

The Role Of The Conceptosphere In The Formation Of National Identity (Based On A Linguocultural And Axiological Approach)

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Abstract: This article examines the theoretical foundations of the concept of the conceptosphere and analyzes its role in the formation of national identity from linguocultural and axiological perspectives. The system of national values expressed through language is interpreted as a conceptosphere, and it is substantiated that it serves as a significant factor in shaping national consciousness, cultural memory, and social identity. Using examples of national value concepts in the Uzbek language, the structural-semantic and discursive features of the conceptosphere are revealed.

Keywords: Concept, conceptosphere, national identity, linguocultural studies, axiology, national values, cultural memory.

Introduction: In contemporary linguistics, language is interpreted not merely as a means of communication, but as a cognitive-cultural system that shapes national consciousness, culture, and identity. Especially in the current era of intensified globalization, the issue of national identity has become one of the most pressing problems for the social and humanities sciences, including linguistics.

The role of language in the formation of national identity is primarily determined by the system of national values, cultural stereotypes, and conceptual representations embedded within it. In linguistics, this system is expressed through the notion of the conceptosphere. The conceptosphere is a conceptual space that reflects the generalized knowledge, evaluative attitudes, and social experience of the speakers of a particular language and culture. The main aim of this article is to provide a scholarly justification of the role of the conceptosphere in the formation of national identity based on linguocultural and axiological approaches.

The concept of the conceptosphere emerged within the framework of cognitive linguistics and denotes the system of concepts existing in the consciousness of the

speakers of a given language. Concepts do not exist in isolation; rather, through semantic, associative, and axiological interconnections, they form an integrated system—the conceptosphere.

The origins of the ideas underlying the conceptosphere can be traced back to S. A. Askoldov's work "Concept and Word" (1928), in which the term concept was introduced and theoretically substantiated. Although the term conceptosphere itself does not appear in this work, it laid the theoretical foundations for the subsequent formation of the concept of the conceptosphere as a systemic unity of language, culture, and artistic thinking [6:5]. The concept of the conceptosphere as a scientific term was first introduced by the Russian linguist D. S. Likhachev and later developed by Y. S. Stepanov, V. I. Karasik, and others. According to Likhachev, the conceptosphere is the conceptual atmosphere of a national language, representing a unity of concepts ranging from binary oppositions to multicomponent conceptual series [2:28].

The conceptosphere is one of the key linguocognitive mechanisms in the formation of national identity, as it ensures the harmony of language, culture, and values. Through the concepts of national values, members of a

society become aware of their cultural affiliation and strengthen their social self-identification. Therefore, the study of the conceptsphere has not only theoretical but also practical significance, serving as an important scholarly foundation for the preservation and development of national identity.

In contemporary research, the conceptsphere plays a significant role in the formation of national identity. For example, M. B. Yuldosheva (2023) emphasizes in her study that, in the process of forming a national conceptsphere, linguistics facilitates the transfer of culture into consciousness [3:168–176]. Likewise, E. Izbasarova and others argue that, in language learning, it is crucial first and foremost to take into account the main features and symptoms of the phenomenon of linguistic personality [3:789].

The axiological conceptsphere (the conceptsphere of values) is particularly important for the preservation of national culture. It includes both the central (core) and peripheral components of values (according to studies conducted in 2024). These works demonstrate the dynamic nature of the conceptsphere in the formation of national identity.

The conceptsphere is a set of concepts that constitutes the conceptual basis of language and culture. A concept is a mental unit that represents human experience, knowledge, and evaluations, and it is realized through language. The structural components of the conceptsphere are as follows:

Conceptual component: The core meaning of a concept; for example, the concept of “guest” in Uzbek culture expresses hospitality and respect.

Imagery component: Visual and emotional representations; for instance, the concept of “bread” among Uzbeks symbolizes sustenance, dignity, and prosperity.

Axiological (value) component: Cultural evaluation; for example, the concept of “father” is associated with greatness and divine approval in Uzbek culture.

The conceptsphere exists at both individual and national levels. The individual conceptsphere is formed under the influence of family, education, and society, whereas the national conceptsphere is generalized through folklore, literature, and history. In the Uzbek national conceptsphere, concepts such as “ibo-hayo” (modesty), “iffat” (chastity), and “baraka” (abundance, blessing) occupy a central position.

A linguistic personality is a hierarchical structure that encompasses an individual’s knowledge of language and the characteristics of its use. It contains a national invariant component and is shaped under the influence of the national conceptsphere.

National identity is a complex of cultural, historical, and psychological factors that ensure the distinctiveness of a nation. In this process, the conceptsphere performs the following functions:

1. Preservation and transmission of cultural values.

The conceptsphere functions as an “archive” of national culture. For example, Uzbek proverbs (such as “Ot izini toy bosadi”—the good deeds of a worthy person are continued by their children) reflect views on child upbringing and the role of animals in culture. In this way, national identity is transmitted across generations.

2. Formation of worldview. The conceptsphere shapes national consciousness. Among Uzbeks, the concept of “bread” is associated with labor and sustenance, and the value of not wasting bread constitutes an integral part of national identity. By comparison, in Russian culture, health is considered superior to wealth, whereas in Uzbek and Kazakh cultures, health is often equated with wealth.

3. Development of intercultural competence.

Knowledge of the conceptsphere is essential for intercultural communication. For instance, the Uzbek concept of “guest” contrasts with the notion of personal boundaries typical of Western cultures; this both strengthens national identity and facilitates understanding of others. In folk proverbs, the father is represented through multiple concepts such as a garden, gardener, treasure, wealth, and a self-sacrificing figure. For example, the proverb “Ota-bola — bir bogʻ, biri — gul, biri — bogʻbon” (“Father and child are one garden: one is the flower, the other the gardener”) likens the family to a garden, equating the relationship between father and child to that of a gardener and a flower. Just as a gardener’s care, affection, and skill determine the beauty and fragrance of a flower, so too does a father’s care shape the development and value of a child [1:15].

4. Axiological aspect. The axiological conceptsphere shapes a hierarchy of values. While central values include “goodness,” “justice,” and “freedom,” the peripheral zone contains individual interpretations. Under the conditions of globalization, the conceptsphere plays a crucial role in preserving national culture, as demonstrated by studies conducted in 2024.

The conceptsphere is characterized by the following features:

- systemicity – concepts are organized in hierarchical relationships;
- cultural conditionedness – concepts are formed on the basis of national culture;

– dynamic nature – it changes under the influence of historical and social processes;

– evaluativity – concepts are assessed as positive or negative according to specific values.

Therefore, the conceptsphere appears not only as a product of cognition but also as a mechanism that preserves and transmits cultural identity.

National identity is a complex sociocultural phenomenon associated with an individual's awareness of belonging to a particular nation and the acceptance of that nation's values, traditions, and cultural norms. In the formation of national identity, alongside historical memory, customs, and religious beliefs, language functions as a key integrative factor. Through language:

- national experience is generalized;
- cultural memory is transmitted from generation to generation;
- social evaluations and norms are reinforced.

Thus, while language serves as the external expression of national identity, the conceptsphere constitutes its internal semantic foundation.

The conceptsphere of national values encompasses a set of moral, social, and cultural notions that are significant for a particular people. In the Uzbek language, such concepts include respect, family, honor, dignity, diligence, hospitality, homeland, and faith. These concepts:

- define norms of national behavior;
- regulate social relations;
- contribute to an individual's self-awareness as a member of society.

For example, the concept of respect occupies a central position in Uzbek national identity and is reinforced through linguistic units such as *hurmat qilmoq* (to respect), *izzat-ikrom* (esteem and honor), and *kattakichik* (elder–younger). This leads to the linguistic expression of hierarchical relations within society.

At this point, it is appropriate to clarify the meaning of the term concept. The word concept derives from the Latin *conceptus*, meaning “something conceived” or “thought.” In dictionaries of cognitive terminology, a concept is defined as a mental unit that reflects psychological and cognitive resources involved in human thinking, knowledge, and skills. In modern linguistics, the term concept is used to denote the mental image of a lexical unit. In everyday scholarly practice, concept is often employed as a synonym for notion. A new branch of linguistics—cognitive linguistics (or cultural linguistics)—studies the relationship between language and culture, with the

concept serving as its central notion [5:466].

The conceptsphere not only passively reflects national identity but also actively shapes and reproduces it through discourse. In literary, journalistic, religious, and oral discourses, concepts of national values are employed for various pragmatic purposes. For example:

– In literary texts, concepts acquire aesthetic and emotional connotations;

– In religious discourse, they are reinforced as moral norms;

– In mass media, they become a means of social evaluation.

As a result, the conceptsphere functions as a mechanism that continuously renews national identity. Globalization processes directly affect the national conceptsphere. The introduction of concepts specific to foreign cultures and changes in the hierarchy of values can lead to transformations in national identity. Under such conditions, it becomes essential to:

– scientifically study the national conceptsphere;

– identify its core values;

– utilize them in education and cultural policy.

Studying the conceptsphere in education helps strengthen national identity. Explaining national concepts in foreign language teaching develops intercultural competence. The use of the conceptsphere in advertising and political communication unites society. In the digital age, social networks modify the conceptsphere, but preserving traditional values remains crucial.

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