

COGNITIVE LEXICOLOGY: THE MENTAL FORMATION OF WORD MEANING

U. M. G'ulomxonovna, bachelor's student,
Karshi international university,
Supervisor: A. A. Abdurakhmonova
Teacher at Karshi international university

Abstract

This article discusses a number of significant aspects related to the mental formation of word meaning, which constitutes a core component of cognitive lexicology. The paper also examines various states connected with human cognition, as well as their widely observed manifestations. By providing an understanding of how words are correctly conceptualized and directed into human consciousness with their intended meanings, this study aims to enhance learners' comprehension of cognitive lexicology and to foster a deeper awareness of its fundamental nature.

Key words

cognitive linguistics, word meaning and its features, communication, mental model.

Word meaning is shaped in the human mind through conceptual metaphors. In addition, Ronald W. Langacker developed the theory of cognitive grammar, which has become a cornerstone of introduction.

Cognitive linguistics is a field that studies lexical units in relation to human cognitive activity, experience, and the mechanisms through which spoken words are understood. According to this approach, words do not directly reflect objective reality; rather, they represent how individuals conceptualize and interpret that reality. This theoretical framework began to develop more actively during the 1970s and 1980s. One of its key founders is George Lakoff, who emphasized that this discipline. Today, cognitive linguistics is represented by an international scholarly community, biennial conferences, and the academic journal Cognitive Linguistics. In previous decades, large-scale research was conducted specifically within the field of cognitive lexicology. Although much of this research focused on semantics, syntax and morphology have also played an important role in the development of this approach.

Cognitive lexicology emerges from the integration of lexicology, one of the core branches of linguistics, with the principles of cognitive linguistics and cognitive grammar. Its primary focus is not on how a word is written, but on how it is understood and conceptualized in the human mind. Within the cognitive lexicological framework, three fundamental hypotheses can be identified:

1. Language is not an autonomous cognitive faculty.
2. Grammar represents conceptualization.
3. Linguistic knowledge is acquired through language use.

These hypotheses emerged as a response to the dominant approaches in syntax and semantics at the time, namely generative grammar and truth-conditional semantics. Although these paradigms continue to be actively studied today, cognitive linguistics offers an alternative perspective that emphasizes meaning construction and usage.

Another central notion in cognitive lexicology is the concept. A concept is a mental structure formed in the human mind on the basis of accumulated experience and knowledge over time, and it is expressed through language. For example, the term "spouse" does not merely denote a person; it may also encompass ideas such as friendship, family, trust, security, and even financial stability.

This article primarily focuses on emotion terms, which are typically difficult to define precisely. Although emotion terms have been extensively studied in academic literature



(Kövecses, 2000), their definitions in traditional dictionaries often remain vague or circular. In this study, nine basic emotion terms—anger, disgust, hatred, fear, sadness, desire, love, happiness, and joy—were examined through participant-based research. Participants were asked to identify the appropriate emotion term corresponding to a given definition.

The results demonstrated that definitions based on cognitive linguistic description frameworks produced significantly better outcomes than traditional dictionary definitions.

The semantic analysis of emotion terms has attracted considerable attention within cognitive linguistics. Scholars such as Johnson-Laird and Oatley have conducted influential research in this area, proposing that the semantic field of emotions can be divided into basic emotions and secondary emotions derived from them. They also argue that emotions serve a communicative function.

The cognitive processes that govern language use—particularly meaning construction and transmission—do not fundamentally differ from other cognitive abilities. In other words, the organization of linguistic knowledge and its retrieval from memory are not substantially distinct from other types of knowledge stored in the human mind.

In conclusion, cognitive lexicology is a modern and promising field that investigates linguistic units in close connection with the conceptual system of the human mind. Moreover, it serves as one of the most effective tools for revealing the relationship between language and thought.

References

1. Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
2. Langacker, R. W. *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
3. Langacker, R. W. (2008). *Cognitive Grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

