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CERTAIN THEORETICAL VIEWS ON PECULIARITIES AND CORRELATION OF “CONCEPT” AND  
“NOTION” IN CULTURAL LINGUISTICS

Research article

Dilfuzai I.<sup>1,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Khujand State University, Khujand, Tajikistan

\* Corresponding author (dilfuzaiislom[at]gmail.com)

**Abstract**

The given article dwells on certain theoretical views on peculiarities and correlation of “concept” and “notion” in cultural linguistics. The introduction provides information on the relevance and importance of studying cultural linguistics, noting that linguists are currently focused on identifying the specific characteristics of thinking, worldviews, cultural values, and their specific and common characteristics in understanding the world. The study revealed that two areas of linguistics — cognitive linguistics and cultural linguistics — focus on the study of concepts. Differences exist between cognitive concepts and cultural linguistic concepts in both content and structure, which are discussed in the article. Thus, the author summarizes his theories obtained as a result of the analysis and consideration of the opinions of foreign and domestic linguists.

**Keywords:** concept, notion, linguacultural studies, imagination, consciousness, worldview.

НЕКОТОРЫЕ ТЕОРЕТИЧЕСКИЕ ВЗГЛЯДЫ НА ОСОБЕННОСТИ И СООТНОШЕНИЕ «КОНЦЕПТА» И  
«ПОНЯТИЯ» В ЛИНГВОКУЛЬТУРОЛОГИИ

Научная статья

Дилфузаи И.<sup>1,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Худжандский государственный университет имени академика Бободжана Гафурова, Худжанд, Таджикистан

\* Корреспондирующий автор (dilfuzaiislom[at]gmail.com)

**Аннотация**

В данной статье рассматриваются некоторые теоретические взгляды на особенности и соотношение понятий «концепт» и «понятие» в лингвокультурологии. Во введении сообщается об актуальности и важности изучения лингвокультурологии, отмечается, что в настоящее время лингвисты сосредоточены на выявлении специфики мышления, мировоззрения, культурных ценностей, их специфических и общих черт в познании мира. В ходе исследования выявлено, что два направления лингвистики — когнитивная лингвистика и лингвокультурология — фокусируются на изучении концептов. Между когнитивными концептами и лингвокультурными концептами существуют различия как по содержанию, так и по структуре, что и обсуждается в статье. Таким образом, автор обобщает свои теории, полученные в результате анализа и рассмотрения мнений зарубежных и отечественных лингвистов.

**Ключевые слова:** концепт, понятие, лингвокультурология, воображение, сознание, мировоззрение.

**Introduction**

Language functions not only as a communication system but also as a fundamental repository and medium of national culture. It is pivotal in shaping historical consciousness, embodying traditions, and transmitting spiritual values across generations [11, P. 7]. In the context of globalization, the study of language as a cultural phenomenon has gained significant urgency. Cultural linguistics, an interdisciplinary field emerging at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, has established itself as a vital philological discipline dedicated to investigating the interrelationships between language, culture, and worldview.

While earlier linguistic studies often prioritized morphology and syntax, cultural linguistics focuses on a diverse set of phenomena, including phraseology, speech etiquette, metaphors, proverbs, and mythologemes [4, P. 36], [8, P. 217]. A central undertaking within this field is the analysis of key terminologies, among which "concept" and "notion" are paramount. Despite occasional conflation in everyday use, this study posits that they represent distinct theoretical categories.

This article aims to clarify the specific characteristics, structural components, and precise correlation between "concept" and "notion" through a systematic analysis of existing linguistic scholarship across various traditions.

**Research methods**

This study employs a theoretical and analytical methodology based on a systematic review of scholarly literature. The research process was conducted in several stages:

1. Source Selection: A comprehensive range of primary and secondary sources from Russian, Tajik and Western linguistic traditions was selected, focusing on works that explicitly define "concept" and "notion" (e.g., Askoldov, Karasik, Stepanov, Wierzbicka, Matrobijon).

2. Comparative-Conceptual Analysis: The core methodology involved a detailed comparison of definitions and theoretical positions to identify points of convergence and divergence regarding the structure, content and function of the two terms.

3. Descriptive and Interpretive Synthesis: The properties of "concept" and "notion" were characterized using descriptive linguistics, followed by an interpretive synthesis to propose a coherent theoretical model of their correlation.

4. Etymological and Semantic Analysis: The Latin etymology of *conceptus* was analyzed to clarify the foundational meaning of "concept", and a semantic analysis contrasted its usage with the more philosophically anchored "notion".

### Main results and discussion

Cultural linguistics, as a contemporary philological discipline, systematically investigates the intricate relationships between language and culture, thereby providing an organized depiction of the linguistic worldview. V.N. Teliya precisely defines cultural linguistics as a component of ethnolinguistics, dedicated to the rigorous study and description of the correspondence between language and culture in their synchronous interaction [8, P. 217]. The disciplinary object of cultural linguistics fundamentally emerged from the strong interdisciplinary connection between linguistics and cultural studies. Its primary areas of inquiry encompass a diverse array of phenomena, including but not limited to:

- 1) lexical inventory and textual manifestations;
- 2) mythological linguistic units such as archetypes, mythologemes, and culturally established rituals and beliefs;
- 3) the corpus of proverbs and sayings embodying linguistic cultural heritage [4, P. 36].

#### 3.1. Delineating "concept" and "notion": theoretical perspectives

The distinction between "concept" and "notion" forms a cornerstone of clarity in cultural linguistics. According to N.R. Khushmatov, cultural linguistics specifically addresses the interdependence of cultural particularities in both verbal and non-verbal behavior, which collectively shape the human worldview and comprehension of society, while also serving to refine the identity of its members [10, P. 14]. Within this discipline, "notion" and "concept" function as fundamental terms, each possessing distinct theoretical implications.

Etymologically, the term "concept" derives from the Latin *conceptus* (from *concipere* "to take in, conceive"), originally signifying "a representation" or "an idea" originating from an older Latin root meaning "to take or seize". This etymology underscores its generative and formative aspect.

Early modern scholarship on "concept" in Russian linguistics was notably advanced by S.A. Askoldov in "Концепт и слово" (Concept and Word). He defined concept as "a product of imagination that, in the process of thinking, accommodates an indefinite set of homogeneous objects in human consciousness", adding that it substitutes for specific objects or representations [1, P. 30-43]. This highlights concept as an image-generating cognitive tool. D.A. Umarov, from a cognitive and cultural linguistic perspective, correctly observes that not all concepts are fully lexicalized [9, P. 72]. This view aligns with Askoldov's earlier assertion that a concept can exist even if it is difficult or impossible to articulate with a specific linguistic expression.

In contrast, V.I. Karasik posits that a "concept is a multi-component semantic formation in which the value, image, and the clear aspect of the notion must be distinguished". He further argues for the appropriateness of using "concept" when the domain is perceived and meaningful within linguistic consciousness and can be expressed by a single word [5, P. 109]. This perspective suggests a tighter link between concept and its lexical manifestation. A.P. Babushkin echoes this by stating that "a concept does not exist in the absence of the necessary lexical reality" [2, P. 72]. However, this more restrictive view is debatable, as a significant number of linguists propose that concepts encompass broader semantic groups, creative imagination, and human emotions in perceiving the world, which do not always find direct linguistic reflection.

D.S. Likhachev offered an insightful perspective, proposing that a concept does not merely originate from the meaning of a word but emerges from the interaction between a word's lexical meaning and an individual's personal experience. He contended that "the richer and more extensive a person's experience, the more powerful and robust the concept becomes" [6, P. 393].

The analysis confirms that a concept arises in consciousness through an iterative cognitive process and prolonged experience, influenced by the dynamic interaction between an individual and their environment. As human knowledge, representations, and experience continuously evolve, concepts correspondingly exhibit characteristics of generation, substitution, and transformation. This aligns with the etymological roots of *conceptus*, signifying "that which is conceived or produced", inherently implying a dynamic, evolving nature.

#### 3.2. Distinguishing "concept" from "notion": key characteristics

The preceding analysis allows for a clearer differentiation between "concept" and "notion":

1. Generativity vs. Formalization: A primary distinguishing characteristic is the generativity of "concept", which arises from the continuous perception, learning, and extensive experience of the world, shaping an individual's worldview. Conversely, a "notion" (*мафҳум*) pertains to the formalized semantic content of a verbal sign — a meaning or a set of closely related meanings — that is an outcome of thought (*тафаккур*), rather than the broader activity of consciousness (*шуйп*). S.Q. Matrobiyon elaborates that "concept" is an interdisciplinary term used in mathematical logic, cultural studies and cognitive/cultural linguistics, while "notion" is a term predominantly associated with philosophy and logic [3, P. 37].

2. Constancy vs. Mutability: Yu.S. Stepanov argues that a "concept in culture is a constant notion, perpetually or for a long period entwined with culture", describing it as an immutable part of the worldview [7, P. 84]. While some fundamental concepts like "homeland", "family" and "justice" indeed exhibit relative constancy in the worldview, attributing immutability to all concepts is debatable. A.P. Babushkin contends that "concepts do not possess sharply defined boundaries. They are relatively mutable and can lose their meaning or be re-formed over time" [2, P. 42]. This perspective is supported by historical evidence, where concepts transform with shifting ideological, political and social values. Examples like "cheka", "aksakal", "feudal", "slave", "communist" and "red army soldier" illustrate how historically specific concepts can become archaic, or how one concept (e.g., "tabaa" — subject) can be replaced by another (e.g., "shahrvand" — citizen) due to societal evolution.

3. Scope of Expression: The view that "concept" primarily remains a component of scientific expression and has not fully integrated into everyday communication is contentious. Studies indicate that the use of "concept" is observable in everyday speech communication in Tajik, suggesting its broader linguistic presence beyond just academic discourse.

4. Multifaceted Nature and Cultural Specificity: Tajik linguists, including S. Matrobiyon and M. Mahmudzoda, emphasize that "concept" is multifaceted, which complicates its precise definition and study. They argue that despite "concept" often

being translated as "notion" in Tajik linguistics, a true equivalence in meaning, structure, and usage is absent. Scholars like A. Mamadnazarov, Sh. Bobomurodov and Z. Mukhtorov have recognized this non-equivalence, proposing translations for "concept" such as "general meaning", "general idea" and "general notion". They conclude that "the term "notion" cannot be used in Tajik in the position of "concept", highlighting its distinct, broader and more complex nature compared to "notion" [10].

### Conclusion

In summary, while "notion" typically refers to the stable, lexicalized meaning of a word as a result of thought, "concept" represents a more dynamic, experientially-derived, and often unlexicalized mental construct that is deeply embedded in culture and individual consciousness. There are, however, instances where their semantic fields may coincide, and some scholars, like A. Askoldov, have viewed "notion" as a type of concept, underscoring the ongoing debate and complexity of their interrelationship. Future research should apply this theoretical framework to the analysis of specific concepts within the Tajik language to further refine these distinctions and contribute to the development of Tajik cultural linguistics.

### Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

### Рецензия

Все статьи проходят рецензирование. Но рецензент или автор статьи предпочли не публиковать рецензию к этой статье в открытом доступе. Рецензия может быть предоставлена компетентным органам по запросу.

### Conflict of Interest

None declared.

### Review

All articles are peer-reviewed. But the reviewer or the author of the article chose not to publish a review of this article in the public domain. The review can be provided to the competent authorities upon request.

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