

Ethnolinguistics and Linguaculturology Are As Two Related Fields of Linguistics Which Study The Relationship Between Language And Culture

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Abstract. The study explores *ethnolinguistics* and *linguaculturology* as two closely related subfields of linguistics that examine the dynamic relationship between language and culture. Ethnolinguistics focuses on how language reflects the worldview, traditions, and social practices of specific ethnic communities. Linguaculturology, in turn, emphasizes the mutual influence of language and culture within the framework of intercultural communication, highlighting culturally bound linguistic phenomena. Both disciplines contribute to understanding how language not only conveys information but also embodies cultural identity, values, and collective memory. The paper underscores the interdisciplinary nature of these fields and their relevance to translation studies, language teaching, and cross-cultural dialogue.

Key words: ethnolinguistics, linguaculturology, language and culture, intercultural communication, linguistic worldview, cultural identity, linguistic relativity, language teaching, translation studies, cross-cultural communication.

Introduction

Language and culture are intrinsically connected. Linguistic structures do not exist in isolation; they are shaped by and reflect the values, beliefs, and norms of the societies in which they are used. Two branches of linguistics - ethnolinguistics and linguaculturology - are particularly focused on this intersection.

Ethnolinguistics investigates how language reflects the worldview and cultural practices of specific ethnic groups. It emphasizes the role of language in the construction of cultural knowledge and identity. Linguaculturology, a relatively newer term, focuses on how language both shapes and is shaped by culture, especially in the context of intercultural communication. Although these disciplines developed independently, their mutual concern with language-culture interrelations makes them deeply interconnected.

Methods

The study employs a qualitative comparative methodology. First, a literature review was conducted using scholarly articles, monographs, and reference materials in the fields of ethnolinguistics and linguaculturology. Key theoretical frameworks were identified and compared. Secondly, a conceptual analysis was used to explore terminological overlaps and divergences. Lastly, examples were drawn from intercultural contexts to illustrate the theoretical findings.

Results

Ethnolinguistics reveals how the language of a community encodes culturally specific meanings. For example, the multiplicity of terms for snow in Inuit languages reflects the environmental and cultural importance of snow to the Inuit people. Similarly, kinship terms in different languages indicate varying social structures and value systems.

Linguaculturology takes a broader approach, including sociolinguistics, cognitive linguistics, and cultural studies to understand how language transmits cultural codes. It often includes comparative studies of conceptual metaphors, speech etiquette, and culturally marked idioms. For example, the metaphor “time is money” in English, reflects Western capitalist cultural values.

Both fields explore linguistic worldviews (linguistic relativity), the role of language in shaping identity, and the challenges of cultural translation. They inform language education, intercultural competence development, and translation practices.

Discussion

While ethnolinguistics traditionally aligns with anthropological linguistics, focusing on indigenous languages and the preservation of cultural heritage, linguaculturology is more interdisciplinary and future-oriented, often applied in globalization, education, and media studies.

Despite these differences, the integration of both approaches enhances our understanding of how deeply embedded cultural meanings are in language. Recognizing these meanings helps avoid miscommunication and fosters respect in intercultural settings.

Furthermore, both fields contribute to overcoming ethnocentrism by highlighting cultural relativism-the understanding that each culture views the world through its own lens.

The anthropocentric paradigm, which replaced the linguistic paradigm in the second half of the 20th century, has determined the interest in the problems of the relationship between language and culture. Scientists and researchers have voiced the idea of the role of language as an integral part of culture over the past two centuries, from W. Humboldt to modern anthropologists, culturologists and ethnologists. One of the youngest sciences that studies the relationship between language and culture is linguaculturology. Formed in the 90s of the twentieth century as an independent direction of linguistics, it is actively developed by many famous researchers.

Linguaculturology appeared and is developing within the framework of the idea of the nature of language, determining the picture of the world. This idea, having been consolidated in the Sapir-Whorf theory, is today one of the most popular linguistic theories in the world. V.A.Maslova defines linguacultural studies as a science that arose at the junction of linguistics and cultural studies, having as its subject language and culture, which are in dialogue, interaction and study language as a cultural phenomenon. According to V.A.Maslova, through linguacultural studies we see the world through the prism of the national language, when the language acts as an expression of a special national mentality [Maslova, 2004, p. 8, 28].

V.I.Karasik also points out the complex nature of linguacultural studies as a field of scientific knowledge about the relationship and mutual influence of language and culture [Karasik, 2002, p. 103]. A.T.Khrolenko believes that the goal of linguacultural studies is to generalize all the information accumulated by ethnolinguistics and the disciplines included in it, as well as to identify the mechanisms of interaction between language and culture. Linguacultural studies is the philosophy of language and culture [Khrolenko, 2006, p. 30]. S.G.Vorkachev attributes the description of the relationship between language and culture, language and ethnicity, language and mentality of the people to the immediate tasks of linguacultural studies. In his understanding, linguacultural studies is a lens through which a researcher can see the material and spiritual identity of an ethnic group, the very same Volksgeist of W. von Humboldt [Vorkachev, 2001, p. 64]. According to E.O.Oparina, linguacultural studies is a humanitarian discipline that studies the material and spiritual culture

embodied in a living national language and manifested in linguistic processes. The goal of this science is to study the ways in which language embodies culture in its units and transmits it [Oparina, p. 8].

Linguacultural studies the relationship and interaction of culture and language in its functioning and reflects this process as an integral structure of units in the unity of their linguistic and extralinguistic (cultural) content using systemic methods and with an orientation toward modern priorities and cultural institutions [Cited from: Zubkova, 2003, p. 10]. Thus, linguacultural studies is a science with a pronounced interdisciplinary character, in which language and culture are closely interconnected, and the researcher gains access to both language and culture.

The relationship between two such global concepts as language and culture is reflected in a number of sciences, namely ethnolinguistics, cognitive linguistics, ethnopsycholinguistics, linguistic anthropology, anthropological linguistics, sociolinguistics, metalinguistics, macrolinguistics, ethnosemantics, ethnography of communication, ethnomethodology [Karstedt, 2004, p. 11]. Such diversity is explained by the fact that language and culture are extremely voluminous concepts that include many different aspects. In addition to all this, the shift in the center of gravity from language to culture and vice versa expands the prospects of the research field. What is the place of linguaculturology among the sciences of language and culture? Many scientists point to the kinship of linguaculturology with ethnolinguistics and sociolinguistics. Thus, in N.I.Tolstoy we find: "Ethnolinguistics and sociolinguistics can be regarded as two main components (sections) of one more general discipline, with the only difference being that the first takes into account, first of all, the specific - national, folk, tribal - features of an ethnic group, while the second takes into account the features of the social structure of a specific ethnic group (society) and the ethnic group (society) in general, as a rule, at a later stage of its development in relation to linguistic processes, phenomena and structures."

A more general discipline, apparently, is linguacultural studies [Karasik, 2002, p. 104]. V. A. Maslova points out the significant differences between the three above-mentioned disciplines, emphasizing that linguacultural studies has a global character, studying both historical and modern linguistic facts, while ethnolinguistics studies historical facts, and sociolinguistics studies only modern linguistic facts. If ethnolinguistics operates primarily with historically significant data and seeks to discover historical facts of a particular ethnic group in modern material, and sociolinguistics considers exclusively the material of today, then linguacultural studies both historical and modern linguistic facts through the prism of spiritual culture [Maslova, 2004, p. 11]. V.N. Teliya holds a different opinion, considering linguacultural studies to be a section of ethnolinguistics that studies only the synchronous interactions of language and culture [Maslova, 2004, p. 11].

A.T.Khrolenko, like V.N.Teliya, emphasizes the general methodological principles of linguacultural analysis and ethnolinguistics, pointing out the primacy of ethnolinguistics. According to A.T. Khrolenko, ethnolinguistics and linguacultural studies are related as specific and general linguistics. While ethnolinguistics, in his opinion, can be Russian, German, English, linguacultural studies cannot be national. It is supranational [Khrolenko, 2006, p. 31]. Ethnolinguistics can be classified as a foreign science that has an object and subject of study similar to linguacultural studies. The term ethnolinguistics was first mentioned in the USA in the 1940s.

In German sources, the term "Ethnolinguistik" was used for the first time in 1964 in a newspaper headline. As research by German scientists shows [Karstedt, 2004, p. 248], ethnolinguistics is in many ways similar to linguistic anthropology and anthropological linguistics. The following definition of anthropological linguistics can be found in the work of the Australian scientist W. Foley: "Anthropological linguistics is that sub-field of linguistics which is concerned with the place of language in its wider social and cultural context, its role in forging and sustaining cultural practices and social structures. (...) [It] views language through the prism of the core

anthropological concept, culture, and, as such, seeks to uncover the meaning behind the use, misuse or non-use of language, its different forms, registers and styles. It is an interpretive discipline peeling away at language to find cultural understandings» [Karstedt, 2004, p. 222].

V. Foley points out that anthropological linguistics is a part of linguistics that touches on the place of language in its broad social and cultural context and turns to language with the aim of identifying cultural features. We find many similarities in the interpretation of the science of language and culture in A. Duranti, who classifies linguistic anthropology as a section of cultural anthropology that studies language not just as a way of thinking, but also culture and the ways in which they interact, and where language is «not only as a mode of thinking but above all, as a cultural practice, that is, as a form of action that both presupposes and at the same time brings about ways of being in the world» [Holzer, 2005, p. 15].

When studying works on ethnolinguistics, it is necessary to point out the goal of this science, which for the German scientist T. Barthel (Barthel, Thomas) is to obtain knowledge about culture through the analysis of linguistic material [Karstedt, 2004, p. 224]. A number of other German scientists use this concept in their works. Ursula Schlenker (Schlenker, Ursula) understands ethnolinguistics not as a specific scientific discipline, but as a set of phenomena that arise as a result of language contact (Sprachkontakt), which is understood as the mutual influence of different languages that arises as a result of the interaction of their speakers [Karstedt, 2004, p. 226]. A. Hetzer (Hetzer, Armin) uses the concept of a worldview (Weltbild) in defining ethnolinguistics and thus classifies ethnolinguistics among the sciences that study the relationship between language and the worldview [Karstedt, 2004, p. 229].

By ethnolinguistics, various authors also understand the analysis of languages of cultures that do not have a written language, the discipline that studies a person's knowledge of language, the science that studies the languages of national minorities [Karstedt, 2004, p. 231], etc. There is an obvious lack of terminological unity, which at first glance does not allow us to clearly define the boundaries of ethnolinguistics in the German scientific space. It should be noted that over the past 10-15 years, works have appeared in Germany in which the concept of ethnolinguistics has acquired a clearer form and is already considered as a discipline in which language and speech act as a means or subject of ethnological research. The authors of these works include such researchers as H. Fischer, V. Heeschen, B. Illius, M. Gaenszle, L. von Karstedt. L. von Karstedt understands ethnolinguistics as the science of language and speech taking into account cultural specificity and an ethnological understanding of culture [Karstedt, 2004, p. 248]. Thus, an analysis of ethnolinguistic works by Western scientists allows us to conclude that, despite the extensive interpretation of ethnolinguistics as a science, a common core can still be traced for all definitions, namely, its belonging rather to linguistics, that is, to the study of language and speech as the main component of culture.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, we can say that Ethnolinguistics and cultural linguistics are two related areas of linguistics that study the relationship between language and culture. Ethnolinguistics typically focuses on how language reflects the cultural beliefs and worldviews of specific ethnic groups, while cultural linguistics studies how culture influences language use and structure, including the features of different languages.

- Some linguists consider ethnolinguistics to be a diachronic approach to studying culture through language, while cultural linguistics is synchronic.
- The differences may also be due to the different approaches to the study of language and culture, which often have different goals.
- However, both disciplines have a common goal - to understand the relationship between language and culture.

Overall, ethnolinguistics and cultural linguistics are important areas of linguistics that help us better understand language and its role in our culture and the world. Ethnolinguistics and linguaculturology, though originating from different scholarly traditions, converge on the central issue of the language-culture nexus. Together, they offer essential insights for linguists, educators, translators, and anyone engaged in intercultural communication. Their combined contributions are vital in a globalized world where cultural sensitivity and understanding are key to successful interaction.

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