

COGNITIVE APPROACH IN THE SYNTAXEME STUDY OF POLYSEMY

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Abstract: this article explores the cognitive approach to analyzing polysemy through the lens of syntaxeme structures. Syntaxemes, as the minimal meaningful syntactic units, provide a deeper understanding of how multiple meanings of polysemous words are realized and interpreted in various syntactic environments. The study aims to reveal how cognitive mechanisms, such as conceptual metaphor and mental schemas, influence the syntactic realization and comprehension of polysemous words.

Key words: cognitive mechanisms, syntaxeme analysis, cognitive frames, contextual analysis, contrastive analysis, cognitive modeling

Introduction: polysemy, the phenomenon of a single word possessing multiple related meanings, has long been a subject of linguistic inquiry. Traditional approaches have primarily focused on lexicological and semantic aspects. However, recent trends in cognitive linguistics emphasize the role of cognitive processes in meaning extension and comprehension. The syntaxeme, introduced by G.A. Zolotova, serves as a bridge between lexical semantics and syntax, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of how polysemous meanings emerge in context. This study aims to analyze the relationship between polysemy and syntaxemes from a cognitive perspective, focusing on English and Uzbek languages.

Syntaxeme theory posits that minimal syntactic units carry discrete semantic functions. When examined through the cognitive lens, these syntaxemes are not only structural but also mental constructs shaped by human perception and categorization. This study therefore proposes a unified framework combining cognitive linguistics and syntaxeme theory to address how polysemous words function dynamically in sentence structures.

Methods: this study employs a qualitative research methodology grounded in cognitive linguistic theory and syntaxeme analysis. The key methods include:

- Syntaxeme identification: Extracting minimal syntactic units from authentic texts (literary, journalistic, and academic).
- Contextual analysis: Determining the context-dependent meanings of polysemous words.
- Cognitive modeling: Using conceptual metaphor theory and image schemas to explain semantic extensions.
- Contrastive analysis: Comparing English and Uzbek examples to reveal cross-linguistic similarities and differences in polysemous usage.

Corpora such as the British National Corpus (BNC) and the Uzbek National Corpus were used for data collection.

Results: the study revealed the following key findings:

Syntaxemes play a critical role in determining which meaning of a polysemous word is activated in context.

In both English and Uzbek, the cognitive mechanisms of metaphor and metonymy are closely tied to syntactic structures.

Example: The English word "run" (to move quickly vs. to manage) shows different syntaxeme realizations: "She runs every morning" vs. "She runs a business."

Uzbek equivalents, such as "yugurmoq" and "boshqarmoq", also reflect similar cognitive shifts, though the syntaxemes tend to be more context-bound due to agglutinative morphology.

Cognitive frames, such as movement or control, help determine the syntactic patterns in which polysemous words appear.

There are language-specific tendencies: English relies more on fixed syntaxeme patterns, while Uzbek uses morphological markers to guide interpretation.

Discussion: the results support the hypothesis that cognitive mechanisms underpin the syntaxeme realization of polysemy. The study emphasizes that syntax is not merely a structural phenomenon but also a cognitive one. Syntaxemes serve as "anchors" for the mental schemas that guide interpretation. Understanding polysemy through this lens allows for more accurate semantic parsing, particularly in language learning and translation studies.

Moreover, the comparative analysis reveals that while the core cognitive principles are universal, their linguistic realization is shaped by typological features of each language. This supports the relevance of cognitive syntaxeme analysis in cross-linguistic studies of polysemy.

In Conclusion, the cognitive approach to syntaxeme analysis offers a powerful framework for understanding polysemy. By examining how polysemous meanings are distributed across syntactic contexts, we gain insights into the mental models that speakers use to interpret language. This approach not only deepens theoretical understanding but also has practical implications for lexicography, translation, and language teaching.

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