

РЕЦЕНЗИИ

JAPANESE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS

Grigory Kazakov

PhD, Associate Professor

Department for the Development of Language Training
of Graduate Specialists, Russian Customs Academy
4, Komsomolsky prospect, Lyubertsy, 140000
amicilinguarum@rambler.ru

1. In late 2019, *The Encyclopedia of Cognitive Linguistics* – 認知言語学大事典 *Ninchi Gengogaku Daijiten* – came off the press in Japan (Tokyo, Asakura Publishing). This fundamental 864-page work prepared by more than 80 contributors under the general editorship of Prof. Yukio Tsuji and co-editorship of Profs. Takashi Kusumi, Kazumi Sugai, Masuhiro Nomura, Kaoru Horie and Kimihiro Yoshimura, presents a comprehensive overview of the main theoretical concepts and models of cognitive linguistics, and covers its diverse subfields and topics, including the research undertaken by the members of the Japanese Cognitive Linguistics Association founded in 2000 and now being the largest of this kind in the world (with about 750 regular members).

2. It is probably not too much to say, as indicated by the editor-in-chief, that this encyclopedia excels all the other similar publications in the world in its exhaustiveness of the areas dealt with, its diversity of contributors, and its insightful considerations of the matters in question. The encyclopedia consists of 5 chapters presenting various perspectives in cognitive linguistics and related fields enabling readers to approach their subjects of interest.

Chapter 1 (General Remarks) includes 5 main overview papers on the development and current trends in the study of language and thinking (“Cognitive linguistics and semiotics” by Yoshihiko Ikegami, “Cognitive linguistics and cognitive science” by Masa-aki Yamanashi, “Cognitive linguistics viewed from the perspective of linguistics” by Masuhiro Nomura, “Cognitive linguistics in Europe, North America and Japan: its pioneers and modern flag bearers” by Minoru Ohtsuki, and “Cognitive semantics and philosophy” by Katsuhito Aoki).

Chapter 2 (Theoretical Framework) contains 14 articles on different aspects of language (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, functional linguistics, typology, poetics, etc.) viewed within the framework of traditional linguistics. In addition, the approaches, methods and models peculiar to cognitive linguistics are overviewed and critically evaluated.

Chapter 3 (Major Concepts) consists of 9 papers dealing with some key concepts and basic terms of cognitive linguistics such as embodiment, experientialism, construal, categorization, prototype, interpretation, image schema, metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, subjectification, intersubjectification, reference point, grammaticalization, and blending.

Chapter 4 (Theoretical Issues) is composed of 23 articles subdivided into 3 sections: language evolution and diversity; language acquisition and education; creativity and expression. In this chapter the authors connect central, theoretical issues of cognitive-linguistic research (origin and historical development of language functions, grammatical categories, universality and diversity of human thinking, etc.) with their various applications (e.g. Japanese and English language education, cognitive disorders, and lexicography).

Chapter 5 (Interdisciplinary Areas) consists of 12 papers discussing the interplay between cognitive linguistics and other fields of research (psychology, anthropology, neuroscience,

sociolinguistics, communication studies, natural language processing, neuropsychology, sign language, etc.).

Besides the 5 main chapters, the encyclopedia is supplemented by 52 column articles on a variety of topics spanning from computer programming languages, cognitive typology, word play, and experimental methods to spatial cognition, mirror neurons, verbal expression of memory, and language disorders. For the convenience, the volume has a detailed table of contents, subject and name indexes, and the Japanese-English comparative table of terminology.

A significant advantage of the encyclopedia is that the team of authors includes not only linguists but also researchers from other relevant fields thus securing a more comprehensive view of the complex issues discussed. The heterogeneity of structure across the parts of the book, which differentiates it from traditional encyclopedic dictionaries (there are no alphabetical-order-based entries), probably reflects the diverse nature of contemporary cognitive studies and makes it more convenient for use as a textbook.

In the preface, the editor-in-chief points out that cognitive linguistics emerged in the second half of the 20th century as a response to the problems faced by generative grammar. The major feature of this modern trend is its “interdisciplinary nature as a comprehensive science that keeps track of the development of cognitive science, information science, neuroscience, etc., while maintaining its expertise as linguistics”. Given such a broad understanding of this discipline, the adequacy of research results should be guaranteed by their empirical justification and methodological clarity.

The composition of the encyclopedia and previous professional contacts with Japanese scholars (see, e.g., *Journal of Psycholinguistics*, 37, p. 177) lead one to think that in Japan, as compared to some other academic traditions, cognitive linguistics tends to focus on semantics and is specifically concerned with discovering and interpreting language facts that can be indicative of mental processes and cultural patterns, thus inclining more to the humanities than to natural sciences.

All in all, it seems quite certain that this encyclopedia will become a milestone reference material in linguistics and cognitive studies for all readers of Japanese, and can work as a model for similar publications in other languages. Hopefully, the intellectual exchange that can result from processing and discussing the findings presented in this solid work will not only increase scientific knowledge but will also stimulate closer acquaintance and cooperation between researchers in the East and the West.

The author is indebted to Prof. Minoru Ohtsuki for his advice.