

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LINGUOCULTURAL STUDIES IN THE ANTHROPOCENTRIC PARADIGM

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Abstract

Modern linguistics is experiencing a significant shift toward the anthropocentric paradigm, which views language not as an autonomous system but as a phenomenon intrinsically linked to human beings, society, and culture. This article examines the importance of linguocultural studies within the anthropocentric approach. It highlights how language serves as a key repository and reflector of national worldview, mentality, cultural values, traditions, and collective experience. Particular attention is paid to the analysis of folkloric texts, especially epics, as vivid manifestations of national culture. The study discusses the historical roots and theoretical foundations of the anthropocentric paradigm, the emergence and development of linguoculturology, and its interrelations with cognitive linguistics, ethnolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and other related fields. In the context of globalization, the research emphasizes the necessity of preserving national linguistic and cultural identity through linguocultural analysis. The findings demonstrate that language functions as an active mechanism for shaping human cognition, self-awareness, and intercultural understanding, thereby enriching contemporary linguistic science with new depth and practical relevance.

Keywords: anthropocentric paradigm, linguoculturology, linguistic worldview, national mentality, cultural values, language and culture, globalization, folklore, epic literature, linguistic personality.

Introduction. Modern linguistics is undergoing profound transformations. Scholars are moving away from viewing language as an autonomous, self-contained system independent of its users toward understanding it as a phenomenon inherently linked to human beings. Since the second half of the 20th century, the anthropocentric approach has gained prominence, demonstrating that language is not merely a tool for communication but is deeply connected with society and its speakers. Each nation possesses its own linguistic worldview, shaped by unique patterns of conceptualizing and encoding reality.

This perspective acknowledges that a people's worldview, ancient customs, traditions, and national spirit—embodied in cultural heritage, particularly folklore and epic narratives—must be considered. Linguocultural analysis of folkloric works, especially epics, has become one of the most vital and relevant directions in contemporary linguistics. These texts are examined not only as linguistic units but as profound layers of national culture and vivid mirrors of collective mentality. Through their lexical-semantic structures, phraseological units, metaphors, and other linguocultural elements, researchers uncover a nation's life experiences, ethical values, and attitudes toward nature and society.

The anthropocentric approach in language study has roots extending far beyond its formal recognition over the past half-century. Wilhelm von Humboldt's ideas align closely with its essence: studying language does not negate the goals of exploring human psychology and its relations to other domains. In the anthropocentric framework, linguistic units serve not only to express concepts in human life but also as phenomena reflecting a people's spiritual qualities, culture, and worldview. This paradigm places the human factor at the center, treating language as a key mechanism for self-awareness, perception of the world, and connection with the socio-cultural environment. Linguistic personality is viewed as an active subject who creates, assigns meaning to, and develops language.

Methods (Theoretical and Analytical Approach). This study employs a theoretical and descriptive method grounded in the anthropocentric paradigm. It involves systematic analysis of key concepts in linguistics and cultural studies, drawing on philosophical, linguistic, and cultural sources. Special attention is given to linguocultural analysis, which examines the interrelation between language and culture through concepts, linguistic worldview (linguistic picture of the world), and national mentality.

The approach integrates insights from ethnolinguistics, cognitive linguistics, psycholinguistics, and related fields. Primary sources include works by classical and contemporary scholars (Humboldt, Vorobyov, Xudoyberganova, Qo'ziyev, and others). Conceptual analysis, comparative interpretation, and synthesis of theoretical positions form the core methodology. Examples from national languages (particularly Uzbek) illustrate how cultural concepts such as hospitality, respect, and moral values are encoded linguistically.

Results. The analysis reveals that language functions as the primary repository and transmitter of cultural information. In the anthropocentric view, the linguistic picture of the world is dynamic and shaped by human experience, social environment, and cultural heritage. Linguoculturology, first systematically developed by V.V. Vorobyov in the 1990s, studies the dialectical unity of language and culture, focusing on how national existence manifests through linguistic means.

Key findings include:

- National mentality and values (e.g., Uzbek concepts of *mehmondo'stlik* [hospitality], *oqibat* [kindness], *hurmat* [respect]) are embedded in lexical, phraseological, and metaphorical units, distinguishing one linguistic worldview from another.
- Globalization intensifies the need to preserve these unique elements, as foreign influences and digital media may dilute national lexicon and cultural concepts.
- Linguocultural units in folklore and epics serve as rich sources for understanding collective cognition, ethics, and historical memory.
- The linguistic worldview evolves continuously through human cognitive activity, with new concepts reshaping the existing picture of reality.

Close connections exist between linguoculturology and fields such as cognitive linguistics, pragmalinguistics, sociolinguistics, and ethnolinguistics, all of which center the human subject.

Discussion. The anthropocentric paradigm enriches linguistics by positioning humans as active creators and interpreters of language rather than passive users. Linguocultural research within this framework deepens understanding of how language reflects and shapes national identity, values, and thought patterns. It moves beyond structuralist and generative models to view language as an open system intertwined with society, nature, and culture.

In an era of globalization and multilingualism, such studies hold strategic importance for maintaining cultural diversity, informing language policy, and supporting education. They help mitigate risks of cultural homogenization while allowing beneficial cross-cultural exchange. Practical applications include strengthening mother-tongue education with linguocultural insights, promoting national literature and media, and fostering intergenerational transmission of values.

Challenges remain, such as the potential erosion of traditional expressions under digital influences. Future research should further integrate empirical methods (corpus analysis, psycholinguistic experiments) with theoretical frameworks to provide deeper insights into concept formation and cultural preservation. Ultimately, preserving the linguistic expression of national values is not only an academic task but a sacred duty for future generations, contributing to mutual respect and global harmony.

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