

# SCHOLASTIC:

## Journal of Natural and Medical Education

Volume 2, Issue 12, Year 2023 ISSN: 2835-303X

<https://univerpubl.com/index.php/scholastic>

### COGNITION AND LANGUAGE

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#### Article Information

**Received:** Oct 25, 2023

**Accepted:** Nov 24, 2023

**Published:** Dec 27, 2023

#### Keywords

*language, cognition,  
cognitive structures,  
verbalization, frame,  
script, speech utterance,  
social norms*

**Abstract.** Language, which in its structure is a system of verbal sound signs and in its purpose is primarily a communicative system, provides acts of transmission and reception of messages containing information and knowledge about the world that the speaker (or writer) has. But at the same time, it serves the processing and organization of acquired knowledge, its storage in human memory, i.e. functions as a cognitive system. Elementary units of knowledge, concepts, as a rule, are organized into complexes, intellectual systems, cognitive, or cognitive structures, various types of which have recently been often collectively called frames.

#### Introduction

**Basic functions of the language.** The language is bidirectional. On the one hand, it ensures interaction between the sender of a verbal message and its recipient, the addressee. In this case, they talk about its communicative function. This function is considered to be the leading one, since it is it, according to most modern scientists, that determines the essence of language.

On the other hand, language is aimed at reality and at the world of images that is built between reality and man, acting as a set of knowledge that together form a picture, or model, of the world. This picture of the world, localized in the mind, constantly replenished and adjusted, regulates human behavior. Language does not simply convey messages in acts of communication in the form of utterances that contain certain knowledge about some fragments of the world. It plays an important role in the accumulation of knowledge and its storage in memory, contributing to its ordering, systematization, i.e. participating in their processing. Thus, language provides human cognitive activity. In this case, we talk about its cognitive function.

Both functions of language are inextricably linked; they mutually presuppose each other. To better understand these aspects of language, we can turn to a consideration of what knowledge of the world and linguistic communications are. If we understand language as a

special one, namely a communicative and, more narrowly, verbal mode (or form) of human behavior, then we should take into account the exceptional ability of each specific language to adapt to an infinite variety of life situations and express an infinite number of meanings. That is why it is so difficult to know your native language and immeasurably more difficult to know another language (or other languages). In many ways, the difficulties of mastering both one's native and, especially, foreign languages lie in the fact that language is not just a nomenclature of words and a set of grammatical rules. Any individual language does not exist on its own as an abstract system, but is tied to the specific conditions of existence of a certain tribe, nationality, nation in a certain historical era. Dictionaries, and especially grammatical descriptions, usually do not contain this kind of information.

Language is both finite and infinite. The inventories of sound units, morphemes and even words, the sets of grammatical rules of any given language, are in principle finite. But the number of meanings that can be expressed in a given language is essentially infinite. Existing linguistic dictionaries do not record all possible meanings. To understand many words and expressions, it is not enough to know the language itself; knowledge of an encyclopedic nature is required, i.e. knowledge about the world.

The culture of a given ethnic group and the relationships in a given society are opposed not just by language as such, but by the integral information-cognitive system inherent in a person, which is formed by thinking, consciousness and language that are closely interconnected with each other. And it is impossible to understand what language is outside of this system. <>

**Initial stages of functioning of the information-cognitive system.** Language is included in a complex system of human cognition of the world, in an information-cognitive system in which thinking, consciousness, memory and language interact. It is localized in the human brain. Its main purpose is to ensure the processes of perception of information from the outside, processing of this information and its preservation, its transmission to other individuals.

Information processing is carried out in acts of thought. Knowledge as the results of the work of thinking is ordered by consciousness, organized into cognitive (cognitive) structures that can be placed in memory. Consciousness operates not only with knowledge, but also with opinions, assessments, and beliefs. It forms a more or less holistic picture of the world, or a model of the world, which largely predetermines human behavior (including his communicative behavior). This model of the world is constantly supplemented and modified in the process of life. Thanks to various systems of communication and, above all, thanks to language, a picture of the world that is common to the entire given ethnic group or society is formed. It is an important part of the so-called mentality of the people or society.

There is so much in common between different languages that they are often classified as variants of the same human language, as "variations on the same theme." And at the same time, there is a widespread opinion that different languages are based on different pictures of the world and can even predetermine a different vision of the world, non-identical forms of behavior among speakers of different languages.

The formation of knowledge about the world is a very complex and multi-stage process of processing experience coming from outside. Apparently, knowledge and information can be transmitted and stored in both non-linguistic (or pre-linguistic) and linguistic forms. Primary information about some events in the external world enters the human senses in the form of stimuli perceived by them, in the form of physical signals (optical, sound, tactile, etc.). It is processed by thinking and transmitted to consciousness, ending up here in the block of short-

term (operative) memory in the form of not an exact copy of a physical stimulus, but its mental interpretation, on the basis of which a kind of belief is formed in the consciousness about what is in the external world. This belief has its source in a perceived stimulus, but at the same time it reflects the strong influence of the context of the situation of perception, and the ethnocultural and social norms operating in a given group, and individual predisposition, and personal experience. Belief is subjective knowledge. Different people may have different beliefs about the same event.

**Verbalization of knowledge.** At any given moment, a limited amount of information is realized (i.e. activated, “highlighted”), so a significant part of it is located in a memory block, the contents of which are not active, not “highlighted.” From here knowledge is extracted when the need arises to transfer it to other people. Extracting experience from memory is associated with the translation into verbal (linguistic) form of what initially had (fully or partially) a non-linguistic (pre-linguistic) status. After all, thinking, as many modern scientists believe, does not use the ordinary sound language at the disposal of one or another ethnic group, but a special code - the “language” of the brain, or the “language” of thought (*lingua mentalis*). If we accept this point of view, then verbalization is the recoding of the results of thinking by means of a specific ethnic sound language.

In memory, information is stored in the form of separate “chunks”, or episodes. They can be different in size and in the number of remembered details. Thus, in terms of spatio-temporal volume and the number of details “highlighted” during memory, such blocks as “*My school years*” and “*I passed my last final exam at school*” differ significantly.

Retrieving his experience from memory, the speaker first of all breaks a large episode into many smaller ones, bringing the process of dismemberment to such micro-episodes, which can be associated with mental structures - judgments or (as they more often say today) propositions. Each of these propositions displays the composition of the participants in a given episode, their roles relative to each other and the general nature of the event. So, keeping in mind an event associated with the transfer of an object by someone to someone, we assume the presence of three participants in such an event: the one who performs the act of transfer (producer of the action, agent), the one who is the recipient (addressee), recipient), and the item that is being transferred (object, patient). To convey ideas about these objects and the situation as a whole, the speaker selects suitable words (and in their absence, new words are constructed) and develops a sentence (for example: *Konstantin / student gives / hands over flowers / vase / book to the teacher / professor / birthday boy*).

A sentence is not an exact imprint of a thought. The transmitted content undergoes a certain processing, during which the following are taken into account: a certain communicative intention (illocution) of the speaker, the mental state of the addressee of the speech utterance, his preliminary knowledge of the objects in question, the possibility of his understanding of the utterance and his adequate reaction.

The speaker must take into account ethnocultural and social norms, without resorting to direct mention of objects and actions that are considered taboo. He looks for more acceptable forms of statements, realizing that not every interlocutor reacts normally to a joke, irony or open flattery, and that success in communication is often harmed by familiarity, cynicism and rudeness. In choosing forms of expression, he has to take into account the principle of cooperation, deliberately violating in certain cases one or another of its postulates. The form of an utterance is also influenced by the peculiarities of the grammatical structure of the language used.

In other words, the actual utterance is not an expression of the original thought. It contains many hidden meanings, omissions, and hints. This is why the process of understanding written text (for example, scientific, journalistic and especially artistic) is so difficult. There are also many difficulties in understanding the interlocutor's statements in everyday oral communication, where omissions are frequent and non-verbal signs may be used.

**Cognitive structures.** Both the mental processing of a perceived stimulus, which ultimately allows one to obtain certain knowledge about some external event, and the preparation for a story about some event in the past that would be understandable to the addressee, and the understanding of the just perceived text rely to a very significant extent on to use standard schemes or models already existing in the mind, under which more and more new situations can be summed up. Such schemes dictate ways of breaking up large "chunks" of experience into smaller ones. They organize newly received information. They seem to "suggest" which information link is still missing, i.e. have anticipatory power. The term scheme was proposed by psychologist F. Bartlett back in 1932. Currently, the terms *frame*, *scenario*, *script*, etc. are used in a similar meaning.

The frame helps us "complete" in our minds what we do not see, but what should be there. Having entered a room and not yet seeing it in its entirety, we nevertheless know about the existence of four walls, a floor and a ceiling, one or more windows, and at least one door. Having heard or read the word dean, we correlate it within the frame "higher educational institution" with a large number of other words, which include such as *university*, *faculty*, *department*, *teacher*, *student*, *schedule*, *lecture*, *seminar*, *session*, *exam*, *test*, *course*, *audience*, *scholarship*, *vacation*, etc.

We will correlate the word *waiter* with the frame "We are having dinner in a restaurant." This event (in our life today, almost unrealizable for most people and familiar either from the past experience of people of the older generation, or from novels and films!) can be represented as a sequence of approximately such scenes as: "we come to a restaurant", "we take a table", "we look at the menu and choose dishes", "we place an order to the waiter", "the waiter serves us", "we eat", "the waiter brings us the bill", "we pay", "we leave the restaurant". A frame of this kind, associated with the representation of an event unfolding over time, can appropriately be called a script.

A frame can be thought of as a hierarchical structure, where there is an upper, dominant node and a certain set of lower, subordinate nodes (slots; from the English slot 'groove, hole') specified by it. Thus, the frame of the verb *write* 'to depict graphic signs' implies the possibility of many slots, in other words, empty positions that can be filled with the names of the writer, the writing instrument, the surface for applying graphic signs, the type of graphic work, etc. Replacing a slot makes it a terminal. The writing frame can serve as a basis for constructing statements. *Lisa writes a poster with a felt-tip pen; Tom writes a letter to his brother; Emma writes with chalk on the blackboard.*

Referring to frames helps the listener or reader when interpreting statements containing omissions, hints, elliptical constructions, etc. The addressee brings the content of the received message under a certain stereotypical scheme and "completes" in his mind what was not said. Based on the appropriate frame, the speaker structures the large-volume message being transmitted, breaking it into units of the optimal size for transmission. The frame approach is one of the effective methods for the semantic representation of words, sentences and texts.

Mental schemes can serve to organize experience stored in memory in both non-linguistic and

linguistic forms. Some researchers believe that we store both prelinguistic and linguistic frames in memory. Non-linguistic frames acquire the status of linguistic frames after they are processed in such a way that makes them communicable (i.e., transmitted in the processes of linguistic communication). Other researchers suggest that all frames have (as opposed to purely mental schemas) a linguistic status.

Cognitive structures processed by language and individual elements of experience (so-called concepts) together make up the linguistic picture of the world. Based on this, one can consider language not only as a system of lexical, grammatical and phonological units, not only as a system of rules of communicative behavior in a certain ethnocultural and social context, but also as a system of verbalized knowledge about the world.

**Concluding remarks.** So, language is included in information processes, will it be the use of language in communication between people, will it be the participation of language in the processing of received information in the mind and its storage in the individual memory of each of us, in the formation of a common picture of the world for a given human collective, in thereby ensuring historical continuity between generations. The functions of language as a tool of communication and as a tool for understanding the world are inextricably linked. Language is, by its purpose, a cognitive-communicative system. When studying a particular language, one must not lose sight of the inextricable connection between its two main functions - cognitive and communicative.

Mastering a foreign language involves not just memorizing its vocabulary and grammatical rules, but also deepening into the ethnocultural and social context in which this language functions, and getting used to the linguistic picture of the world behind the statements in this language, which can be qualified as organized through language into a holistic structure - a set of individual elements of experience (concepts) and a set of patterns of typical situations (cognitive structures). You need to learn to see everything around you through the prism of a different linguistic picture of the world, to treat any language as a system of verbalized knowledge about the world.

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