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NONVERBAL COGNITION AND PERCEPTION: A LINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE

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Nonverbal cognition, a fundamental aspect of human perception, extends beyond the confines of language, playing a crucial role in shaping how we understand and interact with the world. This article explores the intricate relationship between nonverbal cognition and linguistic processes, drawing from insights provided by prominent scholars in psychology, linguistics, and cognitive science. By delving into the mechanisms underlying nonverbal cognition, we aim to shed light on its significance in shaping human thought and understanding, and its implications for fields such as translation and cross-cultural communication.

A.N. Leontiev posits that thinking is the highest level of human perception, reflecting objective reality through psychic processes. Sensations are the sole source of thinking, enabling knowledge acquisition beyond direct sensory perception (Leontiev, 1983).

This mental landscape is not a simple sensory reflection but is shaped by the perceiving subject (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Perception is indirect, a complex reflection of reality. A. Benjamin emphasizes that transitioning from inanimate object language to human language introduces new knowledge, such as thought and perception (Benjamin, 1989). J. Piaget's studies on children's thinking and conceptual views highlight that objects can exist independently of the subject. Full understanding requires the subject to engage with the objects, logically connect them to other realities, and integrate them (Piaget, 1994).

Interaction between the knowing subject and existing objects, rather than the world's influence on thought, is crucial. R. Jackendoff states that perception results from the interaction between external stimuli and cognitive models in our minds, shaping perceived reality (Jackendoff, 1985).

O.A. Kornilov argues that language conveys acquired information through its means and capabilities, shaping perceived reality differently by each national language into a specific conceptual system (Kornilov, 2003). Despite having the same perceptual



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abilities, speakers of different languages develop different conceptual systems due to variations in conceptualizing methods (Lakoff, 2004). Cultural experiences and geographic locations also influence these differences.

Once a conceptual system is consolidated in language, it allows individuals to perceive the world directly and represent knowledge extralinguistically. This ensures uniform perception while determining differences in perceptual activities through linguistic worldviews.

At the current stage of scientific progress, nonverbal thinking has been demonstrated through various studies, including education and training of congenitally deaf children, clinical observations of aphasia patients, cognitive processes in nonverbal professions, and observation of disrupted internal speech in older individuals.

Prominent scholars like Vygotsky, Jinkin, and Leontiev hypothesize that the human mind possesses a special nonverbal mental code. Vygotsky considered this code to be internal speech, emerging from egocentric thinking (Vygotsky, 2007). He describes internal speech as not intended for communication, differing semantically from verbal speech. Internal speech operates through denotative meanings, with minimized external structural aspects like grammar and phonetics

Psychologist N.I. Jinkin emphasizes that human thinking operates through a two-stage mechanism, with internal speech serving as a universal object-schematic code (Jinkin, 1998). This code lacks the material signs of words, instead comprising images, schemes, or representations forming chains or groups. Unlike natural spoken language, the object-schematic code is devoid of redundancy. The continuous connection between internal speech code and natural language constitutes the thought process, with natural language usage only possible through the universal object-schematic code stage.

The hypothesis of a nonverbal cognitive code is supported by various researchers, referred to by different names: natural, internal code; intellectual language; intellectual code; semantic language; and thought language. These terms reflect complementary tools of verbal thinking.

Experiments by I.N. Gorelov demonstrate the existence of a specific special code in the brain responsible for thought and perception formation. These experiments show that national linguistic material becomes comprehensible only after being recoded through this special code (Gorelov & Sedov, 1997). This supports the hypothesis proposed by Vygotsky and Jinkin regarding the nonverbal universal object-



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schematic code (Jinkin, 1998). The code's universality lies in its openness to everyone, allowing speakers of different languages to express different methods of nonverbal thinking and categorization of the world (Kornilov, 2003).

The existence of the nonverbal object-schematic code, with its units capable of transforming into synonymous texts in any natural language, is crucial for translation. It forms one of the primary theoretical and philosophical bases of translation. Understanding this code's structure and units is essential for bridging linguistic and cognitive processes, facilitating accurate and effective translation.

In conclusion, nonverbal cognition emerges as a multifaceted phenomenon deeply intertwined with linguistic processes, yet extending beyond the constraints of language. Through the works of scholars like Vygotsky, Jinkin, and Leontiev, we have gained valuable insights into the nature of nonverbal cognition and its role in shaping human perception and understanding. The existence of a universal object-schematic code, as proposed by these scholars, highlights the universality of certain cognitive processes across different linguistic and cultural contexts. Understanding the intricate interplay between nonverbal cognition and language not only enriches our understanding of human cognition but also has practical implications for fields such as translation and cross-cultural communication. As we continue to unravel the complexities of nonverbal cognition, further research in this area promises to yield valuable insights into the nature of human thought and perception.

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