

**CROSS-LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPTS OF THE UNIVERSE,
NATURE, AND LANGUAGE**

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**КРОСС-ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКИЙ АНАЛИЗ КОНЦЕПЦИЙ ВСЕЛЕННОЙ,
ПРИРОДЫ И ЯЗЫКА**

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Abstract. *This article presents a cross-linguistic analysis of the conceptualization of “universe”, “nature” and “language” across different languages and cultures. By examining lexical, semantic, and cultural variations, the study reveals how these fundamental concepts are understood and expressed diversely, reflecting unique worldviews and cultural priorities. The research employs comparative semantic analysis, drawing on languages from various families and typologies. Findings show that cultural context shapes not only linguistic expressions but also the cognitive frameworks underlying these concepts, highlighting the interplay between language, culture, and cognition.*

Keywords: *cross-linguistic analysis, universe, nature, language, conceptualization, semantics, cultural linguistics*

INTRODUCTION

The concepts of the universe, nature, and language are central to human cognition and culture. They encompass broad and abstract ideas that vary significantly across linguistic and cultural contexts. Studying how different languages encode and conceptualize these ideas offers valuable insight into the relationship between language, thought, and culture.

While the “universe” often refers to the entirety of existence, its conceptual boundaries differ culturally. “Nature” commonly denotes the physical environment but can include spiritual or philosophical dimensions. “Language” itself is both a tool of communication and a subject of reflection in many cultures.[1].

This study aims to compare these concepts cross-linguistically, exploring how lexical choices, semantic fields, and cultural associations reflect and shape understanding.

Methods

A qualitative comparative approach was applied, analyzing linguistic data from selected languages across diverse families and typologies, including English (Indo-European, analytic), Russian (Indo-European, synthetic), Japanese (Japonic, agglutinative), and Arabic (Semitic, templatic morphology).

Data sources included dictionaries, corpora, ethnographic texts, and prior semantic studies. Key lexical items representing the concepts of "universe," "nature," and "language" were examined for their semantic components, usage contexts, and cultural connotations.

The analysis focused on identifying commonalities and differences in conceptual boundaries, metaphorical expressions, and cultural values associated with these terms.

Results

Concept of Universe

In English, the term "universe" generally signifies all physical existence and cosmic matter, often in scientific or philosophical discourse. Russian distinguishes between "вселенная" (vséennaya) for the physical cosmos and "мир" (mir) which also carries cultural and spiritual connotations of world or peace.

Japanese uses "宇宙" (uchū) for the cosmos, emphasizing vastness and emptiness, often linked to Buddhist cosmology. Arabic "كون" (kawn) refers to existence or being, encompassing both physical and metaphysical aspects.

Concept of Nature

The English "nature" refers primarily to the physical environment but also to innate qualities. Russian "природа" (priroda) includes natural phenomena and a sense of inherent order. Japanese "自然" (shizen) combines characters for "self" and "so," implying spontaneity and naturalness aligned with Shinto beliefs.[2].

Arabic "طبيعة" (ṭabīʿah) denotes both nature and temperament, reflecting a holistic view that integrates physical and psychological traits.

Concept of Language

The English "language" is seen primarily as a system of communication. Russian "язык" (yazyk) means both "language" and "tongue," showing a metaphorical link between body and speech. Japanese "言語" (gengo) combines "word" and "language," focusing on linguistic structure.

Arabic "لغة" (luḡha) carries rich historical and cultural significance, often linked to identity and revelation, reflecting the sacred status of language in Islamic tradition.

Discussion

The analysis illustrates how cultural frameworks shape the conceptualization and lexicalization of these fundamental concepts. The concept of "universe" integrates physical, spiritual, and philosophical dimensions variably, reflecting cultural worldviews and religious beliefs.

"Nature" is conceptualized not only as an external environment but also as an intrinsic quality or force, shaped by philosophical and religious traditions. For example, Japanese Shintoism emphasizes harmony with nature, influencing the semantic nuances of "shizen."

"Language" as a concept reveals cultural attitudes towards communication, identity, and cognition. The sacred connotations in Arabic contrast with more secular or functional views in English, demonstrating cultural embedding.[3].

These findings align with the linguistic relativity hypothesis, showing that language both reflects and shapes cultural cognition.

Conclusion

Cross-linguistic analysis of “universe”, “nature” and “language” reveals profound cultural variation in conceptualization, rooted in distinct linguistic, philosophical, and religious traditions. Understanding these differences enriches comparative linguistics and cognitive anthropology and informs cross-cultural communication and translation practices. Future research should expand the language sample and integrate psycholinguistic methods for deeper insight.

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