
		4.2 The content of the thesis reflects the topic of the thesis: 1) <u>Reflects</u> ; 2) Partially reflects; 3) Does not reflect	The content of the thesis <u>fully reflects</u> its stated topic – "Linguo-semantic and cognitive characteristics of legal discourse: on the materials of the English language." Each chapter consistently focuses on the linguistic, semantic, and cognitive features that define legal discourse. For example, the theoretical section outlines the key concepts such as legal terminology, semantic roles, and the structure of legal texts. The analysis section provides concrete examples from English legal documents, illustrating how meaning is constructed and interpreted in legal contexts. The cognitive approach is also clearly demonstrated through the discussion of conceptual metaphors and frames commonly used in legal language. Thus, the thesis remains aligned with its topic throughout, and the content logically supports the research aims and objectives.

		4.3. The purpose and objectives correspond to the topic of the thesis: 1) <u>correspond</u>; 2) partially correspond; 3) do not correspond	The purpose and objectives of the thesis clearly <u>correspond</u> to its topic. The main purpose is to investigate how linguistic and cognitive features shape legal communication in English. This is supported by specific objectives such as: - analyzing key semantic and syntactic structures in legal texts; - identifying typical cognitive models used in legal discourse (e.g., conceptual metaphors like "law is a path" or "justice is balance"); - classifying legal terminology based on its semantic roles. Each objective directly supports the central research question and ensures a comprehensive study of legal discourse from both semantic and cognitive perspectives, fully <u>aligning with the thesis topic</u>.
		4.4 All sections and provisions of the thesis are logically interconnected: 1) <u>completely interconnected</u>; 2) the interconnection is partial; 3) there is no interconnection	The thesis is built on a solid structure where each section flows naturally into the next, forming a cohesive whole. For example: - The section titled "<u>Theoretical Foundations of Legal Discourse Research</u>" provides a general overview of legal discourse as a field of linguistic study. It introduces key concepts such as legal context, discourse participants, and the functional role of legal texts. - This is followed by the "<u>Theoretical Framework of Legal Language</u>", which deepens the discussion by exploring the structural and stylistic features of legal language. It draws upon linguistic theories and legal semiotics to explain how legal meaning is constructed. - The section on "<u>Semantic Ambiguity and Polysemy in Legal Language</u>" continues this line of argument by illustrating how the theoretical insights from the previous sections are manifested in actual language use. It analyzes examples where ambiguity or polysemy in legal texts can lead to multiple interpretations or legal disputes. Each section supports and builds upon the previous one. The theoretical basis laid out in the first section is developed through the framework, and then applied in the analysis of specific linguistic phenomena. This logical progression ensures that the thesis remains consistent, coherent, and scientifically grounded throughout.

		4.5 The new solutions (principles, methods) proposed by the author are reasoned and evaluated in comparison with the known solutions: 1) <u>there is a critical analysis</u>; 2) partial analysis; 3) the analysis does not represent one's own opinions, but quotes from other authors	The thesis demonstrates a <u>clear critical analysis</u> by comparing the author's proposed approaches with existing theories and methods in the field of legal discourse. For example, the author introduces a modified classification of semantic ambiguity in legal texts, which goes beyond traditional linguistic frameworks by incorporating cognitive and contextual variables. This new approach is reasoned through the use of relevant examples from English legal documents, showing how conventional classifications (e.g., lexical ambiguity or structural ambiguity) may fall short in capturing deeper layers of meaning. In contrast, the author's model accounts for intentional vagueness and strategic polysemy as tools often used in legal drafting. Additionally, the methods of discourse analysis proposed by the author are critically compared with previously known methods. The thesis explains why the integration of cognitive linguistics into legal discourse analysis provides more accurate interpretation strategies, especially in complex legal cases. Throughout the work, the comparisons are supported by scholarly references and real-life case studies, which reinforces the validity and originality of the author's contributions. This critical engagement with existing literature highlights the scientific value and innovation of the proposed solutions.
5.	Scientific novelty principle	5.1 Are the scientific results and provisions new? 1) <u>completely new</u>; 2) partially new (25-75% are new); 3) not new (less than 25% are new)	The scientific results presented in the thesis are completely new. The research offers original insights into the field of legal discourse by introducing new classifications, analytical models, and interpretations. These contributions significantly advance current understanding of semantic ambiguity and polysemy in legal texts and go beyond existing theories in linguistics, cognitive science, and legal language studies. For instance, the cognitive-semantic framework developed by the author for analyzing legal discourse introduces new perspectives on how legal meaning is constructed and interpreted. This framework integrates legal pragmatics, conceptual metaphor theory, and frame

			semantics, which have not previously been combined in the same way within this context. In addition, the comparative analysis of legal terminology across English and other languages offers new empirical data and highlights cultural-linguistic factors affecting legal interpretation. Thus, while the work is rooted in existing scholarship, it brings innovative theoretical and methodological contributions that are considered partially new and valuable for further academic and practical applications.
		5.2 Are the dissertation findings new? 1) <u>completely new</u>; 2) partially new (25-75% are new); 3) not new (less than 25% are new)	The findings of the dissertation are completely new, as they present original insights that significantly contribute to the field of legal linguistics. The results introduce entirely new approaches, interpretations, and classifications related to the linguo-semantic and cognitive characteristics of legal discourse, offering a fresh perspective that advances current scholarly understanding. The author offers a new perspective on semantic ambiguity and polysemy in legal language by combining cognitive linguistics with discourse analysis. This interdisciplinary approach allows for a deeper understanding of legal texts, particularly in terms of how meaning is shaped by legal context, cultural norms, and cognitive models. Moreover, the thesis provides comparative data and case studies that enrich current knowledge, especially in the analysis of English legal texts. These findings not only confirm existing theories but also extend and refine them, making the research partially innovative and applicable in both academic and professional legal settings.
		5.3 Technical, technological, economic or management decisions are new and reasonable: 1) completely new; 2) <u>partially new (25-75% are new)</u>; 3) not new (less than 25% are new)	The dissertation introduces partially new management and methodological decisions within the scope of legal discourse and legal language research. Based on the content of the sections – “Theoretical Foundations of Legal Discourse Research,” “Theoretical Framework of Legal Language,” and “Semantic Ambiguity and Polysemy in Legal Language” – the author offers innovative analytical tools and updated linguistic frameworks that enhance the

			precision and understanding of legal texts. For instance, the discussion of lexical vagueness and semantic ambiguity (Section 2.4 and Section 3) introduces a cognitive-semantic approach to interpreting polysemous terms in statutory language, which can be considered a management – level innovation in the field of legal drafting and translation. The analysis of translation-induced polysemy in Kazakh legal acts (Section 3.3) also presents new insights useful for bilingual legislative processes and improving translation quality control – a practical decision relevant for legal professionals and policymakers. While some concepts build on previous research, the integration of empirical analysis, such as word frequency studies and comparative frameworks across different legislative acts (CRA, CJA, ERA), adds a novel dimension to understanding and managing semantic precision in law. Therefore, these decisions are partially new, falling within the 70-75% innovation range, and demonstrate clear practical value and academic relevance.
6.	The validity of the main findings	All main <u>conclusions are</u> /are not <u>based</u> on scientifically significant evidence or well-grounded (for qualitative research and areas of training in the arts and humanities)	All the main conclusions presented in the dissertation are well-grounded and supported by scientifically significant evidence, particularly suitable for qualitative research in the fields of linguistics and discourse studies. The author uses a wide range of theoretical sources, empirical data, and cognitive-linguistic frameworks to justify each finding. In Section 2 – Theoretical Framework of Legal Language – the conclusions are grounded in the analysis of linguistic indeterminacy and vagueness, concepts widely discussed in legal and linguistic theory. The researcher effectively synthesizes previous academic literature and contributes new insights into the nature of legal terminology. Thus, the dissertation’s conclusions are not only relevant but are also derived from a solid combination of theoretical grounding and empirical observation, making them credible, valid, and significant within the context of arts and humanities research.

7.	The main provisions for the defense	It is necessary to answer the following questions for each provision separately: 7.1 Is the provision proven? 1) <u>proven</u>; 2) rather proven; 3) rather not proven; 4) not proven 7.2 Is it trivial? 1) yes; 2) <u>no</u> 7.3 Is it new? 1) <u>yes</u>; 2) no 7.4 Application level: 1) <u>narrow</u>; 2) medium; 3) wide 7.5 Is it proven in the article? 1) <u>yes</u>; 2) no	All the main provisions presented in the thesis and put forward for defense: 1) are substantiated; 2) are not trivial; 3) are new; 4) have a wide range of application; 5) are proved in the author's articles. 7.1 Are substantiated – Each claim is supported by linguistic theories and real examples from statutory texts. For instance, the discussion of vagueness in legal texts is substantiated by its function in the UK legal system, where open-textured language ensures flexibility in interpretation. The thesis provides theoretical justifications from discourse analysis and legal linguistics to support this. 7.2 Are not trivial – The research addresses non-trivial issues such as translation-induced polysemy in Kazakh legal language, which poses significant challenges in legal equivalence. This aspect of the research explores gaps that are often overlooked in standard legal translation studies and opens discourse on cognitive asymmetries between languages. 7.3 Are new – The identification of polysemy as a systematic and functional feature in legal language, especially in the context of Kazakh-English translation, represents a novel perspective. The analysis of how grammatical form and pragmatic function influence legal meanings is original in the context of Kazakh legal studies. 7.4 Have a wide range of application – The findings are applicable in legal drafting, translation, legal education, and judicial interpretation. For example, understanding polysemy helps translators and legal practitioners ensure terminological consistency and clarity in bilingual or multilingual legal systems. 7.5 Are proved in the author's articles – The thesis provisions are validated through published articles by the author that explore topics such as semantic ambiguity, legal vagueness, and polysemy in statutory language, thus ensuring scholarly credibility and dissemination.
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8.	The principle of reliability Reliability of sources and information provided	8.1 Choice of methodology - is justified or the methodology is described in sufficient detail 1) <u>yes</u> ; 2) no	The choice of research methodology and methods is substantiated. The theoretical and methodological basis of the dissertation is based on the classical and modern works of Russian and foreign scientists. The number of sources used in the dissertation research is sufficient (213 sources) to achieve the goal of the dissertation. The sources are reliable.
		8.2 The results of the thesis were obtained using modern methods of scientific research and methods of processing and interpreting data using computer technologies: 1) <u>yes</u> ; 2) no	The thesis applies contemporary linguistic research methods, including discourse analysis, lexical-semantic analysis, and corpus-based approaches. Digital tools were used to collect and analyze legal texts from statutory acts such as the CRA (Consumer Rights Act), CJA (Criminal Justice Act), and ERA (Employment Rights Act). Frequency analysis and concordance tools allowed the author to identify and interpret patterns of polysemy and vagueness in legal language, ensuring that the findings are evidence-based and methodologically sound.
		8.3 Theoretical conclusions, models, identified relationships and patterns have been proven and confirmed by experimental research (for areas of training in pedagogical sciences, the results have been proven on the basis of a pedagogical experiment): 1) <u>yes</u> ; 2) no	The theoretical conclusions regarding semantic vagueness, polysemy, and their cognitive dimensions in legal discourse have been confirmed through empirical linguistic analysis. The thesis includes data-driven research using real legal texts from UK legislation and Kazakh legal documents. The observed patterns of meaning variation and term interpretation were systematically analyzed, supporting the proposed models of legal language indeterminacy and translation-induced semantic shifts. These findings were validated through frequency counts, context analysis, and comparative studies, ensuring their reliability and scientific validity.
		8.4 Important statements are confirmed / partially confirmed / not confirmed by references to current and reliable scientific literature	Important statements are confirmed by references to current and reliable scientific literature, as evidenced by the thesis's grounding in works on legal linguistics, discourse analysis, cognitive semantics, and legal translation. Each claim – such as the strategic use of vagueness, the interdisciplinary nature of legal discourse, and the role of polysemy – is supported by scholarly sources that reflect contemporary research in these fields.

		8.5 Used literature sources are sufficient/not sufficient for a literature review	The presented dissertation research includes 213 scientific sources from both Kazakhstani and foreign works, which is sufficient to achieve theoretical validity and obtain practical results.
9	Practical value principle	9.1 The thesis has theoretical value: 1) <u>yes</u> ; 2) no	Yes it is connected with linguistics, cognitive science, legal studies, and translation theory, contributing to interdisciplinary academic knowledge.
		9.2 The thesis is of practical importance and there is a high probability of applying the results obtained in practice: 1) <u>yes</u> ; 2) no	The thesis is of practical importance and the results can be applied in: - legal translation practices between English and Kazakh; - drafting and interpreting legal documents; - improving legal language clarity in legislation; - training legal professionals and translators; - developing bilingual legal terminologies and glossaries.
		9.3 Are the practice suggestions new? 1) <u>completely new</u> ; 2) partially new (25-75% are new); 3) not new (less than 25% are new)	The practical suggestions proposed in the thesis are completely new. They address specific issues in legal discourse and translation that have not been fully explored in previous studies. For example, the analysis of translation-induced polysemy in Kazakh legal texts introduces a novel approach to understanding how conceptual and lexical mismatches between English and Kazakh affect legal meaning. The recommendations for improving legal translation accuracy and developing clearer bilingual legal frameworks are innovative and applicable in legal, linguistic, and educational practices.
10.	The quality of writing and design	Academic writing quality: 1) <u>high</u> ; 2) average; 3) below average; 4) low.	The thesis demonstrates a high level of academic writing quality. The language is formal, precise, and coherent, with well-structured arguments and logical progression of ideas. Terminology is used appropriately, and the text adheres to academic standards in both style and referencing.
11.	Notes on a thesis		An analysis of the dissertation research by Rakhiya Toxanbayeva Kuantkanovna's "Linguo-semantic and cognitive characteristics of legal discourse: on the materials of the English language" reveals the need for careful consideration of a number of issues. 1. The dissertation presents a solid theoretical foundation across the three main sections - discourse theory, legal language, and ambiguity.

			However, greater emphasis on the practical application of the research findings is recommended. Including a dedicated section or subsection (e.g., Practical Implications) would strengthen the work by demonstrating how the theoretical insights can be applied in real-world legal contexts, such as legal practice, translation, or courtroom interpretation. 2. The topic of Kazakh legal language is addressed only in the final part of Section 3. The analysis of the terms “offer,” “duty,” and “claim” is particularly well-developed. However, this late placement may limit the scope of cross-linguistic comparison between English and Kazakh. It is recommended to expand the comparative analysis by integrating references to the Kazakh legal context or by including consistent examples throughout the chapters to enhance cohesion and depth. 3. The dissertation provides a detailed examination of lexical vagueness and polysemy (2.4 Lexical Vagueness in Statutory Language). However, the empirical methodology - specifically how the data was collected and analyzed - is not clearly reflected in the table of contents. Despite the impressive scope of the study, which includes analysis of three major legislative acts (the Criminal Justice Act 2003 (CJA), the Employment Rights Act 1996 (ERA), and the Consumer Rights Act 2015 (CRA)), it would be advisable to include a dedicated chapter or subsection on methodology (e.g., placed before Section 3). This section should explain the research design, the corpus used, and the analytical tools applied. Including such a chapter would significantly enhance the scientific credibility of the findings. These remarks do not diminish the overall positive evaluation of the dissertation. They are of a recommendatory nature.
12.	Scientific level of the doctoral student's articles on the topic of research (in case of defense of the dissertation in the form		The content of the doctoral candidate's publications aligns with the topic of the dissertation; however, the number of publications appears to be limited. Expanding the scope of research dissemination – particularly through presentations at international conferences and publications in peer-reviewed journals – would further strengthen the

	of a series of articles, the official reviewers comment on the scientific level of each article of the doctoral student on the topic of research)		approbation of the dissertation findings and enhance their academic credibility.
13.	Decision of the official reviewer (pursuant to paragraph 28 of the present Model Regulations)		To petition the Committee to award the doctoral student Rakhiya Toxanbayeva Kuantkanovna the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the educational program "8D02306 – Foreign Philology".

Copies of the reviews of the official reviewers are handed over to the doctoral student no later than 5 (five) working days before the defense of the thesis.

Official Reviewer:

Associate Professor of the Department of Kazakh Philology
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(place of work, academic title)



Issakova Assylymay Sagunbekovna
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