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THE SITUATIONAL FRAME OF ENGLISH-LANGUAGE COSINESS DISCOURSE: A CO-ACTIVATION-BASED RECONSTRUCTION

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Abstract

The paper reconstructs the situational frame of contemporary English-language cosiness discourse as represented in home-and-living media discourse focused on domestic space, home design, and everyday comfort. The relevance of the study lies in the need to explain cosiness not as a mechanical sum of isolated features, but as a recurrent experiential configuration grounded in the interaction between the subject and the material-spatial environment. The study is based on a cognitive-semantic and frame-based approach, according to which meaning is anchored in structured knowledge about typical situations and recurrent linguistic patterning may serve as evidence for conceptual organization.

The empirical material is drawn from a specialized corpus of English-language home-and-living discourse derived from *Ideal Home* magazine (37,500 tokens). The analysis focuses on statistically verified co-activations of lexical realizations of 51 autochthonous concepts, yielding 42 pairwise relations. These recurrent co-activations are interpreted as indicators of stable relations among frame components and, consequently, as a basis for identifying parametric patterns of cosiness representation. The reconstructed frame comprises the locus of the living environment, local spatial organization, object- and surface-based structuring, textile arrangement, material-textural and compositional organization, lighting and chromatic profiles, sensory characteristics, the integrated perceptual effect, the resultant state of the subject, and the contextual conditions of situational actualization.

The findings indicate that cosiness discourse is organized around a stable experiential schema in which spatial, material, perceptual, and affective parameters converge to produce a coherent perceptual-experiential effect. They also show that the same autochthonous concept may profile different frame components depending on co-activation context, while the overall frame structure remains stable. The paper argues that frame-based reconstruction provides an adequate explanatory model for the conceptual organization of cosiness discourse and its regular modes of discursive actualization.

Keywords: contemporary English-language cosiness discourse; situational frame; autochthonous concepts; frame semantics; co-activation; conceptual structure.

1. Introduction.

Contemporary English-language cosiness discourse occupies a visible place in lifestyle and interior media, where it functions as a stable mode of representing domestic space, material comfort, sensory appeal, and affective experience. In this discourse, cosiness is verbalized not through a single lexical marker, but through recurrent combinations of spatial, material, perceptual, and experiential meanings that collectively construct a recognizable model of a desirable living environment. This makes cosiness discourse a productive object of cognitive-semantic inquiry, since recurrent combinations of spatial, material, perceptual, and affective meanings encode not merely separate descriptive features but a recognizable situational model of a desirable living environment.

The relevance of the study lies in the need to explain how the discourse of cosiness is conceptually organized and how its regular linguistic realizations can be interpreted as manifestations of a stable situational model. Although contemporary cognitive linguistics offers productive tools for investigating meaning as conceptualization, frame-based knowledge organization, embodiment, and usage-based entrenchment, the problem of reconstructing the frame structure of cosiness discourse on the basis of corpus-derived conceptual relations remains insufficiently elaborated. However, existing studies do not provide a corpus-based procedure for moving from recurrent lexical-conceptual co-activations to the reconstruction of a situational frame of domestic cosiness discourse.

2. Literature Review.

The theoretical and methodological foundations of the present study are rooted in cognitive semantics, frame semantics, and usage-based approaches to meaning. A substantial contribution to the development of these perspectives has been made by both classical and recent research in cognitive linguistics. In particular, D. Geeraerts, R. Langacker, and V. Evans have consistently argued that meaning is grounded in conceptual structure and in structured knowledge about typical situations rather than in isolated lexical features. More recent work has further elaborated this view by emphasizing construal, embodied grounding, and the continuity between perception, conception, and linguistic meaning (Winter & Perek, 2023; Pelkey, 2023).

An equally important line of research is associated with frame-semantic approaches to meaning. In this tradition, developed in the works of C. Fillmore and continued in later studies by C. F. Baker, C. J. Fillmore, J. B. Lowe, K. Sullivan, and S. Löbner, meaning is interpreted against a structured background of knowledge, while frames are understood as systems of interrelated concepts that organize situational understanding (Fillmore, 1977b, 1982; Baker, Fillmore, & Lowe, 1998; Sullivan, 2023; Löbner, 2021). These approaches are particularly relevant to the present research because they make it possible to move beyond feature-based description and to model linguistic meaning through relations among conceptually integrated components.

The present study also relies on usage-based and discourse-oriented perspectives. Research by J. Bybee, D. Divjak and C. L. Caldwell-Harris, as well as Biber and Conrad, has shown that recurrent linguistic patterning, contextualized frequency, and pervasive discourse features may serve as evidence for stable conceptual organization (Bybee, 2010; Divjak & Caldwell-Harris, 2015; Biber & Conrad, 2019). In addition, recent work on viewpoint and contextual profiling has demonstrated that the same conceptual content may be differentially activated depending on discourse context, while the broader conceptual structure remains stable (Dancygier, 2021; Winter & Perek, 2023). These findings are methodologically important for the analysis of co-activation patterns, since they support the assumption that recurrent lexical-conceptual relations in discourse can be interpreted as cognitively significant rather than accidental.

At the same time, studies directly addressing the conceptual organization of home-and-living media discourse remain comparatively limited. While existing research provides strong theoretical models for meaning as conceptualization, frame-based knowledge organization, and discourse patterning, much less attention has been paid to how recurrent lexical-conceptual relations in this type of discourse can be used to reconstruct a situational frame of lived domestic experience.

Within a cognitive-semantic perspective, meaning is understood as grounded in structured knowledge about typical situations rather than as a simple aggregate of isolated features (Geeraerts, 2006, p. 5; Langacker, 1987, pp. 155–156). In frame-semantic terms, this implies that recurrent linguistic patterning may be interpreted as evidence for a structured model of experience comprising interrelated components and relations (Fillmore, 1982, pp. 111–112; Baker, Fillmore, Lowe, 1998, pp. 86–90). From this perspective, the recurrent co-activations identified in the corpus may be treated as indicators of stable conceptual relations and, consequently, as a basis for reconstructing the situational frame of cosiness discourse.

Against this background, the practical significance of the present study lies in its potential to explain how home-and-living media discourse organizes experiential meanings and how recurrent linguistic choices contribute to the representation of domestic comfort, atmosphere, and affective orientation. The contribution of the paper consists in proposing a frame-based model of contemporary English-language cosiness discourse grounded in statistically verified co-activations of lexical realizations of autochthonous concepts, i.e. discourse-specific conceptually salient units identified as the core conceptual nodes of cosiness discourse in a specialized corpus of home-and-living media discourse. The study shows that these co-activations may be interpreted as indicators of stable relations among frame components and, consequently, as a basis for reconstructing the component structure of the situational frame of cosiness discourse.

3. Aim and Objectives.

The aim of the paper is to reconstruct the situational frame of contemporary English-language cosiness discourse on the basis of statistically verified co-

activations of lexical realizations of autochthonous concepts in a specialized corpus of home-and-living media discourse. More specifically, the study seeks to show how recurrent co-activation patterns make it possible to move from an inventory of conceptually salient units to a structured model of their interaction within a typical situation of cosiness.

To achieve this aim, the study sets out the following objectives:

- 1) to identify statistically verified co-activations of lexical realizations of autochthonous concepts;
- 2) to determine what types of recurrent conceptual relations these co-activations instantiate;
- 3) to generalize these relations into the component structure of the situational frame of cosiness discourse;
- 4) to establish how co-activation context affects the profiling of individual frame components.

4. Methodology.

The study is grounded in cognitive-semantic and frame-based approaches to discourse analysis and employs a corpus-based methodology. A corpus-based approach is an empirical methodology that uses authentic corpus data to test, refine, and exemplify linguistic descriptions or theoretical assumptions. Its empirical material consists of a specialized corpus of contemporary English-language home-and-living media discourse compiled from *Ideal Home* magazine (<https://www.idealhome.co.uk/>) and totaling 37,500 tokens. For the purposes of co-activation analysis, the corpus was segmented into 3,000 discourse fragments treated as minimal units of observation, within which the co-occurrence of lexical realizations of autochthonous concepts was recorded.

The methodological procedure combines corpus analysis with cognitive-semantic interpretation. The present study does not re-establish the inventory of autochthonous concepts anew, but relies on the previously identified set of 51 autochthonous concepts, which constitute the core conceptual units of contemporary English-language cosiness discourse (Krychun, 2025, p. 292). On this basis, the analysis focuses on recurrent co-activations of their lexical realizations in corpus data. Co-activation is understood here as the co-occurrence of lexical realizations of two autochthonous concepts within the same discourse fragment.

To test whether such co-occurrences are non-random, 2×2 contingency tables were constructed for each pair of concepts on the basis of co-presence versus absence across the corpus fragments. Statistical significance was assessed using the log-likelihood ratio test for independence (G^2). To control for multiple comparisons, the Benjamini–Hochberg procedure was applied, and corrected significance values were reported as q_{BH} . Only pairs meeting the adopted threshold of corrected significance ($q_{BH} \leq 0.05$) were retained for further interpretation. The strength of association was measured by the ϕ coefficient, and only relations with $\phi \geq 0.10$ were treated as minimally interpretable effects suitable

for inclusion in the reconstructed model. Under these criteria, 42 pairwise co-activations were retained for further interpretation and frame reconstruction.

In the present study, co-activations are not treated as frame components in themselves, but as corpus-based indicators of recurrent conceptual relations between discourse-salient units. When several statistically verified co-activations converge around the same type of spatial, material, perceptual, sensory, or experiential parameter, they are generalized into a frame component or into a stable relation between components. The reconstruction therefore proceeds from lexical co-activation to conceptual relation, from conceptual relation to parametric pattern, and from parametric pattern to frame structure.

The methodological framework thus integrates descriptive, corpus-analytical, statistical, and interpretive procedures. The descriptive method is used to characterize the linguistic realization of conceptual patterns in discourse. Corpus analysis identifies recurrent co-activations and establishes their distributional regularity. Statistical procedures verify the significance and strength of interconceptual relations. Cognitive-semantic and frame-based interpretation is then applied to determine how these verified relations contribute to the reconstruction of the situational frame of contemporary English-language cosiness discourse.

5. Results and Discussion.

The reconstruction of the situational frame is based on two types of evidence: the inventory of 51 autochthonous concepts and the set of 42 statistically verified co-activations between their lexical realizations. The former provides the component inventory, while the latter provides evidence for recurrent relations among components. In the present study, this frame is construed as a situational model of lived experience within the domestic environment, structured by the interaction of spatial, perceptual, and experiential components (Evans, 2019, pp. 203–204). Table 1 does not equate autochthonous concepts with frame components; rather, it shows how conceptually salient units are grouped according to the reconstructive function they perform within the frame model. This schema therefore rests on two complementary layers of evidence: component evidence, provided by the inventory of 51 autochthonous concepts, and relational evidence, provided by statistically verified co-activations of their lexical realizations.

Table 1.

*Mapping of autochthonous concepts onto components
of the reconstructed situational frame of cosiness discourse*

No.	Frame component	Autochthonous concepts	Function in the frame
1.	Locus of the living environment	ROOM, LIVING ROOM, BEDROOM, KITCHEN, BATHROOM, HOME, GARDEN	Profiles the living environment and the adjacent space within which the situation of cosiness unfolds
2.	Internal spatial organization	SPACE, NOOK, CORNER	Specifies the internal zoning of space and the local points around which a cosy

			scene is organized
3.	Object- and surface-based structuring of the environment	SOFA, SEATING, BED, RUG, WALL, FIREPLACE, CANDLE	Specifies the object and surface composition of the environment as the material basis of the situation of cosiness
4.	Textile furnishing of the environment	THROW, CUSHION, BLANKET, DUVET, BEDDING	Activates textile elements of spatial arrangement involved in the formation of a comfortable environment
5.	Material, textural, and compositional profiling	WOOD, BOUCLE, LINEN, VELVET, WOOL, TEXTURE, LAYER	Profiles materials, textural properties, and layering as means of visual-sensory specification of the environment
6.	Lighting organization of the environment	LIGHT, LIGHTING, LAMP, GLOW	Shapes the lighting profile of the environment and the perceptual effects associated with it
7.	Chromatic organization of the environment	COLOUR, TONE, HUE, SHADE, NEUTRAL, EARTHY, DARK	Shapes the chromatic profile of space, including hue differentiation, tonal modulation, and subdued colour specification
8.	Sensory characteristics of the environment	SOFT, WARMTH, SCENT	Activates tactile, thermal, and olfactory properties of the environment relevant to the experience of cosiness
9.	Integrated perceptual effect	ATMOSPHERE	Represents the generalized perceptual effect emerging from the interaction of spatial, object-related, lighting, chromatic, and sensory parameters
10.	Subject's resultant and affective-experiential construal	RELAX, COMFORT, INTIMATE, COCOON	Profiles the subject's resultant state and the affectively enveloping construal of the cosy environment
11.	Contextual conditions of situational actualization	WINTER, AUTUMN, EVENING	Contextually specifies the typical temporal and seasonal conditions under which the situation of cosiness is actualized

Table 1 combines two complementary types of evidence: component evidence, represented by the full inventory of 51 autochthonous concepts, and relational evidence, represented by the 42 statistically verified co-activations identified in the corpus. For this reason, the table includes all core conceptual nodes of cosiness discourse, even though not all of them are equally prominent at the level of pairwise statistical verification. The assignment of concepts to frame components follows their dominant reconstructive function in the corpus rather than their dictionary meaning in isolation.

Accordingly, each concept is grouped under the component that it most regularly profiles in corpus evidence and recurrent co-activation patterns. Out of 1,275 logically possible pairwise combinations among the 51 autochthonous concepts, 42 co-activations were statistically verified under the adopted thresholds. These relations do not form a uniform set, but cluster around several recurrent types of conceptual linkage, including spatial-localizing relations (e.g. ROOM–LIVING ROOM, NOOK–CORNER), object-textile furnishing relations (e.g. THROW–CUSHION, SOFA–THROW, CUSHION–BLANKET), material-textural relations (e.g. LAYER–TEXTURE, TEXTURE–BOUCLE, LINEN–VELVET), lighting and chromatic relations (e.g. LAMP–LIGHT, LIGHT–GLOW,

COLOUR–SHADE, COLOUR–TONE, COLOUR–NEUTRAL), as well as integrative and experiential relations (e.g. LIGHTING–ATMOSPHERE, DARK–INTIMATE). Taken together, these verified co-activations provide the relational basis for reconstructing the situational frame of cosiness discourse.

As Table 1 shows, the proposed model is organized around three interacting domains: the spatial-material configuration of the environment, its perceptual-sensory profiling, and the resultant experiential state of the subject. The contextual conditions of situational actualization are treated here as peripheral to the semantic core of the frame, since they specify typical coordinates of activation rather than constituting the core situation itself. The resulting model shows that cosiness discourse is organized around a stable experiential configuration rather than around isolated descriptive features. Its central structure is formed by the interaction of the living environment as locus, the material and spatial arrangement of that environment, the perceptual qualities it generates, and the resultant experiential state of the subject. In this sense, the frame models cosiness not as a script-like sequence of actions, but as a situational configuration of domestic experience.

The spatial component of the frame is profiled by the autochthonous concepts ROOM, LIVING ROOM, BEDROOM, KITCHEN, BATHROOM, HOME, and GARDEN, which designate the main domestic settings in which cosiness is discursively constructed. The concepts SPACE, NOOK, and CORNER further specify the local organization of the scene by marking internal zoning and localized points of cosy arrangement. Together, these units establish the spatial basis of the reconstructed model. This is evident in the following fragment.

And while soothing colours and pared-back decor that doesn't overstimulate works well in a space like this, that doesn't mean you can't express your style in this room that's meant to be just yours and make you feel cosy and comforted – and bedroom wall decor ideas are the perfect way to achieve this (Ideal Home corpus).

The object-related and textile components specify the material furnishing of the environment through which cosiness is discursively realized. SOFA, SEATING, BED, RUG, WALL, FIREPLACE, and CANDLE profile the object composition of the scene, whereas THROW, CUSHION, BLANKET, DUVET, and BEDDING activate textile elements associated with comfort, softness, and enclosure. This layer of the frame is further elaborated by material-textural and compositional concepts such as WOOD, BOUCLE, LINEN, VELVET, WOOL, TEXTURE, and LAYER, which contribute to the visual and sensory specification of a cosy environment. This material-textile configuration is illustrated by corpus examples.

From throws, cushions, to rugs, incorporating these soft, dreamy textiles into small bedrooms and master bedrooms alike is a foolproof way to add character and much-needed cosiness to a sleep haven (Ideal Home corpus).

The lighting organization of the frame is represented by LIGHT, LIGHTING, LAMP, and GLOW, whereas its chromatic organization is represented by COLOUR, TONE, HUE, SHADE, NEUTRAL, EARTHY, and DARK. These

concepts shape the visual profile of the environment and contribute to the formation of its perceptual atmosphere. The sensory dimension is further reinforced by SOFT, WARMTH, and SCENT, which activate tactile, thermal, and olfactory properties directly relevant to the experience of cosiness. At the level of integrated perceptual effect, ATMOSPHERE functions as the conceptual unit that verbalizes the generalized outcome of the interaction among spatial, material, lighting, chromatic, and sensory parameters. This pattern is illustrated by the following example.

Neutrals like warm taupe or beige offer a cosy, inviting atmosphere, while soft blush tones add warmth and a nurturing feel (Ideal Home corpus).

The experiential component of the frame is represented by RELAX and COMFORT, which profile the subject's resulting state. These concepts indicate that the discourse of cosiness is oriented not only toward the description of domestic space, but also toward the experiential effect produced by that space. In this respect, the model confirms that spatial, material, perceptual, and affective parameters converge in discourse to form a coherent perceptual-experiential schema of cosiness. The interaction of chromatic and atmospheric parameters is evident in the corpus fragments.

With the right lighting and a cosy blanket (or two), you'll have a bedroom that invites you to relax and wrap yourself in comfort (Ideal Home corpus).

The temporal concepts WINTER, AUTUMN, and EVENING represent the contextual conditions of frame activation. In frame-semantic terms, they are best treated as contextual rather than core components, since they specify the temporal and seasonal coordinates under which the situation is typically activated without determining its semantic nucleus (Fillmore et al., 2003, pp. 298–299). Their function is therefore to contextualize, rather than constitute, the core frame structure. The experiential effect of this configuration is captured in examples such as the following:

Come autumn every year, the demand for all things 'cosy' goes up (Ideal Home corpus).

The co-activation evidence reveals several recurrent types of relation within the reconstructed frame: (1) localization relations, linking the cosy scene to a domestic locus; (2) furnishing relations, connecting space with object and textile arrangement; (3) perceptual-specification relations, linking furnishing and material parameters to lighting, colour, and sensory qualities; (4) integrative relations, through which these parameters converge in ATMOSPHERE; and (5) experiential-resultative relations, in which the configured environment is associated with RELAX and COMFORT.

The analysis also shows that the same concept may remain within the same lexical domain while participating in different frame functions, depending on which co-activated concepts it is linked to. Thus, contextual variation affects local profiling rather than the coherence of the reconstructed situational model as a whole.

A particularly clear example is provided by the concept COLOUR. In co-

activations such as WALL–COLOUR, COLOUR–TONE, and COLOUR–SHADE, it profiles the chromatic parameter of the environment, being associated with the surface that carries colour, its tonality, and its hue differentiation. In other co-activation contexts, COLOUR contributes not only to chromatic specification but also to the construal of an enveloping or affectively marked environment. This demonstrates that the same conceptual unit may serve different profiling functions depending on the relational context in which it appears. The following fragment illustrates this relation.

If you're looking to coat your walls in a cosy shade then one of the perfect living room paint ideas that will transform the lounge into a cocooning space is going for dark colours (Ideal Home corpus).

This example illustrates the convergence of spatial and chromatic parameters within a single cosy scene, particularly through the interaction of LIVING ROOM, WALL, SPACE, COLOUR, and SHADE. Here, COLOUR and SHADE remain part of the chromatic organization of the environment, but the same fragment also shows how chromatic specification contributes to a more interpretive construal of space as cocooning and enveloping.

A similar variation can be observed in concepts associated with lighting, textiles, and sensory qualities. In co-activations such as LIGHT–LIGHTING, LAMP–LIGHT, and LIGHT–GLOW, light is profiled as an environmental parameter, whereas in links such as LIGHTING–ATMOSPHERE it contributes to the integrated perceptual effect of the environment. Likewise, THROW, CUSHION, and RUG may profile object-related and textile furnishing in some co-activations, while in others they become associated with the tactile dimension of the environment through relations such as THROW–SOFT, CUSHION–SOFT, and RUG–SOFT. In this case, LIGHT and GLOW are not limited to the technical organization of illumination, but contribute directly to the integrated perceptual effect of the environment.

A metallic finish on lighting, furniture and tabletop accessories will gently reflect light back into the room – emitting a warm glow to create a cosy living room idea (Ideal Home corpus).

From a cognitive-semantic perspective, such variation is expected, since lexical meaning is not fully fixed in isolation but becomes elaborated in interaction with other elements of conceptual structure (Langacker, 1987, pp. 155–156; Barsalou, 1992, pp. 21–74). In the discourse of cosiness, this means that autochthonous concepts acquire more specific profiling functions within recurrent co-activation patterns. At the same time, the recurrence of these patterns in corpus data supports the interpretation of such relations as cognitively stable rather than accidental. In this way, statistically verified co-activations provide a basis for moving from recurrent lexical-conceptual patterning to the reconstruction of the situational frame underlying contemporary English-language cosiness discourse.

6. Conclusions.

The frame is modelled as a situational configuration of domestic experience

structured by interacting spatial, material, perceptual, sensory, integrative, and experiential parameters. The findings demonstrate that the 42 statistically verified co-activations may be interpreted as indicators of stable conceptual relations and, consequently, as a basis for identifying parametric patterns within the discourse of cosiness.

The reconstruction proposed in the paper is grounded not only in the inventory of conceptually salient units, but also in recurrent relations among them. It has also been established that the same autochthonous concept may profile different frame components depending on co-activation context, while the overall frame structure remains stable. This supports the view that contextual variation affects local profiling rather than the coherence of the reconstructed situational model as a whole.

The study further shows that spatial, material, perceptual, and affective parameters systematically converge in discourse to produce a coherent perceptual-experiential effect associated with cosiness. The paper argues for the explanatory value of frame-based reconstruction for modelling the conceptual organization of contemporary English-language cosiness discourse. The practical significance of the results lies in the possibility of applying the proposed model to further corpus-based studies of home-and-living media discourse, as well as to broader research on the linguistic representation of affective and experiential meanings. The reconstructed frame may also serve as a methodological basis for subsequent analyses of contextual profiling, multimodal projection, and cross-discursive variation in the representation of cosiness.

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Анотація

У статті реконструйовано ситуативний фрейм сучасного англійськомовного дискурсу затишку, репрезентованого в медіадискурсі про житловий простір, домашнє облаштування та повсякденний комфорт. Актуальність дослідження зумовлена потребою пояснити затишок не як механічну суму ізольованих ознак, а як повторювану експерієнційну конфігурацію, що ґрунтується на взаємодії суб'єкта з матеріально-просторовим середовищем. Дослідження спирається на когнітивно-семантичний і фреймовий підхід, відповідно до якого значення вкорінене в структурованому знанні про типові ситуації, а повторювані мовні патерни можуть слугувати свідченням концептуальної організації. Емпіричним матеріалом слугує спеціалізований корпус англійськомовного медіадискурсу про дім і домашнє облаштування, сформований на основі журналу *Ideal Home* (37 500 токенів). Аналіз зосереджено на статистично верифікованих коактиваціях лексичних реалізацій 51 концепту-автохтона. Ці повторювані коактивації інтерпретовано як індикатори стійких зв'язків між компонентами фрейму і, відповідно, як підставу для виявлення параметричних патернів репрезентації затишку. Реконструйований фрейм охоплює локус житлового середовища, локальну просторову організацію, предметно-матеріальне наповнення, текстильне облаштування, матеріально-фактурну й композиційну організацію, світловий і колористичний профілі, сенсорні характеристики, інтегрований перцептивний ефект, результативний стан суб'єкта та контекстуальні умови актуалізації ситуації. Результати засвідчують, що дискурс затишку організований навколо стійкої експерієнційної схеми, у межах якої просторові, матеріальні, перцептивні та афективні параметри конвергують і формують цілісний перцептивно-експерієнційний ефект. Також показано, що той самий концепт-автохтон може профілювати різні компоненти фрейму залежно від контексту коактивації, тоді як загальна структура фрейму залишається стабільною. У статті обґрунтовано, що фреймова реконструкція забезпечує адекватну

пояснювальну модель концептуальної організації дискурсу затишку та його регулярних способів дискурсивної актуалізації.

Ключові слова: сучасний англійськомовний дискурс затишку, ситуативний фрейм, концепти-автохтони, фреймова семантика, коактивація, концептуальна структура.

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