The Main Linguistic Features of Terms "Concept" And "Notion" In Cognitive Linguistics

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Abstract. *This article examines the linguistic and cognitive features of the terms concept and notion in the field of cognitive linguistics. Although these terms can be frequently utilized interchangeably, cognitive-linguistics theory treats them regarding them as distinct cognitive and mental units with various and different functions in terms of meaning construction. The study aims to define and clarify their theoretical status by analyzing their structural, semantic and cognitive features with their circumstances.*

Key words: *concept, notion, cognitive linguistics, theoretical status, semantic and cognitive features, scholars, mental frame, rational thoughts.*

Based on the works of some scholars being listed below, the aim of this article can be achieved. Those scholars are George Lakoff, Ronald Langacker, Eleanor Rosch, Anna Wierzbicka, and Elena S. kubryakova, the article argues that a concept demonstrates and represents a complex, experience-based and culturally structured mental frame, while a notion functions as an abstract, logically structured unit of rational thoughts. The analysis provides that concepts are dynamic and prototaype-based, as opposed to notions which are relatively stable and definitional. This article emphasizes the significance of distinguishing these scientific terms for accurate cognitive-semantic analysis and further linguistic research works.

Cognitive linguistics is a linguistic paradigm that examines a language as a reflection of human mental cognition, emphasizing the interaction between a language, thoughts, experience, and cultural identities. However, traditional structural and formal approaches, cognitive linguistics protests the thought of a language as an autonomous system and it argues that linguistic meaning is established and grounded in general cognitive processes such as categorization, perception, and conceptualization. The theoretical establishment-based foundations of cognitive linguistics were founded in the late twentieth century by the works of scholars such as Ronald W. Langacker, George Lakoff, and Eleanor Rosch. Langacker's work named *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar (1987)* provides us that linguistic meaning is equivalent to conceptualization, meaning that a language encodes the way communicators cognitively construe reality by having interactions. Different linguistic expressions, for example, describing the same situation may reflect distinct conceptual perspectives, for instance, *the path goes up the hill* and *the hill rises along the path.*

A central principle of cognitive linguistics is considered to be prototype-based categorization, developed by Eleanor Rosch. The research done by Eleanor Rosch demonstrates that categories are organized around typical members as opposed to stringent logical definitions. This is evident in the process of dealing lexical categories such as *BIRD*, while *a sparrow* is perceived as more prototypical

than *a penguin.* George Lakoff further expanded this thought by introducing conceptual metaphor theory, demonstrating that abstract concepts are frequently understood through the help of embodied experience, as in metaphors like *TIME IS MONEY,* meaning that time and money can be equally the same in the mental process and they should not be squandered as a process of waste.

Cognitive linguistics also gives us the information with the point of stressing the cultural dimension of meaning. Anna Wierzbicka and Elena S. Kubryakova emphasize that language structures knowledge and it reflects cultural beliefs and culturally established conceptual systems. Within this idea of this framework, the analysis of mental units such as *concept* and *notion* becomes significant, as they appear and represent different forms of cognitive establishment and organization and the process of meaning construction.

In cognitive linguistics, the *concept* is considered to be as a fundamental cognitive and mental unit through which every human being establishes knowledge, interpret experience, and build the construction of meaning in a language. In modern linguistics, especially within cognitive linguistics, the term *concept* is considered to be a mental unit that emphasizes linguistic meaning and connects a language to knowledge and experience acquired by human beings. Linguistic research views concepts not as abstract logical structures that are functioned and structured, and expressed through a language. One of the fundamental linguistic interpretations of *concept* is demonstrated by the scholar called Ronald W. Langacker in his theory of Cognitive Grammar. In *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar* (1987, 1991), Langacker argues that linguistic meaning is inherited conceptually and that every lexical and grammatical fraction of units evokes a structure built conceptually. The linguistic difference, for example, between *enter the room* and *go into the room* reflects different understandings of the same event, demonstrating that concepts are encoded not only with lexical resources but also with the contributions of grammatical resources.

A major contribution to the linguistic comprehending of the concepts is made by George Lakoff and in his work called *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things* (1987), Lakoff demonstrates that linguistic categories can be structured conceptually by prototypes as opposed to definitions with fixed combinations. Lakoff's analysis of lexical categories shows that words reflect conceptual figures and structes. The word *mother*, for example, provides with multiple conceptual meanings and models (a biological mother, adoptive mother which is so-called a stepmother and a motherland), indicating that the concept emphasizing a lexical meaning is complicating with complexities and established with structures.

Eleanor Rosch's contribution, by experimental approaches, has contributed a decisive influence to linguistic theory. In *Principles of Categorization* (1978), Rosch shows that categories structured with lexica resources have prototypical centers. In the field of linguistics, this explains the fact that why some works are considered to be more readily associated with a category than others. In English a *chair,* for example, is a more prototypical example of *FURNITURE* than *a lamp*, reflecting the structure internally of the concept expressed by the category with lexical resources.

The cultural and semantic dimension of concepts in linguistics is developed with systematic approaches developed by Anna Wierzbicka. In semantics: *Primes and Universals* (1996). Wierzbicka argues that concepts are encoded in a language and reflect specific meanings with cultural structures. By analyzing lexical categories such as *freedom*, *friend,* or *happiness,* Wierzbicka shows that distinct languages perceive these meanings with differentiating concepts, which defines and proves that concepts are linguistically and culturally structured as opposed to generally universal in one form.

In Slavic linguistic traditions, the scholar called Elena S. Kubryakova provides an understanding linguistic definition of a concept in her work known to us with the name *Language and Knowledge* (1997). Elena describes the concept as a key factor of the linguistic worldview that lexical meaning is integrated with grammatical representations, and encyclopedic background knowledge. The concept *TIME*, for example, is considered to be linguistically perceived through systems of tenses, temporal adverbs, and expressions with metaphorical units, demonstrating how concepts establish linguistic meaning across various levels of a language. Therefore, in linguistics, *a concept* is comprehended as a linguistically relevant cognitive and mental establishment that structures meaning

with lexical units, choices with grammatical resources, and semantic interpretations. The works of Langacker, Lakoff, Rosch, Wierzbicka, and Kubryakova demonstrate that concepts are considered to be central to linguistic meanigs and a theoretical foundation for cognitive-semantic analysis is provided.

In linguistics, there is a term called *notion* and it traditionally refers to an abstract with rational units of meanings associated with thought constructed logically and with the contribution of generalization. Differently, the cognitively enriched and experience-based notion of *concept* established in the field cognitive linguistics, *notion* has been aligned with classical semantics, logic, and grammatical theories with historical background resources. It is basically utilized to denote meanings generalized that are stable enough with definitions, and relatively independent of every cultural experience.

One of the definitive linguistic features of *notion* makes an appearance in classical and functional linguistics, where it is comprehended as a generalized semantic category emphasizing grammatical and lexical meanings. Otto Jespersen, in *The Philosophy of Grammar* (1924), utilizes the term *national* to illustrate meanings that demonstrate general thoughts and ideas such as a number, time, possession, or existence. Categories specialized grammatically, for instance, like *tense* or *number* are extracted based on notional distinctions and examples could be (past versus present, singular versus plural), which can be abstract and clarified with logical resources as opposed to experiential ones.

The notion-based approach is also accurately evident in the fields of traditional grammar and structural linguistics. The scholar whose name is Leonard Bloomfield, in *Language* (1993), protests explanations expressed with mentalistic units but implicitly treats a meaning as a generalized abstraction extracted from the process of usage. In this framework, a notion corresponds to a stable semantic unit that can manage to be defined through contexts. The notion of *plurality*, for example, remains steady and constant despite whether it is expressed by –s in English or by different types of metaphorical units in various languages.

In grammatical semantics, *notion* is frequently utilized to illustrate meanings that are generalized emphasizing categories based on grammatical manners. Bernard Comrie, in *Tense* (1985), analyzes tense as a notional category according to the logical connection between occasion and event time and reference time. Moreover a tense does not rely on cultural understandings or interpretations or metaphors but on temporal connections that are abstract, describing the notional nature of meanings of grammatical units.

Therefore, *a notion* in linguistics, is comprehended as an abstract, a logically organized unit of meanings that emphasize categories structured grammatically and semantically. Its function operates as a tool of rational classification and definition as opposed to as an enriched structure established culturally and experientially. While notions play a crucial role in descriptions of grammatical usages and formal analysis, they show fundamental difference in terms of concepts, which own a main and basic and most importantly central position in the field of cognitive-linguistic theory.

In cognitive linguistics and linguistic theories, differentiating between *concept* and *notion* is very crucial for comprehending how a language encodes the process of humanly acquiring knowledge. Although two of those terms are frequently utilized interchangeably in the chain of interactions in discourse in everyday communications, scholars have highlighted fundamental differences in their structures, cognitive functions, and the realization of linguistics.

George Lakoff (1987) and Ronald Langacker (1987), conducted the research for the clarification of the term *concept* as a demonstration and the term *concept* is considered to be a multidimensional mental and cognitive structure established within the units of permission, experience, and a language. Concepts can be prototype-based, flexible, and conditioned according to cultural norms. The concept *BIRD*, for instance, consists of central members like *sparrow* and members of peripheral creatures like *penguin*, reflecting grounded membership as opposed to stringent boundaries. Concepts are also regarded as context-dependent, meaning that different linguistic expressions can emphasize various aspects of the same concept, for example, as mentioned above, *the path goes up the hill* versus *the hill raises along the path.*

As long as the aim is concerned with the purpose of defining the difference of these two terms *concept* and *notion,* in contrast, *a notion* demonstrates a logically abstract and stable and more importantly generalized unit of meanings, as it was emphasized by Elena S. Kubyakova (1997) and there is also one linguist who can be included in the field of classical linguistics and his name is Otto Jespersen (1924) who was on the same page as Elena S. Kubryakova. Notions underlie categories with both grammatical and lexical aspects and they are defined by reasoning as opposed to experience. The notion of *plurality* or *triangle* is not relevant across contexts and languages, depending on formal properties instead of variations of perceptual and cultural aspects.

From a linguistic point of view, concepts make an appearance is both lexical semantics and grammatical constructions, frequently revealing cognitive viewpoints and cultural beliefs and values. Anna Wierzbicka (1996) mentions that concepts like *freedom* or *honor* constructed knowledge with cultural influence, demonstrating that meaning cannot be altered to formal features alone. Concepts have the potential to trigger extensions of metaphoric and prototype-associated features as the example of metaphor *TIME IS MONEY* by Lakoff.

However, in linguistics, notions, in comparison, basically function as generalized semantic cores emphasizing categories of grammatical aspects or terms related to scientific areas. Bernard Comrie (1985) shows that a tense functions as a notional category according to logical connections between event time and the time of the reference, with the addition of independent cultural interpretation. Quite similarly, Jepersen clarifies distinctions that are notional such as *tense, number,* and *case* regarding them as crucial abstractions that are prominent for systematic analysis of grammatical aspects. The difference between *concept* and *notion* is proved and supported by the contributions of both experimental and theoretical evidence. This circumstance can appear in the works of some mentionable scientists in this article. Eleanor Rosch (1978) demonstrated the graded category membership with experiments, confirming that concepts can be flexible cognitively. Lakoff (1987) and Langacker (1987) demonstrated that a meaning related to conceptual aspects is as a result of the shape created by embodiment, metaphors, and perspective. In contrast, analyses done by Kubryakova (1985) propose that notions are stable, logical and they can have definitions.

In Uzbek, the concept *"qalb"* demonstrates a complex cognitive frame that connects **emotional, moral, and spiritual dimensions.** It is commonly utilized to show a personal inner worldview, cultural values, ethical values, and emotional sensitivity, while a logical notion "qalb" represents as a culturally established concept structured by social priorities and traditional values. For example:

➢ *Uning qalbi juda pok va toza (showing moral and spiritual purity)*

➢ *Mening qalbim juda og'ridi (showing the feeling of emotional pain)*

➢ *Men har doim qalbdan gapiraman (showing the feeling of emotional sincerit)*

In English, the concept *"heart"* basically represents as the center of emotions, emotional sincerity, and a person's moral judgment. It is highly linked to individual emotional process and experience and decision-making as opposed to collective or the responsibilities of spiritual states. For example:

➢ *She has got a kind heart*

➢ *She has spoken from the bottom of his heart*

➢ *Please, follow your heart, as long as you are alive*

According to cognitive linguistics, basically Langacker's research of conceptualization, the term *"heart"* demonstrates a salient emotional center founded in individual personal experience. Unlike "qalb", the English version "heart" hardly holds strong meaning including spiritual values and is more basically concerned with a person's feelings, psychological conditions, and personal choices.

The English term *"soul"* shows a distinct conceptual frame, it is primarily associated with the essence of spiritual process, the level of morality, and metaphysical identities. It is rarely utilized in everyday expressions with emotions and is frequently linked to philosophical and religious interactions and discourse. For example:

> ➢ He possesses a noble soul

> ➢ His soul is truly immoral

Based on a cognitive viewpoint, *"soul"* connects with what the scholar called Wierzbicka demonstrates as culturally specific and semantically joined concepts, in which the values of moral and spiritual expressions are lexicalized being separated from the emotional experience and process.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF CONCEPTUAL FEATURES

FEATURE	QALB (UZBEK)	HEART	SOUL
Emotional meaning and expressions	Strongly expressed	Strongly expressed	With limitations
Moral meaning and expressions	Strongly expressed	Moderately expressed	Strongly expressed
Spiritual meaning and expressions	Always present	Minimal	Central
Cultural orientation	Ethically communal	Personal and individualistic	For philosophical and religious aims
Daily usage	Very high and common	Very high and common	Medium not very often
The type for conceptual terms	A concept which is multi-layered	A concept with emotions	A notion which is spiritually abstract

The practical part has the analysis that demonstrates that *"qalb", "heart", "soul"* share a generally universal mental and cognitive though which is related to inner and individual experience, the states of emotions, and values. However, their realization in linguistic fields is distinct and differs with significant differences owing to the factors of cultural and cognitive states. Uzbek focuses more on emotional and moral meanings when it comes to the term *"qalb",* while English speakers can distribute these meanings with two of the terms which are *"heart"* and *"soul".* It can be obvious that the distinction suggests that in the principle of cognitive-linguistics concepts are not merely the labels of linguistic fields but they are structured with cultural foundations and they are the representations of culturally structured mental foundations. Therefore every concept is evidently structured based on the cultural background and concepts function differently in different nations.

In conclusion, this article has demonstrated that *concept* and *notion* have a representative distinction but the meaning of complementary units in linguistics as well. *A concept* is comprehended as a cognitive reality, experience-based, and culturally shaped and constructed mental establishment that underlies linguistic meanings. The works of Lakoff, Rosch, Langacker, Wierzbicka, and Kubryakova help us to comprehend this distinction between *notion* and *concept* that concepts are prototype-based and context-dependent. In contrast, *a notion* operates as an abstract and logically defined unit of meanings, primarily linked with grammatical categories and formal semantic analysis. The scholars such as Jespersen, Comrie, and Kubryakova highlight that notions appear due to the influence of rational abstraction and function as tools to structure linguistic descriptions with a systematic style.

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