

علم المعنى الإدراكي والنظرية ذات الدلالة

Cognitive Semantics and A Related Theory

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الملخص

يهدف هذا المقال إلى تسليط الضوء على دراسة الدلالة المعرفية ومدى تأثيرها في دراسة المعنى، إذ ترتبط ارتباطاً وثيقاً بعدد من النظريات من بينها العمليات التفسيرية. تفيد هذه المقالة في معرفة الأسس الأساسية لعلم الدلالة وكيفية تعامله مع المعنى الذي يتقاطع بشكل مباشر بين المتكلم والمجتمع. ولذلك سيتم التركيز في هذا المقال بشكل أساسي على دراسة الدلالات المعرفية ودورها وأساسياتها، بالإضافة إلى معرفة إحدى النظريات المهمة في دراسة المعنى وفروعه الرئيسية. وبعد ذلك نستنتج من خلال هذا المقال أن علم الدلالة المعرفي هو جانب أساسي يهتم بدراسة المعنى الموجود في ذهن المتكلم. إنهم مرتبطون ارتباطاً وثيقاً بالمجتمع، ويرتبطون بالإدراك.

الكلمات المفتاحية: علم المعنى الإدراكي، الوسائل العملية، الانتباه، المقارنة

Abstract

This article aims to shed light on the study of cognitive semantics and the extent of its impact on the study of meaning, as it is closely linked to a number of theories, including Construal Operations. This article is useful in knowing the main foundations of semantics and how it deals with meaning, which directly intersects between the speaker and society. Therefore, in this article, there will a main focus on the study of cognitive semantics, its role, and its basics, in addition to that, knowing one of the important theories in the study of meaning and its main branches. After that, it will be concluded through this article that cognitive semantics is a basic aspect concerned with studying the meaning that exists in the mind of the speaker. They are closely connected with society, linked by cognition.

Keywords: cognitive semantics, construal operations, attention, and comparison.

1 Cognitive Semantics

A subfield of cognitive linguistics, which is itself a field inside the umbrella of cognitive science, is cognitive semantics. This branch first entered the picture in the 1970s in opposition to the dominant viewpoints, which included the truth-conditional central tenet of formal semantics and the objectivist worldview formed within western philosophy. The truth conditional semantics, which eliminate the cognitive organization from the language structure, are criticized by Sweester (1990: 4). According to formal semanticists, meaning is the connection between the outside world and the lexical objects. Contrarily, cognitive semantics views language as having an overlap with different cognitive systems and faculties. This method contends that linguistic meaning reflects conceptual structure in all of its diversity and depth, which makes it a challenging and specialized approach.

A pioneer in cognitive linguistics, Leonard Talmy, examines the concept that "[R]esearch on cognitive semantics is research on conceptual content and its organization in language" (Talmy 2000:4). The following form the central claims of cognitive semantics:

A: Conceptual structure is embodied

Two crucial elements are (1) embodied experience, which refers to the fact that reality is not viewed objectively because of the limitations imposed by human physicality, and (2) grounded cognition, which refers to the grounding of mental representation in embodied mental states. Our cognition models reality, which means that meaning is not static in our thoughts (Barsalou, 2008; Evans, 2017).

B: Semantic structure is conceptual structure

Language encodes the speaker's thoughts, not what is found in the outside world. In other words, the conceptual structure includes the semantic structure (the meanings associated with lexical objects) (Evans & Green, 2006: 158).

C: Meaning representation is encyclopedic

This article addresses two issues: (1) How conceptual representation interacts with the semantic structure of language systems. There are some specifics that vary from theory to theory, including, For instance, Evans suggests that the two structures are different but connected, whereas

Langacker (1987) maintains on the prior view in which semantic structure is equated with the conceptual structure. Some portions of the conceptual framework are easier to access thanks to the semantic structure.

(2) A vast network of built knowledge is included in the conceptual framework. Semantic potential refers to the underlying knowledge that serves as the foundation for the semantic framework. (Evans, 2017: 289).

D: Meaning construction is conceptualization

Conceptual and semantic structures interact in a way during language comprehension. Different conceptual and linguistic processes and mechanisms govern this relationship. The compositionality theory, according to which the meaning of the whole is generated from the intrinsic meaning of its constituent pieces, is rejected by cognitive linguists (Evans, 2009:3–4). According to cognitive linguists, conceptualization, which is primarily a nonlinguistic activity, has a role in linguistic or semantic meaning (Evans, 2017: 289–90).

2.Construal Operations

In cognitive linguistics, one of the key ideas is "construal operations," which includes grammar and semantics. The cognitive linguistic thesis, which holds that perception of the world is subjective rather than objective, is related to this. envisioned (Evans, 2017: 284). The term "construal operations" describes how one sees and understands the world (i.e., objects, events, etc.). Diverse perspectives exist about the same object or activity, as do diverse methods of cognition. The conceptual procedures enable these different readings or conceptualizations (Kovecses, 2006: 227).

In Langaker's cognitive grammar framework, the notion of "construal" is central. As per his statement, it is associated with the manner in which a language user decides to "package" and "present" a conceptual representation that is encoded in language, which in turn has an impact on the hearer's conceptual representation that the statement invokes" (Evans, 2007: 40-1).

Under the heading "focal adjustment," Langacker (2007: 435-8) modified his taxonomy and separated construal operations into four categories. These are as follows:

Specificity pertains to the ability of humans to establish similarities among diverse occurrences and classify ideas.

b. Prominence is the method by which a language user chooses some conception details while excluding others. The Figure/Ground phenomena makes up the majority of it.

c. Perspective: this pertains to the way a language user perceives a situation or an object that takes on linguistic manifestation. There are four of them below it: Three things: (1) perspective; (2) subjectivity/objectivity; and (3) deixis.

d. Dynamicity is the progression of conceptualization throughout time. Conceptualization occurs throughout the processing of time, and it evolves during this processing. As the concept is processed, many facets are brought to light or become active (Langacker, 2009: 341).

Additionally, Talmy (2000: 40–84) updated his classification to include four primary "schematic systems" that are linked to his "Domain" designation. The domain is a "schematic category" of space and time, which are the two primary the constructal dimensions. These four schematic systems are force dynamic, perspective, configurational structure, and attention distribution. These schematic systems are described under several headings in the following categorization of construction procedures.

2.1 Attention

In cognitive psychology and cognitive linguistics, attention is a fundamental concept and a well-known cognitive process. The "focus of consciousness" is one definition of attention (Chafe, 1994: 140). It's not just one degree; focus is dispersed at varying degrees throughout the numerous components of a single body. It is described in terms of conceptual activation from a psychological and neurological perspective; concepts are engaged to varying degrees. The majority of the work on attention is based on the prominent characteristics of the outside world; it is not an isolated phenomenon.

The following four dimensions of attention are only a few of the things that visual ability can illustrate: (1) Among numerous other entities, one can concentrate on or devote his attention to make a choice. The attentional focus is limited by the attentional scope. It is not unrestricted.

(3) There are two ways to observe a scene: closely examine the details (fine-grained) or broadly (coarse-grained). The observer has the option to maintain fixed focus on the scene or to shift their eyes over it (Croft and Cruse, 2004: 46-7). The notions that follow formulate these four aspects:

- a. Selection: it can be explained in terms of prominence, which forms the basis of human cognition, and relevancy—nearly in the same sense as this term was proposed by Sperber and Wilson (1995). Humans possess the capacity to care for a few salient details from their experience that are pertinent to the situation while excluding everything else. The most well-known instances of selection are the phenomena of metaphory and idea profiling. Different terms profile or direct our attention to certain facets or sections of a semantic domain or frame; for instance, the words radius and circumference are in the frame of CIRCLE. In the perspective of cognitive linguistics, metonymy refers to the capacity of the language user to choose certain salient contextual elements instead of the features that the words typically indicate (Croft and Cruse, 2004: 47-8).
- b. Scope of Attention: Chafe (1994:29) describes the accessible entities to attention at the edge of consciousness as the scope of attention that surrounds the entity that was chosen during the selection process. Regarding the extent of greater accessibility to the direct predicted domains compared to the indirect ones thanks to the profiled concept's prediction. This implies that the focus of attention may change depending on how information is interpreted (Croft and Cruse, 2004: 50). According to Langacker (1987:119), "knuckles" are the immediate portions of the finger, fingers are the immediate parts of the hand, the hand is the immediate part of the arm, and the arm is connected right away to the entire body. Given that it is appropriate to refer to the "knuckles of the finger" but not the "knuckles of the body," the profiled idea of "knuckles" will allow the scope of "fingers" to be more accessible than the "body".
- c. Scalar adjustment: this subcategory reformulates Talmy's Schematization and Langacker's Abstraction; it is not a new one.
- d. d. Dynamic attention: While focus, scope, and scale are the three static components of attention, the fourth component is dynamic. Sometimes the focus is distributed around the scene rather than staying in one place (Croft and Cruse, 2004, p. 53). Between static and dynamic interpretation, Langacker makes a distinction in both in terms of sequential and

summary scanning. The former makes the point that seeing a scene in segments, like seeing a picture, is possible. The latter describes how the viewer's attention is distributed among the several interconnected scene elements like when you watch a scene in a movie (Langacker, 1987).

a. Judgment/comparison

A phenomenon or thing's interpretation in connection to other phenomena or things is indicated by the category of judgment/comparison. It comprises the subsequent subcategories: metaphor, categorization, and ground/figure.

- a. Categorization is one of the basic mechanisms that operates at various levels of language structure. Words are interpreted according to the category to which they belong.
- b. Metaphor: This concept is extensively explored in cognitive linguistics and is outlined in various theories, such as Fauconnier and Turner's (2002) Conceptual Blending Theory and Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory. There are two realms in metaphor: source and goal. The literal meaning of the statement is the source, and the thing the metaphor is describing is the target. A metaphor is the perception of something through the lens of another.
- c. Figure-ground alignment: This subcategory comes from the Attention/Prominence category developed by Langacker and Talmy. The objective characteristics of the figure-ground alignment appear to constitute the foundation for scene, even though the arbitrary characteristics can matter. When discussing spatial interactions, Talmy (2000: 311–41) uses the figure–ground distinction, which states that all spatial relationships (motion or location) are expressed by locating an item (figure) in reference to another (ground).
- d. Cognitive image: This is one cognitive representation, in my opinion, that recalls what a person has in reality in his mind that goes with things represented in real life.

3. Conclusion

This study shows that semantics may not only be concerned with the meaning aspects of the language. It does not only deal with the meaning of what is present in the word itself, but it also has a relationship with the meanings that revolve in the mind of the speaker, which are linked in a sequential chain with the person receiving, so that the meaning is clear and thus the idea is conveyed correctly. Therefore, many theories are closely

related to semantics for the purpose of arriving at the appropriate meaning through cognitive studies.

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