

B. (eds.) Continuum Companion to Discourse Analysis. London : Continuum. Pp. 171–184.

10. Kress, G. (2009). *Multimodality : A Social Semiotic Approach to Contemporary Communication*. London : Routledge. 1st ed. 236 p.

EMPIRICAL FOUNDATIONS OF DEFINING NOTIONS: A SURVEY BASED METHODOLOGY

Yaroslava Fedoriv

National University of “Kyiv-Mohyla Academy”

Liudmyla Zhukorska

Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University

I. Introduction

This research explores empirical methods in defining linguistic notions, drawing insights from recent literature on diverse approaches to understanding complex linguistic units. It focuses on identifying key features, including cognitive dimensions, linguistic verbalization, and cultural/historical references.

Addressing challenges in defining word meanings, the study emphasizes the adaptability of survey methods, guided by insights from a comprehensive literature review highlighting the pivotal role of empirical research in unveiling linguistic data and understanding language use and cognition.

The paper methodically describes participant selection, data collection, and the design of empirical research instruments. The data analysis combines quantitative analysis via Google Forms for closed questions and qualitative content analysis for open-ended questions, resulting in a nuanced understanding of participants' responses and contributing to a holistic exploration of defined linguistic notions.

II. Literature Review

A brief overview of recent studies focused on exploring different approaches to examining, describing, and explaining the complex unit of a concept from a linguistic perspective outlines the researchers' goal as identifying key features of a concept, including its cognitive character, verbalization through linguistic units, and cultural and historical references.

A range of empirical approaches have been used to define linguistic notions. The challenge of defining notions is compounded by the elusive nature of word meaning, as discussed by Rieger (1981). Baker (1997) emphasised the versatility of survey methods, which can be applied through various techniques such as questionnaires, interviews, observation, and content analysis. Racciah (2005) highlights the role of empirical observations, such as utterances and human behaviours, in the study of semantics. Fischer (2010) and Belica et al. (2010) advocate for the use of quantitative and usage-based methodologies, respectively, in cognitive semantics, with the former suggesting a need for methodological rigour and the latter proposing a self-organising clustering approach to studying lexical-semantic relations. Stolterfoht and Featherston (2012) emphasise the importance of controlled methods in advancing our understanding of language.

Collectively, these studies underscore the value of empirical research in shaping our understanding of linguistic concepts, particularly in their ability to capture a wide range of data and provide insights into language use and cognition.

III. Research Methodology

Participants for the study are university students in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes, selected through a random sampling method to ensure diverse language proficiency levels and representation across academic backgrounds.

Data collection involves controlled and open-ended

questions integrated into EFL classes' introductory activities. Controlled questions, structured and closed-ended, aim for specific information, facilitating quantitative analysis. Open-ended questions encourage participants to freely express thoughts, offering qualitative insights into language proficiency, experiences, and attitudes in introductory discussions.

Survey questions are crafted to capture specific dimensions and nuances of targeted concepts, aiming for detailed responses that enhance understanding of participants' perceptions, experiences, and interpretations.

The survey design incorporates a mix of closed-ended questions with predefined response options for quantitative analysis, providing measurable data on participants' views. Additionally, open-ended questions are strategically integrated to allow participants the flexibility to express their thoughts freely, offering qualitative insights that enrich the understanding of the concepts.

The aim is to craft a robust and reliable instrument facilitating empirical exploration and definition of concepts based on participants' perspectives and experiences. Researchers must prioritize participants' rights, ensuring voluntary participation, informed consent, clear communication of study purpose, procedures, and potential benefits, while also implementing measures to safeguard participant identity and sensitive information.

IV. Data Analysis Procedures

In this study, empirical data analysis employs a blend of quantitative and qualitative methods, combining numerical trends with nuanced insights derived from content analysis. Statistical summaries will be generated using Google Forms' built-in tools for closed questions, providing a quantitative overview of participants' responses, offering insights into patterns, frequencies, and correlations. Open-ended question

responses undergo content analysis, involving systematic examination and categorization of textual data to identify recurring themes, patterns, and meanings. This method offers qualitative insights into the respondents' perspectives, experiences, and attitudes.

V. Conclusion

By fostering a data-driven understanding of linguistic concepts, this research offers a methodological framework for developing an empirical-based definitions of linguistic notions, refining linguistic theories, and applying them practically in language practices and communication strategies. The use of both controlled and open-ended questions proves effective in comprehensively capturing respondents' experiences and perceptions.

The findings may have implications for language teaching, intercultural communication, and the development of linguistic resources, fostering practical advancements in the field.

References

- Baker, C. (1997). Survey Methods in Researching Language and Education. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-011-4535-0_4
- Belica, C., Keibel, H., Kupietz, M., & Perkuhn, R. (2010). An empiricist's view of the ontology of lexical-semantic relations. In *Lingvisticae investigationes* (pp. 115–144). <https://doi.org/10.1075/lis.28.08bel>
- Fischer, K. (2010). Quantitative methods in Cognitive Semantics. Introduction to the volume. In De Gruyter eBooks (pp. 43–60). <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110226423.43>
- Raccah, P. (2005). What is an empirical theory of linguistic meaning a theory of? In *Studies in language companion series* (pp. 51–80). <https://doi.org/10.1075/slcs.72.04rac>
- Rieger, B. B. (2015). Feasible fuzzy semantics. on some problems of how to handle word meaning empirically. In De Gruyter eBooks. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110842524-010>
- Stolterfoht, B., & Featherston, S. (2012). Empirical Approaches to Linguistic Theory. In De Gruyter eBooks. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781614510888>