



## THE TERM « CONCEPT» IN CULTURAL LINGUISTICS

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**Abstract.** *The research is focused on the analysis of one of today's developing fields, cultural linguistics, and one of its notions “concept”. The aim of the study is to show some ideas based on the meaning of “concept” and its analysis and to clarify its meaning.*

**Keywords:** *linguistics, cultural linguistics, cognitive linguistics, concept, notion term.*

The term “concept” serves as a cornerstone in the interdisciplinary field of cultural linguistics, which explores the intricate interplay between language and culture. In this domain, concepts are not merely linguistic constructs; they represent the cognitive categories that individuals use to interpret and navigate their cultural environments. As language reflects the values, beliefs, and practices of a society, understanding how concepts are formed, structured, and expressed becomes essential for analyzing the relationship between linguistic practices and cultural identities.

Cultural linguistics combines principles from linguistics, cultural studies, anthropology, and cognitive science, enabling a holistic understanding of how language shapes and is shaped by the cultural context. According to Wierzbicka, concepts are “universal human concepts that can be expressed in many languages but are culturally specific in their application and connotation.” [7,p.153-181] This view highlights the dual nature of concepts as both universal cognitive tools and culturally embedded entities, informing the ways language users categorize their experiences and communicate meaning.

### Key Aspects of the term “Concept” in Cultural Linguistics

1. Cognitive Frameworks: - Concepts are fundamental cognitive units that help individuals categorize and make sense of their experiences. In cultural linguistics, concepts are shaped by cultural contexts and can vary significantly across different cultures. For example, the concept of “family” may encompass different meanings and structures in various cultures, influencing how individuals perceive relationships and social responsibilities.

2. Language and Conceptualization: - Language serves as a primary medium through which concepts are expressed and communicated. The vocabulary, idioms, and metaphors used in a language can reveal underlying cultural concepts. For instance, the English concept of “freedom” may be expressed through phrases like



“freedom of speech” or “freedom to choose”” which reflect specific cultural values associated with individualism and autonomy.

3. Cultural Models: Cultural linguistics posits that concepts are often organized into cultural models—shared cognitive frameworks that guide individuals' understanding of their social world. These models can be seen in proverbs, myths, and narratives that convey cultural wisdom and norms. For instance, the concept of “success” may be framed differently in collectivist cultures compared to individualist cultures, influencing how people pursue goals and measure achievement.

4. Metaphor and Conceptualization: Metaphors play a crucial role in shaping concepts and influencing thought processes. Conceptual metaphors can provide insight into how different cultures understand abstract ideas through more concrete experiences. For example, the metaphor “time is money” in Western cultures reflects a specific conceptualization of time as a valuable resource, which may not be as prevalent in cultures that view time in a more cyclical or relational manner.

5. Cultural Variation: Concepts are not universal; they can vary widely across cultures, leading to different interpretations and understandings of similar phenomena. Cultural linguistics examines these variations to highlight the diversity of human thought and experience. For example, the concept of “happiness” might be associated with individual achievement in one culture, while in another, it may be more closely linked to community and social harmony.

6. Interdisciplinary Nature: Cultural linguistics draws on insights from various disciplines, including anthropology, psychology, sociology, and cognitive science, to explore how concepts are formed, transmitted, and transformed within cultural contexts. This interdisciplinary approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of how language and culture interact to shape human cognition.

The significance of concepts in linguistics is further underscored by the cognitive linguistics movement, which emphasizes that language is fundamentally intertwined with human thought. [4] This perspective posits that linguistic expressions are rooted in conceptual structures that emerge from a speaker's lived experiences. As such, linguistic features, from vocabulary to syntax, can reveal deeper ideological frameworks that underpin a culture. Moreover, linguistic relativity, as proposed by Sapir and Whorf, suggests that the language one speaks influences thought processes and worldview. [5, p.26] This illustrates the need to examine concepts within their cultural contexts to fully grasp how they inform cognition and social interaction. The study of concepts in cultural linguistics thus



fosters an appreciation for the nuances of meaning that arise from the intersection of language and culture.

This article explores the term “concept” within the framework of cultural linguistics, delineating its relevance and implications for understanding cultural dynamics in language use. We will examine various theoretical approaches, including semantic fields, cognitive models, and cultural scripts, to elucidate how concepts function as instruments of cultural of the term “concept” in science. Strangely enough, the “concept” was borrowed by expression and cognitive processing.

At the beginning of the article, it seems to us, it is necessary to briefly dwell on the history of the development linguists from mathematical logic. Its usage as a term in our linguistics begins in 1928 with the publication of the article by S.A. Askoldov (pseudonym S.A. Alekseev) “The Word and the concept””, published in the journal “Russian Speech”.

The term “concept” has been experiencing an era of “linguistic renaissance” since the early 90s of the 20th century, primarily due to the scientific works of D.S.Likhachev and Yu.S. Stepanov, who reanimated it and gave it their detailed interpretation. The active usage of this term in cognitive linguistics, in the paradigm of Linguistic conceptualism and cultural linguistics are explained by the need to introduce into their categorical apparatus a missing cognitive “link”, the content of which, in addition to the concept, includes associative figurative assessments and representations of it. producers and users. According to the scientific definitions of S.A. Askoldov, E.S. Kubryakova, S.H. Lyapin, O.P. Skidan, the concept is “a multidimensional mental construct reflecting the process of cognition of the world, the results of human activity, his experience and knowledge about the world, storing information about it” [6,:2]

Hayotova stated that There is no clear structure to the concept and each person learns the concept in his own way. A concept is a multifaceted and multi-layered mental structure. This is evidenced by the fact that the concept is described as an object of cognitive and cultural linguistic studies. [1, p. 1].

Scholars such as V. I. Karasik and Yu. S. Stepanov have emphasized the role of concepts as cultural benchmarks, positing that they serve as bridges between language and cultural identity. [2:17]. One major area of interest in studying concepts is the cognitive aspects that underlie their formation and usage. Theories from cognitive linguistics suggest that concepts are not arbitrary but are grounded in specific cultural experiences and social interactions [3:20-21]. This perspective



highlights the dynamic nature of concepts, which are shaped by both linguistic structures and cultural contexts.

Therefore concept is considered to be one of the most widely used term in cultural linguistics. As cultural linguistic unit it expresses specific aspects of one or another culture. For instance, the concept «mother» is integrated in following forms in Karakalpak context:

1) *Mother* - A person who gives a birth. For example: Heaven is beneath Mother's Feet (from karakalpak folklore)

2) *Mother tongue*- The language of someones' birthplace. For example: My mother tongue you are special for me (I Yusupov)

3) *Motherland*- A place where person is born. For example: My heart beats for my motherland (M Kosimbetov). By examining examples given above, it can be understood that the concept «mother» may be used in integration with other words in order to give another meaning in written or spoken discourse. In conclusion, the term “concept” in cultural linguistics highlights the interconnectedness of language and culture and emphasizes the importance of context in shaping understanding. Future research should continue to investigate the nuances of concepts across diverse cultural landscapes, employing interdisciplinary approaches that consider historical, social, and cognitive factors. By doing so, scholars in cultural linguistics can contribute to a richer comprehension of human communication and cultural expression, fostering greater empathy and understanding in an increasingly globalized world.

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