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Linguistic and Psycholinguistic Foundations of Constructing an Associative-Somatic Portrait

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the linguistic, psycholinguistic, and linguocultural foundations of constructing an associative-somatic portrait as a means of investigating the relationship between language, human cognition, and cultural identity. The study focuses on the role of somatic lexical units in shaping associative fields and revealing the linguistic representation of the human body in individual and collective consciousness. Particular attention is given to the semantic structures, associative meanings, connotative features, and ethnocultural characteristics of somatic vocabulary. The research examines how identical somatic stimuli generate different verbal associations across linguistic communities, reflecting variations in linguistic worldviews, conceptualization processes, cultural values, and collective linguistic experience. Through a comparative analysis of previous linguistic studies based on Russian, Kazakh, and Tatar language materials, the article identifies existing methodological approaches and research gaps in the construction of associative-somatic portraits. The findings emphasize that an associative-somatic portrait constitutes a complex linguocognitive and linguocultural model that integrates lexical semantics, associative relations, conceptual structures, and culturally determined meanings. The study establishes a theoretical and methodological framework for examining the associative potential of somatic vocabulary in the Uzbek language and contributes to the development of systematic mechanisms for constructing an associative-somatic portrait of Uzbek linguistic consciousness.

Keywords: Associative-somatic portrait, linguistics, psycholinguistics, linguoculturology, somatic vocabulary, associative field, lexical semantics, linguistic consciousness, linguistic worldview, Uzbek language.

INTRODUCTION

Since the second half of the twentieth century, linguists worldwide have increasingly focused on the study of linguistic associations evoked by a particular stimulus word. Research conducted in this field has revealed the associative nature of language and provided a theoretical basis for the associative connections established among linguistic units in the human mind. It has been demonstrated that linguistic associations reflect not only lexical, grammatical, stylistic, pragmatic, cognitive, social, and ethnocultural features of language, but also an individual's way of perceiving the world, evaluative attitudes, psychological state, cultural perspectives, and social characteristics.

In recent years, research in associative linguistics has gradually shifted from describing the associative properties of individual linguistic units toward reconstructing and linguistically representing the holistic image of a particular object as formed in the consciousness of native speakers through associative relations. As a result, the concept of an "associative portrait" has emerged as a distinct notion within linguistic research.

Modeling the image of a particular object through associative portraits is of considerable importance for investigating linguistic consciousness, associative thinking, the perception of the external world, and the knowledge and conceptual representations formed about it, as well as human memory and the mental lexicon. The theoretical foundations of this research area have been developed in the works of N. V. Krushevskii, G. H. Kent, A. J. Rosanoff, C. N. Cofer, M. M. Pokrovskii, J. Deese, A. A. Leontiev, A. A. Zalevskaya, G. A. Martinovich, N. V. Ufimseva, Yu. N. Karaulov, Yu. I. Goroshko, R. M. Frumkina, and N. O. Zolotova. Their studies address such issues as the

associative connections between human concepts, the relationship between words and linguistic consciousness and memory, the mechanisms underlying the formation of associations, the associative nature of language, the characteristics of linguistic associations, and their role in speech production.

In contemporary linguistics, the cognitive nature of associative portraits, the mechanisms underlying their formation, the ways in which they represent a particular object, and their ethnocultural characteristics have been investigated to varying degrees. Theoretical approaches to the study of associative portraits have been developed systematically in recent years, particularly within Russian linguistics. These studies have constructed associative portraits of prominent individuals and representatives of various professions and have demonstrated the extent to which such portraits capture individual characteristics associated with the person being represented. Furthermore, researchers have established that associative portraits may reveal the subjective attitudes of a speech community toward the individual or ethnic group serving as the object of representation.

In this regard, D. Lutfullayeva states that "a characteristic feature of an associative linguistic portrait is that it also reflects speakers' subjective perceptions of the object being represented. For example, the subjective nature of associations formed by speakers toward a particular individual (or ethnic group) is often influenced by the following factors: 1) positive or negative attitudes arising from social, political, cultural, legal, and religious interactions between speakers and the particular individual (or ethnic group); 2) positive or negative information that speakers have read or heard from others about the particular individual (or ethnic group), as well as the perceptions formed on the basis of such information; 3) subjective attitudes toward the particular individual (or ethnic group) shaped by neighborhood, friendship, or kinship relations; and 4) the influence of positive or negative stereotypes concerning the particular individual (or ethnic group) that have developed within society. These external factors directly influence the subjective nature of speakers' perceptions of the individual (or ethnic group) serving as the

object of linguistic representation. This is also reflected in the image and representation of the individual (or ethnic group) formed in the consciousness of language users."

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative, comparative, and linguocognitive research design to examine the mechanisms underlying the construction of an associative-somatic portrait. The methodological framework combines associative, semantic, linguocognitive, linguocultural, and axiological approaches, allowing associative responses to somatic units to be examined as manifestations of linguistic consciousness and culturally conditioned conceptualization.

The study is based on a comparative analysis of previous research on associative and associative-somatic portraits conducted using Russian, Kazakh, Tatar, and other linguistic materials. Particular attention is given to studies that investigate somatic units through associative experiments and reconstruct their semantic, cognitive, emotional, and ethnocultural characteristics. The selected studies are analyzed with regard to their research objectives, methodological procedures, classification principles, and approaches to interpreting associative responses.

The analysis is conducted in several successive stages. First, somatic units are treated as stimulus elements capable of activating associative responses in linguistic consciousness. Second, the recorded associative responses are grouped according to their semantic and functional characteristics. Third, the responses are classified according to their axiological orientation, including positive, negative, and neutral associations. Fourth, the resulting associative groups are interpreted from a linguocognitive perspective in order to identify the concepts, perceptual features, emotions, evaluations, and culturally determined meanings underlying them. Finally, the identified components are integrated into an associative-somatic portrait that reflects the interaction of linguistic, cognitive, social, psychological, and ethnocultural factors.

Comparative analysis is used to identify similarities and differences between associative-somatic portraits constructed in different linguistic and cultural contexts. This approach makes it possible to determine which associative characteristics may have a relatively universal basis and which are conditioned by specific national and cultural experiences.

The study also applies a descriptive-analytical approach to systematize the mechanisms involved in the formation of an associative-somatic portrait. On this basis, the following analytical sequence is proposed: somatic stimulus → associative response → semantic grouping → axiological classification → linguocognitive interpretation → ethnocultural interpretation → associative-somatic portrait.

The proposed methodological framework is intended to provide a systematic basis for investigating associative responses to somatic units and for developing an associative-somatic portrait of Uzbek linguistic and cultural consciousness. Since the study is primarily theoretical and analytical, no artificial quantitative data or experimentally generated results are introduced; the conclusions are derived from the comparative interpretation and synthesis of previously documented research findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It can therefore be concluded that associative portraits provide information not only about the object being represented but also about the speakers who characterize and evaluate that object.

Linguistic research has addressed the construction of associative portraits of particular individuals, representatives of specific professions, ethnic groups, and even individual objects. Such studies have focused on reconstructing, on the basis of associative experiments, the image of a prominent individual, professional group, ethnic community, or object as formed in the collective consciousness of a speech community and on developing an associative portrait of the respective object. In the following section, taking into account the overall scope of the dissertation, we examine selected studies in greater detail.

One of the dissertation studies devoted to modeling the associative portraits of different ethnic groups is T. A. Ershova's research entitled *Russian-German Associative Portraits: An Interpretive Study*. Based on the results of an associative experiment, the study identifies the characteristics of the associative portraits of the Russian and German peoples as formed in their collective consciousness. The researcher conducted an associative experiment with representatives of both ethnic groups using 50 stimulus words that characterized the Russian and German peoples from different perspectives. The responses obtained from the experiment were analyzed thematically and classified into several groups.

For example, visual associative responses describing the physical appearance of Russian and German people included such responses as *ровесник* ("peer"), *зрелый* ("mature"), *старость* ("old age"), *толстый* ("overweight"), and *худая* ("thin"). Axiological associative responses reflecting their internal states, positive and negative characteristics, and behavioral patterns included *надёжный* ("reliable"), *верный* ("loyal"), and *сварливая* ("quarrelsome"). Mental-functional associative responses reflecting their emotional and affective states included *верность* ("loyalty"), *доверие* ("trust"), and *независимость* ("independence"). Another group consisted of social associative responses, which represented the social status of Russian and German people and their roles within society and the family, such as *начальник* ("supervisor/boss") and *пенсионерка* ("female pensioner"). Functional associative responses reflecting their occupational activities and types of employment included *секретарь* ("secretary"), among others.

These associative responses contributed to the reconstruction of the associative portrait of the Russian and German peoples as formed in their collective consciousness.

The scientific significance of the study lies in the author's ability to reconstruct the national images of the Russian and German peoples formed in collective consciousness through an analysis of associative experimental data. The thematic groups identified among the associative responses provide a framework for systematizing associative representations of a particular

ethnic group and for determining the specific characteristics underlying the formation of such representations. At the same time, the classification of associative responses made it possible to identify the structural organization of the associative portraits of the Russian and German peoples.

The methodological significance of Ershova's study lies in the systematic presentation of the practical procedures employed in constructing associative portraits of different ethnic groups. The study clarifies the essence of the associative experiment conducted with language users and demonstrates its significance for modeling associative portraits. The research, particularly the methodology developed for constructing associative portraits, can therefore serve as a theoretical and methodological source for modeling associative portraits of different ethnic groups as perceived by representatives of other peoples.

The modeling of associative portraits of particular individuals or ethnic groups has also been addressed in a number of research articles. For instance, in her study devoted to the associative portrait of Russian President V. V. Putin, N. A. Segal identified the linguistic units that represent the image of the head of state in the consciousness of Russian speakers. The researcher conducted an associative experiment involving 125 students from five higher education institutions in the Russian Federation. The participants were asked the question, "What animal does V. V. Putin make you associate with?" and were instructed to provide their associative responses.

On the basis of the experimental data, the researcher compiled a corpus of associations containing zoonyms. The results demonstrated that the most frequent associations evoked by the participants in relation to the President of the Russian Federation were "bear" (44%), followed by "wolf" (12%) and "lion" (10%). Less frequent associations included "eagle" (5%) and "dog" (4%). At a considerably lower frequency, 2% of the participants produced associations such as "dolphin," "whale," "cat," "spider," and "tiger," as well as individual responses including "ram," "badger," "Bengal tiger," "marten," "goat," "horse," "hawk," "fox," "mink," "monkey," "rooster," "fish," "lynx," "polecat," and "lizard."

According to the researcher, the high frequency of the associative response “bear” can be explained by the strong symbolic connection established between the image of the bear and Russia’s past, present, and future in the consciousness of both Russians and other peoples around the world. Consequently, Russia is commonly represented through the image of a bear. The author also compared the results of the associative experiment with the image of V. V. Putin represented in the mass media. By identifying common features among the associations that construct the image of this political leader in the linguistic consciousness of Russian society, the study demonstrated the important conceptual and linguocognitive significance of zoonymic units in modeling the images of political leaders.

This study can serve as a theoretical source for modeling the associative portraits of particular individuals or ethnic groups. Rather than merely describing the image of V. V. Putin, the author reveals its complex dimensions through the associative responses of Russian students concerning the head of state. These associative responses contribute to identifying the image of V. V. Putin as represented in the collective consciousness of the student participants. The methodological significance of the article lies in its detailed presentation of the methodology for constructing an associative portrait of an individual. In this respect, the study can provide a theoretical and methodological foundation for modeling the associative portrait of a particular individual.

In her article entitled ‘The Associative Portrait of a Migrant,’ I. S. Karabulatova reconstructs the associative portrait of migrants working in the Russian Federation as formed in the consciousness of Russian speakers. Based on the results of a directed associative experiment conducted around the question “What is a migrant like?”, the researcher established the associative field of “migrant” and analyzed the attitudes toward migrants that had developed within the host society on the basis of this field. The author conceptualizes migration not only as a socio-political process but also as a linguocognitive and psycholinguistic phenomenon. According to her, upon entering a new social, cultural, and linguistic environment, migrants become subject to the influence of two different sociocultural

spaces. Any positive or negative information about migrants disseminated through mass media and electronic/digital discourse directly affects their representation within society.

Drawing on the associative experiment data, the author sought to determine how the image of the migrant is conceptualized in the consciousness of Russian participants. She identified two contrasting representations in their perceptions of migrants: 1) dominant negative associations, including *обиженный* ("offended"), *оскорбленный* ("insulted"), *провоцирующий* ("provocative"), *задиристый* ("aggressive/quarrelsome"), *злостный* ("malicious"), *безграмотный* ("illiterate"), *алчный* ("greedy"), *вонючий* ("smelly"), and *крикливый* ("loud/boisterous"); and 2) less dominant positive associations, such as *трудолюбивый* ("hardworking"), *счастливый* ("happy"), *интеллектуальный* ("intellectual"), and *красивый* ("beautiful"). These responses indicate that, in the consciousness of the Russian participants, the migrant is predominantly represented as a negative figure. The findings demonstrate the significant role of axiological, affective, and stereotypical associations in constructing the associative portrait of the migrant.

The article also examines the representation of the migrant image in electronic and digital discourse. The participants were presented with various video materials concerning migrants and were subsequently divided into groups according to the videos they selected: 1) participants who selected the video portraying the migrant as a "criminal" (81 participants, 18.1%); 2) participants who selected videos portraying the migrant as a "hero" (150 participants, 33.6%); and 3) participants who did not wish to watch any of the presented videos (216 participants, 48.3%). According to the researcher, participants who selected the "migrant as hero" representation demonstrated a higher level of social and ethnic tolerance, whereas those who selected the "migrant as criminal" representation displayed greater social distance toward migrants.

Thus, Karabulatova's study is significant for the investigation of the associative portrait of the migrant. The article reveals the ethnic, legal, social, intellectual, emotional, and moral

characteristics attributed to the migrant image through the associations generated by Russian participants in response to the concept of "migrant."

A. P. Chudinov, N. A. Segal & A. N. Mishchenko investigated the reconstruction of the associative portrait of a police officer as formed in the linguistic consciousness of the Russian people. They conducted an associative experiment among Russian participants using the following questions: "What qualities do you consider most important for a police officer?", "What qualities do you consider completely unacceptable for a police officer?", and "What associations arise when you hear the words 'police officer'?" Based on the experimental results, the researchers developed several associative models, including "personal qualities of a police officer," "characteristics of the police officer's professional activity or its outcomes," and"the physical appearance and attributes of a police officer." These models accounted for 84% of all associative responses and contributed to the conceptualization of the police officer image in the participants' consciousness. In particular, the model "personal qualities of a police officer" included associative responses with both positive and negative connotations:

1. **Associative responses expressing positive evaluation**: "honesty" (37), "responsibility" (31), "fairness" (30), "courage" (28), "conscientiousness" (24), "bravery" (22), "kindness and responsiveness" (20), "benevolence" (20), "selflessness" (18), "determination" (17), "goodness" (14), "integrity" (honesty) (14), "diligence" (10), "composure" (9), "patriotism" (8), "perseverance" (7), "fearlessness" (5), "prudence" (5), "understanding" (4), "punctuality" (3), "good manners" (3), "strong character" (3), "discipline" (3), "self-sacrifice" (devotion) (2), and "intelligence" (2);
2. **Associative responses expressing negative evaluation**: "injustice" (52), "bribery" (46), "propensity for corruption" (19), "cruelty" (19), "indifference" (12), "irascibility" (12), "rudeness" (11), "aggressiveness" (9), "cowardice" (8), "dishonesty" (8), "self-interest" (7), "abuse of official authority" (7), "physical violence" (7), "harshness" (6),

"laziness" (6), "hypocrisy" (5), "aggressive behavior" (5), "selfishness" (4), "partiality" (lack of impartiality) (4), "irresponsibility" (4), "greed" (4), "anger" (3), and "excessive pursuit of financial gain" (2).

The article analyzes associative responses that contribute to the construction of the associative portrait of a police officer and demonstrates their significant role in revealing the image associated with representatives of this profession. More broadly, studies of this kind can serve as theoretical foundations for constructing associative portraits of representatives of different professions.

Ya. S. Shevchenko and A. A. Krumplevskaya conducted a study aimed at identifying the associative representation of the Belarusian people formed in the consciousness of university students. The research was carried out as part of a project examining the influence of Belarusian cultural traditions on the worldview of university students in the Vitebsk region. The study involved students from Polotsk State University and Vitebsk State University, with a total of 281 participants.

The students were asked the following question: "In your opinion, which traditions, customs, and symbols are associated with your country and the household in which you were born and raised?" The participants provided associative responses belonging to various thematic domains. For example, responses referring to traditional Belarusian celebrations included Maslenitsa, Kupalye, and Kolyady (28%); representations of nature included "fields," "forests," "rivers," "lakes," "cornflower," "stork," and "European bison" (23%); religious celebrations included Christmas, Easter, Radunitsa, and Dzyady (18%); while state holidays included New Year, Independence Day, and Victory Day (17%), among others.

The authors also surveyed the students with regard to the transmission of national and cultural traditions and customs from one generation to another through the family. They asked: "Which means of transmitting cultural traditions do you consider the most effective?" In response, 78% of the students identified "family" as the most effective means. The researchers explained

this finding by emphasizing the important role of the family as a social institution in Belarusian society and the continuity of cultural values and traditions across generations within the family.

At the same time, the researchers identified high-frequency associative responses reflecting characteristics associated with the Belarusian mentality and examined their role in constructing the associative representation of the Belarusian people. These included "kindness and benevolence" (53%), "hospitality" (26%), "tolerance" (18%), "responsiveness and willingness to help" (17%), "honesty and sincerity" (14%), "hard work" (11%), "openness" (8%), "politeness" (7%), "composure and patience" (6%), and "generosity" (4%).

In summary, based on the survey results, the authors identified the associations that made it possible to reconstruct the associative image of the Belarusian people as formed in the consciousness of students in the Vitebsk region. They demonstrated that these associative responses reflect the cultural traditions and characteristics associated with the Belarusian ethnic group.

In contrast, L. I. Baturina's article entitled 'The Russian Associative Portrait of Contemporary Advertising' selected neither prominent individuals nor ethnic groups, but rather advertising as the object of an associative portrait. Based on experimental data, the researcher formulated conclusions concerning the associative representation of contemporary advertising.

The study involved 150 participants from the Tula region: 100 women and 50 men aged between 18 and 55. The participants were provided with a questionnaire containing 18 questions related to advertising and were instructed to write down the associations that arose in response to each question within 30 minutes. For example, they were asked: "Write the first word that comes to mind in connection with advertising." Another question was: "Write a word expressing the opposite meaning of the word advertising."

The researcher classified and analyzed all associative responses according to 15 thematic groups. According to her, the

experimental findings constituted a fragment of the associative-verbal network associated with advertising. This network revealed the participants' knowledge of advertising at grammatical-semantic, cognitive, and pragmatic levels. The researcher argued that responses such as "advertisement" and "presentation" to the stimulus word "advertising" reflected knowledge at the semantic level; responses such as "television, "commerce," and "money" reflected knowledge at the cognitive level; whereas responses such as "beautiful," "bad," "annoying," "nonsense," and "deception" manifested knowledge at the pragmatic level. These associative responses therefore reflected not only the participants' semantic and cognitive knowledge of advertising but also their pragmatic attitudes, emotional evaluations, and axiological perspectives toward advertising [4].

A particularly noteworthy aspect of the study is that the researcher analyzed the associative responses of male and female participants separately. She concluded that women tended to perceive advertising primarily at the cognitive-pragmatic level. For women, particular importance was attached to the function of advertising as a source of information, as well as to descriptions of its external characteristics.

Men, by contrast, tended to perceive advertising at the pragmatic level. For them, not only the negative external aspects of advertising but also its internal content were considered important. The researcher concluded that, in the consciousness of Russian consumers, advertising was primarily associated with television and television commercials. At the same time, advertising was frequently represented as a low-quality and professionally inadequate product. She also noted that people often perceived advertising in connection with commercial activity and, as a result, associated it with deception.

The scientific significance of this study lies in the fact that it reveals a methodology for reconstructing the image of a particular concept formed in the consciousness of a linguistic community on the basis of an associative experiment. By classifying associative responses into semantic, cognitive, and pragmatic levels, the author modeled the associative portrait of advertising as represented in the consciousness of Russian

participants. This approach made it possible to describe the image of advertising in the consciousness of the linguistic community on the basis of the materials obtained through the associative experiment.

Another important aspect of the study is that it identified the knowledge, perceptions, and attitudes of female and male participants toward advertising. Studies of this kind are of considerable importance for the further development of associative portrait theory.

In Uzbek linguistics, increasing attention has also been paid in recent years to the modeling of the associative portraits of individuals or ethnic groups. In particular, D. Lutfullayeva's study entitled 'The Representation of Perceptions of the Uzbek Nation in Linguistic Associations' introduced and elaborated the concept of the "associative linguistic portrait," clarified its essence, developed a methodology for identifying the associative portrait of an object as represented in people's perceptions, and modeled the associative linguistic portrait of the Uzbek nation as perceived by Uzbeks. To reconstruct the image of the Uzbek nation formed in the consciousness of Uzbek speakers on the basis of their perceptions, knowledge, and conceptions of their own people, the author conducted a free associative experiment involving a total of 364 participants. The materials obtained from the associative experiment served as the basis for describing the associative linguistic portrait of the Uzbek nation as perceived by Uzbeks.

During the experiment, the participants were given the following instruction: "As soon as you perceive the word (Uzbek word) read aloud to you by the experimenter, write down in the questionnaire, within 30 seconds, the first word that comes to mind under the influence of this stimulus word." Based on the experimental data, an associative field of the stimulus word *Uzbek* was constructed. On the basis of the high-frequency associative responses occurring within this field, the following associative portrait of the Uzbek nation was reconstructed as formed in the consciousness of the participants:

> Uzbek – a nation, (my) nation. Uzbeks – a people, (my) people. Uzbek(s) – a people that has achieved independence, a Turkic people. Uzbek means Uzbekistan, the motherland, birthplace, my homeland, a peaceful country with its own flag. Uzbeks are a hospitable people, a people with pleasant speech. Uzbeks are hardworking and kind. Uzbeks love children and are proud people. Uzbek means 'one's own master' (a self-governing people), independent (people), a peaceful country. Uzbek means our identity, love, honor and dignity. Uzbek means national identity, national customs and traditions, Navruz, wedding celebrations. Uzbek means (my) family, spoken language, language, a people with its own language, a people speaking Uzbek. Uzbek means atlas fabric, doppi, almond-patterned doppi, and national clothing. The traditional Uzbek dish is plov. Uzbek means Uzbek athletes, a girl wearing atlas fabric, defenders of the homeland; a person: myself, a person wearing a doppi, a person with a doppi on his head, an Uzbek girl, an Uzbek woman, Islam Karimov.

It can therefore be argued that this linguistic associative portrait provides a means of characterizing the image and representation of the Uzbek nation formed in the consciousness of the linguistic community.

In several studies, X. Murodova modeled the image of the mother as represented in the perceptions of primary and secondary school students in the Fergana region through linguistic associations. Drawing on the materials of an associative experiment conducted among school students using the stimulus word "mother", the researcher described the image of the mother formed in the students' linguistic consciousness and constructed its linguistic model [1].

In subsequent studies, the concept of the "associative-somatic portrait," which describes the external appearance of an individual or an ethnic group, has been introduced into associative linguistics. An associative-somatic portrait is a linguistic model that represents, through verbal associations, the image of a person's or an ethnic group's physical appearance formed in the consciousness of a linguistic community. Such a portrait can be regarded as a reconstructed somatic representation based on associative responses that reflect the linguistic

community's knowledge and perceptions of human or ethnic physical appearance, national-cultural attitudes, ethnocultural stereotypes established in society, and evaluative attitudes.

Once this issue became a subject of systematic investigation in associative linguistics, it began to attract the attention of a number of researchers [2]. In particular, N. V. Dmitryuk examined the formation of the ethnic associative portraits of Russians and Kazakhs, the extent to which such associative portraits possess an autoreflexive character, and the mechanisms through which individuals perceive themselves and others. For this purpose, the researcher employed directed and comparative associative experiments. The participants, comprising 200 Russians and 200 Kazakhs, were asked to distinguish between different ethnic portraits. Specifically, directed associative experiments were conducted according to the following models: 'Russians as seen by Russians,' "Kazakhs as seen by Kazakhs,' 'Russians as seen by Kazakhs,' and 'Kazakhs as seen by Russians.'

The results demonstrated that, in some cases, participants attributed characteristics associated with another ethnic group to themselves or, conversely, attributed characteristics considered typical of their own ethnic group to representatives of another nation. The findings confirmed that participants were capable of constructing not only the associative portrait of members of their own ethnic group but also that of representatives of other ethnic groups, such as neighboring ethnic communities.

The study identified associative responses elicited by 26 somatisms denoting parts of the human body in Russian and Kazakh. The participants were presented with such somatic units as "head," "neck," "hair," "lips," "hand," "mouth," "eyebrows," "nose," "forehead," "teeth," "eyes," "body," "ear," "leg," "abdomen," "chest," "figure," "fingers," "cheeks," "shoulder," "chin," "cheekbones," "face," "nail," "knee," and "back of the body" (spine) and were asked to characterize each somatism using adjective-based associative responses. The questionnaire contained separate columns for "Russian man/Russian woman" and "Kazakh man/Kazakh woman," which played an important

role in determining which gender the adjectives associated with the names of body parts referred to.

The experimental data were classified and analyzed according to the groups of "shape and appearance," "color," "size," "physical characteristics," and "social characteristics." This classification encompassed the principal parameters of the human body.

The scientific significance of this study lies in its demonstration of the role of ethnic, gender, and sociocultural factors in the formation of an associative-somatic portrait. The study also demonstrated the manifestation of national-cultural characteristics associated with representatives of different ethnic groups in associative-somatic portraits. On this basis, it was established that the representation of particular ethnic groups in linguistic consciousness may possess distinct national-cultural characteristics.

The study by M. R. Badretdinova likewise examined the modeling of the associative-somatic portraits of the physical appearance of different ethnic groups. Her dissertation reconstructed the somatic representations of Russians and Tatars formed in the consciousness of speakers of the respective languages and developed linguistic models of these representations through associative responses. The researcher sought to determine, through linguistic associations, how individuals conceptualize and evaluate both their own ethnic group and other ethnic groups or nations.

An associative experiment was conducted with 250 Russian and 400 Tatar participants. On the basis of the experimental data, the researcher identified associative responses that contributed to the construction of the somatic portraits of Russians and Tatars. The experimental materials enabled her to draw conclusions about "the associative strategies and the structure of associative fields of the two compared linguocultural communities, as well as to identify the differences and similarities between them; and 2) to compare the associative responses obtained, which, in turn, made it possible to reconstruct the somatic portraits of Tatars and Russians and identify the differences and similarities between them" [5].

M. R. Badretdinova demonstrated that the associative responses elicited by somatic units denoting parts of the human body were related to stereotypes, images, and cultural perceptions concerning the physical appearance of members of particular ethnic groups. The researcher first constructed the associative-somatic portrait of the Tatar ethnic group and subsequently compared it with the portrait of the Russian ethnic group.

According to her conclusions, individuals' perceptions and evaluations of the physical appearance of representatives of other ethnic groups may influence the tolerant or conflictual character of interpersonal communication. In other words, perceptions of the physical appearance of a particular ethnic group do not necessarily imply an aesthetic evaluation of that group. Rather, such perceptions may also be associated with the mechanisms through which individuals perceive themselves and others. From this perspective, the author related the relevance of her research to its potential significance for identifying the causes of interethnic conflicts.

The study also introduced and described the concept of a "somatological map." According to the researcher, "a "somatological map" is a set of judgments (verbal expressions) aimed at directly describing 'objects' represented in nonverbal images. It may even be argued that the somatological map has no other function. Its particular units (in our case, lexemes or word combinations) remain incompletely formed within the map until their meanings become associated with evaluative-descriptive characteristics ("large head," "round," etc.). In other words, within a somatological map, 'objects' are not merely described as vague and isolated features; rather, they are attributed with specific characteristics pertaining to a concrete object."

The researcher also established that the same object may evoke different associations in different cultural environments. She attributed this phenomenon to the influence of national, cultural, psychological, and cognitive factors. She emphasized that when evaluating others, individuals rely on their own evaluative standards and compare the perceived object with an existing image formed in their consciousness.

This study was the first to construct an associative-somatic portrait of the Tatar ethnic group. This portrait was compared with a similar portrait of the Russian people, and the similarities and differences between them were identified. The dissertation therefore serves as an important scientific and theoretical source for researchers engaged in constructing associative-somatic portraits of different ethnic groups. However, the study did not systematize the linguocognitive nature or the semantic, axiological, and national-cultural components of the associative responses elicited by somatic units. Nor did it distinguish the stages involved in the formation of an associative-somatic portrait or identify the factors determining its formation.

Based on the foregoing, it can be concluded that, in linguistics worldwide, somatic units denoting parts of the human body in different languages have been extensively studied from lexical-semantic, cognitive, and linguocultural perspectives. Researchers have examined the ways in which somatic units function within metaphors and phraseological expressions, as well as their symbolic meanings. However, these studies have not sufficiently addressed somatic units from an associative perspective. With a few exceptions, the associative-somatic portrait of a person or an ethnic group's physical appearance constructed through somatic units has hardly been treated as an independent research object.

Somatic units are not merely ordinary lexical items. Through these units, aspects of human physical appearance, including shape, color, size, physical characteristics, and gender-specific features, can be represented, while people's evaluations of human appearance may also be reflected. From this perspective, investigating somatic units from an associative perspective is of considerable importance.

Although numerous studies of somatic units have been conducted in linguistics worldwide, there remains a lack of specialized research examining how associative responses elicited by these units within a linguistic community contribute to the construction of the somatic portrait of an individual or an ethnic group, as well as how the linguistic model and formation mechanism of an associative-somatic portrait can be established.

Accordingly, one of the pressing issues in contemporary associative linguistics is to synthesize existing scholarly approaches to associative portraits and the associations of somatic units and to elucidate the mechanisms underlying the formation of associative-somatic portraits. Addressing this issue makes it possible to reconstruct, through associative responses to somatic units, the image of the physical appearance of a particular individual or ethnic group formed in the consciousness of a linguistic community and to construct a linguistic model of this national representation.

CONCLUSION

Furthermore, investigating this problem can contribute not only to the refinement of associative portrait theory but also to the scientific understanding of how the physical appearance of an individual or an ethnic group is represented in national linguistic consciousness.

The analyzed scholarly sources demonstrate that linguistics worldwide has accumulated substantial experience in constructing associative portraits of individuals, ethnic groups, social groups, representatives of different professions, and various objects. However, the construction of an associative-somatic portrait of an individual or an ethnic group on the basis of associative responses to somatic units still lacks a systematic theoretical foundation.

In particular, it is necessary to scientifically substantiate the relationship between associative responses to somatic units and such social factors as national-cultural stereotypes established within society and evaluative attitudes, as well as to determine the influence of these factors on the formation of an associative-somatic portrait.

These issues are also highly relevant to Uzbek linguistics. Accordingly, priority areas for further research include investigating associations of somatic units in the Uzbek language; developing mechanisms for constructing associative-somatic portraits; identifying the cognitive, linguocultural, social, and axiological factors influencing their formation; and linguistically modeling the physical appearance of an individual

or an ethnic group on the basis of associative-experiment data from Uzbek-language materials.

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