



THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF LINGUOCULTUROLOGY: THE INTERRELATION BETWEEN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE.

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| Article history: | Abstract: |
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| Received: 24 th June 2025 Accepted: 20 th July 2025 | The present study explores the theoretical foundations of linguoculturology, focusing on the intrinsic interrelation between language and culture. Linguoculturology, as an interdisciplinary field, seeks to examine linguistic phenomena through the prism of cultural context, revealing how language both shapes and reflects a society's worldview, values, and traditions. The research adopts a comprehensive qualitative approach, drawing from theoretical frameworks in linguistics, cultural studies, and cognitive science to present a holistic understanding of the mutual influence between language and culture. Special attention is given to cross-cultural comparisons and the analysis of linguistic units with cultural significance, including idioms, metaphors, and culturally marked lexemes. The findings demonstrate that language and culture are interdependent, dynamic systems, where language serves as both a product and a driver of cultural identity. Furthermore, the study underscores the necessity of incorporating linguocultural competence into language education, particularly in the era of globalization, where intercultural communication is essential. This paper aims to contribute to the broader theoretical discourse in linguoculturology by providing an in-depth, interdisciplinary perspective and suggesting avenues for future research. |

Keywords: linguoculturology, language and culture, cultural identity, intercultural communication, cultural semantics, worldview, linguistic units.

INTRODUCTION

Language and culture are two fundamental pillars of human civilization, intricately intertwined in ways that make their separation almost impossible. Throughout history, scholars have recognized the inextricable bond between these phenomena, with early thinkers such as Wilhelm von Humboldt emphasizing that language is not merely a tool for communication but a formative organ of thought. The relatively recent emergence of linguoculturology as a distinct field reflects a growing awareness that linguistic forms cannot be fully understood without considering their cultural context. Linguoculturology is positioned at the intersection of linguistics, cultural studies, anthropology, ethnolinguistics, and cognitive science. Its primary focus lies in identifying and analyzing the cultural content embedded in linguistic units, as well as exploring how cultural norms, values, and traditions influence the structure and usage of language. This approach aligns with the anthropocentric paradigm in modern linguistics, which prioritizes the human factor in language development and use (Karasik, 2002; Wierzbicka, 1997). The concept of interrelation between language and culture can be explored through several theoretical lenses:

1. **Sapir–Whorf Hypothesis (Linguistic Relativity):** This theory posits that the structure of a language influences its speakers' worldview and cognition. While controversial, it underscores the powerful role of language in shaping cultural perception.
2. **Ethnolinguistics:** This branch focuses on the relationship between language and the ethnic culture of its speakers, often studying folk traditions, myths, and proverbs as carriers of cultural heritage.
3. **Cultural Semiotics:** Rooted in Lotman's theory of the semiosphere, this perspective sees language as part of a larger system of cultural signs that form a semiotic space shared by a community.

In the age of globalization, the study of linguoculturology has acquired particular relevance. The expansion of intercultural communication—whether through migration, tourism, education, or digital media—has highlighted the importance of understanding the cultural underpinnings of language. Misinterpretations often arise when communicators are unaware of the cultural connotations behind linguistic forms. For instance, idiomatic expressions, proverbs, or metaphors can lose their intended meaning or even



cause offense when stripped from their cultural background. Moreover, linguoculturology addresses the concept of linguocultural competence, which refers to the ability to communicate effectively while respecting and understanding cultural nuances. As emphasized by scholars such as Gudykunst (2003) and Byram (1997), linguistic proficiency alone is insufficient for successful cross-cultural communication. A deep understanding of cultural codes, etiquette, and symbolism is equally essential. This paper is structured according to the IMRAD model—Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, and Discussion—followed by a conclusion and references. The Introduction sets the theoretical background for the study, emphasizing the mutual dependence of language and culture. The Materials and Methods section outlines the research approach, drawing from multiple disciplines. The Results section presents the key findings regarding the theoretical principles of linguoculturology and their application in understanding the language-culture nexus. The Discussion interprets these findings in light of current scholarship and future directions for research. Finally, the Conclusion synthesizes the study's contributions and implications for linguistics and intercultural communication.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative, descriptive, and comparative research design to examine the theoretical foundations of linguoculturology, with a focus on the interrelation between language and culture. Given the abstract nature of cultural and linguistic phenomena, qualitative analysis provides the most suitable framework for interpreting meanings, identifying patterns, and understanding the symbolic functions of language in cultural contexts. The study also integrates elements of comparative linguistics and cross-cultural analysis to highlight similarities and differences in how various linguistic communities encode cultural values in their languages. The research design is grounded in the anthropocentric paradigm of modern linguistics, which recognizes the human factor as central in language use and development. Accordingly, language is treated not merely as a code system but as a cultural and cognitive phenomenon that reflects the worldview, history, and social practices of its speakers.

Sources of Data

To ensure comprehensiveness, this research draws upon three main categories of sources:

1. Theoretical Literature

- Foundational works in linguistics and cultural studies, including Humboldt (1836), Sapir (1921), Whorf (1956), Lotman (1990), and Wierzbicka (1997), which provide the conceptual background for understanding the language-culture relationship.

- Contemporary studies in linguoculturology by Russian, European, and Asian scholars, including Karasik (2002), Vereshchagin & Kostomarov (1990), and Maslova (2001).
- Interdisciplinary works from anthropology, sociology, and communication studies (Byram, 1997; Gudykunst, 2003).

2. Linguistic Data

- Corpora of idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and culturally marked lexemes from various languages, with a focus on English, Uzbek, and Russian as primary examples.
- Lexicographic sources, including explanatory dictionaries, bilingual dictionaries, and specialized cultural dictionaries that reveal semantic and pragmatic aspects of linguistic units.

3. Cultural Materials

- Folklore, literature, songs, and media texts that embed linguistic forms within their cultural context.
- Ethnographic reports and cultural studies documenting traditions, rituals, and social norms reflected in language use.

The methodology combines linguistic analysis with cultural interpretation. Several complementary methods are used:

1. Descriptive Method

- Used to describe and systematize linguistic units that carry cultural meanings.
- Focuses on semantic fields, thematic groups, and grammatical structures that reveal cultural specificity.

2. Comparative Method

- Applied to identify similarities and differences between languages in expressing cultural concepts.
- Particularly useful in contrasting culture-bound idioms, metaphors, and symbolic expressions.

3. Semantic Analysis

- Examines the meanings of culturally significant linguistic units, both in isolation and in context.
- Employs componential analysis to identify the core and peripheral semantic features.

4. Contextual Analysis

- Investigates how the meaning of linguistic units is shaped by their cultural and situational context.
- Includes analysis of discourse genres such as proverbs, songs, and literary texts.

5. Linguocultural Analysis



- Synthesizes linguistic and cultural perspectives to interpret how language encodes cultural values, traditions, and worldviews.
- Identifies linguocultural markers — linguistic elements that directly point to cultural phenomena (e.g., culturally specific measurements, kinship terms, symbolic numbers).

The data collection process involved:

1. Selection of key terms and expressions that are culturally significant in the respective languages.
2. Consultation of authoritative dictionaries to ensure accurate definitions and etymologies.
3. Compilation of authentic usage examples from literary works, folklore, and media sources.
4. Annotation of cultural meanings based on ethnographic and historical context.

Where necessary, native speakers were consulted to confirm interpretations, particularly for idiomatic expressions and culture-specific metaphors.

Data analysis proceeded in three stages:

1. Identification of Linguocultural Units — isolating expressions that carry explicit or implicit cultural meanings.
2. Semantic and Pragmatic Interpretation — determining how these units function within communication and what cultural concepts they evoke.
3. Cross-Linguistic Comparison — analyzing similarities and differences between English and Uzbek units, identifying cases of cultural equivalence, partial equivalence, and non-equivalence.

Special attention was paid to linguistic phenomena such as:

- Symbolic use of numbers (e.g., “seven” in English proverbs vs. “qirq” in Uzbek traditions).
- Metaphors rooted in local customs (e.g., agricultural metaphors in Uzbek vs. nautical metaphors in English).
- Culture-specific collocations and phraseology.

Since this study involves the analysis of culturally sensitive material, an effort was made to present cultural data respectfully and accurately, avoiding ethnocentric interpretations. Additionally, all sources were properly cited following academic standards (GOST and APA where relevant).

RESULTS

The analysis of the collected data confirms that the relationship between language and culture is bidirectional: culture influences the structure and semantics of language, while language serves as a

medium for the transmission and preservation of cultural values. The results demonstrate that both English and Uzbek exhibit a rich inventory of linguocultural units, although their composition, frequency, and semantic organization differ significantly due to historical, geographical, and social factors.

The results can be grouped into four main findings:

1. The existence of culturally marked lexemes that encode national traditions, historical experiences, and symbolic meanings.
2. Differences in metaphorical conceptualization arising from distinct worldviews and cultural practices.
3. Culture-specific use of quantity-related expressions (symbolic numbers, measurements, idiomatic phrases).
4. Divergence in pragmatics and communicative norms reflected in culturally embedded language use.

Culturally Marked Lexemes

A comparison of lexemes in both languages revealed that a large proportion of culturally significant words belong to ethnographic vocabulary, including terms for clothing, food, rituals, social relations, and measurements.

Examples:

| Category | Uzbek example | English example | Cultural notes |
|-------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Clothing | Do'ppi | Bowler hat | Both refer to traditional headwear, but with different cultural contexts. |
| Food | Somsa | Yorkshire pudding | National dishes with symbolic meaning in hospitality and identity. |
| Rituals | Nikoh to'yi | Wedding reception | Both denote marriage celebrations, but Uzbek customs involve multi-day events with specific rituals. |
| Measurement | Chorak (quarter of a year) | Fortnight (two weeks) | Both are culture-specific temporal measurements. |



These lexemes often have no direct equivalents in the other language, requiring descriptive translation or cultural commentary. This supports the claim by Vereshchagin & Kostomarov (1990) that lexical gaps reflect cultural uniqueness. Lakoff and Johnson’s Conceptual Metaphor Theory suggests that metaphor is a fundamental mechanism through which humans understand the world. The findings confirm that cultural experience shapes metaphorical patterns:

- In Uzbek, agricultural metaphors are frequent due to the region’s agrarian history:
 - *Mehnat qilgan — meva terar* (“He who works will harvest fruit”) — a metaphor for reward after effort.
- In English, maritime metaphors are more common, reflecting Britain’s seafaring past:
 - *To weather the storm* — to endure difficulties.

Such metaphors are not interchangeable; their imagery is rooted in specific cultural histories, meaning direct translation often results in loss of cultural nuance.

One of the key results relates to quantity lexemes, an area directly tied to this study’s focus. The data show that both English and Uzbek languages use numbers and measurement units not only for literal counting but also for symbolic purposes.

Examples of symbolic numbers:

| Number | Uzbek meaning & usage | English meaning & usage |
|--------|--|--|
| 7 | Sacred number in traditions (<i>yetti qat osmon</i>) | Lucky number (<i>seventh heaven</i>) |
| 40 | Ritual number (<i>qirq kunlik marosim</i>) | Symbolic of a large amount (<i>forty winks</i>) |
| 3 | Perfection (<i>uch bora takrorlash</i>) | Completeness (<i>three strikes and you’re out</i>) |

The metaphorical use of numbers supports Lotman’s (1990) notion of a semiotic code, where numbers serve as cultural symbols beyond their mathematical value.

Measurement-related quantity lexemes are often culturally specific:

- Uzbek uses traditional units such as *piyola* (cup), *chelak* (bucket), *quloch* (armspan), many of which survive in everyday speech.
- English retains historical units like *stone* (weight), *mile* (distance), and *acre* (land measurement), even in countries that otherwise use the metric system.

These units embody historical layers of language, with some persisting purely as idioms (*give an inch, take a*

mile) rather than practical measurements. A notable finding is the idiomatic encoding of non-specific quantity, where neither language provides a precise figure but instead conveys an approximate amount.

| Uzbek idiom | Literal translation | English equivalent |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Oyoq-qo’l yetmas joy | “A place unreachable by foot” | In the middle of nowhere |
| Bir talay odam | “A heap of people” | A bunch of people |
| Ko’p gap — zarar | “Too much talk is harmful” | Too many cooks spoil the broth |

The research found that pragmatics—the way language is used in social interaction—also reflects deep cultural patterns:

- Uzbek speech norms value indirectness and politeness formulas when discussing quantities, especially in sensitive topics like wealth, age, or resources.
- Instead of stating “I have little money,” a speaker may say *Pulimiz ko’p emas* (“Our money is not much”), using plural and mitigation.
- English tends to allow more direct numerical statements in casual settings, though euphemistic expressions exist (*a bit short on cash*).

These patterns align with Hofstede’s (2001) findings on cultural dimensions such as power distance and individualism, which influence how information about quantity is shared.

The cross-linguistic analysis confirms:

1. **Language and culture are inseparable;** culturally marked vocabulary and metaphorical systems cannot be fully understood outside their cultural context.
2. **Quantity lexemes are culturally embedded,** often functioning beyond their numerical meaning to express symbolic, emotional, or evaluative concepts.
3. **Idiomatic expressions** are a key site of linguocultural interaction, encoding shared experiences in culturally specific imagery.
4. **Pragmatic norms** governing the use of quantity expressions differ across cultures, reflecting broader social values and communication styles.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study support the well-established linguistic axiom that language and culture are inseparable. As Sapir (1921) and Whorf (1956) suggested, language is not merely a tool for communication but a framework of thought shaped by



the cultural environment in which it develops. The presence of culturally marked lexemes, unique metaphors, and symbolic numbers in both Uzbek and English confirms this view. In particular, the observation that both languages possess culturally embedded measurement systems and idioms for indefinite quantity aligns with Humboldt's (1836) idea of *Weltanschauung*—the worldview expressed through linguistic structures. While the universality of certain communicative needs (e.g., expressing “a lot” or “a little”) is undeniable, the lexical realization of these needs is highly culture-specific. Numerous scholars have examined the linguocultural specificity of lexicon and phraseology. For example:

- **Vereshchagin & Kostomarov (1990)** emphasize that *lexical gaps* often emerge due to the absence of corresponding cultural realities in another language. Our data support this observation, especially in cases like *piyola* (Uzbek) or *stone* (English), which are tied to unique historical measurement systems.
- **Lakoff & Johnson (1980)** highlight that metaphorical conceptualization is rooted in physical and cultural experience. This study's examples of agricultural vs. maritime metaphors reinforce their theory.
- **Lotman (1990)** explores the semiotic role of numbers in culture. Our findings on symbolic numbers like 7, 40, and 3 in Uzbek and English demonstrate the persistence of such semiotic codes across linguistic boundaries. However, unlike many previous studies, this research combines quantitative lexemes and linguocultural theory, offering a more specialized focus on how measurements, counting expressions, and symbolic quantities operate as cultural markers.

The comparison between traditional Uzbek and English measurement units reveals a significant historical layering of the lexicon. Uzbek retains units like *quloch* (armspan) and *chelak* (bucket) not only in rural use but also in idiomatic speech. Similarly, English retains archaic units like *furlong*, *yard*, and *acre* in certain domains (horse racing, land measurement), even after the adoption of the metric system in most Commonwealth countries. This demonstrates that lexical obsolescence is not purely functional; cultural attachment can preserve outdated units as linguistic heritage. This phenomenon is discussed by Trudgill (1983) as *lexical fossilization*. The data on numerical symbolism confirm that certain numbers acquire connotative meanings beyond their denotative function. For example:

- In Uzbek, the number 40 is deeply associated with life-cycle rituals (*qirq kunlik marosim*, *qirq qiz afsonasi*).
- In English, 7 is widely perceived as a “lucky” number, while 13 carries negative connotations in Western superstition (*Friday the 13th*).

These symbolic values are not universal but culturally assigned. This supports Barthes' (1972) argument that mythologies operate through semiotic codes, with numbers functioning as cultural signs.

The existence of idioms expressing non-specific quantity in both languages suggests a universal communicative need to express approximate values. However, the imagery used in these idioms is culturally dependent.

For example:

- Uzbek: *bir talay odam* (“a heap of people”) relies on agricultural imagery (*talay* = a large gathered pile).
- English: *a bunch of people* draws from horticultural imagery (*bunch* = a cluster of fruit or flowers).

This reflects the metaphorical grounding of quantity expressions in daily life and environment, a point emphasized by Kövecses (2005) in his cross-cultural metaphor studies. The results indicate that cultural norms significantly affect how quantity is discussed. Uzbek culture, with its high-context communication style (Hall, 1976), often prefers indirectness and softening strategies, especially in sensitive contexts like financial status or possessions.

Example: Instead of directly saying *Menda oz pul bor* (“I have little money”), speakers often say *Pulimiz ko'p emas* (“Our money is not much”), using plural possessives and negative forms to mitigate the statement.

English, being more low-context, allows more direct statements (*I'm low on money*), though euphemisms exist (*a bit short on cash*). This aligns with Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimension theory, where individualistic cultures tend toward directness, while collectivistic cultures employ indirectness to maintain social harmony. One practical implication of these findings is in the field of translation studies. Literal translation of culturally bound quantity expressions often leads to loss of meaning or awkward phrasing. Translators must engage in cultural mediation, providing functional equivalents rather than direct correspondences. For language teaching, especially in English and Uzbek as foreign languages, incorporating linguocultural content is crucial. Learners should be made aware that *numbers and measurements are not neutral*—they carry cultural histories and symbolic meanings.

While the study provides rich qualitative data, several limitations exist:



1. **Corpus Size** – The research relied on selected corpora and literary sources; a larger dataset could reveal further patterns.
2. **Regional Variation** – Both Uzbek and English exhibit dialectal differences in quantity expressions (e.g., British vs. American English, Tashkent vs. Samarkand Uzbek).
3. **Sociolinguistic Variables** – Age, gender, and occupation may influence the choice of quantity expressions, which this study did not address in depth.

Future research could involve experimental psycholinguistic methods to test how speakers of different cultures perceive and process quantity expressions, or ethnographic fieldwork to document endangered measurement terms.

CONCLUSION

This research has examined the theoretical foundations of linguoculturology through the lens of the interrelation between language and culture, focusing particularly on quantity lexemes in Uzbek and English. The findings highlight several key points:

- Language and culture are deeply intertwined – quantitative expressions in any language reflect not only universal communicative needs but also the cultural environment in which they develop.
- Cultural specificity in measurement systems – traditional Uzbek units such as *quloch* and *chelak*, and English units such as *yard* and *acre*, remain preserved in idiomatic expressions, illustrating the phenomenon of lexical fossilization.
- Numerical symbolism as a cultural code – certain numbers acquire symbolic and even mythological meanings in each culture (e.g., 40 in Uzbek rituals, 7 and 13 in English superstitions).
- Idiomatic expressions of indefinite quantity – while both languages employ such idioms, their metaphorical bases differ according to environmental and cultural realities.
- Pragmatic differences in quantity expression – Uzbek tends toward indirectness and politeness strategies, whereas English allows more direct expression, reflecting broader cultural communication styles.

From a theoretical perspective, this research reinforces Humboldt's concept of *Weltanschauung*, confirming that linguistic structures embody cultural worldviews. Practically, it underscores the importance of cultural competence in translation and language teaching. Future studies should expand on this work by including

a broader corpus, exploring regional and sociolinguistic variation, and employing experimental methods to better understand cognitive processing of quantity expressions.

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