EMBODIED COGNITION AND MEANING CONSTRUCTION IN COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS

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Annotation: This article examines the role of embodied cognition in meaning construction from the perspective of cognitive linguistics. The study explores how human bodily experiences, perception, and interaction with the environment influence conceptualization and linguistic meaning. Particular attention is given to the theories of embodied cognition, image schemas, and cognitive semantics. The findings demonstrate that meaning is not an abstract linguistic structure but a dynamic process grounded in human experience and cognitive abilities. The study highlights the importance of embodied cognition for understanding the relationship between language, thought, and perception.

Key words: embodied cognition, cognitive linguistics, meaning construction, image schemas, conceptualization, cognitive semantics, language and thought.

Annotatsiya: Mazkur maqolada kognitiv tilshunoslik nuqtai nazaridan gavdalangan tafakkurning ma’no hosil bo‘lishidagi o‘rni tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotda insonning jismoniy tajribasi, idroki va atrof-muhit bilan munosabati til birliklarining shakllanishi hamda konseptualizatsiya jarayoniga ta’siri yoritiladi. Shuningdek, gavdalangan kognitsiya, obraz sxemalari va kognitiv semantika nazariyalarining ma’no yaratishdagi ahamiyati ochib beriladi. Natijalar ma’no inson tajribasidan ajralgan holda emas, balki kognitiv va jismoniy jarayonlar asosida shakllanishini ko‘rsatadi.

Kalit so‘zlar: gavdalangan tafakkur, kognitiv tilshunoslik, ma’no hosil bo‘lishi, obraz sxemalari, konseptualizatsiya, kognitiv semantika, til va tafakkur.

Аннотация: В статье рассматривается роль воплощённого познания в формировании значения с позиций когнитивной лингвистики. Анализируется влияние телесного опыта человека, восприятия и взаимодействия с окружающим миром на процессы концептуализации и языкового значения. Особое внимание уделяется теориям воплощённого познания, образных схем и когнитивной семантики. Результаты исследования показывают, что значение является не статичной языковой структурой, а динамическим процессом, основанным на человеческом опыте и когнитивных способностях.

Ключевые слова: воплощённое познание, когнитивная лингвистика, формирование значения, образные схемы, концептуализация, когнитивная семантика, язык и мышление.

Introduction

Embodied cognition has become one of the central concepts in modern cognitive linguistics, challenging traditional views that consider meaning as an abstract representation independent of human experience. Cognitive linguistics argues that language is deeply connected with bodily perception, sensory experience, and interaction with the environment. From this perspective, human cognition develops through embodied experiences that influence the way people conceptualize and express reality (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). Meaning construction is not simply a process of combining linguistic forms; it involves complex cognitive mechanisms based on perception, memory, and conceptual knowledge. The theory of embodied cognition explains how physical experiences such as movement, spatial orientation, and sensory perception contribute to the formation of abstract concepts and linguistic structures (Johnson, 1987). Recent studies have demonstrated that embodied cognition provides important insights into cognitive semantics, metaphor theory, and language processing. It has also influenced interdisciplinary research in psychology, neuroscience, artificial intelligence, and language education (Evans & Green, 2006). This study aims to examine the role of embodied cognition in meaning construction within cognitive linguistics and to analyze how bodily experience contributes to conceptualization and linguistic interpretation.

Literature Review

The concept of embodied cognition has significantly influenced cognitive linguistic research by emphasizing the relationship between bodily experience and conceptual structures. Lakoff and Johnson (1999) argue that human thought is fundamentally embodied because abstract reasoning develops through patterns of physical interaction with the world. Johnson (1987) introduced the theory of image schemas, explaining that recurring bodily experiences create basic cognitive structures that organize human understanding. Concepts such as container, path, balance, and force emerge from physical experience and become the foundation for more complex meanings. Langacker (2008) further emphasized that linguistic meaning is inseparable from conceptualization. According to Cognitive Grammar, language reflects human perception and cognitive abilities rather than functioning as an independent formal system. Similarly, Evans and Green (2006) highlight that cognitive linguistics views meaning as grounded in experience, embodiment, and conceptual processes. Recent research has expanded embodied cognition into areas such as psycholinguistics, neuroscience, and artificial intelligence. These studies demonstrate that understanding language requires consideration of sensory experience, contextual knowledge, and cognitive mechanisms involved in meaning interpretation.

Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research approach based on descriptive and analytical methods. Academic books, research articles, and theoretical studies related to cognitive linguistics and embodied cognition were analyzed. The research focuses on major theoretical concepts, including embodied cognition, image schemas, cognitive semantics, and conceptualization (Johnson, 1987; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). The collected materials were examined through thematic analysis to identify the relationship between bodily experience, cognitive processes, and linguistic meaning construction. This methodology allows for a comprehensive investigation of how embodied experience contributes to the formation and interpretation of linguistic structures.

Results and Discussion

The embodied cognition plays a fundamental role in explaining how linguistic meaning is constructed. The findings show that human concepts are not formed independently from physical experience but emerge through interaction between the body, mind, and environment. This confirms the cognitive linguistic view that meaning is grounded in human experience rather than existing as an abstract linguistic system (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). The study reveals that image schemas provide a cognitive foundation for understanding both concrete and abstract concepts. For example, spatial experiences such as movement, containment, and direction influence the way people conceptualize abstract domains. Johnson's (1987) theory demonstrates that these recurring patterns of bodily experience structure human reasoning and linguistic expression. Furthermore, the findings indicate that embodied cognition is closely connected with metaphorical thinking. Conceptual metaphors allow people to understand abstract ideas through bodily experiences, which explains the widespread presence of metaphor in everyday language (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). This perspective has significant implications for semantic analysis, translation studies, and discourse research. The results also highlight the interdisciplinary importance of embodied cognition. Research in neuroscience and artificial intelligence increasingly incorporates embodied approaches to improve understanding of human language processing. Therefore, embodied cognition represents an important bridge between linguistics, psychology, and cognitive science.

Conclusion

This study examined the role of embodied cognition in meaning construction from the perspective of cognitive linguistics. The findings confirm that linguistic meaning is closely connected with human bodily experience, perception, and interaction with the environment. Embodied cognition provides a theoretical framework for explaining how people conceptualize reality and create linguistic meanings. The image schemas, conceptual metaphors, and cognitive processes play a significant role in shaping semantic structures. These findings support the idea that language cannot be fully understood without considering the relationship between the body, mind, and cultural experience. Future research should further explore embodied cognition in multilingual communication, artificial intelligence, psycholinguistics, and language education. Such interdisciplinary studies will contribute

to a deeper understanding of the cognitive mechanisms underlying human language and meaning construction.

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