



# THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE CONCEPTS OF "SPEECH CULTURE" AND "LANGUAGE CULTURE", "SPEECH CULTURE" AND "SPEECH CORRECTNESS"

**Usmanova Svetlana Negmatovna**

Senior Lecturer, Oriental University

E-mail: [usmanovasvetlana22@gmail.com](mailto:usmanovasvetlana22@gmail.com)

Tel.: +998 90 606 31 40

Republic of Uzbekistan, Samarkand

<b>Article history:</b>	<b>Abstract:</b>
<p><b>Received:</b> November 8<sup>th</sup> 2025 <b>Accepted:</b> December 7<sup>th</sup> 2025</p>	<p>The article examines the differences between the concepts of "speech culture," "language culture," and "speech correctness." Based on an analysis of domestic linguistic research, it is determined that language culture is a system of norms related to the language system as such, whereas speech culture includes the communicative, ethical, and social aspects of speech. Speech correctness is considered one of the components of speech culture, reflecting the compliance of an utterance with the norms of the literary language. The article emphasizes that speech culture is a broader concept that encompasses correctness, expressiveness, appropriateness, and ethicality of utterances. Practical recommendations are provided for the development of speech culture in the educational environment.</p>

**Keywords:** Speech culture, language culture, speech correctness, language norms, communicative competence, speech ethics, literary language, linguistic norm.

**INTRODUCTION.** The modern linguistic worldview increasingly demonstrates a blurring of boundaries between concepts that are traditionally considered closely related: *speech culture*, *language culture*, and *speech correctness*. In public consciousness, these terms are often used as synonyms, which leads to misunderstandings and errors in scientific and educational discussions. However, in linguistics they have different semantic nuances and serve to describe different aspects of linguistic activity.

The purpose of this article is to identify and systematize the differences between the concepts of *speech culture*, *language culture*, and *speech correctness*, to show their interrelations and boundaries, and to substantiate the practical significance of the precise use of these terms in education and communication.

**REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.** In Russian linguistics, the concept of *language culture* is traditionally associated with the norms that regulate the functioning of language as a system. According to classical studies, language culture is understood as the observance of linguistic norms (lexical, grammatical, phonetic, orthoepic, orthographic, etc.), as well as the aspiration to improve them in the process of societal development. An important aspect of language culture is its connection with the literary language as the standard of normativity.

*Speech culture* in Russian linguistics is regarded as a complex category that includes not only knowledge of linguistic norms but also the ability to use language in a specific communicative situation. This concept is closely related to communicative competence, speech etiquette, the ability to choose an appropriate style, assess the relevance of an utterance, and take into account the addressee and the purpose of communication. Many researchers emphasize that speech culture is not only "correctness," but also "appropriateness," "beauty," "precision," and "politeness."

*Speech correctness* in scholarly literature is interpreted as the conformity of an utterance to the norms of the literary language. This is a narrow category that mainly refers to linguistic forms, that is, grammatical, lexical, and phonetic norms. Speech correctness can be evaluated according to normative criteria, but it does not always include an assessment of communicative effectiveness or the ethical dimension of an utterance. Thus, even at the level of literature review, it is evident that language culture and speech culture represent different levels of linguistic normativity: the former relates to the language system, while the latter relates to linguistic activity. Speech correctness, in turn, is a component of speech culture but does not exhaust it.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY



The study employed the following methods:

*Comparative terminological analysis* – comparison of definitions and interpretations of the concepts in linguistic literature.

*Content analysis* – identification of key characteristics and features of language culture, speech culture, and speech correctness in the works of Russian linguists.

*Systemic approach* – consideration of the concepts as elements of the language system (language culture) and language activity (speech culture).

*Analysis of speech situations* – demonstration of differences through practical examples (typical cases are presented in the text).

### ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Language culture is a set of rules, norms, and standards that determine the functioning of language as a system. It includes:

*lexical norm (correct word meanings and fixed expressions);*

*grammatical norm (correct formation of words and sentences);*

*phonetic norm (pronunciation);*

*orthographic and punctuation norms;*

*stylistic norm (correspondence of linguistic means to a particular style).*

Language culture is formed historically, through tradition and social consensus. It is determined not only by normative dictionaries and reference books but also by social usage. Language culture is not an individual competence but a collective system that exists independently of a particular speaker. Language as a system can be considered cultured or uncultured only in the sense of its conformity or non-conformity to the norms of the literary language [2].

### SPEECH CULTURE AS LINGUISTIC ACTIVITY

Speech culture is the ability to apply language norms in real communication. It includes:

*correctness (conformity to norms);*

*expressiveness (the ability to select linguistic means to convey meaning accurately);*

*appropriateness (correspondence to style, situation, and addressee);*

*logic and coherence (the ability to construct a consistent utterance);*

*ethality (politeness, correctness, respect for the interlocutor);*

communicative effectiveness (achievement of the communicative goal).

Speech culture is an individual ability associated with personality, level of education, social experience, and speech practice. It presupposes not only knowledge of the language but also mastery of it in specific communicative conditions [3].

### SPEECH CORRECTNESS AS A COMPONENT OF SPEECH CULTURE

Speech correctness is the conformity of an utterance to the norms of the literary language. It evaluates:

*correctness of word forms (morphology and syntax);*

*correctness of word choice (lexis and phraseology);*

*observance of orthographic and punctuation norms;*

*normative pronunciation (in oral speech).*

Speech correctness is an important but not the only indicator of speech culture. One can speak correctly but inappropriately, rudely, unethically, or incoherently. For example: "You probably do not know that your boss is an idiot"—the sentence may be grammatically correct, but it is unethical and communicatively unsuccessful. "I came because I needed to" is grammatically correct but stylistically inexpressive and awkwardly formulated [4].

Thus, correctness represents the linguistic aspect, while speech culture represents the communicative and personal aspect.

### INTERRELATION OF THE CONCEPTS

Language culture establishes the normative foundation: without norms, it is impossible to speak of correctness. Speech correctness is the verification of conformity to norms, that is, an assessment of the linguistic aspect of an utterance. Speech culture is a broader category that includes correctness but also evaluates communicative adequacy, ethality, and style [5].

**Distinctions Between the Concepts: A Comparative Table**

Concept	Main Object	Main Criterion	Level	Examples
<b>Language culture</b>	Language system	Conformity to language norms	Systemic	spelling rules, grammar
<b>Speech culture</b>	Speech activity	Appropriateness, expressiveness, ethality, logic	Activity-based	ability to speak in different situations
<b>Speech correctness</b>	Language forms in an utterance	Normativity of forms	Component of speech culture	correct agreement, proper word usage



In other words:

*language culture* → establishes norms

*speech correctness* → checks compliance with norms

*speech culture* → applies norms in communication and evaluates the result

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**

Language culture and speech culture represent different levels of linguistic reality: the former relates to the language system, while the latter relates to human speech activity. Speech correctness is an important but not exhaustive component of speech culture. It characterizes only conformity to norms and does not take into account appropriateness, ethicality, expressiveness, or communicative effectiveness.

In pedagogical practice, it is necessary to teach not only how to “speak correctly” but also how to speak appropriately and beautifully, taking into account the audience and the communicative goal. To enhance speech culture, it is important to develop skills of analyzing speech situations, maintaining a critical attitude toward one’s own utterances, as well as engaging in reading and practicing oral and written speech. Educational programs should include separate modules on language norms, speech etiquette, stylistics, and communicative competence in order to form a holistic speech culture [6].

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