Main Notions of Cognitive Linguistics

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ABSTRACT

The article is about the main notions that are in the focus of cognitive linguistics. Firstly, the discipline of cognitive linguistics is informed with the description of its development. Afterwards, main linguistic terms examined within this field are introduced and several of them as categorization, conceptualization, conceptual and linguistic picture of the world and concept are studied.

COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS, the most common (especially in Europe) name for the direction of linguistic research, which developed in the second half of the 1970s and subsequently had a significant number of followers. In the United States, where this direction originated, it is more often called "cognitive grammar", which is explained by the broad understanding of the term "grammar" in English linguistics, while in Russia the term "cognitive semantics" is often used, indicating one of the sources of this research initiative.

The emergence of cognitive linguistics is one of the episodes of the general methodological shift that began in linguistics at the end of the 1950s and boils down to the lifting of the ban on the introduction of "far from the surface", inaccessible to direct observation of theoretical (model) constructs. The components of this fundamental shift were the emergence of N. Chomsky's generative grammar with its concept of "deep structure" (whatever the further transformations of Chomsky's theory and no matter how difficult its relationship, in particular, to cognitive linguistics), the rapid development of linguistic semantics (see SEMANTICS), the emergence of linguistic pragmatics, text theory, as well as the modern theory of grammaticalization with its interest in the patterns of behavior of language units in real discourse.

In the early 90s, V.Z. Demyankov identified four variants of cognitive science:

➢ description and explanation of the mechanisms that connect the stimulus and response, the input and output of the human "thinking machine";

➢ study of the phenomena of the inner mental nature of man;

➢ emphasizing the subject as a source, initiator of one's actions;

➢ study of the specifics of cognitive processes in comparison with affects [Demyankov, 1994].

If we talk about the formation of cognitive linguistics as an independent scientific discipline, then there is a need to form its categorical and conceptual apparatus, because the development of a metalanguage of description is a primary and important task of science. At the same time, it should be noted that the terminological system of cognitive linguistics is characterized not so much by new terms as by refined and unified terms that are already available in linguistics or borrowed from other sciences.

Key terms of cognitive linguistics: *mind, knowledge, conceptualization, conceptual system, cognition, linguistic vision of the world, cognitive base, mental representations, cognitive model, categorization, verbalization, mentality, cultural constants, concept, picture of the world, concept sphere, national cultural space,* etc. All these concepts are connected with human cognitive activity, i.e. activity, as a result of which a person comes to a certain decision or knowledge. Cognitive activity refers to the processes that accompany the processing of information, and consists in the creation of special structures of consciousness. Then language (speech) activity is one of the types of cognitive activity.

The concept of "picture of the world" came to cognitive linguistics from philosophy and physics and became fundamental for the study of the relationship between man and the world, language and thinking. In modern humanities, the picture (model) of the world is understood as a systematized holistic doctrine of the world, reflecting the intellectual and cultural level of development of society at a certain stage (Barkhatova, 2000, p. 3).

In the human mind, the conceptual picture of the world consists of "reflected fragments of the reality surrounding a person, fixed in the form of concepts, with the participation of all forms of consciousness" and is a deep layer of worldview, since "it arises and is formed in acts of worldview and world action and helps to effectively navigate in surrounding reality" (Lipilina, 1998, pp. 50-51).

The next level of the conceptual picture of the world is the model of the world of a certain people in a specific historical era and the regional picture of the world directly related to it, characteristic of peoples united by a single faith, historical and cultural traditions, often also by an adjacent territory of residence. The national picture of the world determines the linguistic picture of the world of a certain people. Over time, the linguistic national picture of the world becomes a source of knowledge about the national worldview. It is a general cultural phenomenon, it concentrates the centuries-old experience of cognition of reality by the people, passed on from generation to generation.

The conceptual picture of the world is the basis of the language picture of the world, the verbal components of the semantic fields of concept words which convey information about objective reality and together form the thesaurus of the language and its speakers (Khairulina, 2001, pp. 5–6).

The key concepts in the description of cognitive activity and human cognitive abilities are concepts of conceptualization and categorization. All human cognitive activity (cognition) is aimed at mastering the surrounding world, at the formation and development of the ability to navigate in this world on the basis of the acquired knowledge. This, in turn, is connected with the need to single out and compare, identify and distinguish between objects and events. Not a single person can do without this classification activity. The processes of conceptualization and categorization occupy a central place in it.

Both conceptualization and categorization are classifying activities, but differ in their end result and purpose. The process of conceptualization is aimed at highlighting the minimum meaningful

units of human experience, structures of knowledge; the process of categorization - to combine similar or identical units into larger categories, i.e. categories (Concise Dictionary of Cognitive Terms, 1996, p. 93).

Conceptualization is the comprehension of incoming information, the mental construction of objects and phenomena that lead to the formation of certain ideas about the world in the form of concepts (for example, the concept of a house, time, movement, etc.). The main part of these concepts is fixed in the language by the meanings of specific words, which ensures the storage of the acquired knowledge and its transfer from person to person and from generation to generation.

Categorization is the division of the world into categories, i.e., the allocation of groups, classes, categories of similar objects or events in it. At the same time, categorization as a cognitive process is also a mental correlation of objects or events with a certain category. Categories are presented statically, while the process of categorization is dynamic.

The categorization function, i.e. dividing the world into categories and assigning specific objects and events to these categories, is the most important function of human consciousness, which underlies all human cognitive activity (Boldyrev, 2000)ю

The picture of the world consists of concepts of different levels of complexity and abstraction, formed in various ways.

To designate separate parts of the concepts of the picture of the world in cognitive linguistics, the concepts of conceptual area / conceptual sphere, or concept sphere, for example, the concept sphere of time, are used.

Concepts are ideal abstract units, meanings that a person operates in the process of thinking. They reflect the content of the acquired knowledge, experience, results of all human activities in the form of certain "quanta" of knowledge.

The content of the concept includes information about objects and their properties, about what a person thinks, assumes, imagines about the objects of the world. Unlike a concept that reflects the most general, essential features of objects/phenomena, a concept can reflect one or more, not necessarily essential, features of an object. A concept is everything that is known about an object, it is a reflection not only of the essential features of the object, but also of all culturally determined knowledge about it (Boldyrev, 2000; Ivanova, 2006, p. 45).

Let us consider in more detail the relationship between the terms "concept" and "concept". Yu. S. Stepanov writes the following about this: "In its simplest form, a concept is a definition of an object, a definition, while a definition is produced by thinking (achieved) through an indication of the closest genus and its specific difference, or, as is very accurately expressed by times of scholastic, i.e. formal, logic is the "nearest genus" and "species difference" (genus proximum et differentia specifica), for example, a cow is "a domestic dairy animal, a female bull".

It should be noted that at present the question of the content of the term "concept" is far from being resolved. As M.V. Pimenov, the term "concept" in Russian linguistics has several interpretations. Firstly, the concept (conceptus - "judgment, concept, idea [of an object]") is considered as part of the classical scheme "object - sensation - perception - representation - concept", reflecting the stages of sensually practical (contemplation) and logical (abstract) activity of human thinking:

A. a concept is a representation ("general representation") (S.A. Askoldov);

B. a concept is a concept;

C. the concept is a syncretic unit of thinking ("a unit of thinking representing a holistic, undivided reflection of the fact of reality") (P.V. Chesnokov).

Secondly, the concept is studied as a signifier (signifi cat) as part of the "semantic triangle" model:

A. Concept - meaning ("algebraic expression of meaning", according to D.S. Likhachev; "meaning of national color", according to V.V. Kolesov; "invariant of the meaning of a lexeme", according to E.V. Rakhilina);

B. A concept is the meaning (intension, the content of the concept, "the term concept becomes synonymous with the term meaning" Yu.S. Stepanov).

Thirdly, the concept is analyzed as a synthesis of the signified (meaning and concept), signifier (linguistic sign) and signified (denotation and referent):

A. the concept is the etymon of the word (conceptum "embryo, grain", "starting point of the semantic content of the word");

B. concept - a word-concept ("key words") (A. Vezhbitskaya).

CONCLUSION. So, the concept is "a concept immersed in culture" (according to N.D. Arutyunova and V.N. Teliya). It has emotiveness, connotations, is axiological in nature, has a "name" / "names" in the language. The subject of searches in cognitive linguistics are the most essential concepts for the construction of the entire conceptual system: those that organize the conceptual space itself and act as the main rubrics of its division.

The list of used literature

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