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CONCEPT, VERBALIZATION AND THE THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE LINGUOCULTURAL APPROACH

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Abstract. This paper examines the relationship between the concept, verbalization and the linguocultural approach within the linguistic worldview. A concept is interpreted as a mental unit that accumulates knowledge, experience, evaluation and cultural memory; verbalization is understood as the linguistic expression of this mental content; and the linguocultural approach explains how language, values and culture interact in communication. The study shows that a concept cannot be reduced to the lexical meaning of a word, because it includes not only logical content but also imagery and value-based interpretation.

Keywords: concept, verbalization, linguoculture, linguocultural studies, linguistic worldview.

Introduction

In contemporary linguistics, language is viewed not only as a means of communication but also as a form of preserving collective experience. Through words, stable expressions, metaphors, texts and discourse, human beings comprehend the world and transmit cultural meanings. For this reason, the notion of the concept has become one of the central categories in cognitive linguistics and linguocultural studies. In the Russian linguistic tradition, a concept has been defined as a mental formation that substitutes in consciousness a complex set of representations connected with a word.³³ This interpretation is important for the analysis of national and cultural specificity, since the same phenomenon may receive different semantic organization in different languages.

Concepts such as “home”, “freedom”, “honor” and “fate” cannot be reduced to dictionary meanings. They include emotional evaluation, historical associations, figurative features and behavioral norms. The relevance of the topic is determined by the fact that modern humanities seek to explain not only the meaning of a linguistic unit but also the mechanisms through which cultural meaning is formed. In intercultural communication, it is especially important to understand what meanings stand behind words and why literal translation does not always convey the value-based content of an utterance.

The aim of this study is to describe the theoretical relationship between concept, verbalization and the linguocultural approach and to show how these categories can be applied to the analysis of culturally significant linguistic units.

³³ S. A. Askoldov, “Kontsept i slovo” [Concept and Word], in *Russkaya slovesnost: ot teorii slovesnosti k strukture teksta. Antologiya* (Moscow: Academia, 1997), 267-279.





Materials and Methods

The material for theoretical generalization consists of scholarly works in cognitive linguistics, semantics and linguocultural studies. The methodological basis of the study includes descriptive, comparative-contrastive, conceptual and interpretative methods. The descriptive method makes it possible to identify the basic features of the analyzed notions. The comparative-contrastive method helps distinguish linguistic meaning from cultural meaning. Conceptual analysis reveals the structure of the concept, while the interpretative method explains the functioning of the concept in text and discourse.

The study also relies on the principle of anthropocentrism, according to which language is examined through its connection with human beings, their thinking, values and cultural practices. In the investigation of concepts, it is appropriate to use definitional analysis of dictionary explanations, analysis of synonyms and antonyms, identification of metaphorical models, and examination of phraseological units, proverbs and precedent texts. Such a set of procedures makes it possible to reconstruct not an isolated meaning but the semantic field of the concept.

Results

The theoretical analysis shows that a concept has a multilayered structure. Its content includes not only a notional component but also image-based and value-based components. The notional component is connected with logical content and answers the question of what an object or phenomenon denotes. The image-based component includes metaphors, symbols, associations, visual representations and emotional impressions. The value-based component expresses the attitude of members of a culture toward the given phenomenon. It is precisely the value-based layer that makes the concept an object of linguocultural research, because culture is manifested not only in what is named but also in how the named phenomenon is evaluated.³⁴

Consequently, the concept is broader than the meaning of a word. Meaning is fixed in the language system, whereas the concept unites knowledge, memory, experience, emotion and evaluation. In this sense, a word is only one of the possible entrances into a concept, but it does not exhaust its content.

The verbalization of a concept is the process through which mental content is expressed by linguistic means. It can take place at different levels: lexical, phraseological, grammatical, textual and discursive. At the lexical level, a concept is represented by key words and synonymic series. At the phraseological level, it is revealed through stable expressions and proverbs. At the grammatical level, it may be manifested through the categorization of time, person, action, possession and evaluation. At the textual level, a concept develops through plots, character images, repetitions and evaluative characteristics. At the discursive level, it

³⁴ Y. S. Stepanov, *Konstanty: Slovar russkoy kultury* [Constants: A Dictionary of Russian Culture] (Moscow: Akademicheskii Proekt, 2004).





depends on the sphere of communication: scientific, political, religious, literary or everyday discourse.

Thus, verbalization is not a simple packaging of thought into words. It organizes meaning and makes it available for cultural interpretation.³⁵ The richer the system of verbalizers is, the more significant the concept becomes for a culture, because frequency, stability and diversity of linguistic expressions indicate its active presence in the consciousness of language users.

The linguocultural approach combines the study of language and culture as interrelated systems. Its object is not an isolated word in itself but a culturally significant meaning fixed in linguistic forms. Within this approach, language is understood as a carrier of cultural codes, while culture is interpreted as a set of meanings, norms, symbols and values transmitted through communication. Therefore, the analysis of a concept requires attention not only to dictionaries but also to texts, folklore, literary works, speech practices, historical contexts and national stereotypes.

Discussion

The relationship between concept, verbalization and the linguocultural approach can be represented as a three-level research model. The first level is mental: here the concept exists as a unit of consciousness and knowledge. The second level is linguistic: here the concept is manifested through verbalization. The third level is cultural: here its place in the value system of a specific community is revealed. This model helps avoid two extremes: reducing a concept only to dictionary meaning and, conversely, interpreting it too freely without sufficient linguistic evidence.

The problem of national specificity is especially important in the study of concepts. Universal human notions may exist in different cultures; however, the ways in which they are interpreted are not identical. For example, the concept of “soul” in the Russian cultural tradition is often associated with morality, inner depth, suffering and sincerity, whereas comparable units in other cultures may have different semantic accents. Wierzbicka’s key-word approach demonstrates that culturally salient words encode shared values and interpretative models of a speech community.³⁶

Accordingly, linguocultural analysis must consider both universal and ethnospecific features. The researcher should not restrict the analysis to listing words. It is necessary to identify semantic relations, evaluative features, stable images and contexts of use. Another important task is to distinguish between the core and the periphery of a concept. The core includes the most stable features

³⁵ E. S. Kubryakova, V. Z. Demyankov, Y. G. Pankrats, and L. G. Luzina, *Kratkiy slovar kognitivnykh terminov* [A Concise Dictionary of Cognitive Terms] (Moscow: Philological Faculty of Moscow State University, 1996).

³⁶ A. Wierzbicka, *Ponimanie kultur cherez posredstvo klyuchevykh slov* [Understanding Cultures Through Key Words] (Moscow: Languages of Slavic Culture, 2001).





confirmed by dictionaries and frequent uses, while the periphery includes individual, authorial or situational meanings.

Conclusion

Concept, verbalization and the linguocultural approach form a unified theoretical basis for studying the relationship between language, thought and culture. The concept reflects content accumulated in individual and collective consciousness. Verbalization shows the linguistic means by which this content is expressed. The linguocultural approach reveals the value-based and national-cultural nature of meaning.

The most productive model is a comprehensive analysis that includes semantic, cognitive, discursive and cultural parameters. This approach is especially important for the study of literary texts, intercultural communication, translation and language teaching, because it makes it possible to understand not only the meaning of a word but also the cultural experience behind it.³⁷ Therefore, the study of a concept through its verbalization allows the researcher to describe not an isolated linguistic unit but a whole fragment of the linguistic worldview.

Turaev's comparative study of Uzbek and Russian medical discourse also demonstrates that disease names may be interpreted as components of the linguistic worldview because they reflect medical knowledge and culturally marked conceptualization of illness.³⁸

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³⁷ V. A. Maslova, *Lingvokulturologiya* [Linguoculturology] (Moscow: Akademiya, 2001).

³⁸ A. Turaev, "Conceptual Models of Pathological Terminology: A Comparative Analysis of Uzbek and Russian Medical Discourse," *Society and Innovations* 7, no. 1 (2026): 108-115, <https://doi.org/10.47689/2181-1415-vol7-iss1-pp108-115>.

