

November 20, 2020

**Representations of Crucial Cultural Concepts of
American and Russian National Characters
Within Modern Academic Discourse**

prepared and presented
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*“Strength lies in differences,
not in similarities”*

Stephen R. Covey

KEY POINTS

1. The fundamental cultural concepts American and Russian national characters are based on

2. The profound influence of cultural concepts on academic discourse

CULTURE

Culture consists of 3 components:
ideal culture, material culture and social culture.

“Society and culture in sociological and anthropological tradition”
by Gavin Walker

Culture is acquired behaviors that are shared
by and transmitted among the members of the
society

“Dictionary of the Social Sciences” by Craig Calhoun

COGNITIVE REPRESENTATION

- is a mental model of a phenomenon from the external reality. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy

Types of cognitive representations:

- individual
- collective

Individual: a person's internal mental model.

Collective: shared cultural mental models.

Emile Durkheim

CONCEPT

Concepts are the units of meaning that are denoted by lexical categories of a language.

“Cognitive Linguistics” by William Croft and Alan Cruse

CULTURAL CONCEPT

in the merging line between semantics studies and cultural studies

Cultural concepts are a unique system of values and beliefs that is shared by members of a variety of ethnical communities are reflected in each sphere of people's lives.

AMERICAN CHARACTER

AMERICAN DREAM

“that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement”

“Epic of America” written by James Truslow Adams

AMERICAN CHARACTER

AMERICAN INDIVIDUALISM

“SELF-MADE MAN” and “SELF-HELP”

A National idol - an independent hardworking and independent man

RUSSIAN CHARACTER

EMOTIONALITY:

concepts of “душа” (soul) and
“тоска” (yearning)

RUSSIAN CHARACTER

PATIENCE/OBEDIENCE
concept of “судьба” (fortune)

**HOW CULTURAL CONCEPTS
ARE RELATED TO LANGUAGE?**

LINGUISTIC RELATIVITY

Vocabulary units of a language display distinctive features of physical, cultural and social environment of its native speakers.

Edward Sapir “Language and Environment”

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LINGUISTIC DETERMINISM!

DISCOURSE

A term used in linguistics to refer to a continuous stretch of (especially spoken) language larger than a sentence

“A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics”, David Crystal



ACADEMIC DISCOURSE

A fundamental for the construction of social networks, roles and norms within educational institutions

“Academic Discourse: English in Global Context” by Ken Hyland

May be understood as a marker of the social affiliation to a privileged social class

ACADEMIC DISCOURSE

Crucial aim of academic discourse is to create and transfer some specialized knowledge captured with the help of complex grammatical, rhetorical and lexical tools

PUBLIC DISCOURSE FEATURES ARE MERGING INTO ACADEMIC DISCOURSE

- LINGUISTIC TOOLS:
simplified grammar and vocabulary
- PUBLIC SPEAKING TOOLS:
storytelling and attention grabbing devices
- PARALINGUISTIC TOOLS:
from academic to publicistic intonation
- MODEL OF COMMUNICATION:
from linear to interactional

RESEARCH

MATERIALS FOR ANALYSIS

Aspects of description	Lecture 1	Lecture 2
Year of publishing	2016	2017
Duration	15:20	12:44
Scientific field	Medicine, Biophysics	
Target audience	Interdisciplinary, non-specialists	

ASPECTS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Structure of the speech.

The ratio between structural parts of lectures.

2. Stylistic marks used in different structural parts.

The correlation between the frequency of stylistic marks usage and the amount of informational on the subject.

3. Thematic theses of the fragments of the main part of each lecture.

4. Cultural concepts represented in the lectures.

KEY FINDINGS

- Russian academic discourse tends to hold its traditional characteristics while American academic discourse has borrowed a variety of public discourse features;
- Key cultural concepts are represented through lexical categories such as personal pronouns and set phrases.

CONCLUSION

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