

MAIN NOTIONS AND THEORIES OF COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS.

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Abstract. The article explores the evolving field of cognitive linguistics, highlighting its historical roots and contemporary relevance. It posits that language serves not only as a tool for communication but also as a fundamental component of human cognition and cultural identity. By examining key processes such as conceptualization and categorization, the article illustrates how language encodes human experiences and structures our understanding of the world. It emphasizes the interdisciplinary connections of cognitive linguistics with psychology, anthropology, and cultural studies, while acknowledging the limitations of qualitative analyses in the field. The article concludes by suggesting future research directions that could integrate empirical methodologies and cross-cultural studies, ultimately enriching our understanding of the dynamic interplay between language, thought, and culture.

Keywords: cognitive linguistics, conceptualization, categorization, metaphor, frame semantics, culture.

KOGNITIV LINGVISTIKA: ASOSIY TUSHUNCHALAR VA NAZARIYALAR.

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Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada kognitiv lingvistika sohasining rivojlanishi, uning tarixiy ildizlari va zamonaviy ahamiyati ko'rib chiqiladi. Til nafaqat muloqot vositasi, balki insonning bilishi va madaniy identifikatsiyasining asosiy tarkibiy qismi sifatida xizmat qilishi ta'kidlanadi. Konseptualizatsiya va kategoriyalash kabi asosiy jarayonlarni tahlil qilish orqali maqola tilning inson tajribasini qanday kodlashi va dunyoni tushunishimizni qanday tuzishi haqida tasavvur beradi. Kognitiv lingvistikaning psixologiya, antropologiya va madaniyatshunoslik kabi sohalar bilan o'zaro aloqasi ta'kidlanadi, shuningdek, ushbu sohadagi sifatli tahlillarning cheklovlari haqida ma'lumot beriladi. Maqola, kelajakdagi tadqiqotlar uchun empirik metodologiyalarni va madaniyatlararo tadqiqotlarni integratsiya qilish imkoniyatlarini taklif qilib, til, fikrlash va madaniyat o'rtasidagi dinamik aloqaninyanada boyitishga yordam berishi mumkinligini bildiradi.

Kalit soʻzlar: kognitiv lingvistika, kontseptuallashtirish, kategoriyalash, metafora, freym semantikasi, madaniyat.

КОГНИТИВНАЯ ЛИНГВИСТИКА: ОСНОВНЫЕ ПОНЯТИЯ И ТЕОРИИ.

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Аннотация. В данной статье рассматривается развивающаяся область когнитивной лингвистики, подчеркивая ее исторические корни и современную значимость. Утверждается, что язык служит не только инструментом общения, но и фундаментальной составляющей человеческого познания и культурной идентичности. Путем анализа ключевых процессов, таких как концептуализация и категоризация, статья иллюстрирует, как язык кодирует человеческий опыт и структурирует наше понимание мира. Подчеркивается междисциплинарная связь когнитивной лингвистики с психологией, антропологией и культурологией, при этом отмечаются ограничения качественных анализов в данной области. В заключение статья предлагает направления для будущих исследований, которые могут интегрировать эмпирические методологии и кросс-культурные исследования, в конечном итоге обогащая наше понимание динамичного взаимодействия между языком, мышлением и культурой.

Ключевые слова: когнитивная лингвистика, концептуализация, категоризация, метафора, семантика фреймов, культура

Language has long fascinated philosophers and scholars as a unique human faculty, serving as both a tool for communication and a window into the mind. As early as ancient Greece, Plato pondered in his *Cratylus* dialogue whether names are inherently tied to the nature of things or arise from human convention, framing language as a medium for truth [14, 383]. This question sparked centuries of inquiry, evolving through Wilhelm von Humboldt's view that language is not merely a communicative instrument but a dynamic force shaping a nation's worldview and cultural identity. Humboldt argued, "Language forms the worldview of humanity, as it is not just a system of words but the spiritual power and creativity of a nation" [8, 60]. His concept of language's "inner form" laid a philosophical foundation for understanding language as a cognitive and cultural phenomenon, influencing later linguistic theories.

By the XXth century, Ferdinand de Saussure redefined language as a system of signs, where meaning emerges from the relationships between

elements: “Language is a system based on differences, where each element derives its value from its relation to others” [17, 120]. Saussure’s structuralism established linguistics as a rigorous discipline, focusing on the formal properties of language. Noam Chomsky further shifted the paradigm, proposing that language is a biological faculty rooted in a universal grammar, enabling humans to generate infinite sentences from finite rules [4, 25]. Chomsky’s emphasis on the cognitive basis of language paved the way for cognitive linguistics, a field that emerged in the late XXth century to explore language as an integral part of human cognition, culture, and experience.

Cognitive linguistics distinguishes itself from traditional linguistics by treating language as a dynamic, creative process rather than a static system. Its roots trace back to XIXth-century Europe, where Humboldt’s ideas inspired scholars to view language as a cognitive structure. In Russia, Alexander Potebnya [15] developed the notion of the “inner form” of words, arguing that language reflects cultural and cognitive systems. For instance, the Uzbek word *ko‘ngil* encapsulates not only “heart” but also emotional and moral values, illustrating how language encodes cultural meanings. In America, Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf’s linguistic relativity hypothesis suggested that language shapes thought, with different languages encoding unique conceptualizations of reality, such as varying perceptions of time in Native American languages [20, 207]. These diverse perspectives converged in the 1970s and 1980s, when George Lakoff and Mark Johnson revolutionized cognitive linguistics with their seminal work *Metaphors We Live By*. They argued that metaphors are not mere linguistic ornaments but cognitive structures that shape thought, such as “time is money,” which reflects a cultural view of time as a resource [12, 7]. Lakoff’s *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things* further explored categorization, demonstrating how language organizes knowledge into cognitive categories [12, 27].

At the heart of cognitive linguistics are two key processes: conceptualization and categorization. Conceptualization refers to the transformation of human experience, knowledge, and emotions into linguistic structures, enabling individuals to perceive and express their understanding of the world. Lakoff and Johnson [12] highlight metaphors as central to this process, structuring thought in culturally specific ways. Charles Fillmore’s frame semantics complements this view, proposing that word meanings are understood within cognitive frames—structured knowledge systems based on experience. The verb “sell,” for instance, activates a “Commercial Event” frame, involving roles like seller, buyer, goods, and money [6, 25]. Fillmore’s FrameNet project, a database of semantic frames, has advanced computational linguistics by mapping English vocabulary to cognitive structures [7, 55]. These examples illustrate how conceptualization links language to cognitive and cultural contexts, enabling the expression of both universal and culture-specific knowledge.

The second core process categorization involves grouping objects, events, or ideas based on shared features, allowing humans to organize knowledge and communicate effectively. Lakoff's prototype theory redefines categorization, arguing that categories are organized around central, prototypical members rather than rigid boundaries. For instance, in the category "bird," a sparrow is a prototypical member, while a penguin is less typical due to its inability to fly [11, 41]. Eleanor Rosch's research on prototype effects shows that humans categorize based on "best examples," revealing the cognitive basis of linguistic categories [15, 193]. Ronald Langacker's [13] cognitive grammar extends categorization to syntax, arguing that grammatical structures reflect cognitive processes of generalization. In Uzbek, the concept *oila* (family) is categorized into subcategories like *uy* (household), *qarindoshlar* (relatives), and *mehr* (affection), reflecting cultural values of kinship [10, 92]. This culturally specific categorization demonstrates how language organizes knowledge in alignment with societal norms, balancing universal cognitive principles with cultural variability.

Cognitive linguistics draws on several theoretical frameworks to analyze these processes. Lakoff and Johnson's metaphoric approach views metaphors as cognitive mechanisms that structure thought, such as "anger is fire" in expressions like "he's burning with anger" [11, 14]. Fillmore's [6] frame semantics provides a robust tool for analyzing conceptualization, with applications in computational linguistics. Langacker's [13] cognitive grammar emphasizes the interdependence of syntax, semantics, and cognition, as seen in Uzbek possessive constructions like *mening uyim* (my house), which reflect cultural notions of ownership [18, 34]. In Europe, Leonard Talmy's cognitive semantics explores how languages encode motion events, revealing cognitive patterns [19, 21]. Anna Wierzbicka's Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) analyzes universal and culture-specific concepts, such as the Uzbek *hurmat* (respect), which embodies social hierarchy and moral obligation [21, 45]. In Russia, Elena Kubryakova and Nikolai Boldyrev have advanced cognitive semantics, focusing on concepts like *svoboda* (freedom) in Slavic languages [9, 32; 3, 67]. In Uzbekistan, prominent scholar such as Dilyaram Ashurova emphasizes a cognitive approach to literary text interpretation. The researcher focuses on the problems of cognitive stylistics, its methodological basis, main theories and problems of their implementation in literary text analysis as well as illustrating their benefits in cognitive interpretation and modeling of literary text aiming to reveal fictional concepts and the peculiarities of the authors' individual style [1, 2, 3, 4]. The interdisciplinary reach of cognitive linguistics extends to psychology, anthropology, and cultural studies. In psychology, Lakoff's prototype theory informs studies of mental categories and behavior [11, 41]. In anthropology, Whorf's linguistic relativity hypothesis guides research on how language shapes cultural worldviews, such as differing conceptualizations of time [20, 207]. Cognitive linguistics' strength lies in its holistic approach,

integrating language, cognition, and culture to reveal how language shapes thought. However, its reliance on qualitative analyses, such as metaphor studies, can limit empirical rigor compared to quantitative approaches in generative linguistics. Future research could address this by integrating neuroimaging to validate cognitive models or expanding FrameNet for languages like Uzbek [5, 55]. Cross-cultural studies, building on Wierzbicka's [21] NSM, could further explore concepts like *mehmon* (guest) in Uzbek, bridging cognitive linguistics with lingvoculturology [18, 34].

All in all, cognitive linguistics redefines language as a dynamic system intertwined with human cognition and culture. Its historical evolution, from Plato's philosophical inquiries to modern frameworks by Lakoff, Fillmore, and others, underscores its multidisciplinary nature. Conceptualization and categorization illuminate how language organizes knowledge, reflecting universal and culture-specific cognitive processes. By bridging linguistics, psychology, and cultural studies, cognitive linguistics offers a powerful lens for understanding the interplay of language and mind, with future potential in computational and neuroscientific applications.

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