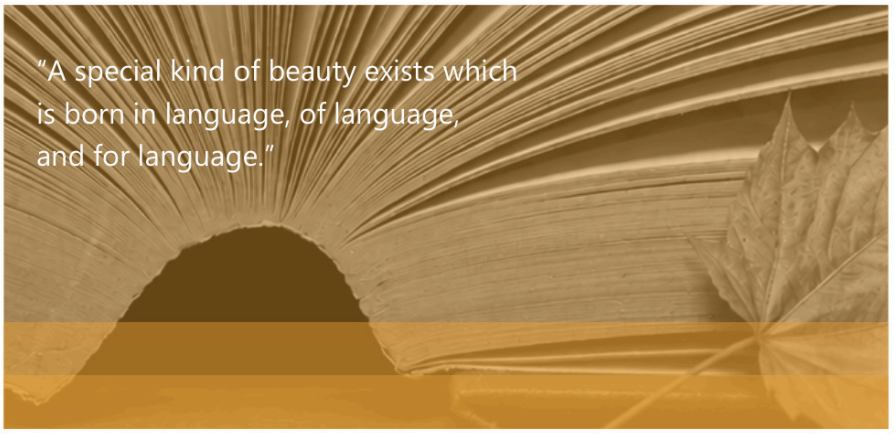
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CONTENTS

LINGUISTICS		**4**
Sulaymanova N.J.	A comparative analysis of the cognitive-semantic features of conceptual metaphors in English and Uzbek	5
Allayarova M.T.	Linguocognitive and linguocultural features of figurative toponyms in Uzbek and English	13
Tashpulatova Sh.Z.	Linguopsychological Foundations of the Expression of Mental States in English and Uzbek	20
Rakhimova U.S.	The poetics of the mother image in 19th-century English novels: the interpretation of biological and surrogative motherhood	27
Umarova Sh.I.	Combinatorial properties of collocations	33
Suvanova Kh.B.	Linguocognitive and pragmatic features of female inner speech: a comparative analysis of V. Woolf's "Mrs Dalloway" and O. Hoshimov's "Ikki eshik orasi"	41
Pazilova N.M., Nancy M. Ackles	National-cultural code and the linguistic construction of social identity in Jura Fozil's "The garden": A Linguopragmatic study	48
Saloxiddinov M.Sh.	Article title: cognitive-axiological features and linguocultural representation of the family concept in Uzbek and English	61
Kosheva D.Kh.	Linguocultural analysis of oral discourse: key parameters and methodological cautions	72
Jo'rayeva N.S.	Semantic gradation and stylistic differentiation of verbs expressing smiling in English and Uzbek	81
Abdulkhaeva M.M.	The role of paragraphemic devices in the theoretical and stylistic analysis of written discourse	87
Pazilova N.M., Makhmudova M.N.	Abdurauf Fitrat's term-formation principles and the semantic-functional adaptation of artificial intelligence terms into Uzbek	93
Pazilova N.M., Imomova Z.M.	Speech strategies and gender roles in Abdurauf Fitrat's family discourse: a linguopragmatic analysis of "Oila"	100
Shakurova N.Kh.	National-cultural and cognitive features of the concept "Mother" in English and Uzbek	107
Abdujalilov M.I.	The linguistic nature of lexical units denoting attributes in Uzbek and Russian	117
Chulliyev N.A.	The theoretical foundations of constructing and expressing collective knowledge in political discourse	128
Song D.	Multilingual guided interpretation mechanisms for foreign tourists in living museums: A case study of the Konigil Tourism Village in Samarkand	138

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Cogito, ergo sum

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The theoretical foundations of constructing and expressing collective knowledge in political discourse

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Annotation *This article explores the theoretical basis of how collective knowledge is constructed and communicated in political discourse through the perspectives of sociocognitive linguistics, discourse analysis, and critical discourse studies. It investigates how shared assumptions, collective memories, social identities, and ideological orientations are conveyed through linguistic resources such as presupposition, personal and collective pronouns, metaphor, evaluative expressions, and framing strategies. Particular emphasis is placed on the capacity of political discourse to influence public understanding, shape interpretations of social and political events, and legitimise particular viewpoints. The article further proposes an analytical framework for a comparative investigation of Uzbek and English political discourse, focusing on common linguistic and cognitive mechanisms alongside features shaped by specific cultural and historical contexts. Rather than presenting empirical findings, the study synthesises theoretical perspectives and establishes a conceptual foundation for subsequent research. Its framework may support further investigations into the complex relationship between language, collectively shared knowledge, and the exercise of political power in different sociocultural environments.*

Keywords *Collective knowledge, political discourse, sociocognitive approach, common ground, presupposition, collective identity, framing, intertextuality*

Siyosiy diskursda jamoaviy bilimni shakllantirish va ifodalashning nazariy asoslari

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Annotatsiya *Mazkur maqolada siyosiy diskursda kollektiv bilimning shakllanishi va ifodalanishining nazariy asoslari sotsio-kognitiv tilshunoslik, diskurs tahlili hamda tanqidiy diskurs tadqiqotlari nuqtayi nazaridan yoritiladi. Unda umumiy qarashlar, jamoaviy xotira, ijtimoiy o'zlik va mafkuraviy qarashlarning presuppozitsiya, shaxs va jamoani ifodalovchi olmoshlar, metafora, baholovchi birliklar hamda freymlash strategiyalari orqali namoyon bo'lishi tahlil qilinadi. Siyosiy diskursning jamoatchilik tushunchalariga ta'sir ko'rsatish, ijtimoiy-siyosiy voqealar talqinini shakllantirish va muayyan siyosiy pozitsiyalarni legitimlashtirishdagi o'rniga alohida e'tibor qaratiladi. Shuningdek, o'zbek va ingliz siyosiy diskursini qiyosiy o'rganishga mo'ljallangan tahliliy model taklif etiladi. Ushbu model umumiy lingvistik va kognitiv mexanizmlarni, shuningdek, madaniy-tarixiy sharoitlar bilan bog'liq xususiyatlarni aniqlashga xizmat qiladi. Maqola empirik natijalarni taqdim etishdan ko'ra, mavjud nazariy yondashuvlarni umumlashtiradi va kelgusidagi tadqiqotlar*

uchun konseptual asos yaratadi. Taklif etilgan yondashuv turli ijtimoiy-madaniy muhitlarda til, jamoaviy bilim va siyosiy hokimiyat o'rtasidagi murakkab munosabatlarni chuqurroq o'rganishga yordam beradi.

Kalit so'zlar *Jamoaviy bilim, siyosiy diskurs, sotsiokognitiv yondashuv, umumiy bilimlar zaxirasi, presuppozitsiya, jamoaviy identitet, freymlash, intertekstuallik*

Теоретические основы конструирования и выражения коллективного знания в политическом дискурсе

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Аннотация *В статье рассматриваются теоретические основы формирования и выражения коллективного знания в политическом дискурсе с позиций социокогнитивной лингвистики, анализа дискурса и критического дискурс-анализа. Исследуется, как общие представления, коллективная память, социальная идентичность и идеологические установки передаются посредством языковых средств, включая пресуппозицию, личные и коллективные местоимения, метафоры, оценочную лексику и стратегии фреймирования. Особое внимание уделяется способности политического дискурса влиять на общественное понимание, формировать интерпретации социально-политических событий и легитимировать определённые позиции. Кроме того, предлагается аналитическая модель для сопоставительного изучения политического дискурса на узбекском и английском языках. Она позволяет выявлять как общие языковые и когнитивные механизмы, так и особенности, обусловленные культурно-историческим контекстом. Статья не содержит результатов самостоятельного эмпирического исследования, а систематизирует теоретические подходы и формирует концептуальную основу для дальнейшей научной работы. Предложенная модель может использоваться при изучении сложной взаимосвязи языка, коллективно разделяемого знания и политической власти в различных социокультурных условиях, а также при анализе способов конструирования общественных смыслов посредством политической коммуникации.*

Ключевые слова *Коллективное знание, политический дискурс, социокогнитивный подход, общий фонд знаний, пресуппозиция, коллективная идентичность, фрейминг, интертекстуальность*

Introduction

Political discourse is a form of social action: it describes public events, proposes policies, assigns responsibility and constructs relationships between political actors and the communities they claim to represent. Its persuasive force often depends not only on explicit arguments but also on background

assumptions that speakers expect their audiences to recognize. References to national history, shared sacrifice, public values, political turning points or a collective future can compress complex narratives into a few familiar words. To interpret such expressions, listeners may need to draw on knowledge that is not fully stated in the utterance. This phenomenon raises a theoretical question: how can researchers identify the role of collective knowledge without assuming that an entire population shares the same beliefs? The phrase collective knowledge may suggest consensus, but political communities are internally diverse. Different generations, regions, social groups and political affiliations may interpret the same historical reference or national symbol differently. A rigorous analysis must therefore distinguish between knowledge available in a social environment, knowledge that a speaker presents as shared, and knowledge actually possessed or accepted by particular audience members.

In this article, collective knowledge is defined as socially circulating information, assumptions, narratives and interpretive resources that may be treated as recognizable within a community or communicative group. The definition is deliberately broad enough to include historical narratives and institutional knowledge, but it does not equate collective knowledge with public opinion, ideology or collective memory. Those concepts overlap, yet each has a distinct analytical focus. The term is used here to examine how political language invokes and organizes socially available meanings.

The study is grounded in several complementary traditions. Van Dijk's sociocognitive approach considers how discourse production and comprehension relate to mental models and socially shared knowledge (van Dijk, 2008, 2014). Fairclough's critical approach situates texts within discursive and social practices (Fairclough, 1992). Berger and Luckmann (1966) explain how social reality becomes institutionalized and taken for granted, while Entman (1993) shows how framing selects and foregrounds aspects of an issue. Work on political and cultural identity further demonstrates how assumed knowledge can help construct a model of a community (Flowerdew & Leong, 2010).

The aim of this article is to synthesize these theoretical perspectives and propose an analytical framework for studying the construction and expression of collective knowledge in political discourse. It addresses four research questions: (1) How should collective knowledge be conceptualized for linguistic and discourse analysis? (2) What linguistic and discursive mechanisms can invoke or reshape it? (3) How can researchers distinguish textual evidence from assumptions about audience cognition? (4) How can the framework support a methodologically sound comparison of Uzbek and English political discourse?

The article makes a conceptual rather than empirical contribution. Its value lies in specifying dimensions that can be applied to a clearly defined corpus in subsequent research. The framework is not presented as a validated coding instrument; its categories require testing and refinement through empirical application.

A sociocognitive approach treats discourse as connected to cognition and social context. Language users interpret a message in relation to their representation of the communicative situation, including assumptions about who is speaking, to whom, for what purpose and under what circumstances. Van Dijk (2008) argues that context should not be reduced to a list of external social variables: it also involves participants' subjective models of the communicative event. This perspective helps explain why the same political statement may be interpreted differently in different settings. The distinction between personal experience and socially shared knowledge is especially relevant. An individual may possess episodic knowledge of a particular event, whereas a

community may circulate general knowledge about institutions, historical events or social conventions. Such knowledge enables communication because speakers do not need to explain every reference in full. Yet what counts as shared knowledge is context-dependent. A fact that is familiar to one political audience may be unfamiliar or contested among another. Van Dijk's later work on discourse and knowledge places emphasis on the social distribution and management of knowledge in communication (van Dijk, 2014). This helps frame political discourse as a site where speakers display, claim, distribute and sometimes restrict access to knowledge. Political actors may represent their account as authoritative, describe opponents as uninformed, or imply that a reasonable citizen should already recognize a particular conclusion. These are discursive positions that can be investigated in text; they should not be confused with proof that audiences accept the speaker's knowledge claims.

Berger and Luckmann (1966) describe how social reality is produced and maintained through processes of externalization, objectivation and internalization. Socially created meanings may become institutionalized through repetition and routine, eventually appearing natural or self-evident to participants. This account offers a useful background for political discourse analysis because recurring descriptions of the nation, the state, citizenship or historical experience can become familiar interpretive resources. However, social construction does not mean that every public narrative is invented arbitrarily or universally accepted. Institutional authority, education, media, commemorative practices and everyday communication contribute differently to the circulation of knowledge. Some interpretations become dominant, while others remain marginal or are actively resisted. A political speech can reproduce a familiar narrative, but it can also contest it by proposing a different account of who belongs to the community or how a past event should be remembered.

For linguistic analysis, this perspective encourages researchers to examine repetition, categorization, presupposition and narrative continuity. It also suggests that a single text should not automatically be treated as evidence of a stable collective belief. Claims about social circulation require contextual support, such as recurring patterns across texts, references to institutional practices or independent historical documentation.

Collective knowledge needs to be distinguished from related concepts. Common ground generally refers to information participants treat as mutually available for the purposes of a communicative exchange. It can be local and temporary: two people may establish common ground during a conversation without sharing a wider cultural identity. Collective knowledge, as used in this article, refers to a broader reservoir of socially circulating information and interpretive assumptions that may be activated in particular communicative settings. While Collective memory focuses more specifically on socially mediated representations of the past. It is relevant when political speakers invoke independence, conflict, reform, sacrifice or founding events as part of a community's story. Ideology, by contrast, concerns organized systems of ideas, values and social representations that may legitimize particular arrangements of power. Collective knowledge can overlap with both: a historical narrative may function as collective memory and simultaneously support an ideological claim. Nevertheless, the concepts should not be used interchangeably.

The distinction is methodologically important. If every reference to a national value is classified as ideology, the analysis may overlook its informational or identity-related function. If every historical reference is treated as shared knowledge, it may ignore disagreement about the past. Researchers should specify what kind of knowledge is

invoked, who is presumed to share it, and what textual evidence supports the interpretation. Critical discourse studies investigate how language participates in the reproduction or transformation of social relations. Fairclough (1992) connects textual analysis with discursive practice and broader social practice, drawing attention to the production, circulation and interpretation of texts. Wodak and Meyer (2016) demonstrate that critical discourse studies encompass multiple approaches, including sociocognitive and discourse-historical perspectives. These approaches are relevant because collective knowledge is not merely a neutral background to political communication: claims about what a community knows or remembers may distribute authority and legitimacy.

A speaker may claim to speak on behalf of '*the people*', present a policy as the only rational response to a familiar problem, or portray an opposing position as inconsistent with national values. Such moves can be examined as textual and discursive strategies. The critical question is not simply whether the statement is persuasive, but how it constructs relevant groups, foregrounds some interpretations and backgrounds alternatives. This does not require the analyst to assume in advance that all political communication is manipulative; the interpretation must be grounded in evidence.

Framing theory explains how communication selects and makes salient particular aspects of perceived reality. Entman (1993) identifies functions such as defining a problem, diagnosing causes, making moral evaluations and suggesting remedies. In political discourse, a policy can be represented as a shield, a bridge, a burden, a battle or a turning point. These metaphors invite different inferences about danger, cooperation, responsibility, cost and historical significance. Metaphorical and evaluative expressions are relevant to collective knowledge because they can draw on culturally familiar conceptual associations. However, metaphor does not automatically activate the same knowledge in every audience. A phrase may be conventional in one setting but unfamiliar in another, or it may be deliberately contested. The analyst should therefore identify the metaphorical mapping or evaluative contrast and explain how it works in its textual and historical context. It can also interact with categorization. A policy described as '*protecting our future*' may position the speaker as a guardian and the audience as beneficiaries of a shared future. The phrase may invoke assumptions about responsibility and collective continuity, but the analyst must avoid claiming that all recipients accept those assumptions. The evidence supports a claim about the interpretive possibilities built into the text, not necessarily about uniform psychological effects.

Presupposition is another mechanism by which information may be presented as already established. Definite descriptions, factive predicates, iterative expressions and certain change-of-state verbs can, in context, signal that a proposition is treated as given rather than argued for. In political communication, this can make a disputed claim appear to be part of the background against which the main argument proceeds. Still, presupposition is sensitive to linguistic form and context; it should be identified through analysis rather than inferred from any statement that seems implicit. Flowerdew and Leong (2010) examine presumed knowledge in the discursive construction of socio-political and cultural identity in Hong Kong newspaper discourse. Their study is pertinent because it connects assumptions about what readers know with the representation of a community. It illustrates the value of asking what knowledge a text presumes and how those assumptions contribute to an identity model. For comparative research, the implication is that analysts should investigate both the content of presumed knowledge and the social identity that it helps construct.

Methodology

The article adopts a qualitative, theory-driven review and conceptual synthesis. It draws on foundational scholarship in sociocognitive discourse studies, social constructionism, critical discourse studies, framing and presumed knowledge. The sources were selected because they provide complementary accounts of the relationship between discourse, cognition, social meaning and power. This is not a systematic review with exhaustive database searches, predefined screening statistics or a formal risk-of-bias protocol. Accordingly, the conclusions are theoretical and should not be read as the results of an empirical corpus study.

The analytical procedure involved: (1) identifying key concepts used to explain knowledge and discourse; (2) comparing how the selected traditions conceptualize shared assumptions, context and social meaning; (3) distinguishing collective knowledge from related constructs; and (4) synthesizing recurring mechanisms into a framework suitable for future text analysis. The purpose of the procedure is conceptual clarification and operational guidance. The synthesis yields five dimensions for analyzing collective knowledge in political discourse:

1. **Presupposed and backgrounded propositions.** This dimension records linguistic constructions that treat information as given, familiar or already accepted. Researchers should identify the trigger, formulate the presupposed content and test alternative readings in context.
2. **Collective categorization and pronoun reference.** This dimension examines terms such as *'we', 'our people', 'citizens', 'the nation'* and their equivalents. The analyst identifies the group being constructed, who is included or excluded, and which knowledge, values or experiences are attributed to it.
3. **Historical, cultural and intertextual allusion.** This dimension covers references to public events, institutional traditions, commemorative dates, slogans or earlier speeches. The analysis records the source of the allusion and explains which background associations are relevant to the current message.
4. **Metaphorical and evaluative framing.** This dimension examines metaphors, labels, value-laden descriptions and problem-solution structures. The researcher identifies how an issue is defined, what causes or responsibilities are suggested, what moral evaluation is implied and what action is presented as appropriate.
5. **Institutional circulation and contestation.** This dimension considers whether the text draws on knowledge that circulates through institutions, public rituals, education, media or recurring political narratives. It also records counter-narratives and signs that the presumed knowledge is contested. This dimension usually requires evidence beyond a single sentence.

To apply the framework to two languages political discourse, a future study should define the corpus in advance. The sample might include official speeches by political leaders, parliamentary addresses or public policy statements, but the genres should not be mixed without justification. The period, selection criteria, source repositories, language versions and unit of analysis should be reported transparently. If the comparison includes presidential speeches from different political systems, differences in institutional role and communicative purpose should be acknowledged. For each text, a coding record could include speaker, date, venue, genre, topic, relevant passage, linguistic cue, type of presumed knowledge, collective referent, contextual source, proposed discursive function and alternative interpretation. Researchers should retain sufficient co-text to avoid decontextualized keyword counting. A

subset of data may be independently coded by a second researcher; disagreements can be discussed and categories revised. If a quantitative component is added, frequency counts should be normalized and interpreted alongside qualitative context.

The comparison should use original-language texts as primary evidence. Translations can support explanation but should not replace the original because pronoun reference, metaphorical associations, politeness conventions and presupposition triggers may not align directly across languages. Claims about audience reception should be supported by additional evidence, such as interviews, surveys, focus groups or documented public responses. Without such data, the analysis should describe interpretations invited by the text rather than assert what audiences actually believed.

Results and Discussion

The central finding of the theoretical review is that collective knowledge is better understood as a resource that political speakers draw on, shape and sometimes challenge than as a fixed body of beliefs shared by an entire population. The sources reviewed here approach this issue from different angles. Van Dijk's sociocognitive work explains how discourse relates to mental models and socially available knowledge; Berger and Luckman show how meanings can become established through repeated social practices; critical discourse studies draw attention to the relationship between language and power; and framing theory explains how some aspects of an issue are brought to the foreground while others receive less attention. Taken together, these perspectives offer a fuller account of how political language works.

This synthesis suggests that analysis should move between three connected levels. First, the researcher examines the wording of a speech: the pronouns, presuppositions, metaphors and evaluative expressions that can be identified directly in the text. Second, the researcher considers what background knowledge those choices appear to invite the audience to draw on. Third, the interpretation is checked against the wider social and institutional context, including earlier speeches, public narratives and relevant historical sources. Keeping these levels distinct matters: a phrase may invite a particular interpretation, but that alone does not prove that every listener recognizes or accepts it.

Presupposition deserves close attention because it can place an assumption in the background while the speaker focuses on a different point. Rather than defending every part of an argument explicitly, a speaker may word a statement as though a particular situation or evaluation has already been established. This can make the assumption less visible and reduce the space devoted to questioning it. However, this is a possible function, not an automatic effect. Researchers need to identify the linguistic trigger, state clearly what is presupposed and consider whether the surrounding passage supports another reading. For example, a political statement may openly advocate a new policy while treating the existence of a crisis, the failure of an earlier measure or the unity of a particular group as already accepted. These are illustrative patterns, not quotations from a specific speech. Their analytical value lies in showing where the argument begins: what the speaker actually argues for and what the wording treats as settled beforehand. In an empirical study, such interpretations must be demonstrated through authentic examples, with the speech, date and source recorded.

Words such as *'we', 'our people', 'citizens'* and *'the nation'* do more than name a group. They help establish who is included in the political community and whose interests are presented as common. The meaning of *'we'* can shift within a single speech: it may refer to the government, a political party, the whole population or the speaker and audience together. Because the boundaries are not

always made explicit, collective language can present a particular position as though it represents a wider community. This is an important issue for both languages comparison. An English phrase such as *'our people'* may have a plausible Uzbek equivalent, but matching the words does not establish that they perform the same function in context. Depending on the speaker and occasion, the expression might refer to citizens, an ethnic community, local residents, political supporters or the population as a whole. A sound comparison therefore asks who the phrase refers to in each passage and what evidence in the surrounding text supports that interpretation.

Historical references can give a political message meaning without requiring the speaker to retell an entire event or narrative. A commemorative date, a familiar slogan or a reference to a period of hardship may connect a current proposal with ideas of sacrifice, continuity, renewal or national achievement. Such references can make an argument more resonant for audiences who recognize the allusion. They can also privilege one version of the past while leaving other experiences or interpretations unmentioned. The researcher's task is to establish what a reference points to before explaining what it does in the speech. This is particularly important in cross-cultural work: an association that appears obvious to an analyst may not be equally familiar to all audiences, and a historical event may be remembered differently by different groups. The wider speech and reliable contextual sources should therefore be used to support the interpretation. Where the meaning remains disputed, that uncertainty should be reported rather than concealed.

Framing shapes how an issue is understood by making some aspects more prominent than others. Describing reform as a *'bridge'*, for instance, can foreground connection and movement from one situation to another; describing it as a *'battle'* highlights conflict and opposition; calling it a *'burden'* draws attention to cost or sacrifice. These examples illustrate possible associations rather than fixed meanings. A metaphor's function depends on the words around it, the topic being discussed and the communicative situation. Entman's (1993) framework provides a practical way to examine this process by asking how a text defines a problem, explains its causes, evaluates it and presents a remedy. Applied to political speeches, these questions can reveal how a speaker guides attention towards certain causes, responsibilities or solutions. A future English-Uzbek corpus study could use this approach to compare how similar issues are framed in the two languages. Any claim about a recurring pattern, however, would need to be supported by examples from the corpus rather than by assumptions about national or cultural character.

The reviewed theories also show why claims about knowledge are connected to political authority. A speaker who presents a position as something 'everyone knows' can make disagreement seem unusual or uninformed. Similarly, describing a policy as consistent with national values may strengthen its legitimacy, while portraying opponents as detached from ordinary people may weaken their standing. These are effects that the wording can invite; whether they persuade a particular audience is a separate question that requires reception evidence.

Collective knowledge should therefore be examined as something that can be negotiated. Political discourse may repeat an established narrative, give a familiar symbol a new meaning or challenge an account that has previously dominated public discussion. Researchers should look for disagreement and counter-discourse as well as repetition. A historical reference, for example, may create a sense of solidarity for some people while making others feel excluded. Recognizing this possibility produces a more careful analysis than assuming that a political community speaks or thinks with one voice.

For research comparing English and Uzbek political discourse, the five proposed dimensions offer a common starting point without assuming that the two languages organize political meaning in identical ways. The texts selected for comparison should be similar in genre, purpose and institutional setting wherever possible. Comparing a ceremonial national address with a parliamentary debate, for example, could make differences in genre look like differences between languages. The context in which each speech was delivered should therefore be documented and taken into account. A practical study could begin by compiling a clearly documented corpus and identifying passages that contain relevant linguistic cues. Each passage could then be coded for the presumed knowledge, the group or community invoked, the contextual source and the likely discursive function. Close reading should accompany any frequency counts so that recurring words are not interpreted in isolation. Researchers should also record examples that do not fit their initial expectations: such cases may expose weaknesses in the categories or show that a phrase functions differently in different contexts.

The main limitation is that this article develops a theoretical framework rather than reporting findings from a newly collected corpus. It therefore does not establish how frequently the five mechanisms occur, whether they differ systematically between Uzbek and English, or how audiences respond to them. The proposed dimensions are a starting point for analysis, not a validated coding scheme. Their usefulness and consistency must be tested against real data, and overlapping or ambiguous cases will need to be discussed transparently. Future research could combine close qualitative analysis with corpus-assisted methods. Corpus searches can help identify repeated expressions and patterns across a larger collection of speeches, while contextual analysis can explain what those patterns mean in particular passages. Interviews, surveys or focus groups would be needed to investigate whether listeners recognize the knowledge being invoked and whether they accept the speaker's interpretation. Combining these methods would allow researchers to distinguish more clearly between what a text suggests, what circulates in public discourse and what audiences actually believe.

Conclusion

This article has examined the theoretical foundations for studying how collective knowledge is constructed and expressed in political discourse. The synthesis of sociocognitive discourse studies, social constructionism, critical discourse studies, framing theory and research on presumed knowledge suggests that collective knowledge should be understood as socially circulating and potentially contested interpretive resources. It is not a uniform stock of beliefs shared by every member of a community.

The proposed framework identifies five dimensions: presupposed and backgrounded propositions; collective categorization and pronoun reference; historical, cultural and intertextual allusion; metaphorical and evaluative framing; and institutional circulation and contestation. Together, these dimensions help researchers examine how political texts invite audiences to recognize certain assumptions as familiar, legitimate or self-evident. The framework also requires a clear distinction between textual evidence, the speaker's presumed common ground and the audience's actual knowledge or interpretation. For future research on Uzbek and English political discourse, the framework offers a structured starting point for corpus design and comparative analysis. Its application should use original-language materials, comparable genres, transparent selection criteria and contextual evidence. Empirical testing is needed before making claims about recurrent patterns or language-specific differences. The central conclusion is that collective knowledge is not merely reflected in political

discourse: it is selected, organized, invoked and sometimes contested through linguistic choices in particular social and institutional contexts.

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