

LINGUOCOGNITIVE INTERPRETATION OF AGENTIVITY IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

Said-Akhmedova Shokhista Nuritdinovna

Samarkand state institute of foreign languages, teacher

Shaibonu@mail.ru

+998888944282

Abstract. This article comparatively examines the linguocognitive features of the category of agency in English and Uzbek. During the study, the semantic, syntactic, and conceptual aspects of agency were analyzed, and the subject's activity in action, voluntariness, level of control, and role in reality were highlighted. The role of the agent in the system of language and thinking, its grammatical and cognitive features are revealed on the example of agent constructions in English and Uzbek. The article also analyzes the metaphorical and pragmatic forms of expression of agency, and substantiates the close connection of this category with the process of human conceptualization of the world. The results of the study show that there are common and different aspects in the expression of agency in English and Uzbek, and allow us to evaluate agency as an important linguocognitive category that reflects the relationship between language and thinking.

Keywords: agentiveness, linguocognitive analysis, semantic role, subject, conceptualization, cognitive linguistics, syntactic construction, comparative linguistics.

INTRODUCTION

The growing interest in studying the relationship between language and thinking in 21st-century linguistics has led to the widespread development of linguocognitive research. In modern research, the human factor, the subject's activity, and the role of the speaker in the process of perceiving reality are interpreted as one of the central issues. In this regard, the category of agentiveness is one of the complex phenomena formed at the intersection of linguistic fields such as syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and cognitive linguistics. Agentiveness manifests as a linguistic-cognitive category that expresses the activity, volition, level of control, and position of the subject performing the action through language at the center of the event. This category is closely related to the model of human perception of existence and is expressed through specific semantic and conceptual means in different languages.

The expression of agency in English and Uzbek, along with typological differences in language systems, also reflects the mental-cognitive views, worldview, and communicative strategies of these peoples. In English, agency is often expressed through the active position of the grammatical subject, the transitivity of the verb, and analytical constructions, while in Uzbek, morphological means, affixation, and contextual factors play an important role. In particular, semantic components such as the agent's attitude to action, responsibility or voluntariness are

conceptualized differently in the two language systems. This creates the need to study agency not only as a grammatical phenomenon but also as a linguocognitive phenomenon related to thinking and culture.

In recent years, in cognitive linguistics, great attention has been paid to the analysis of the conceptual foundations of semantic roles such as “agent”, “experiencer”, “benefactor”, “causator”. However, the comparative-linguistic-cognitive interpretation of agency in English and Uzbek has not been sufficiently comprehensively studied. In existing scientific works, the syntactic or semantic aspects of agency are mainly studied, while its conceptual and mental foundations remain at a secondary level. Therefore, the comparative analysis of agency based on the relationship between language and thinking is one of the urgent scientific problems.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The category of agency has been extensively studied in linguistics within the framework of semantic roles, functional grammar, and cognitive linguistics. One of the important theoretical views in this direction is Ch. Fillmore’s concept of “Case Grammar”, in which the agent is interpreted as an active subject consciously performing an action¹. The scholar explains agency as a semantic phenomenon rather than a grammatical one. According to him, the same syntactic construction can be agent or non-agent in different contexts. T. Givón characterizes agency through semantic components such as control, voluntariness, and the initiation of action². According to the scientist, human thinking perceives reality based on the “subject-action-object” model, and this model is expressed differently in different languages. This view serves as an important theoretical basis for understanding the linguocognitive nature of agency. R. Langecker analyzes agency from the perspective of conceptual grammar, interpreting the agent as the source of the event’s energy³. In his opinion, the subject conceptually occupies a central place in agentive constructions. This approach demonstrates the connection between agency and language and thinking.

In Uzbek linguistics, the issues of agency have been studied mainly in syntactic and semantic aspects. In the research of N. Mahmudov⁴ and A. Nurmonov⁵, attention is paid to the activity of the subject in action, the semantics of the sentence and the issues of predicative relations. However, the linguocognitive interpretation of agency has not been sufficiently studied in comparison with the English and Uzbek languages. Therefore, this topic is one of the relevant scientific directions for modern cognitive linguistics.

METHODOLOGY

¹ Fillmore Ch. J. The case for case. Universals in linguistic theory. – New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968. – P. 74

² Givón T. Syntax: A functional-typological introduction. – Amsterdam: John Benjamins publishing company, 1984. – 464 p

³ Langacker R. W. Cognitive grammar: A basic introduction. – Oxford: Oxford university press, 2008. – 562 p

⁴ Mahmudov N. O‘zbek tilining nazariy grammatikasi. – Toshkent: O‘qituvchi, 1995. – 240 b

⁵ Nurmonov A. O‘zbek tilining mazmuniy sintaksisi. – Toshkent: Fan, 1992. – 286 b



In this study, methods of comparative-typological, semantic and cognitive analysis were used to study the linguocognitive features of the category of agency in English and Uzbek. During the study, agent constructions in the English and Uzbek languages were selected, and a comparative analysis of the subject's activity, voluntariness, and level of control was conducted. Furthermore, the conceptual expression of agency was investigated based on a linguocognitive approach, and a descriptive method was used to summarize the results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Agentiveness is one of the important linguocognitive categories reflecting the human-centered nature of language, expressing the activity, voluntariness, and level of control over reality of the subject performing the action. The expression of agency in English and Uzbek languages occurs through various grammatical and conceptual mechanisms. From the perspective of cognitive linguistics, the agent is conceptualized in human thought as a "source of action" and is located at the semantic center of the sentence⁶. Therefore, the analysis of agent constructions is important in determining the relationship between language and thinking. In English, agentiveness is often expressed through a syntactic subject. In particular, the central position of the agent is clearly manifested in sentences in the active voice: "*The scientist developed a new method*". In this sentence, the lexeme "*scientist*" is interpreted not only as a grammatical subject but also as a conceptual center that carries out conscious activity. According to R. Langecker, in such constructions, the subject is perceived as a source of energy and influences other participants⁷. In this case, the verb "*developed*" also expresses purposeful conscious activity and strengthens agency.

In the Uzbek language, agency is often clarified using morphological means. For example, in the sentence "*Olim yangi usul yaratdi*", the affix "*-di*" indicates the completion of the action, while the component "*olim*" appears as a conscious performer of the action. However, in the Uzbek language, agency is not limited only to the grammatical subject. In some cases, the context or the semantic feature of the verb determines the level of activity of the agent. For example, in the sentence "*Bola kitobni tushirib yubordi*", the action is involuntary in nature, and the level of control of the agent decreases. T. Givon describes such situations as a model of "low agency"⁸. From a linguocognitive point of view, one of the important components of agency is voluntariness. In the English sentence "*She intentionally ignored the warning*", the adverb "*intentionally*" reinforces the agent's conscious decision. In the construction "*U ogohlantirishni ataylab e'tiborsiz qoldirdi*" in the Uzbek language, the lexeme "*ataylab*" also indicates that the action was carried out purposefully. Consequently, adverbial components in both languages are an important tool for determining the cognitive level of agency⁹.

⁶ Croft W., Cruse D. A. cognitive linguistics. – Cambridge: Cambridge university press, 2004. – 356 p

⁷ Langacker R. W. Cognitive grammar: A basic introduction. – Oxford: Oxford university press, 2008. – 562 p

⁸ Givón T. Syntax: A functional-typological introduction. – Amsterdam: John Benjamins publishing company, 1984. – 464 p

⁹ Levin B., Rappaport Hovav M. Argument realization. – Cambridge: Cambridge university press, 2005. – 278 p



The level nature of agentiveness is particularly evident in passive constructions in English. For example, in the sentence “*The window was broken by the boy*”, although the agent is present, it is syntactically secondary. Ch. According to Fillmore, passive constructions reduce the communicative significance of the agent and focus attention on the object¹⁰. A similar situation is observed in the Uzbek language: “*Deraza bola tomonidan sindirildi*”. However, in the Uzbek language, such constructions are used relatively rarely in speech, and the active voice prevails. This situation shows that there is a tendency to open expression of the performer of the action in the Uzbek language thinking.

The linguocognitive nature of agency is also manifested in metaphorical constructions. In the example of “*Fear controlled his mind*” in English, the abstract concept acts as an agent. According to Lakoff and Johnson’s conceptual metaphor theory, human thinking tends to conceptualize abstract concepts as active subjects as well¹¹. In the Uzbek language, units such as “*Qo‘rquv uni boshqardi*” are also found. In this case, the emotional state is interpreted as an agent independent of the person. This phenomenon shows that agency is not only a grammatical but also a conceptual-cognitive category. The use of natural phenomena as agents is also common in English: “*The storm destroyed the village*”. Here, “*storm*” is conceptualized as an agent with high impact power, although it is not a living subject. The same pattern is observed in the sentence “*Bo‘ron qishloqni vayron qildi*” in the Uzbek language. However, in the Uzbek language, such constructions are often associated with an emotional-expressive style¹².

The pragmatic aspect of agency is also important. In English, there is a tendency to hide the agent in a formal style: “*Mistakes were made*”. In this construction, the performer of the action is intentionally not specified. Fairclough views this as a discursive strategy¹³. In the Uzbek language, units such as “*Xatolarga yo‘l qo‘yildi*” are also encountered. In this case, the concealment of the agent serves to obscure the responsibility. In cognitive linguistics, agency is associated with a person’s perception of the world based on cause-and-effect relationships. Talmy analyzes the dynamic structure of movement and describes the agent as a “source of power”¹⁴. For example, in the sentence “*The teacher inspired the students*”, the agent exerts psychological, not physical, influence. The example of “*O‘qituvchi talabalarni ruhlantirdi*” in the Uzbek language also reflects the mental influence of the agent. This situation indicates that agency is associated not only with physical action but also with psychological influence.

In the Uzbek language, affixes such as “*-uvchi*”, “*-chi*”, which express agency, also perform an important cognitive function. For example, in the units “*yozuvchi*”, “*boshqaruvchi*”, “*tarbiyachi*” action is conceptualized as a constant activity. Compared to the English units

¹⁰ Fillmore Ch. J. The case for case // Universals in linguistic theory. – New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968. – P. 88

¹¹ Lakoff G., Johnson M. Metaphors we live by. – Chicago: University of Chicago press, 1980. – 242 p

¹² Mahmudov N. O‘zbek tilining nazariy grammatikasi. – Toshkent: O‘qituvchi, 1995. – 240 b

¹³ Fairclough N. Language and power. – London: Longman, 1989. – 259 p

¹⁴ Talmy L. Toward a cognitive semantics. – Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000. – 565 p



“writer”, “manager”, “teacher”, it is observed that agency in both languages is associated with professional identification¹⁵. This indicates the socio-cognitive nature of agency. Thus, although agency is expressed through various grammatical means in English and Uzbek, it is based on a general conceptual model of human thinking. In both languages, the agent is interpreted as the center that moves reality, but its level of expression differs depending on the language system and the characteristics of cultural thinking. While syntactic structure and passive constructions play an important role in English, morphological means and contextual semantics predominate in Uzbek. This shows that agency combines the features of universality and nationality as a linguocognitive category.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study showed that the category of agency in English and Uzbek is a complex linguocognitive phenomenon. In both languages, the agent is conceptualized as the active performer of an action and the center that moves reality, but its methods of expression differ depending on the language system and the characteristics of national thinking. In English, agency is manifested through syntactic means, active and passive constructions, while in Uzbek, morphological forms, verb semantics, and context are of great importance. During the study, it was established that components of agency, such as voluntariness, control, activity, and the degree of influence, are directly linked to the process of human conceptualization of reality. It was also observed that the cognitive nature of agency is clearly manifested in metaphorical and pragmatic constructions. The results obtained make it possible to evaluate agency as an important linguocognitive category that illuminates the relationship between language and thinking and has theoretical significance for the fields of comparative linguistics and cognitive linguistics.

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¹⁵ Taylor J. R. Cognitive grammar. – Oxford: Oxford university press, 2002. – 621 p



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