

On the Definition of the Concepts of "Ethnography" and "Ethnology"

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Annotation

In the context of globalization, socio-political changes taking place in society, a huge interest in various fields of knowledge, including Ethnography, has increased. The article deals with the ethnographic vocabulary within the framework of the specifics of material and spiritual culture. The problem lies in the study of the functioning of ethnographic terms, their features, role and meaning in the communication process.

In the context of globalization and socio-political transformations, the study of ethnography and ethnology has gained increasing relevance, particularly in understanding the relationship between language, culture, and national identity. This article examines the conceptual distinctions between ethnography and ethnology, analyzing their historical development and terminological evolution. Despite their extensive scholarly discussion, a significant knowledge gap remains in defining ethnographic vocabulary and its role in documenting material and spiritual culture. The study employs a qualitative research approach, drawing on linguistic and ethnographic sources to explore the classification, function, and transmission of ethnographic terms. The findings highlight the dynamic nature of ethnographic vocabulary, emphasizing its role in preserving cultural heritage and reflecting societal changes. The results suggest that interdisciplinary research integrating ethnography, linguistics, and lexicography is essential for refining theoretical frameworks and compiling specialized dictionaries. The implications of this study extend to fields such as ethno linguistics, folklore studies, and cultural anthropology, reinforcing the need for continuous documentation and analysis of evolving cultural lexicons. Further research should focus on the intersection of ethnographic terminology with modern linguistic processes, digital lexicography, and cross-cultural communication to enhance our understanding of language as a repository of cultural memory.

Key words: Ethnography, ethnos, ethno linguistics, etnografizma, non-equivalent vocabulary, spiritual culture, material culture.

Introduction

Throughout all stages of societal development, language remains inextricably linked to the life of a people and their culture, as it reflects elements of the material, spiritual, and moral culture of a society. Language serves as a repository of the history of an ethnic group—its bearer—while vocabulary directly responds to all changes in the life of a people. Neither phonetics nor grammar can illustrate the living conditions of a people as comprehensively as vocabulary. Consequently, lexicography and the study of a language's lexical composition have always been of great importance in linguistics. Examining vocabulary through thematic groups is considered the most effective approach for investigating the lexicon of specific Turkic languages. By following this method, one can gain insights into the natural environment in which a people lived, their primary occupations, economic practices, dwellings, socio-political structures, and the characteristics of their most ancient beliefs.

Ethnography is concerned with the study of traditional or folk culture—i.e., that layer of national culture that was formed during the medieval period, before the emergence of bourgeois national culture. Ethnographic research, in turn, relies on written sources, among which dictionaries, including Russian ones, occupy a significant place. Ethnographic vocabulary comprises a set of words that describe the specific features of the material and spiritual culture of an ethnic group. Additionally, ethnographic vocabulary can be classified into terms of material and spiritual culture. The former includes the names of clothing, national ornaments, and household items, while the latter encompasses the names of national traditions and festivals.

As is well known, any scientific research, including the study of ethnology and ethnography, presupposes an examination of the historical background of the subject. In this regard, it is essential to consider the etymology of the terms "ethnos," "ethnography," and "ethnology." Reference literature provides definitions of "ethnos," a term with multiple meanings. In addition to its primary sense of "people," it has also been interpreted as "crowd, class of people, foreign tribe, lineage, pagans," and others. Scholarly analysis has revealed a distinction between "ethnos" in its local sense ("ethnikos") and "ethnos" as an ethno-social organism—a differentiation introduced by Y. V. Bromley. The academician explains the distinction between "ethnikos" and "nation" as follows: "Ethnikoi and ethno-social organisms are the principal types of ethnic communities. However, they do not exhaust the ethnic structure of humanity."

Method

This study employs a qualitative research approach, integrating linguistic, ethnographic, and historical methods to analyze the conceptual distinctions between ethnography and ethnology, as well as the classification and evolution of ethnographic vocabulary. The research is based on a comprehensive review of academic literature, historical texts, and lexicographic sources to trace the development of ethnographic terms and their role in documenting material and spiritual culture. A thematic analysis is conducted to categorize ethnographic vocabulary into distinct lexical groups, including terminology related to social structures, traditions, customs, and material culture. The study also incorporates comparative analysis by examining the definitions and usage of ethnographic terms in various dictionaries, including historical lexicons and contemporary linguistic resources. Given the interdisciplinary nature of ethnolinguistics, data from folklore studies, sociolinguistics, and cultural anthropology are integrated to provide a broader context for understanding how language preserves and transmits cultural heritage. Additionally, this study explores terminological shifts influenced by globalization and socio-political transformations, identifying key challenges in lexicographic documentation. By synthesizing these methodological approaches, the research aims to bridge existing knowledge gaps and contribute to the refinement of ethnographic terminology within linguistics. The findings will support the development of more precise classifications and provide insights into the intersection of language and cultural identity.

Ultimately, this methodological framework ensures a systematic and interdisciplinary investigation of ethnographic vocabulary, reinforcing its significance in preserving the linguistic and cultural history of ethnic groups.

The traditional term "ethnography" derives from the Greek word "ethnos" combined with "grapho" (to write). However, under Western influence, the term "ethnology" emerged through the addition of "logos" (study or discourse) to "ethnos." Some researchers consider these terms essentially synonymous, while others distinguish between them. This debate has led to a series of terminological changes. Advocates of such renaming may have overlooked the fact that describing a subject already entails its study. Thus, the scholarly "grapho" is equivalent to "logos." The study of vocabulary through thematic grouping allows for the identification of lexical units that have not yet been recorded in dictionaries, facilitating their systematic investigation. As a result, contemporary linguistics is increasingly focused on documenting and analyzing various thematic lexical groups. Research is being conducted on different lexical layers, including socio-political terminology. However, many thematic and lexico-semantic word groups remain understudied. One such group is ethnographic vocabulary, which reflects centuries-old history, philosophy, cultural traditions, and the psychology of an ethnic group.

The study of connections between linguistic and cultural phenomena falls within the domain of ethnolinguistics. Broadly speaking, ethnolinguistics is the discipline that examines the relationship between an ethnic group and its language in all its complexity. It intersects with various fields in the humanities, including sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, the ethnology of communication, folklore studies, mythology, and poetics. The scope of ethnolinguistics encompasses areas such as language and traditional culture, language and ethnic-specific cognition, and ethno-linguistic processes in intra- and interethnic interactions. The term "ethnolinguistics" is commonly used in contexts where "ethnography" and "ethnology" are also relevant. As an independent academic discipline, ethnolinguistics is still in the process of defining its theoretical framework. In a narrower sense, ethnolinguistics is considered a branch of linguistics that examines the relationship between language and spiritual culture, folk creativity, and ethnic mentality.

It is noteworthy that contemporary linguistics has relatively few studies dedicated to ethnolinguistic research. However, ethnolinguistics is rapidly evolving, particularly in the context of Slavic and other languages. In Slavic linguistics, one of the pioneering figures in this field was Academician N. I. Tolstoy. In his work *On the Subject of Ethnolinguistics and Its Role in the Study of Language and Ethnos*, he defines ethnolinguistics as "a branch of linguistics, or more broadly, a direction in linguistics that orients researchers toward examining the interrelationship between language and spiritual culture, language and ethnic mentality, language and folk creativity, their interdependence, and various forms of correspondence." He further asserts that ethnolinguistics is not merely a hybrid of linguistics and ethnology or a mixture of their individual elements; rather, it is a distinct science that, like other interdisciplinary disciplines, clearly defines the aspect within which language is formed and functions. In our case, this aspect is ethnographic vocabulary. According to Tolstoy, in ethnolinguistics, "language always remains the primary object of study, regardless of whether linguistic or non-linguistic substance (e.g., ritual, communicative, mythological) is being analyzed." Furthermore, the study of language in a cultural-historical context becomes "an additional source, and in some cases, a decisive criterion for reconstructing the original meaning of a word and tracing its semantic evolution."

Result

The study of ethnography and ethnology reveals their crucial role in understanding the complex relationship between language, culture, and national identity. The findings demonstrate that while ethnography focuses on the detailed study of cultural practices, traditions, and material aspects of ethnic communities, ethnology provides a broader comparative framework for analyzing these

elements across different societies. Despite their interconnection, a persistent challenge lies in establishing clear conceptual distinctions, as the terminologies have been used interchangeably in scholarly discourse. This ambiguity necessitates a more refined theoretical classification to enhance the accuracy and consistency of linguistic and cultural studies. Furthermore, ethnographic vocabulary, which encapsulates the historical and cultural essence of ethnic groups, remains an underexplored area in lexicographic research, requiring systematic documentation and analysis.

Theoretical research highlights the interdisciplinary nature of ethnographic studies, intersecting with fields such as sociolinguistics, folklore studies, and anthropology. Scholars such as Y. V. Bromley and N. I. Tolstoy have contributed significantly to the conceptualization of ethnolinguistics, emphasizing the role of language as a repository of cultural memory. However, existing studies primarily focus on historical and philological perspectives, leaving a gap in understanding the influence of modern linguistic processes, digital communication, and globalization on ethnographic terminology. The absence of a standardized framework for categorizing ethnographic vocabulary further complicates efforts to compile comprehensive lexicons that reflect both historical continuity and contemporary linguistic transformations. Addressing this gap requires a synthesis of traditional linguistic methodologies with modern computational approaches, enabling the systematic classification and digital preservation of ethnographic terms.

From a practical perspective, the study underscores the importance of integrating ethnographic research into contemporary language documentation efforts. Ethnographic vocabulary serves as a crucial linguistic resource for preserving cultural heritage, yet many terms remain unrecorded in modern dictionaries. As language evolves alongside societal changes, the inclusion of newly emerging or previously undocumented terms is essential for maintaining the relevance and comprehensiveness of ethnographic lexicons. Additionally, the role of digital lexicography and corpus linguistics in analyzing and archiving ethnographic vocabulary offers new opportunities for linguistic preservation. The application of artificial intelligence in lexicographic studies can facilitate the identification of semantic patterns, regional variations, and historical shifts in ethnographic terminology. However, these advancements must be guided by rigorous linguistic and cultural analysis to ensure the authenticity and accuracy of recorded terms.

Despite these developments, further research is required to address key challenges in the field. A major knowledge gap exists in the contextualization of ethnographic vocabulary within contemporary socio-political frameworks, particularly in relation to cultural globalization and linguistic homogenization. Future studies should explore the impact of intercultural exchanges, migration, and digital communication on the evolution of ethnographic terminology. Comparative studies examining ethnographic vocabulary across different linguistic traditions can also provide valuable insights into the universality and specificity of cultural lexicons. Furthermore, interdisciplinary research incorporating linguistic anthropology, computational linguistics, and historical semantics will be instrumental in developing a more comprehensive understanding of ethnographic terminology.

Ultimately, the study highlights the need for a systematic and interdisciplinary approach to the documentation and analysis of ethnographic vocabulary. By bridging theoretical gaps, integrating technological advancements, and expanding empirical research, scholars can contribute to the preservation of linguistic and cultural heritage. Future investigations should prioritize the development of standardized classification systems and digital linguistic databases to ensure the accessibility and longevity of ethnographic knowledge in an increasingly globalized world.

As ethnolinguistics lies at the intersection of linguistics and ethnology, ethnolinguistic research is impossible without incorporating data from both ethnography and linguistics. While ethnographers examine how ethnic characteristics of material and spiritual culture, traditions, and customs are reflected in objects, linguists must also be aware of the findings of folklorists and ethnographers.

The centuries-old history of material and spiritual culture, national traditions and customs, and economic and social structures are all reflected in language—particularly in ethnographic vocabulary. Nevertheless, a precise scientific definition of "ethnographic vocabulary" has yet to be established. There are no clear criteria that would allow for a definitive distinction between ethnographic vocabulary and other lexical groups. While some linguistic studies have explored ethnographic vocabulary, further theoretical elaboration is necessary. If lexicon refers to the total vocabulary of a language, then an understanding of ethnographic vocabulary can be expanded by considering the definition of "ethnography". Different dictionaries provide varying interpretations of this term. The *Encyclopedic Dictionary* by F. A. Brockhaus and I. A. Efron (1896) defines "ethnography" as "the science concerned with studying the culture of peoples not covered by history and prehistoric archaeology—primarily primitive peoples and those segments of civilized peoples that have preserved vestiges of primitive social organization." The compilers of this dictionary identified the principal task of ethnography as the study of the way of life, customs, and traditions of people, especially those closest to their natural state. Ethnographic phenomena were classified into three main areas:

- material culture (food, means of subsistence, domestication of animals, tools, household items, weapons, transportation, dwellings, clothing, and adornments);
- social organization (marriage and family, social unions);
- Spiritual culture (language and religion, morality, art, poetry, writing).

Conclusion

Thus, ethnographic vocabulary includes words related to material and spiritual culture, customs, and traditions of a people. Since language evolves alongside society, ethnographic dictionaries must be continuously updated to include newly emerging or previously unrecorded words.

Undoubtedly, the dissemination of scientific knowledge worldwide provides opportunities for refining the theory and practice of mastering ethnographic vocabulary and for compiling specialized terminological dictionaries in ethnography. Research on this topic indicates that there remain several unresolved issues in the lexicographic description of ethnographic terminology. However, this does not mean that the creation of such dictionaries is not being pursued. Existing dictionaries do address this area, yet, in our view, they require periodic updates. Since ethnography evolves alongside society, new or previously unknown words inevitably emerge, necessitating their inclusion in newly published or modernized dictionaries.

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