Lexical Units Forming General Linguistic Picture of the World by Representing Culture of the Nation

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Abstract. *In this article, we analyze the "linguistic picture of the world, theoretical views of it, the relationship between language, culture and cognition. We also pay attention to the lexical units that show the linguistic landscape of the world in the language. In particular, we emphasize the use of idioms for different purposes.*

Key words: *linguistic relativity, perception, concept, bilinguals and multilinguals, metaphors, idioms, cultural nuances, cultural taboos, social norms, linguistic biases.*

Language is a powerful tool that shapes our perception of the world around us. It is through language that we are able to communicate, express our thoughts and emotions, and make sense of the world. In the field of linguistics, the concept of the "linguistic picture of the world" refers to the way in which language reflects and shapes our understanding of reality.

The study of the relationship between language, thought, and culture—often referred to as the linguistic picture of the world—has been explored by many scholars, particularly in the fields of linguistics**,** anthropology**,** psychology, and philosophy**.** One of them is famous linguist and anthropologist Edward Sapir. Sapir was one of the founding figures of the linguistic relativity hypothesis, which suggests that language shapes thought. He argued that language does not just mirror the world but structures experience in ways that can vary across cultures. He proposed that the way people think and perceive reality is influenced by the language they speak. Sapir's work laid the foundation for the later development of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, especially regarding the ways language categorizes concepts and influences perception [1].

Another well-known linguist and anthropologist is Benjamin Lee Whorf. Whorf expanded upon Sapir's ideas and is most famous for formulating the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (also called linguistic relativity). He suggested that the structure and vocabulary of a language directly shape the way its speakers think about the world. His work particularly focused on how the grammar and lexicon of different languages influence how people categorize experiences and view time, space, and relationships [2]. Whorf is known for his studies on the Hopi language, in which he argued that the Hopi people have a fundamentally different perception of time from English speakers due to the grammatical structure of their language.

We should not forget to mention about Wilhelm von Humboldt and his contribution to the language. Humboldt was a philosopher and linguist who believed that language shapes thought in profound ways. He proposed the idea that every language carries with it a unique worldview and that the structure of a language affects how its speakers perceive the world. He also argued that language is a

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[1] **Sapir. E "***Language: An introduction to the study of speech"*
[2] **Whorf. B. L "***Language, thought, and reality: Selected writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf "*

creative process that constantly shapes and reshapes how people understand their surroundings [3]. Humboldt's idea of "linguistic determinism" laid the foundation for later theories on how language influences cognition.

These thinkers have expanded our understanding of how language does not just reflect reality, but actually shapes the way we perceive and interact with the world. It is important to note that the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis is controversial, and many linguists today do not fully support it. However, it remains a thought-provoking concept that can enrich our understanding of the relationship between language, culture, and perception in real life. And each element plays a crucial role in shaping our understanding of the world around us.

1. Language is the primary means through which we express our thoughts, emotions, and experiences. It is the lens through which we view the world and make sense of our surroundings. Different languages have different structures, vocabularies, and grammatical rules, which can influence the way we perceive reality. For example, some languages have specific words that do not have direct translations in other languages, reflecting unique cultural concepts or ways of thinking. If we consider Uzbek word "mehr", we can not give its translation as a whole. Its meaning: Love, affection, or kindness in English language. However, *mehr* is a deep, warm kind of love that encompasses both romantic and non-romantic feelings, such as familial love or kindness towards others. Furthemore, the word "mehr" reflects the Uzbek value placed on compassion, community, and close family ties. It is not just about romantic love but extends to any sincere emotional connection. In many Uzbek families, *mehr* is central to relationships and social cohesion. Another example of Uzbek language "Ota-onaning duosi" ("The blessing of one's parents"). While this phrase is often translated directly, its cultural significance is profound. It refers to the immense importance of parental approval and blessings in Uzbek society, often regarded as the key to success and well-being. In Uzbekistan, as in many Central Asian cultures, family is central to one's identity, and parents' blessings are seen as a powerful force in shaping an individual's life and fortune. The concept reflects respect for elders and the cultural importance of familial bonds.

Let us look at English phrase "Piece of Cake", means something that is very easy to do. And this phrase reflects a playful, informal attitude towards challenges in life. In English-speaking cultures, this idiom implies that the task ahead is simple and not worth stressing over, showing how humor and ease are often valued in social settings. Another example is "Break the Ice", it is used to initiate conversation in a social setting, especially to overcome initial awkwardness or tension. This idiom reflects the value placed on social interaction and creating comfortable connections in English-speaking cultures. The idea of "breaking the ice" suggests that forming relationships can be a bit like melting barriers or opening up pathways for communication.

2. Our cultural background also plays a significant role in shaping our perception of the world [4]. Culture encompasses a range of factors, including traditions, customs, beliefs, values, and norms. These cultural elements are often embedded in language, influencing the way we use language to communicate and interpret the world [5]. For example, cultural taboos or social norms may dictate the use of certain words or expressions in a particular context.

For example, in many cultures, taboos which direct reference to death or illness can be considered impolite. For instance, in some Asian cultures, instead of saying "He died", people may say "He passed away" or "He left us". The avoidance of direct language reflects a cultural sensitivity to the emotional weight these topics carry. In Western cultures, humor is often used as a way to cope with difficult or taboo topics (such as death), but in other cultures, such as many Middle Eastern or Asian cultures, humor around these topics may be seen as disrespectful. Another examples can be seen in

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[3] **Humboldt. W. von. "** *On the diversity of human language construction and its influence on the mental development of mankind"*

[4] **Boroditsky, L. (2001).** How language shapes thought: The impact of language on thinking and memory. *American Scientist*

[5] **Fauconnier, G., & Turner, M. (2002).** *The way we think: Conceptual blending and the mind's hidden complexities.* Basic Books.

English language, "time is money". It reflects a strong monetary value of time in Western cultures, where punctuality and time efficiency are highly valued. In Uzbek language "Vaqtni behuda sarflama" (do not waste time) stresses the value of productivity and efficiency, though in everyday life, there is also a flexibility with time, especially in social contexts like gatherings, where people may be more relaxed about punctuality.

3. The interplay between language and culture can have profound effects on our perception of reality. Studies have shown that language can influence our cognitive processes, such as memory, attention, and problem-solving skills. For instance, individuals who are bilingual or multilingual may have different ways of thinking and problem-solving compared to monolingual individuals, as they have access to multiple linguistic frameworks and cultural perspectives [6]. For example, when switching from speaking Uzbek to English, a bilingual person may find themselves adjusting not just their vocabulary and grammar, but also their thought processes and ways of approaching a problem. The shift might involve adopting different cultural norms that can lead to different problem-solving strategies. Besides, bilinguals and multilinguals often perform better on tasks that require executive control, such as task switching, problem-solving, and attention regulation. This is because constantly switching between languages enhances the brain's ability to manage competing information and make quick adjustments.

Furthermore, language can shape our emotional responses and attitudes towards different cultures and social groups. The words we use to describe others or ourselves can reflect underlying biases or stereotypes that are ingrained in our cultural upbringing. By becoming aware of these linguistic biases, we can work towards promoting intercultural understanding and fostering a more inclusive society.

For example, the term "uy bekasi" (housewife) is traditionally used in Uzbek to describe women whose primary role is within the home. While the term itself is neutral, it can unintentionally reinforce the idea that a woman's value lies mainly in domestic duties. This contrasts with terms used for men, where there is often an expectation for them to be employed outside the home and contribute to the family's income.

We should mention that "the linguistic picture of the world" is expressed in speech by different lexical units: by words, phrases and expressions, metaphors, proverbs and idioms. We have to write about the idioms and their role in conveying the inner world of a person. It is undeniable notion that one can express his thoughts, feelings and his inner world by the help of idioms. They play a significant role in expressing the cultural nuances and values of a society as well. Idioms are a powerful way to understand the values, humor, and worldview of a culture. They often reflect how people perceive certain situations and the advice they pass down through generations. Idioms are expressions that have a figurative meaning different from the literal interpretation of the words. These phrases often carry cultural connotations that are deeply rooted in a society's history, beliefs, and values.

For example, the English idiom "to kill two birds with one stone" reflects a pragmatic approach to efficiency and multitasking in many Western cultures. It suggests that one should aim to achieve multiple goals with a single effort, reflecting a pragmatic approach to life. On the other hand, the Chinese idiom "drawing a snake and adding feet" which originates from a fable, warns against overcomplicating or overdoing things. The story behind it is that a group of people were tasked with drawing a snake, and one person, eager to make their drawing better, added extra feet to the snake—making it less like a snake and more like a creature of their own imagination. The idiom thus highlights the value of simplicity and knowing when enough is enough. These kinds of idiomatic expressions provide a window into the cultural psyche. They also often do not make sense when translated directly, which can be both amusing and enlightening to language learners. For example, imagine translating "to kill two birds with one stone" literally into another language—it might seem bizarre!

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[6] **Kormos, J. (2006).** *The role of language in thinking: An exploration of language and thought in second language learning.* Cambridge University Press.

We have another example of idiom that can reveals cultural values of the nation. "Don't dig a hole for someone else, you might fall into it yourself" (Не копай другому яму — сам в неё попадёшь) is a cautionary idiom about the dangers of scheming or trying to harm others, showing a cultural focus on mutual respect and fairness.

In conclusion, the linguistic picture of the world is a concept that highlights how language is not merely a tool for communication but a lens through which we perceive and interpret the world around us. Language shapes how we categorize and organize our thoughts, emotions, and experiences, deeply influencing our cognitive processes. The connection between language, perception, and culture is intricate and intertwined. Language is not just a means of conveying information, it embodies the cultural norms, values, and beliefs of a society. Every language reflects its speakers' worldview, as it carries cultural nuances, traditions, and historical contexts embedded in its vocabulary, grammar, and idiomatic expressions. Cultural background profoundly shapes the way individuals use language to express ideas and interpret the world, whether through concepts like time, relationships, space, or emotion. A language, therefore, encapsulates the values and priorities of a society, guiding how its speakers conceptualize their environment and interact with each other. Moreover, the role of idioms in expressing the linguistic picture of the world is of paramount importance. Idioms are rich with cultural meaning, often reflecting the shared experiences, values, and social norms of a particular community. These expressions are typically figurative, and their meanings cannot be deduced from the literal meanings of the individual words, making them powerful vehicles for expressing cultural wisdom, humor, and emotional nuances. Through idioms, we see how language embodies the collective worldview of a culture—its attitude toward life, nature, relationships, and even time.

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