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STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS OF THE "ADAM" (MAN / HUMAN) CONCEPT: SUBCONCEPTS, ATTRIBUTES, AND METAPHORS

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Abstract: This article examines the mental and semantic structure of the "ADAM" (MAN / HUMAN) concept, which stands as one of the foundational objects of inquiry in cognitive linguistics and cultural linguistics. Grounded in the semantic-cognitive methodology developed by Z.D. Popova and I.A. Sternin, the study explores the internal conceptual layers, subconcepts, cognitive attributes, and metaphorical projections of "ADAM" through a linguacultural and cognitive lens.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada kognitiv lingvistika va lingvokulturologiyaning asosiy tadqiqot obyektlaridan biri hisoblangan “ADAM” (ODAM / INSON) konceptining mental va semantik strukturasi o‘rganiladi. Z.D. Popova va I.A. Sternin tomonidan ishlab chiqilgan semantik-kognitiv metodologiyaga tayangan holda, tadqiqotda “ADAM” konceptining ichki konseptual qatlamlari, subkonseptlari, kognitiv atributlari va metaforik proyeksiyalari lingvomadaniy hamda kognitiv nuqtai nazardan tahlil qilinadi.

Аннотация: В данной статье рассматривается ментальная и семантическая структура концепта «ADAM» (ЧЕЛОВЕК), который является одним из основополагающих объектов исследования в когнитивной лингвистике и лингвокультурологии. Опираясь на семантико-когнитивную методологию, разработанную З.Д. Поповой и И.А. Стерниным, в исследовании через призму лингвокультурологического и когнитивного анализа изучаются внутренние концептуальные слои, субконцепты, когнитивные атрибуты и метафорические проекции концепта «ADAM».

Keywords: cognitive linguistics, "ADAM" concept, subconcept, cognitive attribute, conceptual metaphor, semantic-cognitive approach, linguaculture, phraseology.

Kalit so‘zlar: kognitiv lingvistika, “ADAM” koncepti, subkonsept, kognitiv atribut, konseptual metafora, semantik-kognitiv yondashuv, lingvomadaniyat, frazeologiya.

Ключевые слова: когнитивная лингвистика, концепт «ADAM», субконцепт, когнитивный атрибут, концептуальная метафора, семантико-когнитивный подход, лингвокультура, фразеология.

Introduction. Transitioning from traditional structural paradigms to modern cognitive and cultural frameworks has fundamentally reframed how language is analyzed. Language is no longer viewed merely as an abstract system of signs or an isolated tool for information exchange, but as the primary locus for human cognition and cultural memory storage [1]. In perceiving and processing the surrounding world, human beings naturally strive to understand their own existence, physical boundaries, mental capabilities, and social standing. The cognitive outcome of this self-reflective process in human consciousness is materialized in the overarching mental structure designated as the "ADAM" (MAN / HUMAN) concept [2].

The "ADAM" concept is a complex, multi-layered mental formation that cannot be contained within the lexical definition of a single word; rather, it synthesizes interconnected knowledge domains, cultural evaluations, and mental images [3]. Defining the internal constitution of

"ADAM" requires going far beyond dictionary definitions of words like man, human, or person. The content of this concept is shaped on one hand by objective biological markers such as species, age, and gender, and on the other hand by culturally evaluated dimensions including intellect, emotion, character, labor, social roles, and spiritual beliefs [4]. Furthermore, these cognitive features are activated across various levels of language—including lexical items, derivational patterns, phraseological units, paremiology, and textual discourse [5].

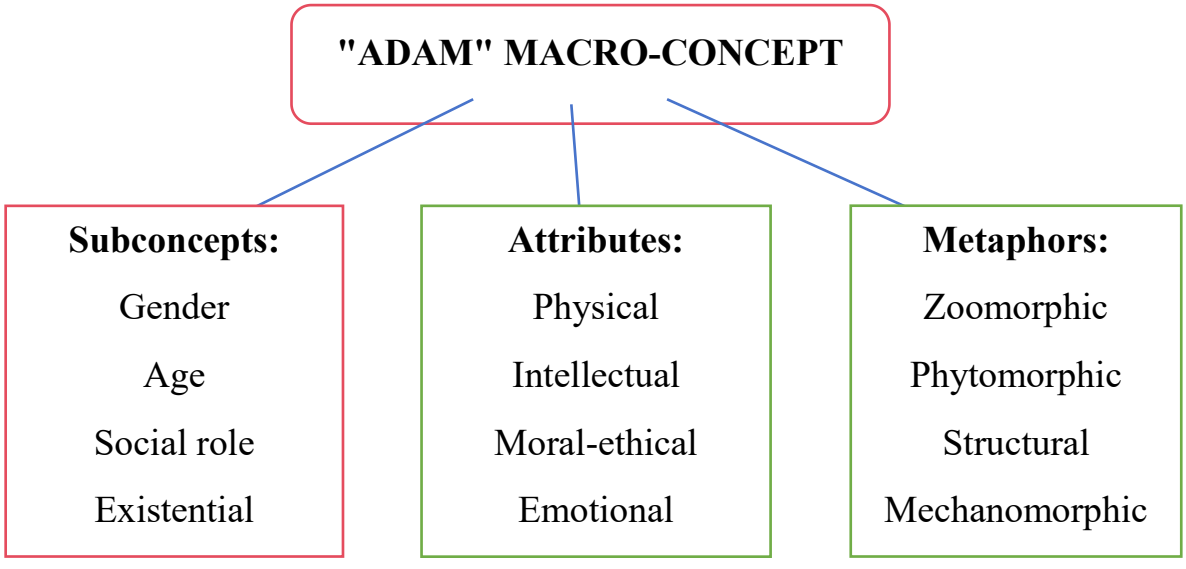
Theoretical Foundations and Research Methodology. In cognitive linguistics, modeling a concept involves investigating how human thought structures are encoded into linguistic expressions [6]. One of the most rigorous and objective frameworks for this purpose is the semantic-cognitive methodology advanced by Z.D. Popova and I.A. Sternin [7].

According to the semantic-cognitive approach, a concept is understood as a unit of thought modeled on the basis of the semantic data provided by language units [7, p. 76]. Under this framework, linguistic semantics—encompassing lexical senses, phraseological meanings, contextual collocations, and proverbial wisdom—serves as a primary window into the cognitive features residing in human mental representation [8]. Studying the structural elements of the "ADAM" concept therefore consists of reconstructing the hierarchy of cognitive features that activate and govern human language use [7].

To systematically map the internal architecture of "ADAM," this study categorizes its cognitive components into four main structural tiers [9]:

1. **The Core Lexical Layer:** The primary lexical nominators (man, human, person) and their immediate semantic variants.
2. **Subconcepts:** Major taxonomical divisions of the macro-concept based on specific parameters (gender, age, social standing).
3. **Cognitive Attributes:** Physical, emotional, intellectual, moral, and ethical features attributed to human beings in linguistic data.
4. **Metaphorical and Symbolic Projections:** Domain mappings that transfer features from other spheres of reality (animals, plants, physical objects) onto the human domain.

Subconcepts of "ADAM" and Their Structural Hierarchy. Within the mental space of "ADAM," several large cognitive sub-domains—or subconcepts—emerge. A subconcept represents a specialized, domain-specific segment of a macro-concept organized around a distinct cognitive axis [10].



Biological and Demographic Subconcepts:

- Gender Subconcepts (Man / Woman): Language cognition constructs gender subconcepts not merely as biological distinctions, but as culturally mediated sets of expectations, societal duties, and behavioral stereotypes [4].
- Age Subconcepts (Child / Youth / Adult / Elder): Age-related categories track the human lifespan through a cognitive vector. For instance, the subconcept of child highlights innocence, vulnerability, and potential, whereas elder synthesizes wisdom, experience, or physical frailty [11].

Social and Existential Subconcepts:

- Social and Functional Subconcepts (Friend / Foe, Leader / Follower, Family Member): Humans are conceptualized as intrinsically social beings whose traits are revealed through community interaction and structural hierarchies [3].
- Existential and Spiritual Subconcepts (Mortal / Created Being): Philosophical and spiritual cognition frames humans as temporal, vulnerable entities operating within a higher metaphysical order [12].

Cognitive Attributes and Axiological Evaluation. In line with Popova and Sternin's methodology, cognitive attributes are reconstructed by analyzing the semantic components of words, idioms, and sayings [7]. In the structure of "ADAM," these attributes cluster around several core evaluative domains:

Physical attributes encompass body parts (somatic components like head, heart, hand, eye), stature, appearance, and physical health. Somatisms exhibit an extraordinarily high degree of cognitive activity across languages [8]. The head functions as the cognitive locus for mental capacity and logic, whereas the heart acts as the primary locus for emotional states and moral truth

The primary cognitive feature distinguishing humans from other biological species is reason (intellect, wisdom, astuteness, wit). Across phraseology and proverbs, intellectual attributes are heavily evaluated along an axiological axis: cognitive competence is rewarded with high social prestige, while intellectual deficiency is framed as weakness or danger [9].

Axiological evaluation within the "ADAM" concept relies on moral attributes such as kindness, honesty, integrity, and compassion versus cruelty, deceit, and arrogance [10]. Language codifies these moral dimensions as essential parameters defining genuine "humaneness" [12].

According to Conceptual Metaphor Theory, a metaphor is not an ornamental rhetorical device, but a cognitive mechanism through which one domain of experience (the source domain) is mapped onto another (the target domain) [6]. To conceptualize the multifaceted nature of human existence, language projects features from several prominent source domains onto "ADAM":

1. Zoomorphic Metaphors (Human as Animal): Human behavioral traits, temperament, and instincts are frequently comprehended through animal characteristics (strong as an ox, sly as a fox, courageous as a lion) [8].

2. Phytomorphic Metaphors (Human as Plant/Tree): Human life stages, growth, and genealogy are mapped through botanical imagery (family tree, blooming youth, deeply rooted, withered) [11].

3. Structural and Mechanomorphic Metaphors (Human as Machine/Building): In modern technological discourse, mental resilience, emotional capacity, and physical stamina are framed using mechanical or structural concepts (man of steel, iron will, breaking down, building character)

Conclusion. Applying the semantic-cognitive methodology to the "ADAM" concept yields several important insights into the relationship between human thought and language:

1. The "ADAM" concept transcends single word meanings, operating as a multi-layered mental structure that integrates biological, demographic, social, moral, and spiritual dimensions of human existence [3].

2. Based on Popova and Sternin's framework, analyzing semantic data from lexical items, phraseological expressions, and paremiology allows researchers to objectively reconstruct the hierarchical system of cognitive features stored in consciousness [7].

3. The internal constitution of "ADAM" consists of distinct subconcepts (gender, age, social roles), cognitive attributes (physical, intellectual, moral), and metaphorical mappings (zoomorphic, phytomorphic, mechanomorphic), demonstrating the deep unity between human cognition, language structure, and cultural identity [1].

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