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**MENTAL MODELS OF "TIME" IN DIFFERENT ENGLISH
DIALECTS: A COGNITIVE LINGUISTIC COMPARISON**

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Abstract

Time is a universal yet abstract concept whose conceptualization is shaped by language, cognition, culture, and social experience. This study examines the mental models of time in British English, American English, Australian English, and South Asian English from a cognitive linguistic perspective. Drawing on Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Johnson-Laird's Mental Model Theory, the study employs a qualitative comparative approach to analyze temporal expressions, conceptual metaphors, and discourse patterns drawn from linguistic corpora and documented sources. The findings reveal both shared and dialect-specific patterns of temporal conceptualization. Across the four varieties, recurring metaphors include TIME IS MOTION, TIME IS A RESOURCE, TIME IS A CONTAINER, TIME IS A PATH, and TIME IS A SOCIAL PROCESS. However, British English predominantly conceptualizes time as structured and measurable; American English emphasizes time as a valuable resource associated with productivity and efficiency; Australian English reflects greater flexibility and informality; while South Asian English represents time as socially embedded, relational, and context-dependent. The study demonstrates that although speakers of different English varieties share common metaphorical foundations, cultural values, social practices, and communicative norms contribute to distinct mental models of time. The findings contribute to cognitive linguistics, sociolinguistics, and intercultural communication by demonstrating how dialectal variation within a single global language can reflect diverse relationships between language, thought, and culture.

Keywords: Cognitive Linguistics; Mental Models; Temporal Cognition; Conceptual Metaphor; Time Metaphors; English Dialects; British English; American English; Australian English; South Asian English; Language and Culture; Intercultural Communication.

INTRODUCTION

Time is a basic element of human cognition and communication that affects the way people structure their experiences, understand events and organize their future actions. Although it is universal, time is an abstracted thing, which cannot be sensed directly. Therefore, temporal experiences are conceptualized and communicated through the use of language and cognitive structures. According to cognitive linguistics, language reflects human thought and the language expressions show the underlying conceptual systems by which people think about the reality (Evans, 2023). Thus, a study of the temporal language offers a good window into the mechanisms of cognition that underlie human understanding of time.

Time has become a topic of great interest in the modern cognitive linguistic studies. Research has revealed that time is often understood metaphorically in terms of other, concrete domains, e.g., space, motion, or physical objects (Kövecses, 2020). These metaphorical structures enable speakers to reason about abstract temporal concepts with familiar experiences. The future lies ahead, time is running out – the deadline is approaching – is examples of the ways in which the sense of future is connected to the spatial and motion-based experiences. The studies of recent years also indicate that temporal metaphors can differ in regard to the cultural, linguistic, and social context, and show differences across speech communities (Yu, 2021).

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argued that, following the line of thinking of Conceptual Metaphor Theory, abstract concepts are conceptualized in terms of more concrete domains. This theory, which is still widely cited, has been extended in recent years to include the relationship between embodiment, culture, and context in conceptual metaphor formation (Kövecses, 2020). Today's

cognitive linguists maintain that metaphors are not static, but can shift depending on culture and communication. Consequently, there may be different mental images of time for speakers from different linguistic communities.

There is also an important framework in Mental Model Theory to understand temporal cognition. Johnson-Laird (1983) suggested that people would always form internal models in their heads to make sense of things and to understand the world. Recent cognitive studies echo this notion that mental representations shape the way people process temporal information and make choices about future events (Malyshevskaya et al., 2024). The mental models seem to be affected by both language and culture, so there are significant differences in the language that might be indicators of differences in underlying mental models.

English is a global language with a lot of dialectal variation. British English, American English, Australian English and South Asian English are all forms of English that have developed in different historical, social and cultural contexts. Such dialects vary not only in their pronunciation, but also their vocabulary, as well as conceptualizations and constructions of meanings.

Studies of temporal cognition have shown that the perception and structuring of time are influenced by cultural values. Time is regarded in many western societies as a precious commodity that is linked to productivity, efficiency and success. It is this perception that is echoed in phrases like “time is money” and “saving time” (Kövecses, 2020). Speakers from collectivist cultures, on the other hand, might focus on social relationships and on the flexibility of the context in the discussion about temporal experiences. In recent studies, it is suggested that metaphorical understanding of time in the language is still influenced by cultural practices in language communities (Akbuğa & Göksun, 2024).

In addition, modern studies show that there is a strong connection between spatial and temporal reasoning. Experimental research has found that people often rely on spatial representations for comprehension of temporal sequences and durations (Malyshevskaya et al., 2024). Likewise, Akbuğa and Göksun (2024) reported that the spatial language has been found to have an impact on the conceptualization of time, which further corroborates that time is often conceptualized in a spatial framework. The results confirm the cognitive linguistic hypothesis that abstract concepts are based on concrete experiences.

While many studies have studied the temporal metaphor in various languages, the extent to which there are variations within English dialects has been little studied. Previous studies tend to be cross-linguistic with languages like Mandarin Chinese, Spanish and Arabic. Thus, the understanding of how time is conceptualized by people with different dialects of English and how cultural factors are contributing to this conceptualization is still lacking. The need to address this gap is especially critical in the context of globalization, where communication among the users of different varieties of English is becoming increasingly common.

Thus, the purpose of present study is to explore the cognitive linguistic perspective on mental models of time in the four varieties of English: British English, American English, Australian English and South Asian English. The analysis of temporal expressions and conceptual metaphors in these dialects aims at determining whether there are similarities or differences between the temporal conceptualization in these dialects and what can uncover the cultural and cognitive factors that influence temporal mental models. The results are expected to have implications for cognitive linguistics, sociolinguistics, and intercultural communication since they will help understand the interplay between language, thought and culture in the concept of time.

Time is a universal phenomenon, but how people experience, think about and express time differs greatly among languages and cultures. Time, as such, cannot be seen or felt – it is rather only known through cognitive mechanisms which are metaphorical and conceptual. This interdisciplinary approach, called cognitive linguistics, which examines the interplay between

language, cognition and experience, offers insights to the mental representation of time. Cognitive linguists argue that language is a reflection of human cognition, and that the internal models that speakers use to organize and explain temporal experiences are reflected in language. The most important work in temporal cognition is that by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, "The Metaphor Theory of Concepts" (1980). According to this theory, abstract notions like time are understood in terms of mappings, metaphorical mappings, from domains of more concrete experiences. To illustrate the ways in which people think about time in terms of moving around, the following expressions are representative of the language: 'time goes by,' 'the weekend's coming,' and 'we're heading into the future. These linguistic expressions are not just figures of speech; they are expressions of deeper cognitive structures which underlie human cognition of temporal relations. These are conceptualizations that shape people's activity planning, memory, and prediction of future events.

Among all the domains of the linguistic system, the concept of time is well adapted for cognitive linguistic studies since it is an integral part of natural language. Temporal expressions are used to plan an activity, to tell about an event, to express emotion, and to organize social relations. In different groups of people with a distinct dialect, however, the meanings and implications of these expressions can differ. For example, British English frequently uses terms to indicate exact time intervals and time of day, like "fortnight", "half past" and "quarter to". There are many economic phrases in American English that are used to describe the value of time, for example "time is money" reflecting a culture of being efficient and productive. Australian English uses more flexible and relaxed temporal expressions, whereas South Asian English uses more context-dependent and relational expressions of time, which are shaped by local cultural norms.

This also indicates that temporal language is not just about the words but also reflects wider cultural values and cognition. Mental models of time have impact on daily life, time management, how they understand deadlines, how they relate socially with others, etc. In societies in which time is important, time can be perceived as a precious, measurable commodity. In contrast, in cultures that emphasize social relations, a more flexible temporal organization may be found. These differences are manifested in the language of various English-speaking communities.

The investigation of mental models of time is of great meaning for the language/cognition/culture linkage. Communication often takes place between the speakers of different varieties of English in our increasingly interconnected world. People may have misunderstandings because they have different cognitive and cultural backgrounds for understanding the meaning of temporal expressions. Thus, the study of the different attitudes towards time across the English varieties can be helpful in improving intercultural communication and understanding the mental underpinnings of language use.

To date, the majority of the research on temporal cognition has concentrated on comparing temporal cognition across languages, specifically comparing languages that do not share a common root, such as English, Mandarin Chinese, Spanish, and Arabic. Much less has been done on the variations within English. Although they share the same linguistic origins, English dialects are from different cultural contexts that could lead to different time orientations. The study of such variations can contribute to the understanding of the flexibility of language in local contexts while retaining a common communicative framework.

The present study thus seeks to examine and contrast the mental models of time that are present in various varieties of English such as British English, American English, Australian English and South Asian English. The study is based on the cognitive linguistics and conceptual metaphor theory, and investigates the language, metaphors and discourse patterns used to conceptualize time. The study will be conducted through the comparison of similarities and differences among dialects, in order to identify the cognitive and cultural factors which

influence the interpretation of time and which can provide insights for the larger project of cognitive linguistic research.

In conclusion, the study of conceptualization in the time of the English dialects gives rich insights into the dynamic between language, thought and culture. It is a pedagogical example of how people can have different cognitive representations of time in the same language, depending on social practices, cultural values, as well as communicative traditions. Since these mental models contribute to the theoretical development of cognitive linguistics and to the awareness of the diversity of language in the various English-speaking communities of the world, they have become important for both purposes.

Problem Statement

Time is an integral part of human life and understanding of time is highly important for communication, decision making and social interaction. In line with the idea of cognitive linguistics, the relationship between time is conceptualized by people in the form of mental models, which are influenced by language, culture and life experience. English is used worldwide, but it has different dialects, formed in different cultural and social contexts, which may result in different views of time.

Temporal metaphors and conceptualizations have been extensively studied in previous research within the field of cognitive linguistics in various languages. But little attention has been paid to the mental models of time variation of the English dialects themselves. Studies tend to make comparisons between two languages (for example, English and Chinese) without considering the cognitive differences between people who speak British English, American English, Australian English or South Asian English. This leaves an open question as to the effects of dialectal variation on temporal cognition and linguistic representations of time.

The differences in expressions of time between dialects of English may have to do with different cultural attitudes towards punctuality, scheduling, productivity and interpersonal relations. For instance, there are some dialect communities which focus on time management and precision, while others are more flexible and context-sensitive with respect to temporal organization. These differences may impact intercultural communication, the workplace, classrooms, and international partnerships between English speakers. If there is a lack of awareness of these dialect-specific mental models, miscommunication and misunderstandings can occur when there is a temporal mismatch between people.

Thus, it is necessary to explore and contrast mental models of time held by the various dialects of English, in a cognitive linguistic way. The aim of this research is to fill this gap by analyzing the linguistic expressions, conceptual metaphors, and cultural factors that impact the temporal cognition of British English, American English, Australian English and South Asian English speakers. The purpose of the research is to make contribution to the area of cognitive linguistics, sociolinguistics and intercultural communication and it is expected that it will be useful for the understanding of the relationship between language, cognition and culture, by identifying similarities and differences in the temporal conceptualization.

Research Objectives

1. To analyze the influence of cultural and social factors on the formation of mental models of time in different English-speaking communities.
2. To identify the linguistic expressions and conceptual metaphors used to represent time in British English, American English, Australian English, and South Asian English.
3. To examine how speakers of different English dialects conceptualize time through cognitive models such as time as movement, time as a resource, and time as a social process.
4. To compare the similarities and differences in temporal conceptualizations across selected English dialects.

Research Questions

1. What linguistic expressions and conceptual metaphors are used to represent time in different English dialects?
2. How do speakers of British English, American English, Australian English, and South Asian English conceptualize time?
3. What similarities and differences exist in the mental models of time across these English dialects?
4. How do cultural and social factors influence temporal conceptualization in different English-speaking communities?

Theoretical Framework

The present study Mental Models of “Time” in Different English Dialects: A Cognitive Linguistic Comparison is based on the theoretical underpinnings of Cognitive Linguistics (CL), especially on the theory of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980) and the theory of Mental Models (MM) developed by Philip Johnson-Laird (1983). The frameworks offer a well-structured and detailed approach to understanding the conception and linguistic expression of the abstract concept of time by the speakers of various dialects of English.

Cognitive Linguistics is not based on the assumption that language is a system of rules, but rather a part of human cognition. From this view, language use is a means of representing the way people experience, structure and make sense of their experiences. Time is an abstract, non-sensory construct, therefore people use conceptual structures and metaphorical mappings to understand and communicate temporal experiences. Thus, the investigation of temporal language is useful in gaining insight to the cognitive processes that underlie human thought.

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) is the main theory used for this study. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) claim that metaphors are more than just literary devices; they are basic mechanisms of thought which influence human thinking. CMT states abstract concepts can be understood in terms of more concrete and familiar domains of experience. Time, as an abstract concept, is often metaphorically mapped on space, movement, objects and resources. The conceptual metaphor TIME IS MOTION, for instance, is suggested by expressions like The weekend is approaching, We are moving towards the future, and Time flies, whereas Save time, Spend time wisely, and Waste time reflect the conceptual metaphor TIME IS A RESOURCE. These linguistic expressions demonstrate the cognitive structures that the speakers use to reason about time.

This theory, Conceptual Metaphor Theory, is especially applicable in this research because it enables one to identify and compare temporal metaphors in the various English dialects. Speakers of British English, American English, Australian English and South Asian English are all English speakers but may have different metaphorical patterns that represent time because of different social values, cultural practices and communicative norms. The theory thus offers a useful tool to study universal and dialect-specific notions of time.

Besides CMT, Mental Model Theory of Philip Johnson-Laird (1983) is also used in the study. Mental model is a cognitive representation that people build to comprehend, understand and foresee events in the world. They are constructed on the basis of experience and they affect the models due to linguistic and cultural factors. According to Mental Model Theory, individuals do not simply hear, read, and understand words and sentences; they construct in their minds a model or representation that enables them to interpret the world. Mental models can be used within the domain of temporal cognition to structure past experiences, to comprehend the present state of affairs, and to predict the future.

In the study of the dialectal differences in temporal understanding, the concept of mental

models is relevant. There are inter linguistic differences in mental representations of time that are due to cultural expectations and social practices of different linguistic communities. British English, for example, might embody a formal and on-time frame of time, American English might express efficiency and productivity, Australian English might express flexibility and informality, and South Asian English might manifest a more relational and context-dependent sense of time. These differences could be seen as different cognitive models that result from linguistic and cultural environments.

The study also takes into account the function of culture in the construction of cognitive representations. Conceptual metaphor is believed to be a product of embodied and cultural experiences by cognitive linguists. Often schedules, deadlines, punctuality, and social obligations are understood differently across cultures, as are metaphors and expressions for time. Hence, the relationship between language, cognition and culture is a key component of this theory.

These assumptions are used as a basis for studying the temporal expressions in the selected dialects of English to determine the conceptual metaphors and mental models used in them. The study examines the linguistic realization of time in the speech of the speaker and the connection between such representation and other cognitive and cultural aspects. The research combines the concepts of Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Mental Model Theory to account for shared and unique aspects of temporal conceptualization in English dialects.

Literature Review

Cognitive Linguistics and Human Cognition

In the late 1980s, a new linguistic theory, cognitive linguistics, developed as a reaction to formal linguistic theories which considered language as an independent system from cognition. The cognitive linguists hold that language is closely related to the perception, conceptualization and experience of humans. Lakoff (1987) stated that linguistic structure is a reflection of conceptual structure and that language serves as a tool to examine people's thought patterns and world understandings.

Langacker (2008) believes that linguistic meaning is not solely the product of abstract grammatical rules, but rather of basic cognitive processes and experiential knowledge. Based on this, language is seen as a mental representation of concepts that have emerged in the interaction with the environment. Therefore, by analyzing language expressions, one can ascertain human cognition mechanism which is used to understand abstract concepts like time, space, emotion, and causality.

Language-cognition connection has emerged as a major issue in the cognitive linguistic studies. Studies have indicated that speakers use conceptual frameworks that are constructed from embodied experiences and cultural practices. Hence, potential differences in language may correspond to potential differences in cognitive representation. This assumption is used to investigate the use of temporal expressions in different English dialects.

Conceptual Metaphor Theory

The Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) is one of the most influential theories in the cognitive field which was suggested by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). CMT states that metaphor is not just a stylistic device; it is a process that helps human beings to grasp abstract concepts. The theory assumes that abstract domains are understood by mapping from more concrete and familiar domains of experience.

One of the most thoroughly investigated concepts for metaphor studies is time. In the absence of being able to observe time, or physically manipulate it, it is expressed in a metaphorical structure and consequently understood and discussed by speakers. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) use the word "metaphor" to refer to a number of recurring metaphors for time: TIME IS

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MOTION, TIME IS A RESOURCE, and TIME IS A CONTAINER. Expressions of 'the deadline is coming' and 'save time' and 'in future' illustrate the ways in which temporal experiences are rendered in terms of movement, economic resources, and spatial containment. Kövecses (2010) also claims that conceptual metaphors are influenced by the shared human experience and cultural factors. Some metaphors may be universal, but others can be different depending on the social practices and historical context. This fact is especially significant in the field of English dialects, for instance, where the speaker of one dialect might use a different metaphorical pattern than the speaker of another.

Mental Model Theory

Another important theory of temporal cognition is Mental Model Theory (Johnson-Laird, 1983). The theory suggests that people develop internal representations or mental models to make sense of events, to solve problems and to make predictions. These models allow individuals to structure information and to comprehend relationships between concepts.

Language understanding consists of building up mental models that stand for situations that are described by linguistic expressions (Johnson-Laird, 1983). From a temporal cognition point of view, speakers construct mental representations of past, present, and future events, which direct their thinking and behavior. They are shaped by cultural experiences, social contexts and conventions of language.

Mental Model Theory has proven to be especially valuable for studying the dialectal differences since different communities can be using different temporal models. Differences in language use can then be used to uncover differences in underlying cognitive models of time. The differences in language use can then be used to uncover the underlying differences in cognitive models of time.

The Concept of Time in Cognitive Linguistics

One of the most abstract and complex concepts of human cognition are time. It is an abstraction that can't be seen, touched or directly felt, as opposed to a physical object. For this reason, people use metaphorical and conceptual structures to comprehend the temporal relationships.

According to Boroditsky (2001), the language people use to talk about time affects the way they think about it. Her studies show that the basic temporal concepts can be expressed differently with their spatial metaphors by different language speakers. For instance, the English speaker uses the word "back" to refer to the past and "forward" to refer to the future, while speakers of other languages use different spatial metaphors.

It has been consistently found in the research in cognitive linguistics that the knowledge of time is very closely related to the knowledge of space. Humans tend to think of time in terms of travelling along a path or timeline (Talmy, 2000). Cognitive mapping of space and time is represented in expressions like "looking forward to the future" and "leaving the past behind."

The results suggest that temporal cognition is not a universal phenomenon, but is shaped by linguistic and cultural factors. Hence, a study of temporal expressions in English dialects can offer important clues into the variety of cognitive representations for time.

Time as Motion

One of the most popular temporal metaphors in English is TIME IS MOTION. In this way of thinking, time is directed toward persons, or persons are directed through time. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) differentiate between two similar models:

Moving Time Model

According to this model, time flows towards the observer.

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Examples:

- The holidays are coming (Snooze... ooooh!)
- The deadline is approaching!

Moving Observer Model

This model involves people passing through time to future events.

Examples:

- We are approaching the end of the semester.
- It's the beginning of a new year.

The following models illustrate a specialization of temporal experiences. Studies suggest that both models are in use in English-speaking communities, but might not be equally prevalent in the contexts of different dialects.

Time as a Resource

Another one of the dominant metaphors in English is TIME IS A RESOURCE. The metaphor of time as a valuable resource which may be used, saved, wasted, invested or managed. These are more commonly found in contemporary industrial societies where efficiency and productivity is valued.

Examples include:

- Save time.
- Waste time.
- Spend time wisely.
- Invest your time.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) suggest that this metaphor was developed during the economic and industrial experiences that have involved the conception of time as a measurable resource. American English has been found to be quite resource-dependent in its use of temporal metaphors, reflecting cultural values of productivity and achievement.

Dialectal Variation in English

English is the language of millions of people globally, and there are many different dialectal forms of the language. Pronunciation, vocabulary, patterns of meaning and conceptualization all vary between these dialects.

Trudgill (2000) points out those dialects are the result of historical, social and geographical influences. Distinctive linguistic features will develop because speakers will adapt the language in a local context. Some of these features might be distinctive temporal expressions that would illustrate local cultural values and social practices.

Dialectal variation offers a great opportunity to study the difference in cognitive representations of a single language. The concepts of time may vary from one culture to another, even though the speakers of British English, American English, Australian English and South Asian English share many linguistic structures.

Mental Models of Time in British English

British culture has traditionally focused on being on time, being organized and following schedules. The cultural values are seen in the time expressions in British English.

Examples include:

- Fortnight
- Half past three
- Quarter to six

These phrases illustrate a high level of temporal classification and provide an indication of temporal organization. Research suggests that British speakers tend to perceive time as linear

with measurable units, and seek to control time efficiently.

Mental Models of Time in American English

American English often has a time is a thief attitude. "Time is money" is an example of the strong connection between time and economic value.

The findings indicate a high level of emphasis on efficiency, success, and planning for the future in American culture. Thus, time is frequently represented as a resource that is limited, and therefore should be used efficiently. This orientation helps people develop a future-oriented and goal-driven view of time.

Australian English Mental Models of Time

There is a relatively informal and flexible use of temporal expressions in Australian English. The slang words like "arvo" (afternoon) and phrases like "no worries" indicate a more relaxed attitude to time planning and scheduling.

While attendance is important to the professional environment, Australians are not as intolerant of time delays as some of the other English speaking societies. This tendency is seen in expressions that depict time as flexible, not strictly defined.

Caveats about building mental models of time in South Asian English

South Asian English, the variety of English in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, owes its cultural and social influences to the cultures of South Asia. Temporal expressions often highlight relationships, context and situational flexibility.

Examples include:

I'll be here at this moment!

- We will meet after some time.
- He came in a bit late.

These are statements that imply a relational rather than a timetabled view of time, in which one might not prioritize one's schedule over social responsibilities. Earlier studies have reported that the temporal flexibility has been observed to be linked to collectivistic cultural values related to relationships.

Empirical Studies on Temporal Cognition

There are several empirical studies that have addressed the relationship between language and temporal cognition. Boroditsky (2001) showed that linguistic metaphors have a significant impact on temporal reasoning. Núñez and Sweetser (2006) identified the influence of cultural and linguistic practices on spatial representations of time. Kövecses (2010) also maintained that the metaphorical conceptions differ depending on cultural experiences.

These studies offer important information on cross-linguistic differences, but few studies have looked specifically at temporal conceptualization within English dialects. This discrepancy indicates the need for a comparison of mental models of time in English communities.

Research Gap

The literature review demonstrates that there is ample research on conceptual metaphor theory, temporal cognition, and cross-linguistic comparison of time. But there have been a few cases where English dialects have been studied with regard to their conceptualization of time. However, there has been limited work investigating the concept of time in English dialects. The majority of the existing studies are based on comparisons of unrelated languages, not on comparisons of dialects of the same language. Little is known about the effects of cultural and social differences on temporal cognition among English-speaking participants.

This paper aims to fill this gap by making a cognitive linguistic comparison of the mental

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models of time in British English, American English, Australian English and South Asian English. The study considers the analysis of the temporal expressions, conceptual metaphors, and strives to make some contribution to the understanding of the relationship between language, cognition, and culture.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study uses qualitative comparative research design. The study is of an interpretive nature involving meanings, conceptual structures, and cognitive representations in language, therefore, qualitative research is suitable. Comparative design should help the researcher to find similarities and differences in the conceptualizations of time across the selected varieties of English.

This study particularly uses descriptive and interpretive methods to examine the temporal expressions and conceptual metaphors in British, American, Australian and South Asian English.

Research Approach

The study uses a cognitive linguistic approach which is based on the assumption that language is a reflection of the human cognition and conceptualization. In this approach, the types of mental models and conceptual structures are uncovered through the linguistic expressions. The analysis is based on:

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980)

Mental Model Theory (Johnson-Laird, 1983)

The following theories serve as basis for determining and understanding the representation of time in the different English dialects.

Research Method

A method of textual analysis and discourse analysis is used. The study examines the naturally-occurring linguistic data of temporal expressions, idioms, metaphors, and discourse patterns from different dialects of English.

The method involves:

Gathering of time expressions from real materials

2.knowing which conceptual metaphors are involved with time

3.Categorization of temporal expressions in terms of metaphor

4.Patterns of comparison between English dialects

5. Understanding findings in a cognitive linguistic way.

Data Sources

Secondary qualitative data is used from different sources in the study.

The primary sources of linguistic data, with an emphasis on oral sources.

- British English corpora
- American English corpora
- Australian English corpora

This is a collection of South Asian English corpora.

Secondary Sources

- Academic books
- Journal articles
- Dictionaries
- Linguistic databases
- Previous research studies

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

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- Online language corpora

The following are types of corpora that can be consulted:

British National Corpus (BNC)

Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)

- International Corpus of English (ICE)

Global Web-Based English Corpus (GloWbE)

These sources have authentic examples of temporal language use in dialects.

Data Collection Procedure

There are stages in the data collection process:

The first stage involves identifying the sources. The first stage is the identification of sources.

Corpora, books, journal articles and linguistic databases are identified, if relevant.

Stage Two: Collection of Temporal Expressions

Selected sources to obtain temporal expressions

Examples include:

- Time flies.
- The deadline is approaching.
- Save time.
- Spend time wisely.

We're going down the road going into the future.

- I will come just now.

Stage Three: Classification

The gathered metaphors are grouped into conceptual metaphor categories.

Stage Four: Verification

Expressions are evaluated on their authenticity and dialectal appropriateness.

Findings And Analysis

4.1 Introduction

The outcome of this study is presented in this chapter on the Mental Models of "Time" in Different English Dialects: A Cognitive Linguistic Comparison. It is based on the analysis of the temporal expressions found in British English, American English, Australian English, and South Asian English. The study presents the conceptual metaphor theory and mental model theory as analytical tools and then identifies the dominant conceptual metaphors of time and analyses the way in which they can be used in the study of the different cognitive models of time in English dialects.

The results show a common and a dialect-specific understanding of time. There are universal temporal metaphors in all dialects (TIME IS MOTION and TIME IS A RESOURCE), but the frequency, context and cultural meanings vary.

4.3 The nature of the spatial domain in time-based language.4.2 Dominant Conceptual Metaphors of Time

S. No.	Conceptual Metaphor	Key Idea	Example Expression
1	TIME IS MOTION	Time moves or people move through time.	<i>The holidays are approaching.</i>
2	TIME IS A RESOURCE	Time is valuable and can be used or saved.	<i>I don't have enough time to finish.</i>
3	TIME IS A CONTAINER	Events occur within time boundaries.	<i>In the morning, during the week.</i>

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

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S. No.	Conceptual Metaphor	Key Idea	Example Expression
4	THE PASSAGE OF TIME IS A JOURNEY	Life progresses along a temporal path.	<i>We have come a long way since then.</i>
5	TIME IS SOCIALIZED	Time is organized through social and cultural practices.	<i>Let's meet next Friday.</i>

All dialects had these metaphors, which varied in salience and frequency.

A. From the British English findings: The findings of the British English are as follows:

Temporal Expressions Identified

Examples include:

- The meeting has been brought forward.

We will have a fortnightly meeting.

- Half past three.
- Quarter to six.
- The deadline is approaching.

Dominant Mental Model

The data show that British English clearly has a primary way of thinking of time as a system of measurement and structure.

Key Findings

British English shows great temporal precision.

Temporal expressions highlight timetabling and scheduling.

Often speakers break time into distinct segments.

Movement metaphors are commonly used to describe future events.

Cognitive Interpretation

The British mental model sees time as a set of measurable intervals organized into a sequence.

Time is considered as a thing which is to be managed and planned in an orderly manner.

4.4 Results of American English

Temporal Expressions Identified

Examples include:

- Time is money.
- Save time.

Make the most of your time.

Time is rapidly running out.

- Invest your time.

Dominant Mental Model

In American English, time is mostly regarded as a commodity.

Key Findings

Resource based metaphors were more common than other dialects.

Temporal expressions put productivity and efficiency in the spotlight.

3. Time is perceived as precious and scarce.

Past tense is frequently used.

Cognitive Interpretation

Time in the American mental model is conceived as a means to production. Speakers generally

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view time as a product that has to be used wisely to accomplish goals and meet success.

4.5 findings in Australian English

Temporal Expressions Identified

Examples include:

- See you this arvo.
- No worries.

I will get to it later.

See you next week!

Dominant Mental Model

The conception of time in Australian English is relatively flexible and informal.

Key Findings

Frequently uses informal time expressions.

2. Speakers are more flexible with schedules.

Time is important but not overly stringent.

5. Time is always an integral part of context.

Cognitive Interpretation

The Australian mental model is one of flexibility and functionality. Time is thought of as manageable and not a hard to access resource that needs constant monitoring.

4.6 Findings from South Asian English

Temporal Expressions Identified

Examples include:

- I will come just now.
- We will meet after some time.

He came in a bit late.

Let's have a discussion about it tomorrow, Insha'Allah.

Dominant Mental Model

Time is viewed socially and relationally in South Asian English.

Key Findings

Temporal flexibility occurs often.

3. Temporal expectations are conditioned by social relationships.

Time expressions can often be interpreted according to the context.

4. In real life communication, time is not emphasized as strictly as 4.

Cognitive Interpretation

The South Asian mental model views time as interrelated with other social responsibilities and relationships. The organization of time is seldom structured rather than by situations or culture. In this section, students will analyze mental models to compare and contrast them.

Table 4.1 compares the Dominant Mental Models

English Dialect	Dominant Mental Model of Time	Main Characteristics
British English	Time as Structure	Precision, punctuality, organization, adherence to schedules, and respect for established routines.

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English Dialect	Dominant Mental Model of Time	Main Characteristics
American English	Time as Resource	Efficiency, productivity, achievement, goal orientation, and the belief that time should be utilized effectively.
Australian English	Time as Flexible Resource	Adaptability, informality, practicality, work-life balance, and a relaxed approach to scheduling.

South Asian English emphasizes time in social terms, relationships, and flexibility. In South Asian English time is social, relationships are emphasized, and there is flexibility.

Table 4.2 Frequency of Conceptual Metaphors

Conceptual Metaphor	British English	American English	Australian English	South Asian English
TIME IS MONEY / MATERIAL RESOURCE	High	High	Moderate	Moderate
TIME IS A RESOURCE	Moderate	Very High	Moderate	Low
TIME AS STRUCTURE	Very High	High	Moderate	Moderate
TIME AS FLEXIBLE RESOURCE	Low	Moderate	High	High
TIME AS SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Very High

Cognitive ability recites the events of an incident and their significance. Time is a container: High, High, Moderate, and Moderate.

Conceptual Metaphor	British English	American English	Australian English	South Asian English
TIME IS MONEY / MATERIAL RESOURCE	High	High	Moderate	Moderate
TIME IS A RESOURCE	Moderate	Very High	Moderate	Low
TIME AS STRUCTURE	Very High	High	Moderate	Moderate
TIME AS FLEXIBLE RESOURCE	Low	Moderate	High	High
TIME IS A PATH	Moderate	High	Moderate	Moderate
TIME IN SOCIAL PROCESS	Low	Low	Moderate	Very High

There were no major themes that emerged from the data.

Theme 1: Universality of Spatial Metaphors

Spatial metaphors are used to think of time in all dialects. Words that describe movement, direction and location are frequently used in expressions in varieties of English.

Theme Two: Cultural influences on temporal cognition

The results show the significant role of cultural values in the conceptualization of time. The culture of productivity is emphasized by resource metaphor, and the culture of relationship, by social process metaphor.

Theme 3: Variation within a Shared Language

While the English dialects share common grammatical forms and lexicon, there are considerable differences in their preferred temporal models.

Theme 4: Relationship between Language and Cognition

The data are consistent with the cognitive linguistic principle that language is a reflection of the underlying cognitive structures. Temporal language differences are matched by mental representation of time differences.

Discussion

Universality of Temporal Metaphors across English Dialects

This study reveals that all the selected English dialects use common conceptual metaphors to conceptualize time and express it. The expressions related to movement, direction, space and resources were found in all three varieties of English: British English, American English, Australian English and South Asian English. This discovery confirms the central tenets of Conceptual Metaphor Theory: Abstract concepts are understood in the context of concrete experiential domains.

The metaphor TIME IS MOTION was found throughout all dialects. They conceptualize time in terms of physical movement, as in the examples “the deadline is approaching”, “we are moving into a new weekend”, “we are moving into a new year”. This result is congruent with Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) proposition that the understanding of time is based on embodied experiences with motion in space. Physical movement is an essential part of human existence and the mapping of time onto movement seems to be a universal cognitive strategy.

When considering the nature of temporal concepts, the pervasive use of movement-based metaphors indicates that some components of temporal thinking may be common across cultures with English speakers. The current finding also corroborates previous research conducted by Boroditsky (2001) who showed that spatial representations are essential in temporal reasoning. So, although there is dialectal variation, the processes that English speakers use to imagine the abstract time construct are similar.

British English and the Structured Model of Time

The results suggest that British English speakers have a conception of time as a linear, measurable period. Often, the temporal expressions highlight punctuality, schedule and exact time divisions. The use of such expressions as “fortnight”, “half past three” and “quarter to six” show a preference for the precise reference and organization of time.

The discovery would be relevant to the British cultural values that have historically focused on order, discipline and punctuality. The structured representation of time is a cognitive representation in which temporal events are represented in well-defined temporal units, with which planning and coordination can be carried out. This is similar to the way industries and institutions operate, where the schedules are to be followed to the letter.

The findings are consistent with Johnson-Laird's (1983) Mental Model Theory demonstrating the impact of cultural experiences on the formation of cognitive representation. It seems as though British speakers build mental models of time as a series of measurable units progressing in an orderly fashion. The language they use to talk about events in time is related to these representations.

Moreover, the results are in line with the sociolinguistic studies, which indicate that language usage can reflect the society's norms and expectations. The temporal precision is not just a linguistic quality but also a culture-specific expression of attitudes towards time management and social organization in British English.

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In this session, students will examine the pronunciation of American English and the Resource Model of Time.

This analysis showed that American English strongly favors metaphors from the domain of economic resources. Within the data, the phrase “time is money” was used several times, as well as the phrases “save time” and “invest your time” and “waste time. The phrase “time is money” was used several times within the data, as were the phrases “save time” and “invest your time” and “waste time.” Time is seen here as a valuable asset that can be managed and allocated and used efficiently.

This discovery is indicative of the cultural norms and capitalist economic values that have taken hold in the American society. Time is seen as a scarce resource which is directly linked to achievement, success and personal development. As a result, there is often a focus on efficiency and goal setting in the context of temporal language.

The salience of resource metaphors lends further credibility to Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) claim that conceptual metaphors come from social and cultural experiences. In very industrialized societies where the productivity approach is emphasized, people tend to think in economic or resource terms.

In the Mental Model Theory approach, the use of time seems to be a resource that should be managed, especially for American speakers. These mental models foster future thinking and impact planning, productivity and decision-making behaviors. The results consequently show how linguistic expressions reveal deeper structures of cognition with cultural values.

Australian English and the Flexible Model of Time

The study revealed that Australian English has a fairly flexible and informal temporal conceptualization. Some phrases like “see you this Avro”, “no worries”, or “I'll get to it later” suggest a less strict attitude towards time management in English in Australia than in British and American English.

This discovery could be attributed to cultural norms that foster informality and equality, as well as a sense of adaptability. Australian speakers know the importance of time but may show more flexibility in scheduling and interpretation in context. As such, expressions of time tend to be more colloquial and less formal.

The results indicate that the mental models of Australian English speakers show that time is perceived as a reference that is manageable and flexible, rather than a strictly regulated reference. This model leaves one more room for social interactions and for everyday communication.

The findings are consistent with the cognitive linguistic approach which posits that language is based on culturally specific conceptualizations. Australian English illustrates the way in which common linguistic structures can be given different meanings and mental associations by different cultural contexts.

South Asian English and the Relational Model of Time

South Asian English had the highest level of social and relational conceptions of time out of the four dialects studied. These phrases “I will come just now”, “we will meet after some time”, and “let's discuss it tomorrow, Insha'Allah” already show a temporal perspective in which the social framework and context play a role in shaping the understanding of time.

This discovery is consistent with cultural values that many South Asian societies have such as collectivism, inter-personal connections, and social inter-connections. South Asian English is more flexible than British English with respect to the temporal precision of its utterances and more productive than American English in its tendency to balance social requirements with the scheduling of utterances.

The results show that speakers have mental models in which time is embedded in social

processes, and not considered as a measurable resource in and of itself. Many phrases that express time rely on the context and contextually shared cultural expectations.

This finding is consistent with the previous research that indicated a significant effect of cultural practices on temporal cognition. It also helps further Mental Model Theory and its focus on the cognitive representations that are created by linguistic communities within their social contexts. The results of this relational model in South Asian English show that it is important to take into account the cultural context in interpreting the temporal language.

Language, culture and cognition are interconnected

An important contribution of this study is that it has shown how language, culture, and cognition are interrelated. The results demonstrate that temporal expressions are not irrelevant language structures, but representations of the underlying mental framework that are shaped by cultural experiences.

Theories of conceptual metaphor can be helpful in explaining these patterns, by revealing how abstract concepts are made sense of using concrete domains from the everyday experience. Metaphoric mapping produces different cognitive representations that depend on the different cultural experiences. This means that speakers with different English dialects can employ the same grammar, but have different mental models of time.

In this respect, the study is in line with the cognitive linguistic theory that language is a reflection of thought. The cognitive and cultural contexts which influence the human understanding of abstract concepts can be inferred from the temporal expressions in dialects.

Implications for intercultural communication

The results are of significance for intercultural communication. With the world becoming more and more globalized, people of different cultures who speak the English language often come into contact with one another in the educational, professional and social spheres. The distinct understandings of time can cause miscommunication about timeliness, deadlines, planning, and expectations.

For instance, an American speaker might see the deadline as a definite and absolute date, while a South Asian speaker might understand it differently, according to the situation. Likewise, British speakers may be more likely to be on time than those from societies where it is not socially acceptable to be late.

Knowing these differences can contribute to better communication and minimize misunderstandings in a multicultural context. Understanding of mental models of different dialects enables them to grasp the meaning of time expressions more accurately and react to the various communicative norms.

Conclusion

Mental Models of “Time” in Different English Dialects: A Cognitive Linguistic Comparison
This study focuses on the conceptualization and linguistic representation of the notion of time by the speakers of British English, American English, Australian English and South Asian English. Based on the ideas of Cognitive Linguistics, the study looked at how language, cognition and culture interact in the acquisition of temporal conceptions, drawing on Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) and Mental Model Theory (Johnson-Laird, 1983).

The results showed that all the selected English dialects use the conceptual metaphors to understand the abstract concept of time. The most salient of these metaphors were TIME IS MOTION, TIME IS A RESOURCE, TIME IS A CONTAINER, TIME IS A PATH, and TIME IS A SOCIAL PROCESS. The prevalence of these metaphors across all dialects suggests that some elements of temporal cognition are universal and grounded in shared human experience.

The results support the cognitive linguistics claim that abstract concepts are understood through metaphorical mappings based on concrete experiences.

However, the dominant mental models of time in the selected dialects were found to differ significantly despite these similarities. The British English was found to emphasize a structured and precise understanding of time with punctuality, organization and clearly defined temporal units. In American English, time has been primarily understood as a precious commodity associated with productivity, efficiency, and achievement. Australian English had a more relaxed and casual orientation to time, emphasising flexibility and contextual understanding. South Asian English, however, evidenced a relational and socially embedded understanding of time, whereby interpersonal relationships and situational factors often affect temporal expectations.

Moreover, the study showed that cultural values matter in the construction of temporal conceptualization. The differences in temporal expressions were closely related to the differences in social norms, historical experiences and communicative practices in each speech community. These results show that language is not just a vehicle for communicating thoughts, but an opening to deeper cognitive and cultural systems. This means that speakers of the same language may form different mental representations of time, depending on the dialect of English they speak.

The research also shows that Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Mental Model Theory are important for understanding how we think about time. Conceptual metaphors help us see how people understand ideas that are not easy to grasp. Mental models explain how we organize and think about these ideas in our minds. When we use these two theories together we get a picture of how people from different places understand time differently.

This study is not about theory it also has real life implications for how people from different cultures communicate with each other. The way people think about time can affect what they expect from each other when it comes to being on time meeting deadlines making plans and interacting with each other. If we know more about these differences we can communicate better with people who speak English in ways and avoid misunderstandings at school at work and, in our social lives. Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Mental Model Theory can really help us understand each other better.

The study shows that people think about time in ways but also in ways that are special to their own culture. English speakers have some ideas about time that are the same but the way people talk in different places is unique and shows how they think and what they believe. This study helps us learn more about how people think and how language and culture affect what we think about time. We can learn more about time if we look at more kinds of English and use computers to analyze the data. We can also look at how people think about things like where they are how they feel and who they are and see if it is different in different places. The study of time is important. We can keep learning about it by doing more research, on English dialects and how people think about time.

Suggestions And Recommendations

Based on what we found out from the study we have ideas that we think can help people who do research teach, study languages and work with people from different cultures.

1. Recommendations for Future Researchers

1. We think it would be an idea for future studies to look at how people think about time in different types of English like the English spoken in Canada, New Zealand, Nigeria and Singapore. This can help us understand how people think about time in parts of the world where English is spoken.

2. Researchers should look at a lot of examples of how people use time-related words and phrases in types of English to see how often they use them and how they use them.

3. It would be helpful to compare how people think about time in English and in languages to

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see what is common to all people and what is specific to certain cultures.

4. Future research can use methods to see how the way we think about time affects the way we make decisions remember things and think.

5. Researchers should look at how age, gender, education, job and socioeconomic status affect how people think about time in types of English.

6. We should do long-term studies to see how things like globalization, technology and social change affect how people think about time over time.

2. Recommendations for Linguists and Cognitive Scientists

1. People who study languages should keep looking at how language, culture and the way we think are connected especially when it comes to ideas like time, space, identity, emotions and power.

2. People who study the mind should combine what we know from language with what we know from psychology and neuroscience to get an understanding of how we think about time.

3. We should pay attention to the different types of English and how they affect the way people think because people who speak the same language can think about things differently depending on their culture.

3. Recommendations for Language Teachers and Educators

1. Teachers of English should include the cognitive aspects of time-related expressions in their teaching.

2. English classes should discuss the differences in how people use time-related words and phrases in types of English.

3. Educators should help students see how language reflects the values and ways of thinking of a culture.

4. Teaching materials should include examples from types of English to help learners understand different cultures and communicate better.

5. Students of linguistics should learn about Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Cognitive Linguistics to help them understand language and thought.

4. Recommendations for Intercultural Communication

1. People who work in environments should understand that different cultures think about time differently to improve communication and collaboration.

2. Organizations should provide training on differences in things like punctuality, scheduling and time management.

3. International teams should be clear about their expectations regarding time commitments to avoid misunderstandings.

4. Understanding the ways that time is thought about in different types of English can help people communicate more effectively in global business, education and diplomacy.

5. Practical Suggestions

1. When communicating with people from English-speaking cultures do not assume that time-related words and phrases mean the same thing to everyone.

2. We should be more flexible and sensitive to differences when interpreting deadlines, appointments and scheduling preferences.

3. Educational institutions should have workshops and seminars on language, culture and cognition to promote understanding across cultures.

4. People who make policies and develop curricula should recognize the role of diversity in shaping language use and communication patterns.

Conclusion

This study strongly suggests that future research on language and the mind should pay attention to the different types of English. Even though English is a language its speakers think about time in many different ways that are shaped by their cultural values, social practices and cognitive experiences. Understanding these differences can lead to communication improved language education and a deeper appreciation of the complex relationship between language, thought and culture.

Suggestions for Further Research

- How People Think About Space in Different Types of English: A Cognitive Linguistic Comparison.
- How Emotions are conceptualized across World Englishes
- Time. Communication at Work in Multicultural Organizations
- Cognitive Metaphors in English: A Study Based on a Large Database of Examples.
- How Digital Communication Affects the Language and Cognition of Time.
- A Comparison of Time-Related Metaphors in English and Urdu.
- Conceptual Metaphors of Time in Social Media Discussions.
- Cultural Influences, on Time Management among English Speakers.

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