

Cognitive Linguistics and the Concepts of "Concept" and "Gestalt"

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Abstract:

This article examines the theoretical aspects of "concept" and "gestalt," which are central to cognitive linguistics. It explores the perspectives of both global and Uzbek linguists on these concepts. The discussed scientific evidence is illustrated with examples from contemporary Uzbek poetry.

Keywords: cognitive linguistics, linguoculturology, concept, mental structure, gestalt, gestalt psychology, realization of gestalt in poetic text.

Introduction

One of the leading fields in modern linguistics is cognitive linguistics. Concepts such as "gestalt", "schema", "frame" and "concept" are fundamental to this field. Specifically, the term "concept" is relevant to both linguoculturology and cognitive linguistics, being used interchangeably in both domains. According to sources, the term "concept" is derived from the Latin word "conceptus", meaning "idea." In Russian linguistics, it was introduced as a scientific term by the scholar S. Askoldov in the early 20th century [1].

Linguist Sh. Safarov describes the concept as: "a mental structure that represents a quantity or generalization of knowledge in various compositions and forms. Concepts form the basis of different categories in human consciousness, serving as a reference point" [2]. Additionally, O. Q. Yusupov writes: "A concept is a set of knowledge about something or an event in the external or internal world, including images and the positive, negative, or neutral attitudes towards it" [3].

Another important unit in cognitive linguistics is "Gestalt," a German term meaning "image, whole form, structure" [1]. This concept originated from the field of Gestalt psychology. Linguist Sh. Safarov notes in the textbook "Cognitive Linguistics" that German psychologists such as V. Köhler,

M. Wertheimer, and K. Duncker introduced it into the field in the early 20th century, and the theoretical basis for linguistic Gestalt was developed by J. Lakoff [2].

In psychology, this concept is based on the wholeness of perception, where separate parts of certain forms find their meaning within the whole or Gestalt [4].

All characteristics of perception in Gestalt psychology—constants, forms—interact with each other to express the Gestalt. Additionally, Gestalt integrates all conceptual information closely related to human speech and cognitive activity. Linguist Shoir Usmanova, in her textbook "Linguoculturology," writes: "Gestalts are separate linguistic units with intrinsic meanings. While being realized in language, Gestalts also form the basis for how a person perceives reality, directs cognitive processes, and defines the specific characteristics of motor acts, among other things" [1].

The intrinsic nature of Gestalts in relation to language manifests in several ways. For instance, at the surface level of language, a single Gestalt can evoke different thoughts, and only through specialized research can their unity be determined [5].

Uzbek linguists such as Sh.Safarov, Sh.Usmanova, and D. Khudoyberganova have shared their views on Gestalts in their textbooks and monographs. Notably, Sh. Safarov emphasizes the importance of Gestalt in cognitive linguistics, stating: "Viewing a text as a collection of parts and conducting analysis in a synthetic-analytic manner risks not going beyond syntax analysis. The only way to avoid this risk is to direct the analysis from the holistic to the parts, referring to Gestalt theory" [2].

Linguist D. Khudoyberganova, in her doctoral work "Anthropocentric Study of Artistic Texts in the Uzbek Language," discusses the role of Gestalt in text creation, writing: "Linguistic Gestalt is crucial not only in the creation of texts but also in revealing the cognitive states inherent in their perception. It is known that during the reading process, a reader perceives the content of the units that constitute the text. Initially, the reader focuses on identifying the main idea the author intends to express. It is important to note that while Gestalt appears as a holistic entity in text creation, its semantic perception involves a process from parts to the whole, meaning the individual units perceived by the reader are unified to form the text's macroproposition" [6].

Linguistic Gestalt is primarily observed in texts that describe a unified concept or object. Specifically, it is evident in texts that depict the external or internal appearance, state, or image of a person, scene, or object [6]. For instance, this phenomenon can be observed in a trio of verses by Rauf Parfi. In this trio, the concept of separation from a beloved, a unified concept of separation, is expressed as follows:

*The earth separates from its axis, believe me, believe me, the sun separates from the sky.
If we were to part.*

In another trio, the author describes the beauty and external appearance of his beloved as follows:

Why did you cast a net over my eyes,

Why did you cast a rope?

Are these eyelashes?!

In this text, the poet expresses the unified concept of beauty through three propositions. The phrase "Are these eyelashes?!" reveals the boundless beauty of the beloved's external appearance. Through this microtext, the concept of beauty as a unified idea is perceived.

The burning tree will hang on its neck

White cloud, white cloud,

Then it will leave.

Through this poetic text, the author paints a unified image of a natural scene with words.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be noted that the concept has both cultural and mental characteristics. It is equally applied in the fields of linguoculturology and cognitive linguistics. The concept embodies the process of how language users understand the world and their knowledge of national and cultural life. Additionally, Gestalt, as mentioned earlier, is closely related to Gestalt psychology and pertains to human cognitive activity. It differs from other cognitive linguistic units by embodying both the static and dynamic aspects of phenomena or objects.

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