

THEORETICAL BACKGROUNDS TO COGNITIVE LANGUAGE MODELS: IMAGE SCHEMAS

ТЕОРЕТИЧНІ ЗАСАДИ КОГНІТИВНИХ МОВНИХ МОДЕЛЕЙ: ОБРАЗ-СХЕМИ

The article focuses on the modern issues of human conceptualization of the world reflected in a language, which stems from the idea that language is an integral part of cognition. Hence, there is a variety of cognitive models of language singled out. Image schemas being perception-based patterns emerge through our activity while we manipulate objects and orient ourselves in time and space. Motivating the way of thinking and reasoning image-schemas define all types of discourse. Accordingly, image schemas have appeared to become the main way of conceptualizing the world in the era of modern informational society, which is characterized by the shift from real reality to a media reality, dominating all spheres of human activity and interaction. Internet news discourse as a prevailing type of media discourse is represented by news, focusing on the most relevant and striking world events. The aim of the given paper is to reveal nominal units, verbalizing image-schemas in Internet news discourse. The material of the research is the BBC news stories. While representing and perceiving events and their constituents the producer and the recipient engage image-schemas as basic abstract mental structures, which play a fundamental role in various cognitive semantic processes. Image schemas are the basis for certain cognitive models or mental representations as ways of categorizing or structuring our knowledge about the world. The author of this article uses image-schemas to demonstrate the indivisible nature of language and cognition. The paper describes the essence of the most important image-schemas (CENTER-PERIPHERY; NEAR-FAR; UP-DOWN; CONTAINER; SURFACE; PATH; CYCLE) and their modifications. Verbal representation of image schemas as a cognitive phenomenon manifests itself in the nominal filling of news texts, while representing different types of events and their constituents and verbalizing main groups of these pre-conceptual structures.

Key words: media reality, Internet news discourse, conceptualization, cognitive activity, image schemas, verbalization.

Стаття присвячена актуальним питанням концептуалізації людиною світу, від-

ображеного в мові, що підтверджує ідею, що мова є невід'ємною частиною когніції. Відповідно, у мові існує велика кількість когнітивних моделей. Образ-схеми як перцептивні моделі сприйняття виявляються в нашій діяльності під час маніпуляції з об'єктами та нашого орієнтування в просторі й часі. Умотивовуючи способи мислення й аргументування, образ-схеми обумовлюють усі типи дискурсу. Образ-схемність виявляється основним засобом концептуалізації світу в період сучасного інформаційного суспільства, коли відбувається заміщення реальної дійсності медійною, домінуючою в усіх сферах функціонування індивіда та соціуму. При зображенні та сприйнятті подій і їх складників, представлених у новинних текстах англomовного Інтернет дискурсу як основного різновиду медійного, продуцент і реципієнт задіюють образ-схеми, покладені в основу певних когнітивних моделей або ментальних репрезентацій як способів категоризації та структурування знань про світ. Повідомлення Інтернет-дискурсу представлені новинними статтями, які повідомляють про останні події та явища, що дає змогу окреслити й проаналізувати використані авторами засоби, задіяні для мовного відображення концептуальних структур їхньої свідомості. Метою наведеної розвідки є виявлення номінативних одиниць вербалізації образ-схем в англomовному новинному Інтернет дискурсі на матеріалі текстів сайту Бі-Бі-Сі. Автор розвідки використовує образ-схеми, щоб проілюструвати неподільну природу мови і мислення. У статті представлена суть основних образ-схем (ЦЕНТР – ПЕРИФЕРІЯ, БЛИЗЬКО – ДАЛЕКО, ЗВЕРХУ – ЗНИЗУ, КОНТЕЙНЕР, ПОВЕРХНЯ, ШЛЯХ, ЦИКЛ) і їх модифікації. Мовне представлення феномена образ-схемності виявляється в номінативному наповненні текстів новин, у яких вербалізовані основні групи вказаних доконцептуальних структур.

Ключові слова: медіа реальність, англomовний Інтернет дискурс новин, концептуалізація, когнітивна діяльність, образ-схеми, вербалізація.

UDC 81'42
DOI <https://doi.org/10.32843/2663-6085/2021/32-1.24>

Nabok A.I.,

Candidate of Philological Sciences,
Assistant Professor at the Department
of Foreign Languages

Academy of the State Penitentiary Service
of Ukraine

Introduction. Modern media discourse is characterized by an overall construal of reality giving a momentum to the development of media philosophy, aimed at analyzing new media reality phenomena [1, p. 57]. Media reality is determined by researchers as a mediator between a content producer and a recipient. The existing mediation is realized through representing information by nominal units via various means of communication (printed, audio-, audiovisual, digital ones). Consequently, the characteristic feature of media reality consists in an exceptional role of mass media as a mediator between reality and an individual [2, p. 8]. Making use of media on a daily

basis the recipient is strongly influenced by it, while being affected by the informational space as a constantly evolving combination of knowledge and information. Reflecting the latest trends characterizing the development of mankind, cognition and social orientation language is continually being changed alongside knowledge and information [3, p. 141].

Dialectical interconnection between language and cognition consists in their interdependence [4, p. 183], because language as a sign system, represented by nominal units in particular, is a way of communication and a means of transmitting information, which is preliminary processed by the cognitive structures within

the human brain. That gave rise to the development of cognitive linguistics as a science which studies ways of conceptualization and verbalization of reality by an individual, using cognitive mechanisms for perceiving the world [5, p. 162].

Overview on recent scientific research and publications. Cognitive approach to language study deals with its relationship with perception, memory, imagination, emotions as mental processes [6, p. 14]. It takes into consideration the interaction between certain mental structures i.e. knowledge and language forms, which represent it [7, p. 52]. The analysis of language use including its separate units in various types of discourse, in general, and in media discourse as the most common type of discourse, in particular, implies studying cognitive and communicative peculiarities of language units [7, p. 18], their modifications, context (i.e. adaptation to requirements and conditions of communication and flexibility), contributing to the **topicality** of the research suggested.

Recent linguistic research of media reality has focused on Internet discourse studies as a multimodal and the fastest means of reality construal, which is relevant for mass audience. The advantage of Internet news discourse lies in its characteristics: disseminating information to any distance; hypertextuality as capacity to shift between texts, pages; non-linear composition; the ability to save and process large amounts of information [8, p. 18].

Internet discourse texts are mainly represented by news articles that inform about the latest events, which enables researchers to outline and analyze nominal units and rhetorical means used by authors to form media reality and influence the recipient.

Purpose statement. The indivisible nature of language and cognition manifests itself in verbalizing cognitive processes by nominative units. Besides, the information in the Internet news discourse is perceived through interpretation of events [10, p. 12]. Hence, it seems necessary to refer to mental structures that help the recipient to process information received. In doing so image schemas appear to be relevant, being a type of preconceptual structures that categorize and structure our mental and sensorimotor experience, formed due to the interaction between individuals and their environments [11, p. 12; 12, p. 19].

Consequently, **the aim** of the given paper is to reveal nominative units, which verbalize image schemas in English Internet news discourse on material taken from BBC news texts.

Results. Due to their indivisible nature, image schemas as abstract mental structures reflect simultaneous interconnection between several objects, fixing our recurrent dynamic bodily movements through space, perceptual interactions, and ways of manipulating objects [12, p.xix]. Image schemas FRONT – BACK, UP – DOWN, CENTER – PERIPHERY, FAR – NEAR structure the nearby space around

the recipient that helps to determine the hypertextual organization of media discourse [14]. The peculiarity of the former phenomenon lies in non-linear information structuring on the Internet news site pages: they comprise sections, main events, headlines, video, commercials, etc [14].

Spatial relationships represented by SURFACE – OBJECT – CONTAINER – CONTENT describe the observer's movement into or out a three-dimensional space, giving internal or external perspective of news coverage that influences spatial identification of objects. For instance, it is common for the recipient to use the CONTAINER image-schema, including both the internal and external zones as well as the border between them [12, p. 23] to contextualize various types of relations.

For instance, the experience of singling out physical CONTAINER, formed as a result of perceiving objects from the inside and manipulating them [12, p. 23] contributes to our locating referents within enclosed space or territory by means of the preposition *in* [13, p. 23] (*in his apartment, in Birmingham, in China*), e.g., *Anti corruption party takes lead in Slovakia* (bbc 01.03.2020). The given example illustrates the use of the physical CONTAINER, represented by the word combination *in Slovakia* to identify the country, where the anti corruption party won elections.

The undefined, open or boundless space related to CONTAINER is described by indefinite nominal groups, indicating approximate or boundless space (*in a big city, around the world, in the countryside*), e.g., *Dense fog continues to cause disruption across the UK* (bbc 02.11.2015). In the example above space is identified by means of the word combination *across the UK*, where the preposition *across* approximately localizes the country's territory.

The perceptual CONTAINER is formed by an individual's visual field [14, p. 31] being an existing spatial borderline for perceiving reality, which is characterized by a relatively constant size [15, p. 99] (*in my view / viewpoint, as I see it*), e.g., *In their view it sends a strong message that bullying should be stopped* (bbc 28.02.2020). In this sentence the perceptual CONTAINER is represented by the word combination *in view* that points to one's estimation of bullying.

The activity CONTAINER represents human activity as a process, connected with the three dimensional space by means of the preposition *in* [15, p. 99] (*in business, in operation*), e.g., *In practice it meant a ban on providing any type of "recurring" assistance* (bbc 26.02.2020). This example demonstrates how the word combination *in practice*, that means putting the ban into effect, points to Activity CONTAINER.

The kinetic image schema PATH represents a referent, moving in a certain direction [12, p. 119], marking the starting and final points with the help of proper names (*from Bali, to Heathrow, from Syria to EU*) or indefinite word combinations (*to an old cinema*), e.g.,

Two elderly people, who returned from Egypt, tested positive for the virus (bbc 02.03.2020). In the above example about Covid-19 the word combination *from Egypt* indicates the starting point of PATH.

The CYCLE image schema, which reflects circular motion [12, p. 119], is used in news stories to represent the cyclical nature of time correlating the meaning of the nominative units with daily, weekly, monthly, yearly periods (*in the morning, on Sunday, last month*), e.g., *Thomas Gafrik, 40, from Slovakia, last contacted his family last week* (bbc 28.02.2020). The word combination *last week* in this example indicates the time of the tourist's last contact with his family, limiting the temporal component to a period of one week.

Vertical movement is realized by the VERTICALITY image schema [12, p. xv], where UP – DOWN coordinates correlate with the starting and final points of PATH. When we consider quantitative changes from LESS to MORE we speak about quantitative type of VERTICALITY [12, p. xv], e.g., *Full council members voted by 22 votes to 19 against the budget cuts* (bbc 01.03.2020). In this sentence the exact number of votes for and against the budget cuts is represented by the numerals 22 and 19. They reflect the corresponding points on quantitative VERTICALITY, presenting election results.

When we think and speak about quantitative increase or decrease we correlate it with the movement UP or DOWN VERTICALITY [12, p.xv] in semes "up" (*increase, boost, go up*) and "down" (*drop, decrease, reduce, decline*), e.g., *The price of the season ticket between Glasgow and Edinburgh will go up by 116 to 4,200* (bbc 02.01.2020). The process of the increase in season ticket prices in the given example is verbalized by the phrasal verb *go up* denoting an upward movement; and numerals 116 and 4,200 indicating reference points on VERTICALITY.

The perceptual image schemas MASS – COLLECTION – COUNT – OBJECT reflect a visual transformation of a mass into objects/object, reflecting various degrees of referent prominence [10, p. 27], depending on an individual's forward or backward motion. This explains the choice of countable, uncountable and collective nouns in speech while describing participants or other components of events.

The COUNT image schema defines the precise number of referents correlating with numerals due to its capacity to denote the number of objects that can be counted from a close perspective [12, p. 26], e.g., *Turkey drone strikes kill 19 Syrian soldiers* (bbc 02.03.2020). The above example illustrates the exact number of the victims of Turkey drone strikes by the numeral 19, referring it to COUNT, because the number of the victims can be calculated.

The use quantifiers (*several, some*) to denote the approximate number of referents is explained from the cognitive linguistics viewpoint by their approximate

position between OBJECT and COUNT, e.g., *Several dead after German shootings* (bbc 19.02.2020). In this example the quantifier *several*, denoting some victims, points to their approximate and small number and to the position between the reference points OBJECT and COUNT.

While identifying a large number of referents there emerges a mental correlation between quantifiers (*many, much*), nouns (*hundreds, thousands*), capable of indicating a group of objects [16, p. 107] and the COLLECTION image schema aimed to differentiate between a number of referents from a distant perspective [14, p. 27], e.g., *Hundreds queue for masks* (bbc 24.02.2020). In the example described above the noun *hundreds* links hundreds of people with COLLECTION as an approximate large number.

The MASS image schema denoting an undifferentiated collection of a very large number of objects [14, p. 103], is verbalized by adjectives to denote an uncountable number of referents (*countless, mass*), e.g., *Indiana school shooting: Police say tipster saved countless lives* (bbc 14.12.2018). This example illustrates a large number of survivors by means of the adjective *countless*, the meaning of which correlates with MASS. The MASS image schema implies that the observer is unable to set separate elements of the whole apart [10, p. 27], as he fails to identify the number of people.

The force image schemas RESTRAINT REMOVAL and COMPULSION are verbalized by verbs denoting speech activity of people involved. For instance, the seme of the verb *say* points to RESTRAINT REMOVAL for 'expressing ideas with words' [17, p. 1460], and the verb *inform* focuses attention on 'communicating information to somebody' in a neutral way [17, p. 1706], e.g., *Los Angeles police said Majed Abdulaziz al-Saud, 28, was arrested on Wednesday and released the following day after posting a \$300,000 (197,000) bond* (bbc 25.09.2015). In the given example the predicate *said* introduces the information about Saudi Arabia Prince's arrest and release on bond with the help of the semema 'communicating information to somebody' [17, p. 1706].

The force image schema COMPULSION reflects control, taken by one referent over the other. The meanings of the verbs *demand* and *insist* refer them to the source of COMPULSION and represent movements of objects under the influence of external forces [12, p. 45], e.g. *Fifa sponsors demand reform overview from its executive committee* (bbc 01.12.2015). In this sentence the verb *demand* denoting "asking for something forcefully" indicates COMPULSION and points to Fifa sponsors as the source that dominates the executive committee.

Conclusion. The analysis of nominative units in English Internet news texts confirms the fact that recipient and producer of the media reality concep-

tualize it with the help of image-schemas that are the basis for the formation of language meaning, assisting to perceive and interpret event components. The prospect of the research is to reveal the interaction of different types of image schemas to represent event components.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

1. Savchuk V.V. *Media philosophy. A stroke of reality*. RCHA, Saint Petersburg, 2013.
2. Opgenhaffe M., Haenens L.d. The impact of online news features on learning from news: a knowledge experiment. *International Journal of Internet Science*. 2011. Vol. 6. № 1. P. 8–28.
3. Dobrovolskaya I.A. The notion of “informational space”: Studying approaches and its peculiarities. *RUDN Journal of studies in Literature and Journalism*. 2014. № 4. P. 140–147.
4. Kochergan M.P. *General linguistics: textbook*, Academy. Kyiv, 2010.
5. Evans V., Green M. *Cognitive Linguistics: An Introduction.*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2011.
6. Dirven R., Ibáñez F.J.R. de Mendoza. *Looking back at 30 years of Cognitive Linguistics*, in Tabakowska E. (Ed.), *Cognitive Linguistics in Action. From Theory to Application and Back*, Mouton de Gruyter. Berlin, N.Y., 2010. P. 13–70.
7. Kybriakova E.S. *Language and knowledge: On the way to getting knowledge about language. Parts of speech from the cognitive point of view. The role of the language in the perception of the world. Languages of the Slavic culture*, Moscow, 2004.
8. Dedova O.V. (2013), *Headline complex in electronic communication. Moscow State University Bulletin. Series 9. Philology*. 2013. № 1. P. 61–70.
9. Nabok A.I. *Cognitive character of objectivity and subjectivity effect identification in English Internet news stories. Literature and culture of Polissya. Series “Philological sciences”*. 2019. № 12. Ed. 95. P. 150–156.
10. Potapenko S.I. *Modern English media-discourse: linguo-cognitive and motivational aspects*. NDU, Nizhyn, 2009.
11. Hampe B. *Image schemas in Cognitive Linguistics : Introduction. From Perception to Meaning : Image Schemas in Cognitive Linguistics*. Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin, N.Y., 2005. P. 1–12.
12. Johnson M. *The Body in the Mind : The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason*. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1987.
13. Talavira N. *English orientating phrases: models of article use. Humanities science current issues*. 2018. № 21. Vol. 2. P. 81–86.
14. Potapenko S.I. *Linguistic personality in the space of media discourse (the experience of linguo-cognitive analysis)*. KNLU Publishing Center, Kyiv, 2004.
15. Talavira N. *English topological phrases without article: semantic models. New philology*. 2014. № 64. P. 98–104.
16. Channel J. *Vague Language*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1994.
17. *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. Longman, Harlow, 2010.