

# Language and Cognition

Lala Gurbanova <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Azerbaijan National Academy of Science Institute of Linguistics named after Nasimi*  
31 H. Cavid, Baku, AZ1143, Azerbaijan

DOI: 10.22178/pos.105-1

LCC Subject Category: P1-1091

Received 21.05.2024

Accepted 27.06.2024

Published online 30.06.2024

Corresponding Author:

[arifwahyumulya@gmail.com](mailto:arifwahyumulya@gmail.com)

© 2024 The Author. This article  
is licensed under a [Creative Commons  
Attribution 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) 

**Abstract.** The article examines the issues of cognitive linguistics, which is considered a new branch of linguistics. Here, various scientists' approaches to the unity of language and thinking are widely analyzed. In general, speech expresses information that arises in human thinking, or the product of thinking is encoded through speech. A person is a social factor, the creator of the joint function of language and thinking, and the person's role in forming language as a sign system in the construction of communication is great. Cognitive linguistics studies the act of speech at the extralinguistic level. It also studies language from another aspect and linguistic phenomena in a broad framework and comprehensively to other branches of science. The emergence of cognitive linguistics makes it possible to approach the issue of language and speech from different perspectives. The listener understands what the speaker is saying in the process of communication. In the act of speech, the main goal is to comprehend the ideas expressed in speech, but the coding of information in the language is not limited to linguistic knowledge. Social and psychological factors also play an essential role here. Thus, communication between the speaker and the listener goes through mental processes; during communication, cognitive processes are always open to new information. In the article, observation and subjective assessment were used.

**Keywords:** cognition; consciousness; generative grammar; lower layer; upper layer.

## INTRODUCTION

Cognitive linguistics removes the limitations of the structural analysis of language and studies its functionality. Cognitiveness, the language-speech relationship, and the nature and activity of consciousness are significant for cognitive linguistics. Cognitive processes reflect reality in thinking. Information is collected in cognition. Its comprehension and presentation are carried out through speech. The events are converted into information and transmitted to the human brain, which then forms consciousness and becomes a product of communication - encoded. Thus, the listener decodes the information the speaker gives during communication. The information that arises in the human mind in an orderly form reflects the objects of the surrounding world. After the International linguistic symposium organized by Rene Dirven in Duisburg, Germany, in 1970, the International Cognitive Linguistics

Association was established, and since the mid-1980s, the journal Cognitive Linguistics was founded. After that, interest in this area grew worldwide, and linguists began to study cognitive linguistics from different aspects. Before 1970, language was studied by psychologists, neuroscientists and other fields of science. Since the 1970s, linguists have studied the relationship between language and psychology, cognition, anthropology, neurology, and philosophy. After that, cognitive linguistics became a new field of interdisciplinary linguistics, combining psychology, neuropsychology, and linguistics. Psycholinguistics was first studied in America but later began to be studied in Europe, Russia, and, for the last 25 years, in Azerbaijan.

Cognitive linguistics has become one of the most studied and relevant fields of linguistics in recent years in the world, as well as Azerbaijani linguistics, so language and speech are examined

from an extralinguistic aspect. Since mental processes are the basis of cognition, the term is also a synonym for "mental" and "intellectual". This field talks about the unity of thinking and language, and its primary goal is to reveal the essence of the joint activity of language and cognition, the role of language in understanding reality, and the manifestation of information formed in human cognition in language. C. Miller and F. Johnson-Lardy [7, 71] cognitive linguistics, tied by the name, developed in the 60s and 70s of the last century.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In the 1970s, this field began to develop by generativists studying transformative-generative grammar and linguistic universals. While the history of cognitive linguistics was closed in the 50s-60s, its full formation dates back to the 1970-1980s, and scientific works began to be written in this area. Since the 70s, cognitive linguistics has been associated with the name of N. Chomsky [4] and in 1959, in a critical review of B.F. Skinner's book "Verbal Behavior", he clearly states his views. He disagrees with behavioural psychology, and with his neobehaviorism ideas, he shifted attention from empiricism to mentalism in psychology with new concepts in cognitive science. N. Chomsky considered linguistics a subset of cognitive science in the 1970s, and called his model "transformational" or "generative grammar."

Since the 1980s, J. Lakoff and R. Langacker developed cognitive linguistics after N. Chomsky. They accepted generative grammar as cognitive science and proposed it as "cognitive linguistics", and after that, a new trend in this field arose, such as J. Lakoff [9] and R. Langacker [10], which is related to the name of the association.

From the definitions given to cognitive linguistics, it is clear that this field studies speech, not language.

"The study of information stored in the mental lexicon in the brain and forming the basis of human consciousness belongs to cognitive linguistics." [13, 71].

The development of cognitive linguistics in Azerbaijani linguistics is connected with the names of A. Mammadov, M. Mammadov [11], A. Abdullayev [1], F. Veysalli [15] and other scientists and their works have given impetus to

the development of this field. Along with the theoretical issues of cognitive linguistics, they study all linguistic units, from the phoneme, the smallest unit of language, to text, from a mental point of view. In addition, in the last 20 years, cognitive linguistics has become a research object in Azerbaijani linguistics by these scientists and their students, and many studies are being conducted in this field. It remains relevant as cognitive linguistics is a controversial field.

A. Abdullayev says: "Linguistics appears as an integral part of cognitive science and is directly related to psychology and neuroscience, as well as anthropology and philosophy" [1, 33]. He also notes that "man knows how to use symbols in understanding the world and himself in the world, combined linguistics with other sciences that study man and society and created cognitive linguistics" [1, 40].

The Encyclopedia of Linguistics defines cognitive linguistics as follows: "Cognitive research studies mental structures through the analysis of cognitive strategies in the way people receive information, store it, and understand and use language" [14, 345].

So, speech acts as a means of transmitting to the listener all the information formed in consciousness and accumulated in the subconscious. Language is studied both as a means of communication and as a means of implementing cognitive processes. So, language is the object of study in both linguistics and cognition. These patterns of language allow you to illuminate actual events and objects.

Veysally notes: Language is an integral part of human cognitive activity. It (Language), a specific achievement of the human mind, covers the mental knowledge system connected to the whole cognitive system. By studying this system of knowledge, one can find a way to study the human mind" [15, 27]. Thus, the models and theoretical explanations of cognitive linguistics are accurate from the point of view of psychology, and cognitive linguistics studies the understanding of mental processes.

The formation of the modern concept of the functioning of communication and the approach to language as an activity is associated with Humboldt's ideas. In his opinion, language, which seeks to turn sound into an expression of thought, represents the continuous activity of the soul. "...the essence of the language lies in its repetition

... The activity of thinking and language is an indestructible unity" [6,70].

One cannot but agree with the scientist that language can also influence thinking if the product of thinking is reflected in the language. Thus, when the speaker transmits the product of thinking to the opposite end, an information product appears in the listener's thinking. So, in the first role in the transmission-reception of information, linguistic factors and extralinguistic factors play a role. For example, creating a new word means bringing a new object and event into view: when we say the phrase mixer, it is already understood that mixing something will be done with an electronic mixer, not by hand. An online meeting is a meeting that will be held not in a meeting room but via a telecommuter over the Internet. According to many scientists, the linguistic structure of the word is understood first, and then its function.

Kubryakova notes that "the focus of cognitive linguistics is the linguistic direction, which includes the general cognitive mechanisms of language, a system of signs that play a role in encoding and transforming information." [8, 35]. The scientist rightly points out that linguistic and cognitive mechanisms play a role in transforming information. Cognitive mechanism refers to the semantic side of the word. Thus, cognition is closely related to semantics, and it serves to reveal the meaning of both words and means of expression. According to Anderson, "cognitive linguistics studies deep semantics and is primarily interested in the functionality of language forms. Cognitive science is concerned with creating meaning, its dynamics, the difficulty of forming meaning within the limits of various constructions, etc. related to orientation" [3, 11].

Language and perception are at the heart of the cognitive system and are closely related. However, the theoretical issues of the interaction between these two systems have not yet been thoroughly investigated, and this issue continues to be controversial. The interaction between language and perception is one of the essential conditions for understanding human behaviour and the product of thought. Speech activity has gradually begun to be understood as the leading dynamic aspect of the nature of language. The meaning of speech is realized by deriving language units from phoneme-morpheme, word-sentence, and sentence-text. The primary motive in the formation of speech is intention. Later, this

process moves to the stage of internal speech, which leads to the formation of a sub-syntactic structure, which is finally realized in utterances based on super-semantic structures.

"According to derivative linguistics, the syntactic description in the human linguistic apparatus consists of two levels: deep structure and surface structure level. These levels are interrelated through transformations among themselves, and they can shift one deep structure into several upper structures and vice versa. Here, a computing system is obtained that more accurately reflects a person's language knowledge than other models dealing with language activity" [4, 9].

A. Abdullayev notes that despite each sentence expressing a finished idea, the exhaustion of ideas he expresses is relative: "The sentence can reveal all its structural-semantic features only within the text. The coherent Union of sentences around a certain idea gives rise to the text. The organization and construction of the text are due to the course of actual membership in individual related sentences" [2, 6]. Veysalli explains the text as the central unit of communication in the language [14, 346]. The author notes that grammatical, phonetic means and intonation uniquely form the text's internal connections [14, 346].

During communication, communicators perceive every piece of information they hear and read as a text, creating the basis for bringing the functionality of the language to the fore. The function of the text includes all units of the language, which means that the idea-language relationship is more pronounced in the text. Indeed, a sentence is not enough to achieve our intention while exchanging ideas. Because the opening of meaning is not limited to one sentence, we need to create large units (text, discourse) of the sentence to fully open and perceive the new news for the listening party. In general, the speaker needs text to enter into communication and understand what he is saying. Suppose the sentence has the characteristic of expressing a finished idea. In that case, the text conveys the intended intention in a comprehensive, complete and detailed manner. It consists of a group of sentences connected by syntactic-semantic and phonetic means. So, along with the grammatical rules of the language, phonetic elements are jointly involved in understanding the text from a semantic point of view. In live speech, acoustic signals influence one's thinking. Intonation is a

means of non-verbal communication and plays a unique role in expressing speech. Intonation establishes a mental connection between the speaker and the listener. It conveys information to the listener by emphasizing exactly what the speaker wants. That is, intonation is a transmitter of accurate information. Intonation shapes speech and reveals its meaning and emotional-expressive content, providing aesthetic influence on the listener. No matter how powerful the word is, which is the code of the thought in the speech, the intonation makes it stronger and more precise. Thus, the idea-meaning-expression-content must be in harmony with the speech relationship between the speaker and the listener.

## CONCLUSIONS

Thus, there are three main approaches in cognitive linguistics today, the first of which is N.

Chomsky's concept-generative grammar, and the second is J. Lakoff and R. Langaker's approach, in which they developed their approach based on N. Chomsky's concept. The third of these two approaches is the scientists' approach related to cognitive linguistics.

All three approaches have the impetus to developing and forming cognitive linguistics. The central claims of scientific research on cognitive linguistics in recent years are based on the scientific-theoretical concepts of the scientists mentioned above. So, based on the study, let's note that cognitive linguistics cannot be evaluated only by theoretical issues; it should be considered as a whole field of scientific research based on facts, evidence, and reality. The concept that forms the basis of cognitive linguistics is the basis of human thinking, and its primary essence is that it has its characteristics due to the interaction of conceptual fields.

## REFERENCES

1. Abdullayev, A. (2006). *Basics of cognitive*. Baku: Sabah (in Azerbaijani).
2. Adullayev, A. (2011). *Actual division, text and discourse*. Baku: n. d. (in Azerbaijani).
3. Anderson, H. (1996). *A Functional Theory of Cognition*. New York: Psychology Press. doi: 10.4324/9781315805924
4. Chomsky, N. (2006). *Language and thought*. Retrieved from <https://www.ugr.es/~fmanjon/Language%20and%20Mind.pdf>
5. F. Veysalli, F. (Ed.). (2006). *Encyclopedia of Linguistics* (Vol. 1). Baku: Mütarjim (in Azerbaijani).
6. Humboldt, V. (1984). *Selected works on linguistics*. Moscow: Progress (in Russian).
7. Johnson-Laird, P.N. (1983). *Mental Models. Towards a Cognitive Science of Language, Interference and Consciousness*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
8. Kubryakova, E. (1994). Nachal'nye jetapy stanovlenija kognitivizma: lingvistika, psihologija, kognitivnaja nauka [Initial stages of cognitive science: linguistics, psychology, cognitive science]. *Voprosy Jazykoznanija*, 4, 34–47 (in Russian)
9. Lakoff, G. (1987). *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What categories reveal about the mind*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
10. Langacker, R.W. (2008). *Cognitive grammar: A basic introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
11. Mammadov, A., & Mammadov, M. (2010). *Cognitive perspectives of discourse analysis*. Baku: Chashoglu (in Azerbaijani).
12. Miller, G. (1985). *Language and perception*. Cambridge.
13. Reed, St. R. (1996). *Cognition. Theory and Application*. San Diego: Brooks.
14. Veysalli, F. (2013). *Fundamentals of Linguistics*. Baku (in Azerbaijani).
15. Veysalli, F. (2015). Cognitive linguistics: basic concepts and perspectives. *Studia Philologica*, 7 (in Azerbaijani).