

The Place of Linguoculturology in Modern Linguistics and its Main Categories

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the place of linguoculturology within the anthropocentric paradigm of modern linguistics and systematizes its principal categories. The study employs descriptive, conceptual-semantic, contextual, comparative, and integrative methods to analyze the relationship among language, culture, cognition, values, and textual meaning. The findings show that the categories of linguoculturology can be organized into three interrelated levels. The macro-cultural level comprises national cultural space, the linguistic worldview, values, cultural memory, and cultural codes. The cognitive-personal level includes the cultural concept, conceptsphere, linguistic personality, and stereotype. The textual-semiotic level comprises the linguocultureme, cultural connotation, symbol, and precedent unit. The study also clarifies the boundaries between linguoculturology and cognitive linguistics, ethnolinguistics, sociolinguistics, and text linguistics. It concludes that linguoculturology provides an integrated framework for explaining how cultural meaning is formed, preserved, activated, and reinterpreted through linguistic forms and discourse.

Keywords: Linguoculturology, anthropocentric paradigm, linguocultureme, cultural concept, linguistic worldview, linguistic personality, cultural code, cultural memory.

INTRODUCTION

During the last quarter of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century, the understanding of the object of

linguistic research changed substantially. By the end of the twentieth century, it had become clear that studying language only as an internally organized system of signs was insufficient. Attention shifted to the relationship of language with human thought, social experience, and cultural memory. V. A. Maslova summarizes the anthropocentric approach by stating that the human being is analyzed in language and language in the human being [1: 5-8]. This statement means that the sound system, vocabulary, and sentence structure of a language are examined together with the people who create and use them. Without rejecting the principles of systemic linguistics, this conceptual shift broadens formal analysis by incorporating the human factor, value systems, and pragmatic goals.

The scholarly significance of the anthropocentric approach lies in its treatment of the language user not as a passive carrier of a code but as an active subject who creates new meanings, selects values, and expresses them through speech. The rapid development of cognitive linguistics, pragmalinguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, ethnolinguistics, discourse analysis, and linguoculturology is therefore connected with the need to study language in close relation to the human factor.

N. Mahmudov likewise notes that the search for comprehensive methods in Uzbek linguistics is connected with anthropocentric approaches and presents linguoculturology as an important component of this new scholarly thinking [2: 6-7]. Accordingly, its place in modern linguistics should be evaluated not as a mere collection of special terms but as an integrative research model within the anthropocentric paradigm.

Linguoculturology did not emerge instantaneously. Its theoretical roots extend to Wilhelm von Humboldt's connection of language with the spirit of a people and its way of viewing the world [3: 68-85], A.A. Potebnya's theory of the inner form of the word [4: 92-114], the ideas of Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf on the relationship between language and thought [5: 259-265; 6: 135-168], and the traditions of ethnolinguistics and cultural anthropology. These views should not be regarded as a fully developed form of contemporary linguoculturology. Their importance lies in opening the way to understand language and

culture as interacting systems rather than isolated phenomena. S. G. Vorkachev regards the convergence of linguoculturology, linguistic personality, and concept within a single scholarly field as a natural result of the formation of the anthropocentric paradigm [7: 64-72]. This confirms that the field's key categories were not selected arbitrarily: they represent points at which language, consciousness, and culture intersect.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study is based on theoretical works in linguoculturology, cognitive linguistics, ethnolinguistics, and anthropocentric text analysis. Descriptive and analytical methods were used to identify the content and boundaries of the field's principal categories. Conceptual-semantic analysis clarified the relationship among linguistic meaning, cultural information, imagery, and evaluation; contextual analysis determined how these categories function in discourse; and comparative analysis distinguished linguoculturology from adjacent linguistic disciplines.

The categories were examined according to their scope, structure, and textual function. They were then organized into three levels: the general cultural-semantic foundation, the cognitive and personal organization of experience, and the concrete textual-semiotic realization of cultural meaning. This procedure makes it possible to treat the categories as an interconnected system rather than an unordered list of terms.

RESULTS

The formation of linguoculturology as an independent discipline dates mainly to the 1990s. Research into the national-cultural content of phraseological units, the theory of linguistic personality, the analysis of cultural concepts, and the reconstruction of a people's worldview through language provided the foundation for this process. Maslova explains the history of the field through the convergence of these scholarly directions and distinguishes three stages in its development: the creation of a theoretical foundation, its formation as an

independent discipline, and a period of diversification [1; 26-30]. In our view, this periodization demonstrates how the field acquired its own subject matter and analytical tools and became a coherent research domain.

Modern linguoculturology includes phraseological, conceptual, lexicographic, comparative, communicative, and other branches [8: 83-85]. This classification shows that the discipline is not a closed system governed by a single method; it is a group of research programs that approach a shared object from different perspectives.

Definitions of linguoculturology generally take the unity of language and culture as their common basis. V. V. Vorobyov characterizes it as a complex discipline that studies the interaction of language and culture within an integrated system [9; 36]. The idea of an integrated system is essential. A linguistic unit is not first analyzed in isolation and then supplied with a cultural explanation. Instead, linguistic form and cultural content are treated as two aspects of the same phenomenon. The strength of this approach lies in its integrity. Nevertheless, not every national feature can automatically be accepted as cultural evidence; any conclusion must be supported by linguistic material, historical sources, and textual context.

Maslova defines linguoculturology as the branch of linguistics that studies manifestations of a people's culture reflected and consolidated in language [1: 30]. N.F. Alefirenko makes the task more explicit by emphasizing how a people's culture, mode of thought, and spiritual values are manifested in language [10: 16, 29]. The first definition marks the boundaries of the discipline, whereas the second clarifies its analytical purpose. Linguoculturology can therefore be understood as the study of meanings formed at the intersection of language, cognition, and value. From this perspective, culture is not external background information but a factor that shapes the meaning of linguistic units.

Methodologically, it is important to distinguish the object and subject matter of the discipline. In a broad sense, its object is the historical and synchronic relationship between language and culture, more precisely, all phenomena in which cultural

experience assumes a linguistic form. Its subject matter is a more delimited aspect of this relationship: cultural semantics embodied in linguistic units, the mechanisms through which that semantics is formed, and the ways in which it is realized in speech. Maslova connects the subject matter with the cultural semantics of linguistic signs arising from the interaction of linguistic and cultural codes [1: 30]. She later extends it to units carrying cultural information, mechanisms for fixing and using this information in language, national linguistic consciousness, and concepts [8: 90]. Thus, the object denotes the general field of relations, while the subject matter identifies the specific semantic phenomena to be examined. This distinction prevents the scope of research from being expanded without sufficient justification.

The tasks of linguoculturology follow from this understanding of its subject matter. They include determining the linguistic levels and means through which cultural content is expressed; explaining how cultural meaning becomes associated with a linguistic unit; identifying how a speaker understands that meaning; examining the relationship between national and individual worldviews; and analyzing the textual activity of concepts, symbols, stereotypes, and values. Alefirenko identifies diachronic, synchronic, structural-functional, historical-genetic, typological, and comparative-historical methods as important for linguocultural research, while also observing that the search for optimal methods continues [10: 39-41]. Hence, the method must be selected according to the material and the research question; no single universal method can fully explain every cultural-linguistic phenomenon.

The development of linguocultural approaches in Uzbek linguistics has made it possible to study national-language material by new criteria. Sh. Usmonova provides a systematic account of the field's history, principal concepts, schools, and methods [11: 24]. D. Xudoyberganova's anthropocentric study of text offers an important methodological basis for analyzing the relationship among personality, text, cognition, and cultural context in Uzbek-language material [12: 6, 16]. As a result, linguoculturology in Uzbek scholarship is no longer limited to applying theories developed for other languages; it has become

an independent field investigating concepts, symbols, similes, the paremiological fund, literary texts, and linguistic personalities specific to the national language.

The relationship between linguoculturology and cognitive linguistics requires particular clarification. Both fields examine the conceptualization and categorization of knowledge in language. Cognitive analysis, however, primarily focuses on general mechanisms of human thought and conceptual structure, whereas linguocultural analysis concentrates on culturally marked content: meanings that have acquired value for a community, are connected with historical memory, and are reproduced in linguistic units. Consequently, not every concept automatically becomes a linguocultural concept. It must possess cultural salience, organize collective experience, and integrate evaluative and imagistic layers. Linguoculturology adds axiological and historical-cultural dimensions to the cognitive model, while cognitive analysis helps explain the mental organization of linguocultural meaning.

One of the central categories of linguoculturology is the linguocultureme. Vorobyov emphasizes that its boundaries extend beyond the individual word and that linguistic expression and the extralinguistic cultural environment appear within it as a whole [9: 47-48]. Maslova describes the linguocultureme as a complex unit combining linguistic meaning and cultural content within a unity of form and substance [1: 51]. Its linguistic aspect may be realized as a word, phrase, sentence, or text, while its extralinguistic aspect includes customs, history, beliefs, values, evaluation, and collective memory. For this reason, a linguocultureme cannot be equated only with a nationally specific word. Common words such as mother, bread, road, and earth may also acquire a cultural function in a particular text.

The dual nature of the linguocultureme determines the criteria for its analysis. One side includes phonetic-graphic form, lexical and grammatical meaning, combinability, and syntactic position in the text; the other encompasses historical origin, custom, religious-mythological representation, social evaluation, emotional attitude, and collective associations. These layers are not simply added together; the text restructures them according to

the author's intention. Although the lexical meanings of such units as mother, homeland, earth, bread, and threshold are widely understood, in the Uzbek cultural space they can evoke additional semantic features such as moral duty, sacredness, intimacy, sustenance, and ancestral memory. In poetic discourse, these units may combine with the author's individual experience and become new linguoculturemes. The transmission of cultural information through semes, background knowledge, concepts, and connotations demonstrates the interdependence of these layers [1: 53-55].

Cultural connotation is a major semantic means of connecting language and culture. V. N. Teliya explains it as the interpretation, through cultural standards, of the aspect of meaning grounded in an object or image [13: 214-217]. Connotation not only names an object or phenomenon but also expresses a community's attitude toward it. The color white may denote a physical property in one context and purity, goodness, or auspiciousness in another. It would nevertheless be incorrect to claim that white invariably represents goodness. Cultural-emotional meaning emerges through context, genre, historical period, and authorial intention. Only when these factors are considered can connotative analysis move from personal impression to substantiated interpretation.

Maslova indicates that cultural information is expressed in linguistic units through cultural semes, shared background knowledge, cultural concepts, and connotations [1: 64-65]. These means are not interchangeable. A cultural seme is the smallest feature of meaning; background knowledge is shared information required to understand a unit; a cultural concept is a larger semantic structure organizing collective experience; and connotation expresses evaluative and emotional attitudes. In literary texts these layers are often activated simultaneously. A poetic image should therefore not be explained by a single term alone; the levels at which it generates cultural content must be demonstrated step by step.

The linguistic worldview is a large-scale structure showing how a people's experience of reality is organized in language. Maslova emphasizes that the lexical, phraseological, and

grammatical resources of a language divide, name, and evaluate the world in distinctive ways [1: 64-65]. Language does not create an exact copy of reality. It selects features important to a community, unites them into groups, and orders them from a value-based perspective. In this sense, language is a mirror of collective experience. Kinship terms, age-sensitive forms of address, and concepts of place and time preserve traces of earlier ways of life. At the same time, language is a developing system, and its worldview is continuously renewed as modern life, new technologies, and new forms of communication emerge.

The conceptual worldview and the linguistic worldview are closely related but are not identical. The former includes the full range of an individual's and a community's knowledge, representations, emotional experience, and logical relations. The latter is the part of this knowledge consolidated in linguistic resources and manifested in speech. Maslova notes that every language conceptualizes reality in its own way [8: 101-103]. This does not mean that language absolutely determines thought. Language offers a community established classifications and expressive possibilities; a writer selects from them to create an individual artistic version of the collective worldview.

The cultural concept is a central category of linguocultural analysis. Y. S. Stepanov defines it as a concentrated form of culture in human consciousness [14: 40-41]. This concise definition reveals two features: a concept accumulates cultural experience, and that experience remains active in the mind. A concept is therefore broader than a lexical meaning or a logical notion. It unites a name, features, imagery, emotion, historical memory, and evaluation. For example, the concept of homeland is not limited to the name of a territory; it can include native land, language, history, obligation, pride, and separation. These layers must be distinguished through textual evidence.

V. I. Karasik characterizes the cultural concept as a multidimensional formation uniting value-based, imagistic, and conceptual aspects [15: 129]. The conceptual aspect includes a phenomenon's name and essential features; the imagistic aspect includes perception, representation, and figurative expression; and the value-based aspect expresses the phenomenon's

significance and evaluation for a community. Karasik regards the value component as the central feature of the linguocultural concept [15: 139-141]. For poetic texts, this triad can be supplemented by a textual-functional component: how a concept organizes the poem, which images it draws to a common center, and how it defines the position of the lyrical speaker. These questions reveal author-specific meaning.

Concepts do not exist in isolation. Through semantic relations they form a conceptual field, or conceptosphere. D. S. Likhachev uses the term to denote the system of concepts underlying the linguistic resources of a people or an individual [16: 3-9]. A national conceptosphere integrates history, religion, art, customs, and everyday experience, while an author's conceptosphere is the part of this common heritage selected and reevaluated by the writer. It is therefore insufficient merely to count frequently occurring words in a poet's works. Only after identifying relations of proximity, opposition, causation, evaluation, and figurative association among them does the semantic organization of poetic thought become visible.

The category of linguistic personality explains the relationship between the language system and the person who uses it purposefully. Maslova writes that the linguistic personality lives in the cultural space reflected in language [1]. This means that lexical choice is based not only on individual taste but also on social norms, values, behavioral patterns, and shared memory. At the same time, the individual does not reproduce cultural experience unchanged; it is selected, renewed, and subordinated to communicative goals. This process of selection is a principal criterion for studying a writer's linguistic personality. A poet's originality appears not only in rare words but also in the new meanings given to common linguistic units.

Y. N. Karaulov describes the structure of the linguistic personality at three levels [17: 48, 51-55]. The verbal-semantic level concerns the ability to know and combine linguistic units; the linguistic-cognitive level includes knowledge, basic concepts, and a model of the world; and the motivational-pragmatic level encompasses needs, values, and communicative intentions. In a literary text, the first level appears in lexical and syntactic

choices, the second in systems of concepts and symbols, and the third in communicative orientations such as appeal, confession, warning, or prayer.

In studying a poet's linguistic personality, the common language, the discourse of the period, and the individual creative method must be considered together. Abdulla Oripov may place a historical word, a colloquial expression, a religious unit, or an ordinary everyday lexeme into a new poetic relationship. In this process, the common cultural meaning is retained, while its evaluation or scope changes. The shared meanings of language, mother, homeland, and conscience, for example, are enriched by the poet's lyrical situation and moral choice. A poet's idiolect is therefore not simply a collection of formal techniques; it is a method of selecting and recreating national cultural experience.

A cultural code is a secondary signifying system used by a community to transform a domain of reality into spiritual or symbolic meaning. The body, space, time, color, number, plants, animals, food, and religious rituals may all serve as sources of such codes. Maslova demonstrates the relationship between cultural codes and figurative meaning [1: 119-121]. Thus, the opposition high-low may represent moral elevation and degradation; the image of a road may symbolize life or destiny; and the opposition white-black may express evaluative contrast. Codes, however, should not be applied as a ready-made dictionary. The cultural function of an image must be verified through tradition, textual context, and authorial evaluation.

A symbol is a compressed and multilayered expression of a cultural code. Maslova describes it as an object endowed with meaning [8: 122-123]. A symbol points to a concrete object while evoking broader spiritual content. A tree may signify life and continuity, a bird freedom or the soul, and a bridge transition or connection. Not every figurative meaning, however, is a symbol. Symbolic interpretation requires that the image recur in the text, integrate other semantic layers, draw on traditional memory, and perform a function broader than its ordinary lexical explanation. These criteria separate scholarly analysis from arbitrary interpretation.

A stereotype is a community's stable and simplified knowledge about a person, group, situation, or form of behavior. Maslova shows that it has both cognitive and linguistic dimensions [1: 108-110], while Usmonova connects stereotypes with national norms of behavior and linguistic units [11: 167-170]. A stereotype is not necessarily a negative or false view; it can help classify experience quickly and orient participants in communication. Yet it may also erase individual differences. A literary text can confirm a stereotyped representation, disrupt it through irony, or complicate it through a new character image.

A precedent unit is a culturally familiar name, text, situation, or expression stored in collective memory. V. V. Krasnykh shows that a shared cognitive base enables communicative references to be understood quickly and that a precedent name can activate an extensive system of events and evaluations through a single act of naming [18]. A historical figure, literary character, or sacred name may introduce familiar meaning even when the text provides no full explanation. Familiarity alone is not sufficient: the unit must recur in collective memory and serve as a concise reference in a new text. Its source, commonly shared meaning, and the author's new evaluation should be distinguished in analysis.

The notion of cultural space makes it possible to view concepts, symbols, stereotypes, precedent phenomena, and values within a single system. Krasnykh describes cultural space as an informational and emotional field encompassing the knowledge, representations, and affective-evaluative attitudes of members of a culture [18]. This field is not completely uniform; it varies by generation, region, profession, and social experience. A person develops within this shared space but appropriates it selectively. A writer connects the signs of collective memory with the questions of a new period. A poetic text is thus not a copy of cultural space but its active and individual interpretation.

Value is the criterion that internally unites the categories of linguoculturology. A concept's significance for a community, a symbol's positive or negative orientation, the normative force of a stereotyped representation, and the choices of a linguistic personality are all determined by values. Alefirenko regards the

value-semantic space of language as a principal subject of the discipline [10]. Values are manifested through evaluative vocabulary, antonymic pairs, proverbs, blessings, curses, forms of address, figurative language, and textual organization. Axiological analysis is not merely the enumeration of 'good' and 'bad' words; it explains which moral choice a text prioritizes and through which linguistic means that choice is justified.

The notions of national mentality and national character must be used with caution. National mentality denotes historically formed tendencies in perception, evaluation, and behavior, but it is not an innate quality that makes all speakers of a language identical. National character has scholarly value not as a fixed list of traits but as a model of self-understanding repeatedly constructed in cultural texts. Language preserves such models through proverbs, standard images, the opposition between self and other, and historical names. It is therefore impossible to make general claims about an entire people on the basis of a few examples; conclusions must be tested against extensive material and historical context.

Cultural memory is the process through which the past acquires renewed meaning in present discourse. It is not a list of events but the selective preservation of people, texts, rituals, and images significant to a community. Language carries this memory in place names, archaic words, idioms, religious formulas, folkloric plots, and symbols. Maslova stresses the need to include cultural memory in the analysis of poetic texts [1]. A poem does not merely repeat the codes of the past; it reevaluates them within a new emotional and moral situation. Historical names and national images in Abdulla Oripov's poetry should therefore be studied at the intersection of these two temporal layers.

Text is the integrated field in which all linguocultural categories are realized in practice. Xudoyberganova's anthropocentric approach to text establishes the unity of the language user, cognition, communicative situation, and national-cultural factors [12]. The cultural potential of a unit is often revealed not in its isolated meaning but in its relations with other elements. Repetition identifies the conceptual center, opposition expresses authorial evaluation, a figurative sequence activates a

cultural code, and the title and ending indicate communicative purpose. Analysis should therefore not end with the identification of “cultural words”; the unit's relationship with poetic structure, the lyrical subject, the addressee, and other texts must also be examined.

The categories of linguoculturology can be organized into a three-level system. The first level includes national cultural space, the linguistic worldview, values, cultural memory, and cultural codes; together they form a general fund of meaning. The second level includes the cultural concept, conceptsphere, linguistic personality, and stereotype; at this level, shared experience is organized through cognition and personal selection. The third level comprises the linguocultureme, cultural connotation, symbol, and precedent unit as concrete textual forms. This arrangement moves the categories beyond a simple list and demonstrates their interaction: a text draws on the cultural fund while simultaneously renewing it.

DISCUSSION

This system also explains the integrative position of linguoculturology in modern linguistics. The worldview and concept are connected with cognition; connotation and the linguocultureme with semantic structure; linguistic personality and addressee with communicative intention; precedent phenomena and cultural memory with intertextual relations; and values with evaluation. One common question unites these phenomena within a single field: how is cultural content created, preserved, and reinterpreted in linguistic form? This question defines the independent subject matter of linguoculturology and prevents the unprincipled mixing of methods.

Comparison with neighboring fields further clarifies the boundaries of linguoculturology. Cognitive linguistics studies how humans structure knowledge through concepts and categories, while linguoculturology isolates the layers of those structures connected with collective memory, values, and symbols. Ethnolinguistics is more strongly oriented toward reconstructing traces of a people's historical life and customs

from linguistic evidence; linguoculturology also observes how historical heritage is activated in contemporary discourse. Sociolinguistics identifies variation according to group, status, and situation, whereas linguocultural analysis explains the cultural meanings and evaluations underlying such differences. Text linguistics examines structure and cohesion, while linguoculturology asks what cultural information emerges through that structure. The difference among these fields therefore lies not primarily in the material but in the research question. This criterion prevents linguoculturology from being treated as a simple sum of neighboring disciplines.

CONCLUSION

Linguoculturology is a modern scholarly field that studies language in inseparable connection with human beings and culture. Its subject matter is the formation, preservation, and renewed realization of cultural meaning in linguistic signs and discourse. The field is not limited to the lexical meanings of linguistic units; it also analyzes the national worldview, historical memory, values, customs, and social experience reflected in them. Concepts, linguoculturemes, symbols, cultural codes, phraseological units, proverbs, similes, and metaphors are therefore among its principal units of analysis. Their study reveals how a community perceives, evaluates, and expresses reality through language. Linguoculturology consequently contributes to explaining the national-cultural properties of language, comparing the worldviews of different peoples, and understanding more deeply the relationship between language and culture.

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