The modern scientific paradigm is rather often called anthropological since the main object that many scholars working within it have in the focus of their studies, is human being taken in a complex of his/her different manifestations. From this point of view we deal with a sort of Renaissance in the sphere of science analogous to the phenomenon of Renaissance in the fine arts, that once took place in Europe.

There are now two main trends in scientific thinking typical to the paradigm in question – centripetal and centrifugal. The former means that Man is regarded as the model and standard of Nature, and everything is analysed and valued through the prism of him. The latter means that while researching the world around us we in this or that way turn our glances to Man trying to understand his nature, mind, desires etc. etc. That’s why a lot of researchers nowadays pay special attention to personality as such, to cognitive processes, to conceptual aspects of thinking, various images of mind and forms of knowledge “storing”, to different ways and methods of appealing those images and “pieces” of knowledge.

Nowadays it’s quite obvious for many researchers – representatives of various branches of science that today it’s rather inconvenient to analyse homo loquens (‘speaking man’) as a certain “ideal speaker” belonging to no culture. That is why the problem of lingual-cultural identity of homo loquens is of utmost importance today.

Lingual-cultural identity of homo loquens is predetermined by both internal and external factors. The internal factors correlate with ethnic and cultural self-identification of a person. The external factors are closely connected with the lingual-cultural environment, and the phenomenon of linguo-culture in particular. The latter is in the focus of the given paper.

Culture is regarded, according to prof. V.N. Telia, as a world-conception, world-perception and world-comprehension of a people. This statement does not certainly deny the
material component of culture but only puts in focus its “ideal” / mental component which is much more significant for lingual-cultural and linguo-cognitive studies. So, linguo-culture is the verbalised culture, the culture externalised in signs of language. Hence, signs of language (in the linguistic sense of this term) are regarded as the substances for signs of culture. Other words saying, we a priori deal with two original semiotic systems – human language and human culture. The zone, where they overlap, forms one more semiotic system, the third one – the system of linguo-culture as such.

Culture and linguo-culture are on the one hand creators, and on the other hand creation of homo loquens. It means that homo loquens is the subject and an object of both culture and linguo-culture.

The lingual-cultural approach considers homo loquens as an aggregate of subjects – subject of communication, subject of language and subject of culture. It means that homo loquens always possesses culture-specific features. Meanwhile homo loquens is believed to be a representative of mankind as well, i.e. homo loquens is at the same time homo sapiens. However, according to the idea of N.A. Berdyaev, homo sapiens belongs to mankind not as a “homo as such” but only as a “national man”, as it were, i.e. as homo litteratus. Thus, we can assert that homo loquens manifests himself in two main hypostases – homo sapiens and homo litteratus.

The lingual-cultural identity of homo loquens presupposes that a person possesses both hypostases. It means that a person, belonging to a certain culture and speaking a certain language, knows the corresponding linguo-culture and can use its units, i.e. he/she can code and decode signs of the language as the signs of the culture. To do this, homo loquens needs to know the following (hypothetically four) sub-systems of the culture – the cognitive, metaphoric, model, symbolic levels, and to be able to use their units externalised in signs of the language. Those units are: 1) mentefacts (the cognitive sub-system); 2) basic metaphors (the metaphoric sub-system); 3) “containers” of models, each container corresponds to a
certain model content, model “sense” (the model sub-system, the basic level of models / standards); 4) basic symbols (the symbolic sub-system). These sub-systems / levels are rather independent and at the same time they coexist and interact within the given culture since the boundaries between them are flexible and transparent.

Let us briefly consider the given sub-systems / levels of culture and their units (first of all those which are externalized in signs of language).

The cognitive basic level of culture.

While analysing this level we pay special attention to its basic units – mentefacts, which are units of content of mind / conscience. Nowadays I can claim that there are the following types of mentefacts: knowledge – notions // concepts – (image / conceptual) representations. Let us rather briefly consider these types putting them in certain oppositions.

Knowledge vs. notions. They are differentiated ontologically according to the criterion of generalisation. Knowledge is just a system of informational units, meanwhile notions are the result of comprehension, categorisation, generalisation and so on.

Notions vs. concepts. First of all I think it is necessary to clarify what is meant by the term concept in this paper (on the whole I should say that the meaning of the “Russian” term concept differs greatly from the meaning of the analogous “English” one). So, concept (nation-culture concept) is the most general, absolutely abstracted, but concretely, specifically represented in mind idea of a subject in the whole complex of all the real and potential connections which are culturally marked. Any concept has its own name. Though it can manifest itself in different units (different words, word-combinations, idioms, even texts etc.), it always has its “main”, “fixed” name, as a rule it’s an abstract noun, e.g. love, happiness, fate, life, death, sin etc. Any concept possesses emotiveness, connotations, axiology, but include no inherent images. And now back to the opposition notions vs. concepts. These phenomena are close from the point of view of their ontogenesis at the level of logic, ratio, since they are the result of comprehension, categorisation, generalisation. According to
N.D. Aroutiunova, concept is a notion in the context of culture. So, the axiology of these phenomena is absolutely different, since notions include no evaluations, but concepts correlate with (cultural) values and therefore they are always evaluative.

Concepts vs. (image / conceptual) representations. These phenomena are close axiologically (they are evaluative), but they are different in their ontology – I believe that the structure of concepts includes no images (as I’ve just said), but an image can be easily found in the heart of any representation.

Knowledge vs. (image / conceptual) representations. They differ in their ontology, ontogenesis and axiology. In fact they are the extremes of linear represented first range division of the mentefacts system (for details see: Krasnykh V. – Красных В. «Свой среди чужих»: миф или реальность? М., 2003).

If we consider the mentefacts from the point of view of linguo-culture and their correlation with the hypostases of homo loquens, we can positively maintain that notions and knowledge for the most part belong to the sphere of homo sapiens, and the sphere of homo litteratus includes concepts, representations and a certain part of knowledge (those items which are culturally marked; besides this the very corpus of knowledge, its configuration is culture-specific).

The metaphoric basic level of culture.

Today it can be hypothetically claimed (since broad researches, including cross- and intercultural studies are needed) that the basis metaphors, which are units at this level, can turn out to be belonged to the sphere of homo sapiens. In this case we are talking about the basic metaphors having in their basis an absolutely abstracted “idea” of a subject that can be not reflected by representatives of this or that linguo-culture. For example, the idea of movement is the image / conceptual basis of cognitive basic metaphor, with the help of which we comprehend any human activity – жизненный путь (lit. ‘life path’), дороги / пути пересеклись // разошлись (lit. ‘paths / ways crossed // parted’), зайти в тупик (≈ to reach an
impasse / a dead end / a deadlock), сдвинуться с мертвой точки (lit. ‘to move from a dead point’ ≅ to get things moving; break the deadlock); ввести // войти в курс дела (lit. ‘to put smb. // to go into the course of affairs’ ≅ to bring smb. up-to-date on smth. // to learn the ropes); внести свой вклад (lit. ‘to bring one’s contribution’ ≅ to make one’s contribution); прийти на ум (≅ to come to one’s mind), выскочить / вылететь из головы (lit. ‘to jump / fly out of one’s head’ ≅ to escape one’s mind); слететь с языка (lit. ‘to fly away from one’s tongue’ ≅ to escape one’s lips), как идут дела? (‘how is it going?’), что происходит? (‘what’s going on?’) and so on so forth (the English equivalents of the Russian idioms, marked by the sign “≅”, were found in special dictionaries: Kveselevich D.I. – Квеселевич Д.И. Русско-английский фразеологический словарь. Изд. 2. М., 2000; Lubenskaya S.I. – Лубенская С.И. Большой русско-английский фразеологический словарь. Изд.2. М., 2004).

This idea can find its exteriorisation in cognitive image components. For instance, bird (in this case bird is the name of the “idea”) has a cognitive image component wings, feathers, beak / bill, nest which is metaphorically re-thought in the Russian linguo-culture in the following way: взять под крыло (lit. ‘to take smb. under one’s wing’ = to begin to take care of smb.), чистить перышки (≅ to preen one’s feathers), принести в клювике (lit. ‘to bring in one’s beak / bill’ = to get, prepare and give smth. absolutely ready to be used), вить свое гнездышко (≅ to build one’s nest) etc.

All the examples given above are illustrations of concretisation, explication in the further metaphorisation, partial exteriorisation of the original “image-sense concentration” of the basic metaphor. All such exteriorisations undoubtedly belong to the sphere of homo litteratus.

The basic level of models.

This level, as far as we can see it for today, wholly belongs to the sphere of homo litteratus. Actually, the “containers of models” as such (their content, their sense, e.g. the model of beauty, the model of riches, the model of betrayal etc.), the very fact of their existence / absence and their share in this or that culture, as well as whether they are filled up
or not and the number of units which exteriorise a certain container (from one to open series),
the very repertoire of the units which fulfil the function of a sign-model – all these things are
predetermined by culture and therefore they are culturally marked.

There is no one strictly fixed “formula” for the ratio “container of model vs. sign-
model”. Today we can talk about its three variants:

1) there is one-to-one correspondence – one container ⇔ one sign: the model of
преданность (‘loyalty’) – собака (‘dog’); the model of a поэт (‘poet’) – Пушкин
(Pushkin); the model of an автор романов (‘author of novels’) – Л.Н. Толстой (Leo Tol-
stoy); the model of «настоящий» роман (‘“real” novel’) – романы Л.Н. Толстого (‘novels
by Leo Tolstoy’), etc.;

2) one container ⇔ a certain set of signs; this set is usually fixed but not closed, since
it can be changed; the concrete meanings of the signs can slightly differ: the model of
труженик / труженица (‘male / female hard-worker’) – вол (‘ox’), лошадь (‘horse’), ишак
(‘Asian donkey’), пчела (‘bee’), Золушка (‘Cinderella’), папа Карло (‘papa Carlo’ – the
father of Buratino, the Russian Pinocchio); the model of «далекости» (‘far distance’) – на
краю света (lit. ‘at the edge of world’), у черта на рогах / куличках (lit. ‘at the devils
horns’); куда Макар телят не гонял (lit. ‘to the place Makar didn’t chase his calves’), на
край света (lit. ‘to the edge of the world’), к черту на рога (lit. ‘to the devil’s horns’), за
тридевять земель (lit. ‘over the three-nine lands’);

3) one container ⇔ an open set of signs; this set is not fixed, it includes a multitude of
units, though their quantity it not infinite (according to the laws of language); those units can
play the role of a sign-model: счастье (‘happiness’) – ?, горе (‘sorrow’) – ?, любовь (‘love’)
– ? and so on.

From all the variants represented above, the second one (one container ⇔ a certain set
of signs) seems to be the most “popular” in the Russian linguo-culture.
If we compile series of “containers of models” we can experimentally reveal and analyse as a system the axiology of a certain culture since such series can show the following things: 1) what is significant for the culture and what is ignored; 2) what is the evaluation of those things which are significant (positive or negative); 3) in what signs those significant things are exteriorised. It means that in this case we can systemically demonstrate how this or that culture selects and evaluates different events and phenomena from its own history and the mankind history on the whole.

Thus, the main aims of studying and mapping “containers of models” can be formulated as follows: 1) scientific reconstruction of the general picture of the parameters significant for a certain culture according to which the world around is being evaluated; 2) valid representation of the system of values from the point of view of their hierarchy, i.e. with the account of their position in the general axiological co-ordinates system based on the ideas what is “good” or “bad”, “good” or “evil”, “up” or “down” etc.; 3) revealing the significance for the given culture of these or those values by determination of the position of certain “containers” in the above mentioned general picture – whether they belong to the centre or periphery of it.

The symbolic basic level.

This level, like the basic level of models, obviously belongs to the sphere of homo litteratus. In this case symbol is understood as a unit of linguo-culture, a certain subject of culture, the main function of which is formal substitution without any serious shift in the sense. Other words saying, a phenomenon \((A)\) is substituted by another phenomenon \((B)\), which is simpler from the point of view of its form or nature and belongs to the material world, and is perceived along one of the perceptual channels; the whole complex of all the senses, evaluations and connotations of \((A)\) is being preserved, though some additional senses and connotations of \((B)\) can be attached, but such an attachment does not lead to any crucial change of the position of \((A)\) in the culture, and that’s why \((B)\) can function and be comprehended as \((A)\). For example, in the Russian linguo-culture грязь (‘dirt’; synonym –
hended as (A). For example, in the Russian linguo-culture грязь (‘dirt’; synonym – помой ‘slops’) is a symbol of uncleanness both corporal and spiritual – обливать грязью / помоями (≡ to throw / sling / fling mud / dirt at smb.), грязная история (lit. ‘dirty story’), грязные мысли (lit. ‘dirty thoughts’); грязь (‘dirt’; close to прах, пыль ‘dust’) is a symbol of triviality, contemptibility, the lowest position – втоптать в грязь (≡ to trample smb. in the mud), смеивать с грязью (≡ to drag smb. / smb.’s name through the mud / the mire / the muck), из грязи в князи (≡ to go from rags to riches / from bottom to top).

As we have seen, at the basic level of models there are “containers of models” on the one hand, and signs-models, on the other. At the symbolic basic level there also exist two equivalent planes: what is substituted – a phenomenon (A), and what substitutes – a symbol as such (B). In the sphere of (A) there could be some intersections between cultures, but in the sphere of (B) divergences seem to be much more possible than concurrences.

If we compile series of symbols of a certain culture we can reveal what is significant in the given culture and what is not, how and in what units the significant things are exteriorised, and also get additional clues to comprehension of the other sub-systems of this culture. As I mentioned in the beginning of this paper, all the levels of linguo-culture are not strictly divided or rigidly delimited, vice versa the boundaries between them are flexible and transparent. It means that one and the same phenomenon can play the role of both symbol and model, as well as it can lay in the basis of metaphoric image. For instance, грязь (‘dirt’) is a model of an enormous quantity, a symbol of contemptibility, and at the same time it is an image / conceptual basis for the idiom как грязи (lit. ‘as much as dirt / dust’).

Thus, lingual-cultural identity of homo loquens presupposes that a person knows, understands and can properly use the units of the given sub-systems, since the very aggregate of those units and levels forms the unity of linguo-culture and therefore predetermines the lingual-cultural identity of homo loquens as such.