

## LEXICOGRAPHIC SOURCES IN THE LEXICO-SEMANTIC REPRESENTATION OF CONCEPTS

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### **Abstract**

In the current era of rapid cognitive development, the linguistic study of how humans perceive and categorize the surrounding world has become a central academic priority. This article explores the “concept” as a fundamental unit of cognition, addressing the ongoing lack of consensus within the scientific community regarding its definition. By examining linguistic, cognitive, and lingvoculturological approaches, the study highlights how national uniqueness and ethnic identity are manifested through language.

Particular focus is placed on the intersection of language and culture within the framework of lingvoculturology, specifically regarding the “Russian linguistic picture of the world.” The research argues that the continuous advancement of human activity is directly reflected in the evolution of a language's lexicon. Through an analysis of lexicographic sources, this paper demonstrates how dictionaries serve as vital repositories of national characteristics, capturing the variability of specific cultural units and their semantic realizations.

### **Keywords**

lingvoculturology, cognitive linguistics concept, linguistic picture of the world, lexicography, lexico-semantic representation, cultural units, ethnolinguistics

### **Introduction**

In the current domain of cognitive linguistics, there has been a notable increase in the examination of how human perception categorizes and interprets the surrounding environment. A key focus of this investigation is the notion of the “concept,” which serves as a fundamental cognitive unit that integrates mental representations of events, objects, and experiences.

Despite its critical significance in cognitive research, the academic community lacks a unified definition of the term "concept." This deficiency often leads to a division between two primary approaches: cognitive and lingvoculturological. Cognitive approaches tend to concentrate on the psychological and neurological foundations of concepts, exploring their formation, organization, and application in

thought and communication (as discussed by Kubryakova, Popova, and Sternin). In contrast, lingvoculturological approaches examine the relationship between language and culture, focusing on how cultural narratives, values, and social practices shape conceptual frameworks.

This study aims to investigate the encoding of national uniqueness within language, specifically through the lens of the "Russian linguistic picture of the world" (Zaliznyak). The concept of a linguistic picture of the world suggests that language not only reflects but also actively constructs the worldview of its speakers. By analyzing distinct linguistic features and cultural references inherent in the Russian language, this research seeks to elucidate how Russian speakers perceive and categorize their reality.

Through this analysis, the study intends to reveal the cognitive and cultural factors that influence the development of concepts within the Russian context. This includes an examination of lexical items, idiomatic expressions, and syntactic structures that convey unique elements of Russian culture, history, and social interactions. Additionally, the implications of these findings will be considered in relation to broader discussions within cognitive linguistics, particularly regarding the role of language as a medium for cultural identity and collective memory.

This research endeavors to bridge the cognitive and cultural dimensions of language, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of how national uniqueness is expressed through the Russian linguistic framework. By emphasizing the interconnections between cognition, language, and culture, this study aims to enrich the discourse in cognitive linguistics and enhance the understanding of the complexities inherent in human perception and categorization.

#### Methods

This research employs a multidimensional lingvoculturological methodology to investigate the symbiotic relationship between linguistic structures and cultural configurations (Kovshova). The study is conducted through the following three procedural phases:

##### **1. Lexicographic Data Selection**

The primary data set consists of authoritative lexicographic sources, including both historical explanatory dictionaries (e.g., Dal) and modern academic corpora. These sources were selected to provide a longitudinal view of how the lexico-semantic representation of concepts has shifted in response to societal advancement.

##### **2. Conceptual and Component Analysis**

Following the theoretical framework established by Popova and Sternin, the research utilizes component analysis to deconstruct specific lexical units (*leksema*)

into their constituent senses. By isolating the “cultural nucleus” of a word from its peripheral denotative meanings, we can identify how specific national values – such as the Russian concept of *sobornost* (collectivity) or *dukhovnost* (spirituality) – are embedded within everyday vocabulary.

### **3. Ethnolinguistic Contextualization**

The study applies the ethnolinguistic perspective pioneered by Wierzbicka, which treats language as a “mirror of culture.” This involves:

1. **Comparative Analysis:** Contrasting Russian lexical units with functional equivalents in other languages to highlight unique “untranslatable” cultural nuances.
2. **Contextual Reconstruction:** Analyzing how human activity and historical labor practices have influenced the semantic branching of specific words.

By integrating these techniques, the methodology ensures that the transition from raw dictionary data to the identification of a “linguistic picture of the world” is both systematic and empirically grounded.

### **Results**

The analysis of lexicographic data reveals that the “wealth of words” in the Russian language is a result of a continuous cognitive mapping of human activity. The study identified three primary ways these cultural characteristics are manifested:

#### **1. Lexico-Semantic Instantiation of Cultural Codes**

Specific Russian lexical units (*leksema*) function as glimpses into the national psyche. For example, the concept of “*Dusha*” (*Soul*) in Russian lexicography extends beyond religious definitions to encompass emotional depth, sincerity, and moral breadth. Unlike its Western counterparts, the Russian *dusha* is frequently collocated with “openness” (*otkrytaya dusha*) and “breadth” (*shirokaya dusha*), reflecting a specific ethno-cultural value of communal transparency and emotional generosity.

#### **2. Variability through Human Activity**

The research confirms that lexical variability is directly linked to social and labor evolution. Concepts related to “*Trud*” (*Labor/Toil*) and “*Volya*” (*Freedom/Will*) show high levels of semantic branching. In Russian lexicographic sources, *Volya* represents both the internal psychological state of “willpower” and the external physical state of “unbounded space/freedom.” This dual representation illustrates how the Russian landscape (the physical environment) has historically shaped the cognitive perception of liberty.

#### **3. Dictionary as a National Repository**

Language-specific dictionaries serve as the primary evidence for the “Russian linguistic picture of the world.” By comparing entries across different historical

periods (e.g., Dal's dictionary vs. modern academic dictionaries), we observe a shift from concrete, object-oriented meanings to more abstract, cognitive representations. This confirms that as human cognitive development accelerates, lexicographic sources adapt to reflect more complex lexico-semantic relationships.

### Conclusion

The examination of lexicographic sources confirms that the lexico-semantic representation of concepts is not a static linguistic phenomenon but a dynamic reflection of cognitive and cultural evolution. By synthesizing cognitive linguistics with the lingvoculturological method, this study demonstrates that the "concept" acts as the vital link between objective reality and national identity. The richness of the Russian lexicon, as illustrated in both historical and contemporary dictionaries, constitutes an empirical representation of the "Russian linguistic picture of the world." Within this framework, human activities and environmental perceptions are systematically encoded in specific lexical units (leksema).

Ultimately, these findings suggest that lexicography remains an indispensable tool for future research into ethnolinguistic identity. As cognitive development continues to accelerate, further study is required to track how digital transformation and global interaction will reshape these traditional cultural codes. This research underscores the necessity of maintaining a multi-dimensional approach—combining linguistic, cognitive, and cultural perspectives—to fully understand the complex architecture of human thought as it is captured in language.

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