

COGNITIVE APPROACH IN MODERN SYNTAX. COGNITIVE CATEGORIES OF SYNTAX

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ZAMONAVIY SINTAKSISDA KOGNITIV YONDASHUV. SINTAKSISNING KOGNITIV KATEGORIYALARI

КОГНИТИВНЫЙ ПОДХОД В СОВРЕМЕННОМ СИНТАКСИСЕ. КОГНИТИВНЫЕ КАТЕГОРИИ СИНТАКСИСА

Abstract

The article examines the field of cognitive syntax and its role in linguistics. It analyzes the logical-cognitive interpretation of sentences, the correlation between the semantic structure of linguistic units in the speaker's mind and cognitive categories, as well as the internal mechanisms connecting syntax and semantics. The study also considers human creative and pragmatic speech activity from a cognitive perspective. The article highlights the importance of cognitive syntax methodology for understanding the cognitive aspects of syntactic structures, sentence expressions, and their representation in discourse.

Key words

cognitive syntax, sentence meaning, logical-cognitive interpretation, linguistic creativity, discourse, syntactic structure, pragmatics, semantics, mental representation.

Annotatsiya

Maqolada kognitiv sintaksis sohasi va uning tilshunoslikdagi roli tahlil qilinadi. Gapning mantiqiy-kognitiv interpretatsiyasi, so'zlovchi ongidagi til birliklari mazmuniy tuzilishi va tafakkur kategoriyalari o'rtasidagi bog'liqlik, sintaksis va semantika o'rtasidagi ichki mexanizmlar, shuningdek, insonning kreativ va pragmatik nutqiy faoliyati kognitiv yo'naltirish nuqtai nazaridan ko'rib chiqiladi. Maqola sintaktik strukturalarning kognitiv aspekti, gap-ifoza va

diskursdagi representatsiya jarayonlarini tushunishda kognitiv sintaksis metodologiyasining ahamiyatini ta'kidlaydi.

Kalit so'zlar

kognitiv sintaksis, gap mazmuni, mantiqiy-kognitiv interpretatsiya, lingvokreativlik, diskurs, sintaktik struktura, pragmatika, semantika, mental representatsiya.

Аннотация

В данной статье рассматривается когнитивный синтаксис и его роль в лингвистике. Анализируются логико-когнитивная интерпретация предложения, корреляция между семантической структурой языковых единиц в сознании говорящего и когнитивными категориями, а также внутренние механизмы, связывающие синтаксис и семантику. Исследование учитывает творческую и прагматическую речевую активность человека с когнитивной точки зрения. Подчеркивается значение методологии когнитивного синтаксиса для понимания когнитивных аспектов синтаксических структур, выражений предложений и их репрезентации в дискурсе.

Ключевые слова

когнитивный синтаксис, значение предложения, логико-когнитивная интерпретация, лингвокреативность, дискурс, синтаксическая структура, прагматика, семантика, ментальная репрезентация.

The cognitive approach in modern syntax allows us to reveal the complex relationship between conceptual categories and specific linguistic competencies, as well as the distinctive linguistic means through which they are expressed. In our view, grammar is grounded in knowledge about reality. Therefore, it is timely to consider that all grammatical categories, particularly syntactic categories, possess a cognitive status. In this context, the linguist E.S.Kubryakova's remark is particularly relevant: the primary task of a linguist "consists in identifying the influence of different perspectives of individuals on the various formations of a given situation" [1].

At the current stage of the development of linguistic science, the cognitive-discursive paradigm is recognized as one of the most rapidly advancing research methods in linguistics. From this perspective, introducing the notion of "cognitive" into syntax is considered particularly important. To substantiate this idea and apply the term in the study of linguistic phenomena, it is necessary to refer to the foundations of cognitive science. Cognitive science, as an independent field of

research and a discipline, is relatively new. Its early roots can be traced in the series of dictionaries *Penguin English Linguistics*, edited by D.Crystal, and in D.Aitchison's book *Introducing Language and Mind* [2].

In these studies, the concept of "cognitive" is defined broadly: cognitive science examines the interconnections between human thought and speech abilities across all domains of knowledge, including artificial intelligence, linguistics, psychology, philosophy, and logic. Such a broad definition of cognitive science is particularly reflected in the research of Russian linguist E.S.Kubryakova and in the work of scholars affiliated with the school she established. Overall, defining the subject matter of cognitive syntax is highly necessary, as it plays a crucial role in approaches and methods for studying discourse, particularly in identifying the structure of cognitive grammar, sentences, and discourse [1].

Previously, issues now addressed within cognitive syntax, particularly in cognitive grammar, were not regarded as a completely new and independent field of study. In fact, such an approach complements cognitive science and more specifically, linguistics by applying the cognitive-discursive paradigm to the analysis of all levels of linguistic structure. This framework is particularly appropriate for accurately understanding and analyzing phenomena observed in language, such as syntactic synonymy, antonymy, and homonymy, which can be considered objects of study within cognitive syntax.

Overall, considering the existing views on cognitive science and cognitive linguistics, it is both necessary and important to introduce the term "cognitive syntax" into contemporary linguistics. As a foundation for this approach in linguistics, one can refer to the theories of expressive syntax developed by O.V.Aleksandrova, her students, and followers, which have been applied and elaborated within their research [3]. Indeed, the cognitive approach in modern syntax allows for the study of the complex interrelations between conceptual categories of thought and understanding, as well as the ways in which these categories are expressed through specific linguistic means. In our view, this perspective further stimulates linguists' interest in exploring the natural categories of language. We believe that the establishment of the cognitive approach as a leading scientific direction in linguistics and related disciplines has created the necessity to reconsider the essence of many linguistic phenomena in a comprehensive manner. From this perspective, the cognitive-discursive paradigm is increasingly relevant for the study of various levels of linguistic units. Against this background, the present study focuses primarily on issues of cognitive syntax, which constitutes one of the central directions of cognitive grammar, namely the investigation of higher-level units within the hierarchical system of language. In

particular, the study prioritizes the analysis of the linguistic-cognitive foundations of syntactic synonymy, antonymy, and homonymy in the Uzbek language. According to linguist E.O.Mendzher, “such studies make a significant contribution to cognitive science and, more broadly, to the development of cognitive linguistics as a whole” [4].

In our view, the necessity of addressing cognitive syntax can be explained by the following factors. First, the development of text linguistics has led to the division of syntax into two directions, indicating that the sentence is not the sole fundamental unit at the syntactic level; rather, higher-level units such as paragraphs and texts are also recognized by linguists. Second, analysis of the scholarly literature dedicated to this issue shows that the study of grammatical phenomena in spoken expression requires consideration not only of linguistic but also extralinguistic factors. In particular, such studies emphasize the importance of examining participants’ psychological states in communicative interactions both the speaker and the addressee as well as cognitive processes at the formal-logical level, including transitions to thought, reasoning, and emotional experiences [5].

Cognitive syntax is regarded as a branch of cognitive grammar that studies the transfer of human thought strategies and conceptual categories into language. Therefore, the distinctive feature of this approach in modern syntax, compared to traditional syntax, is its focus on examining thought and conceptual categories and the ways in which they are expressed through specific linguistic phenomena. Indeed, this approach relies on knowledge of grammar, including all grammatical categories in language. In this framework, syntax inherently acquires a cognitive status. Consequently, the linguist-researcher is required to study the various forms of linguistic phenomena in different communicative situations” [6].

In European linguistics, a number of studies have addressed cognitive syntax. Notably, the works of J.Aitchison, N.N.Boldyrev, A.A.Khudyakova, N.A.Kobrina, M.Ya.Bloch, I.I.Pribytok, L.A.Furs, M.Ya.Bloch, E.F.Serebrennikova, and other scholars can be cited. These studies emphasize that speech activity should be examined as one of the highest manifestations of “cognition” an iceberg-like structure in which cognitive abilities are underpinned not only by linguistic, but also by non-linguistic phenomena. Such research highlights the need to study cognitive capacities as modalities that integrate both linguistic and extralinguistic elements [7]. Thus, this approach increasingly emphasizes the need to reconsider the syntactic structure of language and its associated terminological system in close connection with a “cognitive schema.” These schemas constitute a system beyond language referred to as “mental competence.” This, in turn, further underscores the necessity of examining the functional aspects of linguistic phenomena.

Summarizing the main postulates of cognitive syntax, the present study focuses primarily on the following aspects:

1. The propositional structure of the sentence (its constituents) is analyzed from the perspective of cognitive categories, and the prototypical categories of sentences are also identified. Issues such as ambiguity, synonymy, and objectivity in syntactic units are examined from a scientific standpoint. Additionally, the study investigates how the linguistic representation of the world is reflected in the formal-structural organization of syntactic units and proposes the cognitive modeling of syntactic units within the framework of syntax. Furthermore, the identification of ontological concept categories and the exploration of general theoretical issues related to the categorization of language are defined as key directions of this research.

2. This study places particular emphasis on investigating thought processes and the linguistic mechanisms through which they occur. In particular, linguistic creativity in syntax is analyzed as a general theoretical problem, revealing the content and essence of the issue of creativity. Moreover, the research examines the interrelation of creative potentials with the regularities of human speech activity, specifically highlighting the creative aspects of syntax from a scientific perspective. Additionally, the study provides a detailed analysis of the emergence of linguistic creativity a key direction in cognitive syntax demonstrating its close connection with the heuristic speech-cognitive capabilities of the addressee.

3. In the process of organizing the content of a text or discourse, the study provides a cognitive (targeted) interpretation of the potential roles played by synonyms.

4. Empirical data are provided through text corpora that demonstrate linguistic creativity not only at the syntactic level but across all levels of language. Furthermore, at the stage of cognitive syntax, there arises an opportunity to study comprehensively all processes encompassing specific systems and models related to the comprehension of connected speech and discourse. It is worth emphasizing that at this point, syntax is closely intertwined with cognitive semantics. In this sense, cognitive syntax can be interpreted as a direction that reflects language structures as a product of human cognitive activity aimed at understanding reality, revealing the deep, internal layers of semantics.

It is evident that within the framework of cognitive syntax, there exists the possibility to examine various aspects of categorizing linguistic units associated with the actualization of sentences in specific communicative situations, as well as the methods and mechanisms for their study and application. Thus, a cognitive approach to syntax, grounded in the principle of “cognitive reality,” serves not only

to represent units formed in particular utterances but also to provide a deeper understanding of the communicative goals and meanings conveyed. In other words, this approach allows for the selection and study of essential and relevant features from among various linguistic hypotheses regarding sentence structure, predicates, and text, from the perspective of cognitive reality, which is of paramount importance for cognitive syntax.

In this approach, the form and content of a sentence may not always perfectly align; however, the primary focus is on ensuring that the utterance as a representation corresponds appropriately to the communicative situation, context, and conditions of speech. In this sense, cognitive structures that adhere to the principle of cognitive consistency are manifested within the internal content of linguistic expressions.

However, in our view, research on cognitive syntax to date has not sufficiently revealed the interrelations between thought processes and language structures that belong to other domains of sentence content formation, nor the deep mechanisms of cognitive systems that generally rely on human reasoning and cognition during speech activity. Furthermore, clear and systematic conclusions have not yet been drawn regarding the internal, deep mechanisms that mediate the relationship between syntax and semantics, the nature of human creativity based on language and thought, and the various syntactic constructions that emerge in accordance with the dynamic character of human cognitive activity.

The mechanisms by which a speaker structures the knowledge relied upon in forming sentence meaning, as well as the factors influencing this process, remain insufficiently studied. Investigating these issues, in turn, necessitates a comprehensive examination of the interrelation between logical organization of thought and specific syntactic structures.

Based on the above, it is considered appropriate not to limit the analysis of a sentence to its traditional definition solely as a linguistic unit that is, as a unit corresponding to the semantic invariant at the propositional level but to approach it from the perspective of cognitive syntax as a logical-cognitive interpretation.

In our view, this approach is relatively well-founded, as the study of the semantic categories of a sentence requires examining the syntactic level in close connection with both the semantic and expressive levels, while also taking into account the pragmatic field and the speaker's various speech activities. At the same time, it is undeniable that in studying sentence structures and the mechanisms of their interaction, language levels (stages) and the speaker's mental identity serve as a fundamental basis. In other words, analyzing sentence structures from a cognitive perspective allows for a deeper understanding of the various forms of thought and

reflection that occur in the process of human comprehension of reality, as well as the pragmatic factors influencing meaning formation and the mechanisms by which they are incorporated into sentence content.

In a cognitive approach to syntax, it is appropriate to rely on theoretical principles and evidence developed in various disciplines such as philosophy and logic. Therefore, it becomes necessary to study language within the framework of its logical-cognitive and interpretative (explanatory) functions. The interpretative function of language, in particular, requires investigation not only in terms of expressing knowledge through linguistic means but also with respect to how humans understand and perceive the world, as well as how knowledge is represented in discourse.

Accordingly, linguistic units that exist in the speaker's or writer's mind, manifesting as a basis for logical evaluation but not yet reaching the stage of communicative or linguistic interpretation, are considered objects of study in cognitive syntax in terms of the correlation and interrelation between their semantic structure and cognitive categories. In this context, one of the essential stages of research in cognitive syntax is the description of linguistic units based on logical-cognitive interpretation. This approach allows for the step-by-step analysis of any expression in sentence semantics in fully logical form, within the structure of discourse, enabling the identification of the mental capacities and cognitive characteristics involved in the representation of linguistic knowledge.

The cognitive approach to syntax that we propose serves to complement, in a certain sense, the existing research paradigm by encompassing the cognitive aspects of syntactic structures, particularly issues related to sentence-utterance and syntactic representation. The scientific perspectives and research intentions discussed above further enrich the conceptual and terminological framework of cognitive syntax methodology within the scope of logical-cognitive foundations. In particular, within this approach, terms such as "syntactic factors," "logical-semantic factors," and "discursive factors" are actively introduced into scholarly discourse and applied as key categories in analysis.

In conclusion, cognitive syntax emerges in linguistics as a field of study focused on the logical-cognitive interpretation of sentences. It enables the analysis of the correlation between the semantic structure of linguistic units present in the speaker's or writer's mind and cognitive categories. Furthermore, it investigates the deep mechanisms underlying the relationship between syntax and semantics, in conjunction with human creativity, pragmatic activity, and speech context.

Through a cognitive approach, sentence structures are analyzed step by step in terms of semantic and pragmatic aspects, revealing the mental representation of

knowledge within discourse. Such analysis facilitates a broader understanding of the cognitive aspects of syntactic structures, including issues related to sentence-utterance and syntactic representation. Additionally, the methodology of cognitive syntax is developed with respect to the speaker's activity, logical-semantic factors, and discursive factors, providing a foundation for a deeper investigation of language facts and speech processes.

Overall, cognitive syntax establishes the necessary theoretical and methodological groundwork for studying language within the framework of its logical-cognitive and interpretative functions.

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