

THE ROLE OF LINGUOCULTUROLOGY IN COMPARING LANGUAGES OF DIFFERENT SYSTEMS (WITH REFERENCE TO ENGLISH AND UZBEK)

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Introduction

In an increasingly globalized world, understanding languages goes beyond grammar and vocabulary—it involves delving into the cultural and cognitive frameworks behind them. This is where linguoculturology, an interdisciplinary field at the intersection of linguistics and cultural studies, plays a crucial role. It enables a more nuanced comparison of languages, especially those belonging to different language families and typological systems. This article explores the significance of linguoculturology in comparing English, a Germanic Indo-European language, and Uzbek, a Turkic language, and how cultural context shapes linguistic expression in both.

Linguoculturology (also called linguistic cultural studies) is the study of the interdependence between language and culture. It focuses on how cultural values, historical experiences, worldview, and societal norms are encoded in language. Unlike traditional contrastive linguistics, which often deals with structural features, linguoculturology aims to reveal conceptual and cultural meanings behind linguistic phenomena.

Languages from different systems (e.g., analytic vs. agglutinative, Indo-European vs. Turkic) often lack one-to-one correspondence in both structure and meaning. A purely grammatical or lexical comparison cannot capture the cultural underpinnings of communication. For example:

- The English word “privacy” has no exact equivalent in Uzbek because the cultural concept is differently understood and valued.
- The Uzbek word “oriyat” (a mix of honor, pride, and shame-based cultural regulation) is culturally loaded and not easily translated into English.

These examples show that linguistic elements are not isolated from their cultural matrix.

In both languages many words carry culturally bound meanings. Some lexical-cultural units may carry distinction. For instance, in English “Weekend is more than two days off”, it represents leisure, planning, and consumer habits. In Uzbek, “Mehmondo’slik” (hospitality) goes beyond simply hosting guests—it reflects deep social and moral values of collectivism.

Some differences in concepts of time in English and Uzbek languages can also be detected. English reflects a linear, scheduled view of time (e.g., “Time is money”), while Uzbek tends to reflect a cyclical or flexible perspective (e.g., “Vaqt davo” – Time is a cure). These conceptual metaphors influence idioms, behavior, and communication style.

The styles of politeness and communication demonstrate the variations of the two languages. In English, politeness often follows a low-context model, focusing on explicit expression: “Could you please...?”. In Uzbek, speech is shaped by high-context norms, involving age, status, and formality. The use of honorifics and respectful pronouns (e.g., Siz, Janob) are culturally embedded.

Proverbs and idioms show the cultural differences between the two languages. Proverbs are carriers of collective wisdom and are ideal objects for linguoculturological analysis: English proverb “The early bird catches the worm” reflects valuing proactiveness. While in Uzbek: “Erta

chiqqan yomg'ir tez tugaydi" means "The rain that starts early ends quickly – caution against rushing things".

Applications of linguoculturology. A linguoculturological approach enhances second language acquisition by teaching not just how to say something, but why it's said that way. For instance, explaining why English speakers value brevity or why Uzbek speakers prefer indirectness can aid learners in navigating cross-cultural interactions. Translators often face untranslatable cultural units. A linguoculturological framework helps them find functional equivalents rather than literal translations. For example, translating "he broke the ice" into Uzbek might require a different metaphor to reflect the same cultural function.

Miscommunication often arises from different cultural scripts. A linguoculturological perspective helps bridge these gaps by making cultural assumptions visible and explainable.

Conclusion

Linguoculturology provides essential tools for comparing languages that differ not only structurally but also in their cultural worldviews, such as English and Uzbek. Through the study of lexical items, idioms, concepts of time, politeness strategies, and proverbs, linguoculturology uncovers the deep cultural meanings that shape communication. As global interaction increases, the role of linguoculturology becomes ever more important in language education, translation, and intercultural dialogue. Understanding a language means understanding the culture behind it—and linguoculturology is the key to unlocking that understanding.

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