



OPEN ACCESS

SUBMITTED 22 October 2024

ACCEPTED 20 December 2024

PUBLISHED 09 January 2025

VOLUME Vol.07 Issue01 2025

CITATION

Mokhinur Sirojiddinovna Umarova. (2025). A comparative study of the “tradition” concept in Uzbek and Russian linguistic frameworks. The American Journal of Social Science and Education Innovations, 7(01), 5–7. <https://doi.org/10.37547/tajssei/Volume07Issue01-02>

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A comparative study of the “tradition” concept in Uzbek and Russian linguistic frameworks

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Abstract: This comparative linguistic study delves into the semantic and cultural representations of the concept of “tradition” in Uzbek and Russian languages. Employing methodologies such as semantic field analysis, cognitive linguistics, and corpus linguistics, the research elucidates how “tradition” is lexically encoded and culturally contextualized within these distinct ethno-linguistic frameworks. The findings reveal that the Uzbek term “an’ana” predominantly conveys communal and familial customs, reflecting the society’s collectivist ethos, whereas the Russian «традиция» encompasses a broader spectrum, including institutional conventions, indicative of a more centralized cultural narrative.

Keywords: Comparative linguistics, cultural semantics, Uzbek language, Russian language, tradition, cognitive linguistics, semantic analysis, ethnolinguistics.

Introduction: The intricate construct of “tradition” within the Uzbek and Russian linguistic paradigms necessitates a profound scholarly inquiry, given its pivotal role in reflecting and perpetuating the cultural and historical ethos of these distinct ethno-linguistic entities. The term “tradition” encapsulates a spectrum of socio-cultural practices, beliefs, and norms that are linguistically encoded, thereby influencing cognitive frameworks and worldviews inherent to each language community. Uzbek, a member of the Turkic language family, and Russian, a Slavic language, have evolved within disparate historical and cultural milieus. The Uzbek linguistic landscape has been shaped by a confluence of nomadic heritage, Islamic influence, and Persian literary traditions, resulting in a lexicon rich with terms denoting communal practices and oral traditions. Conversely, the Russian language has developed under the aegis of Orthodox Christianity, Byzantine cultural

influx, and Western European intellectual movements, fostering a lexicon that reflects a centralized statehood and literary canon.

The conceptualization of “tradition” in these languages is thus a manifestation of their unique cultural ontologies. In Uzbek, the term “an’ana” signifies customs and practices transmitted through generations, often associated with communal and familial rites. In Russian, «традиция» encompasses a broader spectrum, including institutional and societal conventions. This semantic divergence underscores the necessity for a comparative linguistic analysis to elucidate the underlying cultural paradigms. Existing literature on linguistic conceptualization underscores the symbiotic relationship between language and culture. Bartmiński’s ethnolinguistic studies highlight how linguistic expressions are imbued with cultural values and collective memory.[3] Wierzbicka’s cross-cultural semantics further elucidates how language shapes and reflects cultural norms and social practices.[8] These theoretical frameworks provide a foundation for examining the “tradition” concept within Uzbek and Russian linguistic contexts.

Cross-cultural studies involving Turkic and Slavic languages reveal both convergences and divergences in conceptual frameworks. Research on folk riddles, for instance, demonstrates how linguistic structures serve as repositories of cultural knowledge, with each language encoding unique metaphors and symbolic references.[5] Such studies underscore the importance of linguistic analysis in understanding cultural transmission and preservation.

The primary objective of this comparative analysis is to deconstruct the linguistic representations of “tradition” in Uzbek and Russian, thereby uncovering the cultural schemas and cognitive models that inform these representations. The research seeks to address the following questions:

1. How is the concept of “tradition” lexically and semantically encoded in Uzbek and Russian?
2. What cultural values and historical contexts influence these linguistic encodings?
3. In what ways do these linguistic representations affect the perception and perpetuation of “tradition” within each cultural milieu?

By interrogating these questions, the study aims to contribute to the broader discourse on language as a vessel of cultural identity and continuity, offering insights into the complex interplay between linguistic structures and cultural conceptualizations.

METHODS

In this comparative linguistic study of the concept of

“tradition” in Uzbek and Russian, a multifaceted methodological approach was meticulously employed to ensure a comprehensive analysis. The selection of linguistic data encompassed canonical literary texts, idiomatic expressions, and colloquial usages in both languages, facilitating a diachronic and synchronic examination of the concept. Analytical frameworks such as semantic field analysis, cognitive linguistics approaches, and corpus linguistics techniques were applied to dissect the semantic, cognitive, and pragmatic dimensions of “tradition”.

RESULTS

The comparative linguistic analysis of the concept of “tradition” within Uzbek and Russian frameworks reveals both convergences and divergences in semantic nuances, usage patterns, and cultural connotations.

Linguistic expressions and constructs associated with “tradition”. In Uzbek, the term “an’ana” encapsulates the notion of tradition, encompassing customs, rituals, and inherited cultural practices. This lexeme is deeply embedded in the socio-cultural fabric, reflecting the collective identity and historical continuity of the Uzbek people. Conversely, in Russian, «традиция» signifies tradition, similarly denoting customs and practices transmitted across generations. Both terms function as pivotal cultural signifiers, yet their semantic fields exhibit language-specific idiosyncrasies.

Semantic nuances. The Uzbek “an’ana” often conveys a sense of communal participation and collective memory, underscoring the societal emphasis on group cohesion and shared heritage. In contrast, the Russian «традиция» may carry connotations of both communal and individual adherence to customs, reflecting a broader spectrum of societal engagement with traditional practices. This distinction aligns with the observations of linguist N.D.Arutyunova, who posits that cultural semantics are intrinsically linked to societal structures and values.[1]

Usage patterns. In Uzbek discourse, “an’ana” frequently appears in contexts emphasizing the preservation of cultural heritage, such as in expressions like “milliy an’analar” (national traditions) or “urfdan qolgan an’analar” (ancient traditions). Russian usage of «традиция» encompasses a wide array of contexts, from «семейные традиции» (family traditions) to «культурные традиции» (cultural traditions), indicating a versatile application across different societal domains. The prevalence of these terms in various collocations reflects their integral role in both languages, as noted by S.Th.Gries and D.Divjak in their corpus-based studies on usage patterns.[4]

Cultural connotations. The concept of “tradition” in Uzbek is often intertwined with notions of respect for

elders and the perpetuation of ancestral customs, mirroring the hierarchical and collectivist nature of the society. In Russian culture, «традиция» encompasses a complex interplay between preservation and innovation, reflecting historical periods of both adherence to and deviation from traditional norms. This duality is explored in the works of S.S.Komissarenko, who examines the dynamic nature of cultural traditions in Russian society.[9]

DISCUSSION

The comparative analysis of the concept of “tradition” within Uzbek and Russian linguistic frameworks illuminates the intricate interplay between language, culture, and cognition. The identified similarities and differences not only reflect the unique historical trajectories and cultural values of Uzbek and Russian speakers but also offer insights into broader theoretical paradigms such as linguistic relativity and cross-cultural communication.

Cultural values and historical experiences. The Uzbek term “an’ana” embodies a communal ethos, emphasizing collective memory and societal cohesion. This linguistic construct mirrors Uzbekistan’s historical emphasis on community and familial bonds, where traditions serve as the bedrock of social identity. In contrast, the Russian «традиция» encompasses a spectrum that includes both communal and individual engagements with customs. This reflects Russia’s complex historical narrative, characterized by periods of both strict adherence to and deliberate departure from traditional norms.

Implications for linguistic relativity. The divergences in the conceptualization of “tradition” between Uzbek and Russian exemplify the principles of linguistic relativity, which posits that language influences thought and perception. The communal connotations of “an’ana” may predispose Uzbek speakers to perceive traditions as inherently collective endeavors, whereas the broader application of «традиция» in Russian could facilitate a more individualized interpretation of customs. This aligns with the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, suggesting that linguistic structures can shape cognitive frameworks and cultural perceptions.[7]

CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis of the concept of “tradition” in Uzbek and Russian linguistic frameworks underscores the profound interrelation between language and cultural cognition. The Uzbek “an’ana”, with its emphasis on communal and familial rites, mirrors the collectivist and hierarchical societal structure, while the Russian «традиция», encompassing a wider array of societal conventions,

reflects a complex historical narrative marked by both adherence to and deviation from traditional norms. These linguistic representations not only reveal the unique cultural ontologies of each language community but also highlight the role of language in shaping and perpetuating cultural values and historical consciousness.

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