



A Cognitive Discursive Framework for the Analysis of Fictional Texts: Integrating Cognitive Semantics and Discourse Studies

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Abstract

Contemporary cognitive linguists argue that the discipline's core principle is the close relationship between language and human cognition. Current research explains how linguistic structures reflect and shape conscious experience by examining the interplay between speech production, thought processes and conceptualisation in the formation of knowledge about the world. Investigations address the ways in which cognitive operations underpin linguistic form and meaning, and how language mediates attentional, mnemonic and inferential mechanisms in turn. The constructs of “concept” and “discourse” have emerged as pivotal analytical categories that determine the orientation and methodology of modern linguistic enquiry. Treating discourse as a formalised model of language activity provides a useful approach for understanding the conceptual structures underlying communicative practice. By analysing discourse-level patterns, researchers can reveal cohesive frameworks, schematic knowledge and culturally informed interpretations that shape mental representations. Thus, discourse analysis within a cognitive framework provides insights into how linguistic embodiment, context and pragmatic structuring together instantiate and transmit world knowledge. This advances theoretical accounts of meaning formation and offers methodological approaches for empirical validation across corpora and experimental paradigms. This approach also fosters interdisciplinary collaboration and pedagogical innovation.

Key words: cognitive stylistics; linguistics, concept; cognitive mechanisms; discourse

Introduction

The study of the cognitive space of an artistic text is grounded in linguophilosophical ideas and concepts. This includes the doctrine of linguistic personality as a subject of speech production, speech formation, perception and the decoding of cognitive structures. Additionally, the philosophical category of activity, encompassing human cognitive and speech activities, and the fundamental principles of cognitive linguistics, are considered. Together, these aspects help to reveal the mechanisms of meaning formation and text perception through the prism of cognitive processes.

Other areas of research into the cognitive space of a work of fiction include discourse theory, communication theory, and speech impact theory. Scientific discussions on the structure and dynamics of spoken dialogue, linguistic

text analysis theory and the organisation of a word's lexical meaning are also considered. Due to the diversity of viewpoints on this phenomenon, it is important to adopt a generalisable approach or utilise a tool capable of meeting the broad requirements of a multifaceted study. This will improve our understanding of the processes of meaning formation and text perception, as well as their impact on the reader.

The artistic style is a complex combination of features that distinguish it from other modern literary English styles. Additionally, artistic speech allows elements of language that are considered unacceptable at this stage of the literary norm to be used. Consequently, literary works by modern English writers contain linguistic phenomena that deviate from the literary norm, such as slang, vulgarisms and dialect features.

Main Part

Elements of artistic speech appear in a processed, standardised and selected form. Using non-literal words in their original form can clutter the language and hinder its enrichment and the development of literary norms. In fiction, the national language, with its unique grammar and diverse vocabulary, is used as a tool for artistic creation, as V.V. Vinogradov explains. In other words, all aspects of the common language — including its grammatical structure, vocabulary, and system of meanings and semantics — act as tools for the artistic, abstract recreation and illumination of socio-cultural reality [Vinogradov, 1963].

According to E.S. Kubryakova, discourse is a unique form of language use [Kubryakova, 2003]. This definition implies the need to distinguish between different types of discourse and discursive activity, as the term “unique” already suggests. The latter has a distinct, socially conditioned character and cannot be described without considering the context in which it manifests, whether in everyday life, in science or in a professional setting. It also depends on the time at which it occurs (a historical factor) and social determinants. In cognitive-discourse analysis, discourse is presented as an abstraction that goes beyond its concrete manifestations and is considered material for constructing generalised patterns of language use. This approach emphasises the analysis of abstract-logical concepts, which are defined by general patterns of consciousness and thinking. Alongside this approach, the notion of “concept” emerges in the context of text analysis.

The concept is considered a textual element that is responsible for forming and verbalising new knowledge; it acts as a stimulus. The “text concept” is the “deep meaning” of the cognised object, representing its hidden structure of meaning. The text, presented as a form of communication and the semiotically materialised result of speech-thought activity, provides a natural environment for the origin and existence of the concept in its verbal form, which is tied to socio-historical reality. According to T.G. Skrebtsova, linguistic ability is considered a manifestation of general cognitive mechanisms. This implies that various aspects of human nature, such as thinking, memory and cognitive processes, can be studied through language. Linguistic analysis is not limited to describing linguistic behaviour; it also involves analysing relevant mental states and processes. The main goal is to create a unified model that explains how linguistic knowledge is organised in humans and how they use it when generating and perceiving speech [Skrebtsova, 2011]. Within the framework of artistic concepts we can distinguish two main categories: typical concepts and individual-authorial concepts. However, it is worth noting that even typical concepts in an artistic text acquire a unique authorial embodiment.

Since the consciousness of the author and the reader interact at the level of associations, which forms the basis for speech and thinking activity, and also provides text regulation, influencing the reader and directing his perception, an effective method of analysing textual concepts is the study of associative links in the text and the creation of associative and semantic fields of concepts on their basis [Orlova, 2009]. Modern cognitive linguistics employs interpretive strategies that consider not only the characteristics of a particular utterance and the general body of knowledge, but also the personal aspects of the interpreter and their subjective perception of the text. This approach is justified because, in real life, the uniqueness of authors' and readers' personalities means their semantic perceptions will never be completely identical. Authors have freedom in choosing interpretative solutions and approaches to enriching the text, and readers' linguistic, cultural and ethical backgrounds can vary significantly. For this reason, when analysing artistic texts, contemporary linguistics applies a cognitive-discursive approach that considers not only linguistic factors, but also non-linguistic ones.

Studying the interpretation of knowledge about the world is often associated with a multitude of factors and complexities. When researching this issue, key aspects can arise due to the subjectivity of interpretation. People's different background knowledge, cultural contexts and personal experiences influence how they interpret information about the world. This subjectivity can result in diverse perceptions and understandings of facts among different individuals. Additionally, language is sometimes limited in its ability to accurately and fully describe complex phenomena and concepts, which can hinder the transmission and interpretation of knowledge. This can lead to distortions in the transmission and subsequent interpretation of information.

Indeed, bias and stereotypes can have a significant influence, as people can be susceptible to them, which affects their ability to interpret information objectively. This can lead to distorted perceptions of events and phenomena in the world. Cognitive biases, such as confirmation bias, can also influence how people interpret new information,

causing them to confirm existing beliefs rather than assess facts objectively. This can hinder the objective perception of facts. The dynamic nature of knowledge also plays a significant role, given that knowledge about the world is constantly changing and evolving. This makes it challenging to track changes in the interpretation of knowledge over time and adapt to new data. Furthermore, communication barriers, such as a lack of clarity when expressing information or misunderstandings between cultures or linguistic groups, can hinder the correct interpretation of knowledge.

One of the main directions in literary studies is studying literary texts using a cognitive-discursive approach. This approach combines the analysis of cognitive and discursive elements, enabling texts to be examined in terms of their content, structure, and contextual relationships. Investigating the cognitive aspect involves analysing the processes of perceiving, interpreting, and creatively re-creating artistic texts. This approach highlights the role of the reader in constructing meaning from the text, including their ability to organise information, form mental images, and construct representations. The cognitive-discursive approach helps to reveal the deep meanings and ideas embedded in artistic texts, as well as analysing their aesthetic value. It supports literary scholars and critics by stimulating the development of new research methods and fostering a more comprehensive understanding of artistic works.

The cognitive-discursive method of analysing artistic texts includes the following stages: Extracting information about the discursive situation (i.e. the context in which the text was created, including the historical and socio-cultural factors that influenced its content and form). Identifying discursive interpretations of cognitive structures (i.e. analysing how the author uses language and cognitive constructs to convey semantic load and express ideas). Analysing the meaning of linguistic units that objectify the cognitive structures previously identified in the text, to help understand the ideas and concepts that the author wants to convey to the reader. Determining the semantic variation of the utterance (i.e. analysing the lexical and phraseological structures and their semantic increments, which reflect the ideologies and values of the text and the various contexts in which they are used). Applying communicative-pragmatic and linguacultural generalisation of the information previously obtained about the text, to achieve a holistic understanding and analysis. These stages allow for a deeper understanding of the artistic text, its semantic structure and its connection to the context of its creation and interpretation. The communicative-cognitive space is therefore an area where linguistic expressions are naturally accompanied by non-linguistic categories such as world cognition, ideas, values and events.

The interdisciplinary nature of cognitive linguistics fosters a profound comprehension of the communicator's motivations and the complete realisation of their linguistic potential. It also demonstrates how cognitive linguistics broadens the scope of language, offering a more comprehensive view of the potential for linguistic interaction while avoiding the establishment of singular principles and criteria.

Conclusion

In conclusion, when using a cognitive approach to analyse artistic discourse, it is important to note that attention is given to perception and interpretation. These constitute a cognitive procedure aimed at uncovering the text's semantic content. Therefore, understanding and interpreting discourse are complex cognitive processes involving the processing of textual information. The conceptualisation and categorisation of the various knowledge structures underlying artistic discourse are particularly important in this process.

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