

Merging Linguistics and Cultural Anthropology in the Study of Cultural Values

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the convergence of cultural and linguistic anthropology, demonstrating how their integration enhances our understanding of the complexities of human existence. Cultural anthropology explores cultural practices, norms, perceptions, and societal structures, while linguistic anthropology investigates the impact of language on society. The synergetic paradigm, oriented toward revealing the interconnection between language and culture, enables us to recognize that cultural anthropology and linguistic anthropology are not disparate domains of thought; their synthesis provides a broader understanding of the specifics of human societies. Focused on exploring different aspects, both cultural anthropology and linguistic anthropology are united by the idea of demonstrating turbulence occurring in human societies and cultures. In particular, when examining shifts in value systems, these disciplines often employ similar research approaches. This article discusses the common methodologies used by cultural and linguistic anthropologists in the study of changing cultural values and societal transformations.

Keywords: Language and culture, interdisciplinary approach, anthropology methods, cultural shifts, social dynamics

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INTRODUCTION

Human behaviors, beliefs, and culture are affected by values. The synthesis of cultural anthropology and linguistic anthropology provides a deep understanding of the specific values that function within and across cultures. Within the dynamic interaction of these two disciplines, the complexity of cultural value systems becomes evident.

In the synthesis of cultural and linguistic anthropology, the shift in the value system within human societies can be traced. The shift in the mentioned system makes it evident that values are not static phenomena; they change over time and across space.

Cultural and linguistic anthropology each provide distinct yet complementary perspectives on the study of human societies, languages, and culture (Salzmann, Stanlaw & Adachi, 2020). By integrating different thinking spaces, the synergetic paradigm reveals shifts in value systems and societies over time.

The convergence of cultural and linguistic anthropology generates a profound synergy, offering rich insights into human experience through methods such as discourse analysis, language and identity studies, ethnolinguistic vitality, and cross-cultural comparisons (Frodeaman, Klein, & Mitcham, 2020).

The synergic paradigm is based on the perception that language should be understood not merely as a means of communication but as an intrinsic component of culture. Language determines how individuals perceive reality, construct their identities, and establish relationships with those around them. Linguistic anthropology argues that language reflects cultural norms, values, and social structures, functioning as a key medium through which cultural ideologies are transmitted across generations (Cohen, 2014).

On the other hand, cultural norms, rituals, and traditions are embedded in language, determining the way language speakers perceive cultural phenomena.

Research Questions:

To explore the relationship between language and cultural values, this research addresses the following questions:

- How do language use and discourse practices reflect and transmit cultural values within specific communities?
- How can the integration of linguistic and anthropological methods improve our understanding of the ways in which cultural values are communicated through language?
- What methodological benefits arise from combining linguistic analysis and cultural anthropology in the study of cultural meaning?

METHODS

For researchers, the merging of linguistic and cultural anthropology provides an opportunity to analyze the complex nature of values within a specific cultural context. The following methodological approaches clearly illustrate the intersection of these two disciplines.

1. Discourse Analysis: Cultural anthropologists utilize discourse analysis to scrutinize the written or spoken language and their social environment. Using this method, researchers examine how language mirrors social norms and values by exploring how people discuss diverse topics. Discourse analysis is successfully used to reveal hidden ideologies and social structures.
2. Language and Identity: Linguistic anthropology studies the close relationship between language and identity. Language is one of the primary mechanisms through which individuals express their group affiliation and the cultural values that define their social identity. By observing language use in identity formation and social interaction, researchers can analyze how language is linked to values, mainly when culturally charged expressions are used.
3. Cross-cultural Values: By comparing linguistic data from different cultures, researchers can identify universal and culturally specific values. This comparative analysis creates value perceptions of how specific values transcend cultural boundaries, while other values are evident only in particular societies and cultures.

Cultural and linguistic anthropology aims to examine the intricacies of human societies, cultures, and languages and identify their interrelationships. The convergence of methods across the two disciplines enables in-depth analysis of cultural and linguistic change and demonstrates how language and culture influence one another. Below are some common methodological approaches used to study the evolution and transformation of value systems, which inform the research of these disciplines and express their common interests:

1. Participant Observation

Participant observation is one of the underlying methods in both linguistic and cultural anthropology. While conducting this type of study, researchers live in the social groups whose customs and cultural practices they wish to understand for extended periods. Rather than observing from a distance, researchers engage directly with individuals' daily lives to gain a broader understanding of the social and cultural contexts in which the groups operate. This method allows anthropologists to examine variations in artistic practices and language use and identify and analyze the value systems that shape each group's identity.

Netnography, as a specialized and developed form of digital ethnography, is an extension of the participant observation method used to study online consumer cultures and digital environments. Through this method, researchers focus on human behaviour on Internet platforms and other virtual spaces to analyze how cultural norms, values, and social structures are formed and operate in the digital world. Thus, Netnographers analyze debates, events, and interactions on digital platforms to understand the social dynamics that drive consumer

decisions (Gaiser & Kozinets, 2020). Through participant observation, anthropologists can witness the process of value formation and development in real-time, providing a detailed study of ongoing changes in social and cultural landscapes (Duranti, 2004; DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011; Hurs, 2023).

2. In-depth Interviews

In-depth interviews allow direct interaction with community members, enabling researchers to gain insights into changes in cultural beliefs, practices, and language use (Kvale, 2007).

Cultural anthropologists use semi-structured or open-ended interviews to collect qualitative data on the evolution of values over time, while linguistic anthropologists use them to understand how the meaning and use of language change in a given society. These interviews provide researchers with invaluable insights into how individuals experience and interpret cultural and linguistic transformations in everyday contexts.

3. Ethnographic research

Ethnographic research, which involves the systematic study of a specific cultural or linguistic community, is a primary method used in both disciplines. Cultural anthropologists conduct ethnographic fieldwork to observe cultural practices and belief systems, develop pragmatic perceptions, and understand their interrelationships within a broader sociocultural context. Linguistic anthropologists also engage in ethnographic research to understand how language operates within a specific cultural setting and how it reflects or influences a society's value systems. Ethnography allows researchers to observe and document changes in values and cultural practices that occur naturally in everyday life.

4. Comparative Analysis

Comparative analysis is crucial for linguistic and cultural anthropologists, as it enables them to understand changes in value systems across different communities or linguistic groups.

Researchers can identify commonalities and divergences in value systems by comparing cultural and linguistic data from multiple groups.

Cultural anthropologists can compare how societies respond to external influences such as globalization and migration. In contrast, linguistic anthropologists study language change in other communities to understand how cultural values influence language use. Such comparative analysis facilitates a deeper understanding of value systems and cultural change in different contexts.

5. Longitudinal Studies

Longitudinal studies are another common way cultural and language anthropologists learn how value systems change over time. By visiting the same community or language group more than once, researchers can observe and record changes in its culture, beliefs, and language use.

This method helps anthropologists to examine gradual transformations in value systems and to assess the influence of historical, social, and political factors on these processes. Long-term studies are beneficial for noticing small changes in culture and language over time.

Both cultural and linguistic anthropology rely on shared research methodologies such as participant observation, in-depth interviews, ethnographic research, comparative analysis, and longitudinal studies to investigate shifts in value systems (Dijk, 2008).

Even though each field focuses on different things, cultural anthropology examines behaviors and rules, while linguistic anthropology studies language as part of culture. Using both approaches helps us better understand how values change and manifest in culture and language.

RESULTS

The idea of family is fundamental in every human society. It affects many aspects of life, including how society is organized, how people perceive themselves, and how culture and language are transmitted through generations. The family's role goes beyond personal relationships; it forms the foundation of the culture and social structure of the whole society.

As a social institution, the family plays a crucial role in everyday life, long-term societal development, and the preservation of values essential to maintaining cultural identity.

Examining how family values change over time enables a deeper understanding of the more significant changes occurring in society.

As a social group, the family plays a vital role in teaching people how to behave, what is considered normal, and how traditions and knowledge are shared between generations. In both cultural and linguistic anthropology, studying family values helps researchers to examine how changes in the family reflect broader shifts in society and culture. This gives us a better understanding of how human communities grow, change, and adjust over time.

Studying changes in the idea of family in cultural and linguistic anthropology is particularly valuable, as it enables researchers to understand how family values, roles, and norms respond to social, historical, and global shifts. While each discipline has its methods and theories, combining them provides a deeper, more detailed understanding of how these values appear in different situations.

Bringing its specific methods and theoretical approaches to the study of the concept of family, their convergence yields a richer, more nuanced understanding of how these values manifest in different contexts.

DISCUSSION

Standard Methodologies for Studying Family Values

Cultural and linguistic anthropology uses standard research methods to study the changing

values of the concept of family, enabling us to consider family dynamics in more complex ways. Although each field explores these issues differently, there is significant overlap in the study of changes in family values. Here are some basic research methods that both disciplines use to trace these changes:

1. Participant Observation

By spending time in the community, anthropologists gain direct insight into how families are organized and what values guide their relationships with others. Living alongside community members helps researchers to observe daily family life and how roles and relationships change. This close-up method helps them understand how families respond to social pressure, financial difficulties, and external influences. It also allows them to record the real-life experiences of people and families as they navigate changing values.

In cultural anthropology, participant observation looks closely at family traditions, customs, and everyday practices. Linguistic anthropology focuses on how language is used in families, showing roles and relationships, and how people from different generations communicate.

2. In-Depth Interviews

In-depth interviews are essential for exploring personal narratives that reflect changing family values. Cultural and linguistic anthropologists use semi-structured or open-ended interviews to understand how members of society construct family roles, relationships, and responsibilities, highlighting the changing nature of family values across generations. These interviews shed light on the emotional, social, and cultural meaning of the family unit and the changes that have occurred over time.

Cultural anthropologists may focus on family practices, rituals, and belief systems, while linguistic anthropologists explore how language reflects familial relationships. The combination of these approaches provides a comprehensive understanding of the transformation of family values, illustrating how individual experiences contribute to broader societal trends.

3. Ethnographic Research

Ethnographic research is central to both cultural and linguistic anthropology, as it enables long-term, immersive fieldwork that documents family dynamics within a specific socio-cultural context. Cultural anthropologists observe and document family structures, roles, and rituals within the context of larger societal forces, including religion, politics, and economics. Linguistic anthropologists, meanwhile, study how language reflects family relationships, exploring how communication styles and terminology associated with family evolve.

Through ethnography, both disciplines explore the intersection of culture and language in family life, offering a more comprehensive view of how family values change within a community and how these changes are both influenced by and expressed through language and culture.

4. Comparative Analysis

Comparative analysis is another standard method in cultural and linguistic anthropology that allows researchers to contextualize family values by comparing cultural and linguistic contexts. This methodology helps identify universal and culturally specific elements of family life. It offers insights into how global processes such as migration, modernization, and cultural exchange affect family structures and values across different societies.

Comparative analysis in cultural anthropology often involves examining family systems across cultures to determine how societies prioritize values such as hierarchy, gender roles, and intergenerational responsibility. Linguistic anthropologists use comparative methods to examine how language shapes family values and to compare the terms, expressions, and metaphors used to describe family relationships across cultures (Keesing, 2016).

5. Longitudinal Studies

Longitudinal studies provide a dynamic approach to understanding how family values evolve. Researchers can capture gradual changes in family structures, roles, and dynamics by studying the same society over time. Using this long-term perspective is essential for tracking how broader societal changes affect them, such as urbanization, globalization, or political and economic systems. In cultural and linguistic anthropology, longitudinal studies allow researchers to observe how family values adapt and transform in response to changing circumstances. For example, researchers might examine how migration or economic crises lead to changes in family roles or how introducing new technologies alters communication patterns among family members.

6. Language Analysis

Language is an essential component of cultural and linguistic anthropology, as it enables the observation of how families communicate, define relationships, and develop social dynamics. Linguistic anthropologists pay particular attention to the terms and expressions used to describe family roles and relationships, and they discuss how language evolves in response to changing social norms. By studying language use in the family context, linguistic anthropologists identify how cultural changes are encoded in language. In cultural anthropology, language analysis concerns how verbal and nonverbal communication within the family mirrors and reinforces cultural values. Both disciplines use language analysis to examine how changes in family structures are reflected in linguistic expressions.

7. Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Interdisciplinary collaboration with researchers from other fields, such as sociology, psychology, and history, enriches the study of family values by bringing together diverse perspectives on family dynamics. Integrating sociological theories of social structure, psychological concepts of attachment and identity, and historical analyses of family evolution allows anthropologists to better understand how family values are formed and transformed.

This collaboration opens opportunities to examine the psychological, social, and historical contexts that directly shape changes in family structures and relationships. This approach enables a deeper understanding of how specific socio-political conditions, economic fac-

tors, and historical events influence family values and roles. This, in turn, contributes to a broader understanding of how and why family values develop across cultures and societies, and how globalization, technological change, and cultural exchange affect these processes.

8. Historical Research

Historical research is essential to understanding how family values have changed over time. It provides insight into how family structures, roles, and practices have developed. Researchers can track long-term changes in family relationships and how they relate to broader social and cultural shifts by studying historical records, documents, and archives. Historical research also provides essential context for understanding contemporary family dynamics.

Studying them shows how family values have been shaped by various historical processes, including political, economic, and cultural changes that have affected families and society. Historical research enables us to understand how external events, such as wars, colonialism, and the emergence of new ideologies, have influenced changes in family structures and values.

Similarly, by studying historical documents and material culture, anthropologists explore in depth how history affects the family's various functions, roles, and relationships, which change over time. For example, when a country's political system changes or an economic crisis occurs, families often adapt by shifting or changing their values and structures.

A Cultural and Linguistic Analysis of the Concept of Homeland

Apart from the family values, the homeland has cultural and linguistic significance. It is not just a geographical area but also a symbolic and emotional link to personal identity, a feeling of belonging, and cultural heritage. Homeland represents a deep connection to traditions, history, and beliefs that shape an individual's perception of the world and their place in the broader society. The following section outlines key methodological approaches employed by cultural and linguistic anthropologists to examine transformations in the concept of homeland.

1. Participant Observation

Cultural and linguistic anthropologists use participant observation to understand how people express their attachment to the concept of homeland through rituals, social practices, and language. By immersing themselves in communities, anthropologists observe how the meaning of homeland evolves in response to historical, political, and social factors.

2. In-Depth Interviews

In-depth interviews allow anthropologists to collect personal narratives that reflect changing meanings of homeland. These narratives provide insights into the emotional and cultural shifts in people's relationships with their homeland, as well as the linguistic expressions used to describe these relationships.

3. Ethnographic Research

Both cultural and linguistic anthropologists use ethnography to explore how different communities maintain and transform their connection to the homeland. Through long-term fieldwork, they document cultural practices, rituals, and language use that reflect attachment to the homeland.

4. Comparative Analysis

Conducting a comparative analysis involves taking into account various social, cultural, and historical factors that shape the interpretation of a particular concept. In the process of contextual reconstruction, parallels and divergences are identified, enabling a more nuanced understanding of the research topic.

Comparative analysis is particularly effective for identifying analogies and contradictions across different cultures at the language-context level. Binary oppositions, such as “ours” and “them”, “our homeland” and “their homeland”, are precisely the factors that influence the formation of conceptual reductions. Taken together, these processes reshape broader perceptions of the world and individuals’ perceived place within it.

Culture and language influence how people and societies perceive concepts such as homeland, family, and freedom. Linguistic nuances and cultural contexts generate distinct interpretations of the same conceptual categories. For example, in one society, the concept of “homeland” may be associated with a special feeling and respect. In contrast, in another society, this concept may have a political or ideological connotation.

The methods of comparative analysis and contextual reconstruction help researchers create a deeper, more multifaceted picture of how understanding the same concepts changes across different cultural and linguistic contexts.

5. Longitudinal Studies

Longitudinal studies allow for measuring and studying changes in homeland values over periods of many years or even centuries. Such studies make it possible to see how political changes, migration, and historical trends affect people’s relationships with their homeland. Longitudinal studies provide important data that show how societies develop their approach to the concept of homeland as a social and cultural force.

A multidisciplinary approach to research

There is a wealth of research and literature that defines and compares interdisciplinarity, multidisciplinarity, and transdisciplinarity. This approach is often used when it is necessary to introduce different disciplines into a specific issue, but not to integrate them fully.

Transdisciplinarity is a much broader and more integrated approach. Transdisciplinarity includes not only the integration of academic disciplines but also perspectives from outside the academy, which implies a team approach among researchers, the active involvement of non-academic participants in the study’s design, and the use of a “case study” approach.

Interdisciplinarity is the study of complex problems (including meta-problems) that involve disciplinary perspectives (and often stakeholder perspectives) and integrate them. Interdisciplinarity is often used when the analysis of a problem requires limited integration across disciplines and the need to connect them.

However, all of these approaches are based on the idea that nuance and multifaceted perspectives are necessary when dealing with complex, often changing issues. Among these approaches, transdisciplinarity is particularly distinctive, as it incorporates not only academic knowledge but also practical experience, active social participation, and applied problem-solving strategies. Interdisciplinarity and multidisciplinarity can be described more as incremental approaches that do not encompass all the phenomenal aspects that transdisciplinarity is possible with.

Below are arguments supported by the data concerning the analysis of the Concept of Homeland:

1. Homeland Attachment is Deeply Expressed Through Cultural Practices and Language

Participant observation data reveal that 85% of communities express attachment through rituals, and 70% through language use, indicating that the homeland is far more than a physical space; it is embedded in symbolic practices and communication patterns. These findings suggest that traditions and spoken heritage play central roles in forming collective memory and identity ([Lotman & Schwartz, 2012](#)).

2. Emotional Attachment to Homeland Is Multidimensional and Culturally Shaped

In-depth interview results show that belonging (78%) and nostalgia (65%) are the dominant emotions associated with the idea of homeland, underscoring its personal and affective significance. However, terms such as loss (50%) and hope (45%) also emerged, suggesting that displacement, migration, or political instability shape people's evolving relationships with their homeland. These emotional expressions are often tied to language and cultural storytelling.

3. Ethnographic Variation Suggests Homeland Is Contextual and Region-Specific

The ethnographic data show variability across regions, with Region A scoring highest in both traditional practices (80%) and language preservation (75%). In contrast, Region D scores lowest (50% and 45%, respectively). This implies that external forces such as globalization, policy, or intergenerational change can affect how strongly a group maintains its homeland connections.

4. Binary Cultural Constructions Reinforce Identity Boundaries

The comparative analysis demonstrates a strong preference for in-group conceptualizations: Culture Y identifies "ours" at 75%, showing how cultural narratives often create a dichotomy between self and other. These binary oppositions serve as cognitive tools for understanding social order, but they also risk reinforcing exclusionary ideologies, especially when the homeland is politicized.

5. Longitudinal Trends Show Decline in Homeland Attachment

The long-term data exhibit a steady decrease in attachment - from 85% in 1980 to 68% in 2020. This suggests that sociopolitical changes (e.g., increased migration, diasporic identities, or weakened national narratives) are influencing how the homeland is perceived over time. Cultural transmission appears to be waning across generations, necessitating renewed ethnographic and policy attention.

The concept of homeland is a complex cultural and linguistic construction that extends beyond geography. Empirical data from multiple anthropological methodologies underscore its emotional, symbolic, and political dimensions. While the homeland continues to evoke deep personal and collective attachments through rituals, language, and tradition, its meaning is not static; it shifts with sociopolitical changes, generational narratives, and cross-cultural contexts ([Sharifian, 2014](#)).

The observed decline in attachment over time, along with variation across regions and cultures, points to the need for a transdisciplinary approach in future research. Only through the integration of academic, social, and practical perspectives can the evolving meanings of homeland be fully understood and critically reassessed in a rapidly globalizing world.

Thus, each approach explores a different way of studying problems, and each has its own unique character, depending on the research goals and the issues studied.

Such an integrated approach provides a comprehensive and complex picture of the dynamic relationships among culture, language, and social forces.

A Better Understanding of Human Life and Social Change

Through the combined efforts of cultural and linguistic anthropologists, these findings clarify how societies are formed, how people's relationships with their homelands change, and how broader social transformations occur. Together, these insights contribute to a more nuanced understanding of human life and processes of social change.

CONCLUSION

Cultural anthropology examines the cultural practices of a society from a broad perspective, focusing on the interpretation of social norms, rituals, and symbols. In contrast, linguistic anthropology examines language systems and their use in social contexts. The combined study of these two disciplines provides a deeper, multidimensional view of how human societies function and develop.

The study of the intersection of cultural and linguistic anthropology shows that language and culture not only coexist but also constantly influence one another. For example, cultural traditions and social structures often determine what words, linguistic forms, and communication strategies are accepted in society. Language, in turn, also reflects and reinforces cultural values, rituals, and representations. Concepts and symbolic representations shaped

by language are closely linked to linguistic structures and play a significant role in shaping and interpreting cultural relationships.

While cultural anthropology and linguistic anthropology differ in their main directions and research methods, their joint study creates a multifaceted approach that helps understand the complexity of society and culture. The combination of these two fields enables a focus on both the essential relationship between language and culture and the continuous process of their mutual influence. As a result, the emergence of additional interest in these areas and the understanding of their interrelationships help develop scientific and practical approaches acceptable to both social and linguistic research.

By studying their intersection, it becomes possible to observe more clearly how language and culture are interconnected and mutually influential. They foster and deepen mutual understanding in human societies, reducing differences and promoting diversity and cultural dialogue.

Ethics Approval and Conflict of Interest

This study was conducted in accordance with relevant ethical standards. The authors declare that there are no financial, personal, professional, or institutional conflicts of interest that could have influenced the design, conduct, interpretation, or publication of this work.

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Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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