

The Linguocognitive Model of the Concept “Human/Adam” in English and Karakalpak: A Comparative Semantic-Historical Study

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ABSTRACT

This article develops a comparative linguocognitive model of the HUMAN/ADAM concept in English and Karakalpak by treating lexical meaning, conceptual structure, cultural categorisation and semantic history as interdependent but non-identical dimensions. The analysis is based on explanatory-dictionary evidence, historical-semantic data, phraseological and paremiological material, and literary-language observations represented in previous English Karakalpak studies. The principal finding is that the two languages share an anthropological conceptual nucleus human existence, personhood, cognition, sociality and moral evaluation while organising the periphery differently. In English, the lexical network around man, human, person, people and mankind reflects a historically layered differentiation between species-level reference, individual personhood, collective humanity and gender-marked reference. In Karakalpak, adam, insan, kisi, adamzat and related derivatives form a comparatively more gender-neutral and culturally saturated network in which social, ethical and communal dimensions are strongly integrated. On this basis, the article proposes a seven-zone model consisting of an anthropological core and six expanding semantic-cultural zones: embodied experience, cognition and emotion, relationality, social participation, moral evaluation, and cultural symbolism. The model contributes a transferable framework for comparing anthropolexical concepts across typologically different languages without reducing conceptual equivalence to dictionary translation. The study is qualitative and interpretive;

it does not claim corpus-frequency generalisations. Future research should test the proposed structure against balanced multilingual corpora and contemporary discourse data.

Keywords: Linguocognition, concept, human, Adam, English, Karakalpak, anthropolexeme, semantic change, cultural conceptualization, comparative linguistics

1. INTRODUCTION

The lexicalisation of human experience is among the most revealing areas for comparative linguistics because words denoting a person do more than identify members of the species *Homo sapiens*. They can encode personhood, social membership, moral value, gender, age, kinship, status, agency and culturally preferred images of an ideal human being. Consequently, a contrast between English and Karakalpak anthropolexemes cannot be reduced to a bilingual dictionary exercise. The relevant analytical object is a concept: a culturally and cognitively organised unit of knowledge whose linguistic manifestations form a network rather than a single lexical item.

The conceptosphere perspective is particularly useful here. Likhachev describes a conceptual sphere as a broad field of culturally accumulated meanings formed by the historical experience of speakers, while Babushkin emphasises the heterogeneity of concepts corresponding to heterogeneous fragments of reality [1: 3-9; 2: 39]. From a Cultural Linguistics perspective, conceptualisation also involves shared cultural schemas, categories and metaphors through which communities interpret experience [3: 11-23]. These approaches suggest that the study of the Human/Adam concept should combine semantic description with attention to cultural categorisation.

The present study addresses three questions. First, what semantic-historical core is shared by English and Karakalpak lexicalisations of the human being? Second, how do the two languages differently distribute biological, personal, social and evaluative meanings across the lexical network? Third, can those similarities and differences be represented as a comparative

linguocognitive model? The answer is developed through a qualitative analysis of the lexical field centred on English man, human, person, people and mankind/humankind and Karakalpak *adam*, *insan*, *kisi*, *adamzat* and related units.

The novelty of the article lies not in proposing that the two languages have a human-related vocabulary – a fact already established in earlier comparative work – but in integrating semantic history, cultural conceptualisation and core-periphery modelling into one explicit architecture. Earlier English–Karakalpak studies have demonstrated both the heterogeneity of anthropolexemes and the presence of positive, neutral and negative evaluative groupings [5: 18-19; 6: 353-356]. The present paper extends this line of inquiry by moving from a list of lexical units toward a layered conceptual model.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1. *Research material*

The research material was organised into four evidence groups: 1) dictionary and lexical-semantic data; 2) historical-semantic evidence for English man; 3) phraseological and paremiological material used to identify evaluative and cultural extensions; and 4) literary-language observations illustrating context-sensitive actualisation. The study also incorporates findings of English–Karakalpak research on the man-adam conceptual sphere and anthropolexical microsystems [5: 18-19; 6: 353-356].

2.2. *Analytical procedure*

The analysis proceeds in five steps. First, dictionary meanings are grouped into broad semantic features rather than treated as isolated definitions. Second, the historical development of major English and Karakalpak designations is reconstructed where reliable evidence is available. Third, recurrent contextual meanings are compared across languages. Fourth, the material is classified into a stable conceptual core, a close lexical periphery and a distant figurative-cultural periphery, following the general logic of conceptual modelling [1: 3-9; 2: 39]. Fifth, the resulting features are arranged into a seven-zone model. The procedure is

qualitative, with claims restricted to patterns demonstrable in the analysed material.

2.3. Methodological principle: Concept is not identical to lexical meaning

A central methodological distinction is required. Lexical meaning is conventionalised and relatively stable within a linguistic system, whereas a concept includes knowledge structures, cultural associations and evaluative expectations activated in discourse. Sharifian's framework is useful because it treats cultural conceptualisations as collectively grounded patterns involving schemas, categories and metaphors [3: 11-23]. Wierzbicka's cross-linguistic perspective further supports the idea that some human-related notions have a universal cognitive basis even though languages lexicalise them differently [4: 908-936]. Thus, the present study neither equates words across languages mechanically nor assumes that every cultural association is arbitrary.

2.4. Core-periphery criteria

The core contains features that are stable across dictionary and ordinary contextual usage: human existence, individual personhood and the capacity to participate in human social life. The close periphery contains recurrent lexical and derivational extensions such as collective humanity, kinship or social roles. The distant periphery includes metaphorical, phraseological, proverbial and literary meanings in which the human being is interpreted through culturally salient values such as dignity, generosity, solidarity, responsibility or fear. This distinction is analytical rather than absolute: contextual use can move a feature from one zone toward another.

3. RESULTS

3.1. A shared anthropological nucleus

The comparison reveals a strong isomorphic nucleus. English and Karakalpak both conceptualise the human being as a living entity who perceives the world, thinks, communicates, experiences emotion, works and enters relations with others. The notion of

personhood therefore includes both an embodied dimension and a social-cognitive dimension. This duality explains why the lexical network cannot be represented by a single synonym: one term foregrounds species membership, another individual reference, another collectivity, and another culturally valued humanity.

The shared nucleus also contains major binary dimensions: life/death, strength/weakness, knowledge/ignorance, reason/emotion and good/evil. These binaries are not merely lexical oppositions; they are recurrent cultural ways of evaluating human behaviour. Wierzbicka's account of basic human concepts supports the broader proposition that cross-linguistic diversity does not exclude a shared conceptual basis [4: 908-936].

3.2. *The semantic-historical trajectory of English man*

English provides a particularly clear case of semantic stratification. Historical evidence shows that man had both the broad sense "human being" and the narrower sense "adult male human being"; the older gender-neutral use gradually became less central in ordinary contemporary usage, while the male-oriented interpretation became dominant in many contexts. The modern lexicon therefore distributes human reference across human, person, people and mankind/humankind, while man remains productive in gender-marked and collective formations. *The Oxford English Dictionary* records both semantic domains and documents the historical coexistence of the two major senses [7].

This development has a direct consequence for conceptual modelling. The English network preserves an older universal layer but has increasingly redistributed general human reference to less gender-marked items. Human foregrounds species-level and human-quality meanings; person strongly marks an individual; people marks a collective; mankind/humankind marks the human species or humanity as a whole; man retains a dual identity as a male-specific noun and as part of older or fixed collective expressions. The semantic history is therefore not a simple replacement story, but a process of functional differentiation.

3.3. *The semantic organisation of Karakalpak Adam*

In Karakalpak, *adam* functions as a central human-denoting unit without the obligatory male restriction that characterises contemporary core uses of English *man*. Around *Adam*, related units such as *insan* and *kisi* enable stylistic, contextual and evaluative differentiation, while *adamzat* extends the designation to humanity or the human collective. Previous comparative work identifies the man-adam sphere as a meaningful locus of national-cultural specification and notes that its analysis must include lexical, phraseological, paremiological and literary material [5: 18-19].

The semantic profile of *adam* is consequently broader in sociocultural terms. In context it can refer to an individual as a biological and conscious being, but it also readily participates in meanings associated with labour, responsibility, social respect, communal relations and moral character. The derivative and phraseological environment around *adam/adamgershilik* strengthens this cultural saturation by shifting attention from “a person” to “what it means to be a proper or respected human being.”

3.4. *Isomorphic features*

Dimension	English	Karakalpak	Comparative interpretation
Existence	human, person, man	<i>adam, insan, kisi</i>	shared human-being nucleus
Individuality	person	<i>kisi/adam</i>	individual reference is central
Collectivity	people, mankind/humankind	<i>adamzat</i> , <i>xalıq</i> -related contexts	humanity/community perspective
Cognition	human intelligence; person as agent	<i>aql, oylaw, til</i> and related contexts	thinking and speaking human
Sociality	person, people; social roles	<i>adam, kisi</i> ; kin/community terms	Person embedded in relations
Evaluation	humaneness, good/badperson	<i>Adamgershilik</i> and evaluative uses	Moral qualification of personhood

The table demonstrates that equivalence is strongest at the level of conceptual function rather than one-to-one lexical

correspondence. The same broad feature can be distributed over several lexemes in one language and concentrated in a smaller number of culturally central items in the other.

3.5. *Allomorphic features*

The clearest asymmetry concerns gender. Contemporary English reserves many ordinary uses of man for adult males, whereas Karakalpak *adam* is not lexically restricted to males. The result is a different relationship between the language's basic human noun and its gender-marked terminology. English has consequently undergone stronger lexical redistribution between man, human and person, while Karakalpak maintains a more direct connection between a central human noun and general person reference [7; 5: 18-19].

A second difference concerns the balance between biological and axiological organisation. English human and person are highly available for neutral classification, while culturally evaluative meanings are often realised by adjectives, compounds and phraseological expressions. Karakalpak *adam*, in comparison, can be rapidly drawn into social and moral interpretation, particularly in expressions describing respect, communal conduct, labour and human qualities. This does not mean that English lacks such values; rather, the languages distribute them differently across the lexical field.

3.6. *The proposed seven-zone linguocognitive model*

Layer	Semantic domain	Typical content
Core	Human being / person / adam	existence; personhood; humanity
Zone 1	Embodied experience	body; appearance; age; health; mortality
Zone 2	Cognition and emotion	mind; speech; knowledge; memory; feeling
Zone 3	Relationality	family; kinship; friendship; parenthood
Zone 4	Social participation	work; education; status; citizenship; community
Zone 5	Moral evaluation	dignity; kindness; honesty; responsibility; shame
Zone 6	Cultural-symbolic dimension	tradition; hospitality; folklore; collective memory

The model is deliberately hierarchical rather than taxonomic. The core represents minimally shared human reference. The first layers remain close to bodily and cognitive experience; the middle layers encode relations and participation in society; the outer layers are increasingly dependent on culturally preferred evaluations and symbolic associations. The model therefore captures both universality and cultural specificity without treating the periphery as semantically secondary.

3.7. *Mechanism of semantic change*

The comparative evidence supports a recurrent mechanism of conceptual development: a basic designation begins as a broad human reference, becomes specialised in particular contexts, and subsequently develops a network of differentiated lexical alternatives. In English, the historical broadness of *man* and its later male orientation created a need for wider neutral terms in many contexts. In Karakalpak, the continued centrality of *adam* allows broader person reference to remain concentrated in one lexical item, with additional lexemes carrying stylistic or semantic nuance. Semantic change is therefore linked not only to internal lexical processes but also to changing cultural expectations about categorisation and reference [3: 11-23].

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. *From lexical equivalence to conceptual correspondence*

A bilingual comparison is strongest when it distinguishes lexical equivalence from conceptual correspondence. Lexical equivalence asks whether one item can translate another in a given context. Conceptual correspondence asks whether the two linguistic systems organise a comparable knowledge domain and, if so, how that domain is internally structured. For *human/adam*, the second question is more productive because no single English item reproduces all the functions of Karakalpak *adam*, and no single Karakalpak item reproduces the full historical and contemporary distribution of English *man*, *human* and *person*.

The conceptual model also clarifies why dictionaries alone are insufficient. Dictionary entries establish conventional

semantic boundaries, but phraseology and discourse reveal what communities habitually regard as central or peripheral human qualities. This is consistent with Cultural Linguistics, where cultural categories and schemas are not identical to dictionary definitions [3: 11-23].

4.2. *Cultural evaluation as a defining component*

The semantic structure of a human concept is never purely descriptive. Speakers routinely evaluate people as kind, honest, responsible, cowardly, generous or respectable. In Karakalpak, such evaluation is particularly visible when *adam* is extended through derivatives and phraseological patterns that encode socially preferred conduct. Comparative anthropolexic research likewise identifies positive and negative evaluative groups within the broader human-related lexical field [6: 353-356].

4.3. *Implications for translation and intercultural communication*

The seven-zone model has practical relevance for translation. A translator who selects a direct dictionary equivalent without checking the conceptual zone may preserve denotation while losing social or axiological meaning. A neutral English person, a gender-marked man, a collective people and a species-level humanity term may correspond to different uses of *adam* depending on context. Conversely, translating an evaluative Karakalpak expression by a semantically neutral English noun may erase cultural information. Conceptual mapping can therefore serve as an intermediate stage between lexical translation and discourse interpretation.

4.4. *Theoretical contribution*

The principal theoretical contribution is the integration of three dimensions: semantic history, cultural conceptualisation and core-periphery architecture. Previous studies established relevant lexical inventories and evaluative groupings in English and Karakalpak [5: 18-19; 6: 353-356]. The present model explains how these units can be positioned relative to an anthropological nucleus. It also shows that linguistic asymmetry does not necessarily mean conceptual incompatibility: two languages may

share a human conceptual basis while distributing its semantic features across different lexical structures.

4.5. *Limitations and future work*

The study is qualitative and therefore does not establish corpus frequencies, statistical salience or diachronic change rates. Some Karakalpak cultural meanings are supported by a limited published comparative literature, while historical data are more accessible for English. These asymmetries should be addressed in future work through balanced English-Karakalpak corpora, frequency analysis, collocational profiling, concordance-based semantic annotation and diachronic corpus methods. Such quantitative validation could test whether the proposed seven zones correspond to measurable lexical and contextual distributions.

5. CONCLUSION

The English and Karakalpak lexicalisations of the human being exhibit a shared anthropological basis but different semantic architectures. The common core includes existence, personhood, cognition, communication, sociality and moral evaluation. English distributes these functions across a historically layered network centred on man, human, person and collective human terms, while Karakalpak concentrates broader person reference in *adam* and elaborates the field through *insan*, *kisi*, *adamzat* and evaluative derivatives. The difference is especially visible in gender marking and in the distribution of axiological meanings.

The proposed seven-zone model translates this comparison into an explicit linguocognitive architecture: anthropological core; embodied experience; cognition and emotion; relationality; social participation; moral evaluation; and cultural symbolism. Its value lies in showing where cross-linguistic correspondence is strong and where conceptual organisation diverges. The model should be regarded as a research hypothesis that can be refined through corpus-based validation, rather than as a closed universal taxonomy.

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