

*Theme:* The Polysemy of  
approaches in the research  
of culture

## Lesson 2

# Vocabulary:

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- interdisciplinary science – пәнаралық ғылым
- possible to allocate – бөлуге мүмкіндік туындайды
- in modern word usage – сөздің заманауи қолданысы
- natural – artificial – табиғи - жасанды
- influence of the person – адамның әсері
- to result from – нәтижесі
- essential shortcoming – байқалатын жетіспеушілік
- spiritual basis – рухани негіз
- certain society – қандай да бір қоғам
- public life – қоғамдық өмір
- exact explanation – нақты түсініктеме
- set of values – құндылықтар жиынтығы
- multiple-valued- әр түрлі мағыналы

# Introduction

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- **In modern word usage the concept (культура) of culture is extremely multiple-valued, and also scientific-theoretical. As a result, now there are not less than four hundred of scientific definitions of culture which cultural science as the interdisciplinary science is obliged to consider at culture research.**

# Introduction

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- It is possible to allocate some main and most widespread *methodological approaches* which have developed in modern culturological knowledge:
  1. *anthropological approach*
  2. *axiological approach*
  3. *normative approach*
  4. *activity approach*
  5. *sign - symbolic approach*

# Anthropological approach

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- One of the most widespread approaches to definition of culture is **anthropological**. According to it the culture represents everything that is **created by the person**. Definition is under construction on opposition «the natural – artificial», differentiating things and the phenomena having exclusively natural origin ("nature") and connected with human activity and activity (culture).

# Anthropological approach

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- **The anthropological approach results from initial value of culture as cultivation. It extremely expands the sphere of a phenomenon of culture, including in it everything that is connected with influence of the person. In this regard its essential shortcoming is found: between culture and society it is not carried out any distinction. It is characteristic for an anthropological approach: culture and civilization identification.**

# Axiological approach

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- The name of an approach occurs from a philosophical science about values – an axiology. The axiological approach starts with opposition «cultural – uncivilized», sharing social and cultural aspects in human life. In that case public relations and social groups carry to society activity and everything that is connected with valuable development of the world – to culture.

# Axiological approach

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- **Axiological definitions fix one of spiritual bases of culture, but extremely narrow the sphere of functioning of culture, including in it one positive and significant values. For example, if institute of slavery widely known in the history absolutely to delete from culture borders as anti-humane from a position of the modern person, there are not cleared those public norms and representations thanks to which there was possible its long existence.**



# Normative approach

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- The **normative** definitions of culture are very widespread in the western cultural anthropology. According to this direction the culture is the social norms defining behavior of the person. In such understanding culture represents the sum of different types of the acquired behavior based on social standards, the models which are transferring from generation to generation within certain society.

# Activity approach

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- Essentially the different view on culture offers us the **activity approach** which has been rather extended in Russian culturologists (E.S.Markaryan, V.E.Davidovich, Yu.A. Zhdanov, etc.). According to this scientific position, at the heart of life of the person activity – **purposeful and productive activity** lies.

# Activity approach

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- **If all life of the person represents activity, the culture is a special way or technology of activity of the person. The culture sets algorithms and activity models in various spheres of public life (economic, political, art, scientific, religious etc.), thereby acting as way of preservation, reproduction and regulation of all public life.**

# Activity approach

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- **Being too very wide, the activity approach, unlike anthropological definitions, carries out distinction between social and cultural spheres of human life, at the same time emphasizing that in reality they create the difficult differable dialectic unity, as though two parties of one "medal" (activity of the person).**

# Sign - symbolic approach

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- The **sign - symbolic approach** interprets culture as the world of senses, or special not genetic "memory" of human society which is coded, stored and transferred from generation to generation by means of signs. As a sign **the word, gesture or a thing** can act.

# Sign - symbolical approach

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- **As the same word, gesture or a thing can have absolutely various sense and communication with other signs because of features of consciousness and attitude of the people living in different societies, there is a need of "interpretation" of their values and reconstruction of these worlds of senses which make a basis of various cultures.**

# Conclusion

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- **Summing up, it is important to note absence of the conventional (дәстүрлі) universal definitions of culture. In modern cultural science complexity and multidimensionality (әрдеңгейлілік) of culture is recognized, among scientists the opinion on impossibility of an exact explanation of culture within only one methodological approach dominates.**

# Definition

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- **As working definition of the formulation of known Russian-American sociologist P.A.Sorokin: the culture is «set of values and norms which cooperating people own, and set of carriers which socialize and open these values».**