# THE ROLE OF SCENARIOS IN COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS

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**Annotation:** This paper explores the scenario cognitive model as a key framework in cognitive linguistics, focusing on how humans perceive, process, and interpret information from the external environment. Scenarios allow individuals to anticipate events, organize knowledge, and respond adaptively by structuring experiences into interrelated components known as slots. Each slot represents essential elements of an event, such as participants, actions, instruments, and contextual factors like time and place. Drawing on the works of C. Fillmore, V. A. Maslova, E. Sweetser, and Sh. Safarov, the study examines the theoretical foundations of scenarios, their connection with frames, and their role in semantic analysis. By highlighting how scenarios facilitate step-by-step processing of information and uncover the core meaning of events, the paper underscores their significance in understanding human cognition and linguistic representation.

**Key words:** Scenario, cognitive model, cognitive linguistics, frame, semantic roles, event representation, human perception, information processing

In the process by which humanity understands the world, the reception, processing, and interpretation of external information constitute one of the most relevant areas of analysis. One of the cognitive models developed to explain this process is the scenario model. Through scenarios, individuals can predict everyday events on the basis of probability and respond accordingly to incoming information. A scenario enables a person not only to receive information passively, but also to revise it and actively convey it to a speaker, thus serving as an essential cognitive mechanism. Past experiences stored in human consciousness play a significant role in the formation of mental scenarios.

In the 1970s, in response to dominant semantic theories in American linguistics that attempted to define word meaning through sets of necessary and sufficient conditions, the linguist Charles Fillmore proposed an alternative to what he referred to as the "checklist theory of meaning." As part of this proposal, he introduced the use of frames and scenarios. Regarding the use of the concept scene in cognitive linguistics, Fillmore states:

"I use the term scene in the broadest possible sense, including not only visual scenes, but also familiar types of internal experiences, culturally standardized scenarios, organizational structures, habitual activities, and bodily postures."

He also notes that in the future development of linguistics, the term domain may replace the concept of scene. Concerning the application of the frame-based cognitive model, Fillmore explains:

"I use the frame model for any system of linguistic choice. In its simplest form, it involves sets of words; however, frames also play an important role in the selection of grammatical rules or linguistic categories. This shows that prototype scenes can be interconnected. From a linguistic

perspective, these elements are noteworthy because they are not presented as independent approaches to linguistic analysis, but rather as parts of a broader paradigm closely linked to the idea of scenes."[1]. From the views expressed by this scholar, it can be understood that frames and scenarios are cognitively interconnected models.

The Uzbek scholar D. Ashurova explains the scenario cognitive model as follows: "scenario (a scheme of events; knowledge about events in dynamics; a synopsis of development—such as a fight, arrest, wedding, fire, driving, examination, game, or trip)[2]. Indeed, as the scholar emphasizes, events that occur in reality are based on certain schemas. Although not all events follow these schemas exactly, they are nevertheless analyzed and understood in human cognition through similar schematic patterns. Similarly, the Russian linguist V. A. Maslova, in her textbook Cognitive Linguistics, defines a scenario as "a description of the most important stages of an action process." She notes that scenarios are developed through text interpretation. For example, the description of a pack of wolves in V.Vysotsky's poem "There Is a Wolf Hunt…" makes it possible to establish the scenario of an ambush (облава), which involves surrounding the animal's location and then driving it toward the hunters."[3]. Based on Maslova's definition, it can be stated that the name of a scenario reflects its most central and defining action.

Professor Eve Elliot Sweetser, a linguist at the University of California, expresses the following view on the scenario cognitive model: "Only context tells us what kind of scenario it is"[4]. Indeed, every scenario formed in human cognition is associated with a specific context. Events in reality may correspond to, or resemble, a particular scenario stored in human memory.

Professor Shahriyor Safarov defines a scenario as "a model representation of interrelated facts characteristic of a typical event, reflecting their internal coherence[5]". The scholar also notes that this cognitive model was first introduced into linguistics by artificial intelligence researchers R. Shank and R. Abelson. According to Shank and Abelson, scenarios are necessary for representing the sequence of events and their interconnections, and each scenario consists of smaller components known as slots.

Slots are minimal semantic units that encode information such as the roles and purposes of event participants. Within the scenario model, these slots acquire semantic significance, and semantic roles in the development of events are interpreted differently by various linguists. In particular, J. Fillmore argues that semantic roles represent the memory-based structure of an ongoing event

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[1] An Introduction of Cognitive Linguistics. Friedrich Ungerer, Hans-Jörg Schmid. Pearson-Longman. Second Edition. 2006. p.172; 396.

[2] Cognitive Linguistics. (Kognitiv lingvistika). O'quv qo'llanma. Ashurova D.U., Galiyeva M.R.-Toshkent 2018; 43-bet, 107 bet.

[3] Maslova, V. A. (2005). *Cognitive Linguistics* [Учебное пособие]. Minsk: [Publisher]. pp. 47, 254.

[4] Cognitive Linguistics Research. René Dirven Ronald W. Langacker John R. Taylor. Edited by Theo Janssen Gisela Redeker. New York-1999, p.152, 279

[5] Safarov, Sh. (2006). *Cognitive Linguistics* [Kognitiv tilshunoslik]. Jizzakh: Sangzor. pp. 35, 91.

scenario[6]. As an illustrative model, the scholar proposes classifying the semantic roles of the actor into eight groups:

1. **Actor** – the subject performing the action
2. **Recipient** – the receiver of the action
3. **Instrument** – the means by which the action is carried out
4. **Object** – the entity affected by the action
5. **Reason** – the cause of the action
6. **Aim** – the purpose of the action
7. **Place** – the spatial setting
8. **Time** – the temporal setting

These slots may vary depending on the specific scenario context.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, scenarios provide a powerful cognitive framework for understanding how information from the external environment is perceived, interpreted, and integrated into human thought in a structured, step-by-step manner. They allow individuals to anticipate events, organize incoming information, and respond adaptively based on prior experiences and established mental schemas. By breaking down events into discrete components, or slots, scenarios make it possible to identify the roles, relationships, and causal connections among participants, objects, and actions within a given context. This slot-based organization not only facilitates comprehension of complex sequences but also highlights the underlying semantic structure of events, enabling a deeper insight into their essential meaning. Consequently, scenarios serve as a bridge between external occurrences and internal cognitive representations, offering a systematic method to analyze, interpret, and communicate the fundamental significance of human experiences.

**References:**

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3. Maslova, V. A. (2005). Cognitive Linguistics [Учебное пособие]. Minsk: [Publisher]. pp. 47, 254.

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[6] Safarov, Sh. (2006). *Cognitive Linguistics* [Kognitiv tilshunoslik]. Jizzakh: Sangzor. pp. 37, 91.

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