INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCHERS
Volume 1,issue 1,2023

APPROACHES IN COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS

Mo'minova Xulkaroy

Annotation: This article contains general introduction to Cognitive linguistics and its approaches.
Key words: psychology, cognition, cognitive linguistics, generative grammar, language faculty, conceptualism.

Introduction

Cognitive linguistics is an interdisciplinary branch of linguistics, combining knowledge and research from cognitive science, cognitive psychology, neuropsychology and linguistics. Models and theoretical accounts of cognitive linguistics are considered as psychologically real, and research in cognitive linguistics aims to help understand cognition in general and is seen as a road into the human mind. There has been scientific and terminological controversy around the label "cognitive linguistics"; there is no consensus on what specifically is meant with the term.

Main body

The roots of cognitive linguistics are in Noam Chomsky's 1959 critical review of B. F. Skinner's *Verbal Behavior*.

Chomsky considered linguistics as a subfield of cognitive science in the 1970s but called his model transformational or generative grammar.

Generative Grammar

Generative grammar functions as a source of hypotheses about language computation in the mind and brain. It is argued to be the study of 'the cognitive neuroscience of language'. Generative grammar studies behavioural instincts and the biological nature of cognitive-linguistic algorithms, providing a computational–representational theory of mind.

This in practice means that sentence analysis by linguists is taken as a way to uncover cognitive structures. It is argued that a random genetic mutation in humans has caused syntactic structures to appear in the mind. Therefore, the fact that people have language does not rely on its communicative purposes.

For a famous example, it was argued by linguist Noam Chomsky that sentences of the type "*Is the man who is hungry ordering dinner*" are so rare that it is unlikely that children will have heard them. Since they can nonetheless produce them, it was further argued that the structure is not learned but *acquired* from an innate cognitive language component. Generative grammarians then took as their task to find out all about innate structures through introspection in order to form a picture of the hypothesised language faculty.

Cognitive Linguistics (linguistics framework)

One of the approaches to cognitive linguistics is called Cognitive Linguistics, with capital initials, but it is also often spelled cognitive linguistics with all lowercase letters. This movement saw its beginning in early 1980s when George Lakoff's metaphor theory was united with Ronald Langacker's Cognitive Grammar, with subsequent models of Construction Grammar following from various authors. The union entails two different approaches to linguistic and cultural evolution: that of the conceptual metaphor, and the construction.

Conceptual metaphor theory

According to American linguist George Lakoff, *metaphors* are not just figures of speech, but modes of thought. Lakoff hypothesises that principles of abstract reasoning may have evolved from visual thinking and mechanisms for representing spatial relations that are present in lower

animals. Conceptualisation is regarded as being based on the *embodiment* of knowledge, building on physical experience of vision and motion. For example, the 'metaphor' of emotion builds on downward motion, while the metaphor of reason builds on upward motion, as in saying "The discussion *fell* to the emotional level, but I *raised it back up* to the rational plane." It is argued that language does not form an independent cognitive function but fully relies on other cognitive skills which include perception, attention, motor skills, and visual and spatial processing.

In Cognitive Linguistics, thinking is argued to be mainly automatic and unconscious. Cognitive linguists study the embodiment of knowledge by seeking expressions which relate to modal schemas. For example, in the expression "It is quarter to eleven", the preposition *to* represents a modal schema which is manifested in language as a visual or sensorimotoric 'metaphor'.

Cognitive and construction grammar

Constructions, as the basic units of grammar, are conventionalised form–meaning pairings which are comparable to memes as units of linguistic evolution. These are considered multi-layered. For example, idioms are higher-level constructions which contain words as middle-level constructions, and these may contain morphemes as lower-level constructions. It is argued that humans do not only share the same body type, allowing a common ground for embodied representations; but constructions provide common ground for uniform expressions within a speech community. Like biological organisms, constructions have life cycles which are studied by linguists.

Integrative cognitive linguistics

There is also a third approach to cognitive linguistics, which neither directly supports the modular (Generative Grammar) nor the anti-modular (Cognitive Linguistics) view of the mind. Proponents of the third view argue that, according to brain research, language processing is specialized although not autonomous from other types of information processing. Language is thought of as one of the human cognitive abilities, along with perception, attention, memory, motor skills, and visual and spatial processing, rather than being subordinate to them. Emphasis is laid on a cognitive semantics that studies the contextual–conceptual nature of meaning.

References

1. *Robinson, Peter (2008). Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition. Routledge. pp. 3–8.* ISBN 978-0-805-85352-0.
2. *Peeters, Bert (1998). "Cognitive musings". Word. 49 (2): 225–237.*
3. *Schwarz-Friesel, Monika (2012). "On the status of external evidence in the theories of cognitive linguistics". Language Sciences. 34 (6): 656–664.*
4. *Greenwood, John D (1999).* "Understanding the 'cognitive revolution' in psychology". *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences. 35 (1): 1–22.*
5. *Harris, Randy Allen (1995). The Linguistics Wars. Oxford: OUP.* ISBN 978-0-19-983906-3.
6. *Peeters, Bert (2001).* "Does cognitive linguistics live up to its name?". *In Dirven, René (ed.). Language and Ideology, Vol.1: Theoretical Cognitive Approaches. John Benjamins. pp. 83–106.* ISBN 978-90-272-9954-3.
7. *Marantz, Alec (2005). "Generative linguistics within the cognitive neuroscience of language". The Linguistic Review. 22 (2–4): 492–445.* CiteSeerX 10.1.1.718.940.
8. *Boeckx, Cedric (2005).* "Generative Grammar and modern cognitive science" (PDF). *Journal of Cognitive Science. 6: 45–54.*

9. *Hauser, Mark D.; Yang, Charles; Berwick, Robert C.; Tattersall, Ian; Ryan, Michael J.; Watumull, Jeffrey; Chomsky, Noam; Lewontin, Richard C. (2014).* "The mystery of language evolution". *Frontiers in Psychology. 5: 401.*