

## FRAMES, CONCEPTS, AND CATEGORIZATION IN COGNITIVE GRAMMAR: WITH REFERENCE TO FRAME SEMANTICS

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**Summary.** The present article is devoted to the core notions belonging to cognitive grammar. It is mentioned in the article that concepts, categories, frames, etc. are core notions and foundational ideas in cognitive grammar. These notions are presented and analyzed as foundational ideas of the theory that considers language to be an integral part of general human cognition rather than a formal system. Conceptions are regarded as building blocks of meaning and thought. Besides, in the article, meaning is equated with conceptualization in cognitive grammar. It means that linguistic expressions derive their semantic value from mental concepts they evoke in a speaker's or listener's mind as well. It is proven in the article that categories are the mechanisms by which humans' group similar experiences, objects, or events based on shared features. The frames represent structured encyclopedic knowledge associated with a word or concept. They provide the necessary background information for understanding linguistic expressions. Without this frame, the concept cannot be fully understood. Moreover, frames emphasize that meaning is inherently linked to real-world and cultural context. According to the article, in cognitive grammar, these concepts are understood as a network of symbolic units (pairs of meaning and form) that reflect general cognitive processes.

**Key words:** cognitive grammar, frame, category, concept, categorization

### Introduction

For a long time, linguistics studies were conducted using descriptive, historical-comparative and comparative methods. However, since the middle of the 20th century, new linguistic trends have emerged, and structural-semantic and functional criteria have begun to be studied using new methods. In connection with scientific and technical achievements and changes in society, especially in social life, cognitive linguistics, which is considered a new field in linguistics, began to form. The reason for this was interest and increasing attention to the human factor, personality and language relations. Human thought and its expression in language are interconnected. The solution of the existing relationships between language and knowledge structures occupies an important place in cognitive linguistics. Cognitive linguistics, which emerged in the USA in the 1970s-1980s, studies the relationship between language and consciousness. Cognitive grammar, which is a theoretical framework for presenting linguistic structure and meaning, was introduced to linguistics by Roland Langaker [11, 12, 13]. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson developed a conceptual metaphor theory of cognition that explains how abstract thought is constructed metaphorically [9]. Leonard Talmy made important contributions to cognitive linguistics with his ideas about how language structures our perception of events and space, and cognitive semantics [16, 17]. Charles Fillmore focused on the fact that knowledge structures (frames) are the basis of word meaning [6]. The points that scholars have investigated have shaped cognitive linguistics as a field of linguistics that challenges traditional, structuralist theories of language that examine the deep connections between language, consciousness, and experience. The purpose of cognitive linguistics is to describe, represent, and systematize linguistic information and to investigate the relationship of language to more universal entities. As in functional linguistics, form and function are considered interrelated concepts in cognitive linguistics.

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson noted about the cognitive knowledge system: "A system of knowledge based on and understood through physical, social and other types of experience is called a cognitive knowledge system." [10, p.48]. One of the foundational works in cognitive linguistics is their book "*Metaphors we Live by*". In this work, they argue

that the metaphor is a central part of both our thought and everyday language. They further suggest that human beings rely on metaphorical structures when perceiving the world and at the same time communicating.

### **Sources and Methods of the Article**

The main research object of the presented article is to investigate the cognitive aspects of language, as well as to reveal the mutual relations between language and human consciousness, as well as thinking and experience. More precisely, the object of the research examines the basic concepts such as concepts, frames and categories formed within the framework of cognitive linguistics. At the same time, their realization in the language system and how they are expressed by language units constitute the object of the research work. In this case, language is considered not only as a means of communication, but also as a mechanism for a person to perceive the world and structure the acquired knowledge.

The subject of the article is the explanation of the semantic and functional properties of language based on the existing theoretical principles of cognitive linguistics, as well as the determination of the relationship of language units with human experience and cognitive processes.

The source of the research is the works and theoretical concepts of scientists who laid the foundation for the cognitive approach in modern linguistics. For this research work, Roland Langacker's cognitive grammar theory, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's conceptual metaphor theory, Leonard Talmy's ideas on cognitive grammar, and Charles Fillmore's frame semantics can be considered the main scientific basis. In addition, the empirical sources of the study include both foreign and local researchers' research in the field of cognitive linguistics, as well as various linguistic examples and language materials. These sources allow for a systematic analysis of the cognitive-semantic properties of language and its relationship with human thinking.

From a methodological point of view, the study mainly used descriptive, theoretical-explanatory, and partly comparative methods. At the same time, the article provides theoretical explanations such as cognitive-semantic and conceptual analysis. Language facts were systematized and explained through the descriptive method, and functional and semantic comparisons were made based on various language units within the text through the comparative method. The article explains conceptual and framed approaches at a theoretical level and interprets the relationship between language and cognition through these approaches. The complex application of all the above ensures the scientific validity of the research and creates conditions for a deeper understanding of the cognitive nature of language.

### **History of Cognitive Linguistics**

Cognitive grammar is a specific field in cognitive linguistics, founded by the American linguist Ronald Langacker. He introduced the theory in two-volume work "*Foundations of Cognitive Grammar*" [12, 13].

Cognitive grammar emphasizes the symbolic and semantic aspects of theoretical concepts that were previously analyzed purely syntactically. The main goal of cognitive grammar is to unify the structure of language through symbolic units (in the form of form-meaning pairs) and cognitive mechanisms such as schematization.

The first point that becomes clear to us when carefully analyzing language is that language does not consist of just a long set of rules. Grammar can also be considered a cognitive achievement. It is a solution that members of a speaking society have developed over generations to structure their thoughts and communicate them to others. The words and grammatical structures of any language, being created by humans, reflect the physical, psychological, and social experiences of their creators. Therefore, the differences in meaning expressed by the vocabulary of a language reflect the important and specific experiences of

our lives, while its grammar reflects the repeated and generalized experiences. It can be understood from this that, like the words of a language, its grammar also has meaning. Part of the cognitive approach to grammar is to discover the motivations underlying existing grammatical structures.

The main function of language can be to symbolize human experiences in an understandable form and to enable them to be communicated to other people. When expressing their thoughts, speakers regularly need to decide which words and grammatical structures to use. The vocabulary and grammatical structure of a language provide the speaker with a variety of options from which to express their thoughts. Therefore, the cognitive approach to grammar can be considered “usage-based”. Here, existing structural differences are considered, and attention is paid to the reason why the speaker's current choice is preferred over others.

### **Frame Semantics in Cognitive Linguistics**

Cognitive grammar, founded by Roland Langacker, has not escaped the influence of the theories of several scholars. One of them is Fillmore's Frame Semantics. According to Charles Fillmore, it is not sufficient to consider the meaning of words in a language solely as denotative [6, p.111-112]. He argues that the meaning of words is related to knowledge structures, or frames, and therefore can be understood through these frames. Similarly, Fillmore (1985) further develops this view [7, p.223-224].

Now let's get acquainted with the concept of frame. This is a set of existing knowledge related to any topic (situation and experience). Therefore, each lexical unit activates a certain conceptual knowledge structure, i.e. a frame [7, p.225-226].

Charles J. Fillmore notes that the words *sell* and *buy* activate the frame of commerce and that the frame elements such as buyer, seller, goods and money are included within this frame [7, p.227-228]. From this we can conclude that one of the important elements in this theory is the framed elements. These elements express the relevant roles involved in a certain situation, as in the example we gave earlier. From this it is also clear that the frame elements, which are like traditional semantic roles, are explained in a broader cognitive framework, unlike them [6, p.117]. From this we can conclude that language is an expression of human mental models. In this way, the conceptual structures underlying language, which are not necessarily visible, are brought to the fore. When we approach frames and frame elements from Fillmore's point of view, we observe that the meaning of words in the language depends on the context. That is, the same semantic unit can have different meanings in different contexts. For example, the word *bank* can be used in the meanings of credit and financial management, riverbank, etc. Charles J. Fillmore argues that in order to understand the intended meaning, the appropriate frame must be activated [6, p.116]. Let's consider the author's idea in different concepts:

*Next you will learn how to compare the business owner's records of the money she took out of the bank with the bank's records of that money [15, p.179].*

*Without waiting to see how Minkiyolh got out, I ran along the bank, finding it hard to keep the animal in sight. Ahead was a large bend in the river, but a little daylight was visible through the trees, so, hoping to gain on my quarry I cut across the isthmus [3, p.364].*

In the first sentence, the word *bank* is used in the sense of a financial institution, and in the second sentence, it is used in the sense of a riverbank. However, to understand this, the appropriate frame is activated within the relevant concept. This shows that language is not a fixed word, but rather dynamic and contextual. According to Charles J. Fillmore [6, p.230; 7, p.227]. People rely on previous experience and information in addition to linguistic knowledge when understanding language units. In other words, a frame is not an abstract construct but is grounded on real human experience. Building on to Charles J. Fillmore's view, it can be noted that this aspect of frame semantics is consistent with the usage-based

approach of cognitive grammar. The author also noted that frame semantics is related to the process of categorization. Therefore, similar situations and experiences are grouped within the same frame, which allows both the systematization of knowledge and its expression through language. In other words, language contains memory, experience, and context [6, p.118]. Thus, Charles J. Fillmore's *Frame Semantics* combines the basic concepts of cognitive grammar: frame, conceptual structure, conceptual meaning, and knowledge-based approach into a single system. That is, the meaning of language units is formed together with the mentioned basic concepts of cognitive grammar.

### **Theoretical ideas underlying cognitive grammar**

Cognitive grammar is based on several assumptions:

- The grammar of language is part of human cognition and is related to other cognitive abilities such as comprehension, attention, and memory. For example, when we see a dove flying in the sky, we focus our attention on the dove, not on the sky around it. We express this as “*the sky around the dove*” rather than “*the dove flying in the sky*”.

- The grammar of language reflects or presents generalizations about events in the world, and these events are based on how speakers experience them. For example, a grammatical form such as tense is used to express a general concept of time (present, past, future), but precise concepts such as year, date, and day are expressed through lexical materials.

- Grammatical forms are not “empty” or “meaningless” as is often assumed in structural linguistics but rather are meaningful as lexical elements.

For example, in the sentence *I would like to speak my mind* [8, p.166].

The use of the particle “to” before the infinitive expresses our desire to achieve a goal.

- The grammar of a language is a general part of the native speaker's knowledge of both lexical categories and grammatical structures. This article informs the reader about the basic units of thought and language. Categories are conceptual units.

- The grammar of a language is based on a usage-based approach and provides the speaker with certain structures and options for presenting his current thoughts. For example, the same thought can be expressed in English as *I am running out of time. or the time is running out* [18, p.413]. (*My time is running out. Time is running out*)

### **Theoretical and conceptual foundations of the study**

The establishment of a language communication model and its use for knowledge exchange and the study of human cognitive capabilities for this whole process is the central problem of the cognitive approach to language. That is, issues related to language perception, thinking and how to use the acquired knowledge are studied in cognitive linguistics. The terms “cognition”, “categorization”, “frame”, “concept”, etc. explain these concepts in cognitive linguistics. Cognition is the information we have because of acquiring knowledge. Storing, classifying and systematizing the information obtained after perceiving events and processes in the world are among the issues solved in cognitive linguistics. Along with these, the set of mental processes such as speech, thinking, and imagination constitute cognition. Understanding which systems provide which types of activities with various information is the goal of cognitive linguistics. According to Nikolai N. Boldyrev states that the goal of cognitive linguistics is to explore various structures of knowledge through the study of language, as well as to explain the relationships between language and these structures [2, p.3].

One of the main concepts in cognitive grammar is the concept. Since the concept is related to words, it is realized in many language units. For example, in examples of oral folk literature, where the culture of the people is reflected, the concept is objectified in phraseological units. The concept is one of the most researched terms about cognitive knowledge and is a content component of consciousness and knowledge [4, p.284].

Zemfira Musa Aliyeva notes that the function of transmitting any information is carried out cognitively through concepts [1, p.222].

The method of presenting knowledge or experience by combining the cognitive field, language and speech activity processes is called a frame. According to V.A. Evans we can say that it is a schematization of experience that combines information and objects represented at the conceptual level and stored in long-term memory [5, p.85-86].

Categories belonging to the culture of any language are placed in the language in the form of linguistic categories. Both words and grammatical forms are based on conceptual units.

The expression of phenomena with similar properties is called categorization. In linguistics, division into types, that is, categorization occurs continuously based on various classifications. Categories are the transformation of a set of similar experiences that are relevant and meaningful to us into concepts. That is, categories are formed for concepts that are important in society. Not all categories, but most of them are conceptual in nature. This means that not all conceptual categories can be placed in the language. In everyday situations, there are also categories that have meaning that do not have linguistic categories. In this regard, it is important to know the types of categories and their different properties. There are conceptual, cognitive and linguistic categories that are related to each other during the organization of knowledge. Conceptual categories are abstract mental groupings (book, notebook, pen, etc.). An abstract mental grouping or unit of thought that represents a class. For example: *red, wood*. It allows us to see specific examples (*red apple, wooden table*) as part of a larger idea, while also facilitating the process of learning and generalization. Cognitive categories are the mental processes that form and use them (learning, planning). They refer to the mental operations and processes involved in categorization, such as recognizing patterns, drawing conclusions, and organizing experiences. It is the act of forming and using concepts, a fundamental human ability that underlies understanding, planning, and decision-making. Linguistic categories are the words and grammatical concepts that express these concepts (noun, singular, common noun). The grammatical and lexical structures that correspond to concepts (noun, verb, adjective, etc. parts of speech, quantity, case, tense, gender, etc. grammatical features) are included in linguistic categories. Language provides us with names and structures (book-noun, run-verb) that allow us to communicate our conceptual categories to others. These three categories work together. We form concepts, categorize them, and then share them with other people. Cognitive processes such as perception and memory create conceptual categories (mental units). These conceptual categories are then encoded and expressed for communication through linguistic categories (words, grammar).

For example: *A written text that can be published in printed or electronic form - a book* [14, p.152]. The next linguistic category is represented by the noun.

The specific cognitive structures used to interpret and process information in any context are called frames. Their functions include controlling and directing attention, contextualizing information about events and situations, interpreting and explaining it. Thanks to these functions, the meaning of information is better understood and perceived, and we can also focus our attention on certain events and ignore others, depending on the situation.

### **Conclusion**

Cognitive grammar is an integral part of general cognition and is one of the theories that make up cognitive linguistics. Its main concepts emphasize that grammar is inherently meaningful and is based on human experience and conceptualization. In cognitive grammar, language is understood as a human system for perceiving and thinking about the world. Grammar is discussed as the reflection of existing mental structures in language. Within the framework of cognitive grammar, language is entirely symbolic in nature. Simple language

units, from words to complex grammatical constructions, are the joint processing of semantic structure (meaning and conceptualization) and phonological structure (form, sound, gesture). There is no syntactic component that exists separately from these and does not have meaning. In cognitive grammar, there is no sharp distinction between lexicon (words) and grammar (rules). Both form a continuum consisting mainly of the collection of elements that differ in the level of semanticity and specificity. Language structure is not innate but arises from actual language use. The frequent use of specific expressions leads to the formation of ingrained cognitive routines and schemes that constitute the speaker's knowledge of the language. Meaning is identified with conceptualization, which is a dynamic, interactive, and imaginative process involving general cognitive abilities such as perception, attention, memory, etc. Linguistic meaning is encyclopedic and context dependent. There is no hard boundary between linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge (semantics and pragmatics). Any situation can be interpreted and interpreted in different ways. Grammar, in turn, provides language with the resources to symbolize these different constructions.

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## KOQNİTİV QRAMMATİKADA FREYM, KONSEPSİYA VƏ KATEQORİYALASDIRMA: FREYM SEMANTİKASINA İSTİNADLA

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Bu məqalə koqnitiv qrammatikaya aid əsas anlayışlara həsr olunmuşdur. Məqalədə qeyd olunur ki, konespsiya, kateqoriya, freym və s. koqnitiv qrammatikada təməl ideyalar və əsas anlayışlardır. Bu anlayışlar dilin formal sistem kimi deyil, ümumi insan idrakının ayılmaz hissəsi hesab edilən nəzəriyyənin mərkəzi ideyası kimi təqdim olunur və təhlil olunur. Konsepsiyalar düşüncə və mənanın təməl daşı hesab edilir. Bundan əlavə, koqnitiv qrammatikada məna konsepsiyalaşma ilə eyniləşdirilir. Bu o deməkdir ki, linqvistik ifadələr, həmçinin, öz semantik dəyərini danışanın və dinləyənin öz zehində oyatdıqları zehni anlayışlardan əldə edir. Məqalədə sübut olunur ki, kateqoriyalar insanların ortaq təcrübələri, obyektləri və ya hadisələri oxşar xüsusiyyətlərə əsasən qruplaşdırma mexanizmləridir. Çərçivələr bir söz və ya anlayışla əlaqəli strukturlaşdırılmış ensiklopedik bilikləri əhatə edir. Onlar linqvistik məlumatları anlamaq üçün lazımi fon məlumatları ehtiva edirlər. Bu çərçivə olmadan anlayış tam başa düşülə bilməz. Bundan əlavə, çərçivələr mənanın real dünya və mədəni kontekst ilə əlqəli olduğunu vurğulayır. Koqnitiv qrammatikada bu anlayışlar ümumi idrak proseslərini əks etdirən simvolik vahidlər şəbəkəsi (məna və forma cütüyü) kimi anlaşılması məqalədə qeyd olunmuşdur.

**Açar sözlər:** koqnitiv qrammatika, freym, kateqoriya, konsept, kateqoriyalaşma

## ФРЕЙМЫ, КОЦЕПТЫ И КАТЕГОРИЗАЦИЯ В КОГНИТИВНОЙ ГРАММАТИКЕ: С ОПОРОЙ НА ФРЕЙМОВОЙУ СЕМАНТИКУ

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Данная статья посвящена основным понятиям когнитивной грамматики. В статье отмечается, что понятия, категории, фреймы и т. д. являются ключевыми понятиями и основополагающими идеями когнитивной грамматики. Эти понятия представлены и проанализированы как основополагающие идеи теории, которая рассматривает язык как неотъемлемую часть общего человеческого познания, а не как формальную систему. Понятия рассматриваются как строительные блоки смысла и мышления. Кроме того, в статье значение приравнивается к концептуализации в когнитивной грамматике. Это означает, что языковые выражения получают свою семантическую ценность из ментальных понятий, которые они вызывают в сознании говорящего или слушающего. В статье доказывается, что категории являются механизмами, с помощью которых люди группируют схожие переживания, объекты или события на основе общих характеристик. Фреймы представляют собой структурированные энциклопедические знания, связанные со словом или понятием. Они предоставляют необходимую справочную информацию для понимания языковых выражений. Без этих фреймов понятие не может быть полностью понято. Более того, фреймы подчеркивают, что значение неразрывно связано с реальным миром и культурным контекстом. Согласно статье, в когнитивной грамматике эти понятия понимаются как сеть символических единиц (пар значения и формы), отражающих общие когнитивные процессы.

**Ключевые слова:** когнитивная грамматика, фрейм, категория, концептуализация, категоризация

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