

## Cognitive Linguistics as a Field in Linguistics

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**Abstract:** This article highlights the basic concepts, research methods and directions in the field of cognitive linguistics, the history of cognitive science and the place of cognitive linguistics in it, the main concepts within cognitive linguistics (cognitive semantics, cognitive grammar, etc.), the conceptual apparatus of cognitive linguistics, the corresponding terminology, methodology of cognitive linguistics.

**Keywords:** language functions, language competence, system structure of language, subject and object of cognitive linguistics, principles of cognitive linguistics, universals and variability in language, embodiment and conceptual structure, frame theory, theory of conceptual domains, categorization, cognitive models, prototype theory, metaphor and metonymy in cognitive semantic.



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**The main part.** Cognitive linguistics (CL) is a relatively new field in linguistics that has been actively developing since the 1970s. This approach focuses on the relationship between language and cognition, and how people perceive and conceptualize the world through language. Unlike traditional linguistic fields such as structural and generative linguistics, which treat language as an abstract system of rules, cognitive linguistics asserts that language is inseparable from cognitive processes and is closely connected to our perceptions, thoughts, and actions.

The goal of this article is to analyze the fundamental principles of cognitive linguistics, examine its key concepts, and highlight the impact of the cognitive approach on the development of linguistic theories and methods for studying language.

One of the core tenets of cognitive linguistics is that language is not just a system of signs but a reflection of cognitive processes. According to this approach, linguistic structures are formed and evolve based on how a person perceives and interprets the world around them. Language, therefore, is not an abstract entity but is deeply connected to perception, memory, attention, and other aspects of cognitive activity.

In cognitive linguistics, the focus is on how language is used to organize and categorize one's experience. For example, CL examines phenomena such as metaphors, conceptual schemes, and ways in which language helps us represent various aspects of the world (time, space, actions).

One of the most important aspects of cognitive linguistics is the study of metaphors. Linguists working in this field argue that metaphors are not merely elements of poetic speech or rhetoric but

are fundamental tools for organizing our thinking. Metaphors are ways in which people conceptualize abstract ideas through more concrete and accessible images. For example, the conceptual metaphor "life is a journey" is expressed in phrases such as "the path of life," "a turning point," or "going through life."

The works of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, such as *"Metaphors We Live By"* (1980), laid the foundation for understanding metaphor as a central element of human thinking, helping us comprehend and organize our experiences and actions. In this context, metaphors are seen not only as linguistic expressions but as deeply embedded in cognitive structures.

Another significant topic in cognitive linguistics is the analysis of semantics and the meaning of words in terms of cognitive processes. Cognitive linguists argue that the meaning of a word is not limited to a set of abstract formal characteristics, as assumed by traditional linguistic theories. Instead, the meaning of a word is connected to conceptual structures formed based on individual experience and cultural contexts.

Network models of meaning suggest that each word has a "center" and is linked to other words that form a semantic network. The essence of these models is that the meaning of a word is determined by its relationships with other words and concepts within the broader cognitive structure.

Cognitive linguistics places emphasis on studying how people construct mental representations of the world through language. In this context, mental images and schemas play a significant role in how people interpret the world. These conceptual schemas include space (perception of direction, extent, position), time (both linear and cyclical), as well as various abstract concepts such as force, movement, etc.

These mental representations are actively used in language to express thoughts, describe phenomena, and transfer knowledge. For example, using space in metaphors (e.g., "new opportunities on the horizon") or time in language (e.g., using temporal markers as a reflection of the duration of events) illustrates how linguistic structure helps a person conceptualize and organize their thoughts.

Semantics in cognitive linguistics is considered to be more than just the lexical meaning of words. The focus is on not only the meanings of words but also on how they combine to form more complex conceptual structures. Pragmatics also plays a crucial role in cognitive linguistics as it examines how context influences the interpretation of utterances. For example, how people use linguistic tools to express intentions, emotions, judgments, and other aspects of communication.

Another important theme is cognitive grammar, which argues that grammatical structures are not separate from semantics. This means that grammar and syntax should be viewed in the context of cognitive processes, rather than as abstract formal systems. In cognitive grammar, the emphasis is on the idea that grammatical constructions can be interpreted as a way of expressing certain conceptual schemas and structures based on perception of the world.

Cognitive linguistics also studies idiomatic expressions and phraseology in terms of how they reflect conceptual and cultural aspects of thinking. Idioms, such as "put the brakes on someone" or "make a mountain out of a molehill," can be seen as a product of cognitive processes that are not always explainable by standard formal models but which play an essential role in organizing and conveying experience.

Cognitive linguistics interacts closely with several other scientific disciplines, such as psychology, philosophy, neurolinguistics, and anthropology. For example, cognitive psychology helps explain how concepts and structures form in the human brain, while neurolinguistics studies the brain processes involved in language use and meaning interpretation.

Other fields that are closely linked with cognitive linguistics include sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology, which help understand how cultural and social factors influence the perception and use of language. Cognitive linguistics thus offers a new approach to the study of language that ties it to broader processes of cognition and social practice.

Cognitive linguistics represents an important and promising direction in contemporary linguistics. This approach contributes significantly to our understanding of the relationship between language and cognitive processes, allowing us to better comprehend the role of language in organizing human experience. Unlike traditional theories, cognitive linguistics draws attention to how language not only reflects but also actively shapes our perception of the world. Research in metaphor, semantics, grammar, and other areas opens new avenues for understanding cognitive mechanisms and the interaction between language, thought, and culture.

Thus, cognitive linguistics will continue to develop, integrating achievements from linguistics, psychology, philosophy, and other fields, and will remain a crucial part of scientific inquiry in the study of language in the future.

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