

PAPER

## KEY CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES OF THE ANTHROPOCENTRIC PARADIGM IN LINGUISTICS

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### Abstract

This article explores the foundational concepts and principles of the anthropocentric paradigm in linguistics. By analyzing its development, philosophical underpinnings, and major linguistic directions, the study highlights the shift from object-centered to human-centered linguistic inquiry. The anthropocentric paradigm's influence is traced through cognitive linguistics, linguoculturology, and paremiology. The article also examines the implications of anthropocentrism for lexicography and phraseography. The findings demonstrate the paradigm's pivotal role in shaping contemporary linguistic methodologies and reinforce its enduring significance across diverse schools of thought.

**Key words:** anthropocentrism, linguoculturology, cognitive linguistics, paremiology, linguistic paradigm, language and culture

### INTRODUCTION

The idea that language reflects human cognition and societal context is central to the anthropocentric paradigm. This paradigm reorients linguistic research by emphasizing the human factor in both language production and interpretation. Historically, linguistics has evolved through various paradigms: the comparative-historical, the systemic-structural, and most recently, the anthropocentric. Each paradigm reflects changing epistemological priorities and methodologies (Kuhn, 1962).

The anthropocentric paradigm, in particular, places the individual and society at the core of linguistic analysis. It suggests that language exists not in isolation but in the minds and interactions of people, making it a unique object of study for understanding human thought, culture, and communication.

### METHODS

This theoretical study employs a qualitative approach, using historical-comparative analysis, conceptual synthesis, and interpretative methods

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to explore the development and application of the anthropocentric paradigm. Primary and secondary linguistic literature was reviewed, including foundational works by Humboldt, Saussure, Sapir, Whorf, and contemporary scholars such as Stepanov, Arutyunova, and Vezhbitskaya. Thematic and paradigmatic analyses are employed to trace conceptual evolution.

## METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

This research paper analyzes the specifics of lacunae concept in intercultural communication from a translation perspective, drawing on semantic and conceptual approaches. It summarizes the theoretical foundations of studying the gaps between different cultures and the challenges of adaptation during translation. Using a linguacultural approach, it identifies the ethnic, national, and cultural aspects of communication gaps that arise during translation. Using translation studies methodology, it develops methods for overcoming these challenges.

## RESULTS

**Evolution of Linguistic Paradigms** The comparative-historical paradigm dominated the 19th century, focusing on diachronic language change (Fortunatov, 1892). The 20th century saw the rise of the systemic-structural paradigm, pioneered by Ferdinand de Saussure and expanded by the Prague and American structuralist schools, emphasizing linguistic structures and synchronic description (Jakobson, 1960).

In contrast, the anthropocentric paradigm marks a shift toward analyzing language in its cognitive, cultural, and social contexts. Language is viewed as a manifestation of the human psyche, as emphasized by I.A. Baudouin de Courtenay: "Language exists only in individual minds" (Baudouin de Courtenay, 1963).

**Core Concepts of the Anthropocentric Paradigm** Anthropocentrism views humans as central in the interpretation of linguistic phenomena. Language becomes a tool for navigating reality, shaping worldview, and expressing identity (Benveniste, 1971). The paradigm holds that language is:

- Both activity and product of activity
- Both system and anti-system

- Both spirit and matter (Stepanov, 1995)

Yu.S. Stepanov elaborates this complexity through metaphorical images of language: as personal speech, system, structure, and house of the spirit. Language, thus, is simultaneously shaped by and shaping of human cognition and society.

### Development of Key Disciplines within Anthropocentrism

**1. Cognitive Linguistics** Cognitive linguistics investigates how language reflects mental processes. It explores how humans conceptualize experience and represent it linguistically (Lakoff Johnson, 1980). Core contributors include Langacker (1987), Croft (2001), and Kubryakova (2004), who examine how cognitive structures shape grammar, metaphor, and categorization.

**2. Linguoculturology** Linguoculturology focuses on the interrelation between language and culture. It asks: How does language reflect and shape national mentality? What role do culturally bound linguistic units, such as idioms, play in communication?

Foundations of this discipline trace back to Wilhelm von Humboldt's ideas on language-worldview correlation. Modern contributions include those by Stepanov (1997), Arutyunova (1990), and Telia (1996), who study phraseological expressions as cultural markers.

**3. Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis and Linguistic Relativity** The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis asserts that language influences thought. Studies of Native American languages led Sapir and Whorf to conclude that grammatical and lexical categories affect perception and categorization of reality (Whorf, 1956). Contemporary scholars such as Lucy (1992) and Lee (1996) have revitalized interest in linguistic relativity.

**4. Linguistic Anthropology** Dell Hymes and A. Duranti emphasized the study of language within anthropological frameworks, highlighting its social and individual representational functions. Language is not merely a communicative tool but a cultural artifact that encapsulates norms, roles, and identities.

**Subfields and Extensions** The anthropocentric paradigm has given rise to numerous branches:

- Cognitive semantics (Alefirenko, Apresyan)
- Discourse theory (Bakhtin, Galperin)
- Semiotics (Saussure, Lotman)
- Metaphor theory (Lakoff, Ortony)

- Hermeneutics and interpretation (Gadamer, Ricoeur)

- Mythopoetics (Uspensky, Toporov)

Newer fields such as gender linguistics, biolinguistics, and xenolinguistics have also emerged, though their scientific rigor varies.

**Application to Paremiology** Paremiology, the study of proverbs and proverbial expressions, provides insight into the linguistic encoding of cultural knowledge. Key principles within the anthropocentric paradigm include:

- Each paremia is a self-contained unit within a broader paremiological system.
- Paremiology reflect conceptual instantiations of lived experience.
- The emergence of new paremiology is driven by societal changes and communicative needs.
- Dictionaries document shifts in paremiological meaning as language evolves.
- Paremiology adapt to social transformation, reflecting dynamic semantic and functional shifts.

## DISCUSSION

The anthropocentric paradigm reframes language as inherently human and deeply embedded in social, cultural, and cognitive contexts. It challenges objectivist approaches and positions the speaker's identity, intention, and worldview as central to linguistic interpretation.

This shift has enabled interdisciplinary research, linking linguistics with psychology, anthropology, sociology, and cognitive science. It has also highlighted the cultural variability of language, encouraging the study of language as a mirror of national consciousness.

The paradigm's strength lies in its flexibility and holistic view, but it also faces challenges: the risk of conceptual overextension and the lack of methodological uniformity in emerging subfields.

## CONCLUSION

The anthropocentric paradigm has become indispensable in modern linguistics. It reshapes research priorities, fosters interdisciplinary integration, and promotes a deeper understanding of language as a human phenomenon. Cognitive linguistics, linguoculturology, and paremiology exemplify the paradigm's explanatory power. As

linguistic inquiry advances, the anthropocentric perspective will likely remain central to understanding how language functions as both a cognitive and cultural artifact.

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