Effective English Language Instruction Using Cognitive Linguistics in English Departments

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ABSTRACT

The current study begins with a brief introduction to the fundamental principles of cognitive linguistics, outlining Goldberg's construction of grammar as a significant theory evolving within the cognitive linguistic approach to the grammatical level of language structure. It then proceeds to consider how cognitive linguistics' various syntactic and lexical findings might be successfully applied to language education in English departments. The paper draws on a range of authors' explorations of the practical application of cognitive linguistics to second language instruction and the relevant theoretical literature. It provides a list and evaluation of ELT books that incorporate these ideas.

Keywords: Linguistics, Cognitive Linguistics, Phonology, Syntax, and Lexical Semantics

Introduction

In light of these objectives, we will first provide a brief overview of the critical postulates of cognitive linguistics more generally (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Ungerer & Schmid, 1986; Lakoff & Johnson, 1987; Langacker & Lakoff, 1987 & 1991; Taylor & Langacker, 1989 & 2002). Then, we will zero in on A. Goldberg's construction of grammar, in particular, as it represents a vital theory advancement within the cognitive linguistic strategy of analyzing grammatical-level language structure.

Meaning permeates every aspect of language, according to a central principle of cognitive linguistics1. As such, we view meaning as a product of conceptualization or how individual language users make sense of the world via an anthropocentric, subjective lens informed by the culture in which they find themselves. In this sense, it is assumed that man's conceptual system is founded in his bodily experience; that is, one's motivation for and basis for the categories, meanings of words, sentences, and other linguistic structures is based on one's concrete, direct experience with the world, with which one interacts through perception, motion, handling various objects, etc. It is assumed that the grammatical structure of language is fundamentally symbolic. According to this view, phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexical semantics, all belong to the same continuum of symbolic structures, and neither the individual levels of linguistic analysis (such as phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexical semantics) nor language as a whole are considered to represent a distinct and individual cognitive faculty in humans. Metaphor and metonymy are two examples of figurative cognition that blur the line between literal and figurative language, widely recognized as an essential component of human symbolic reasoning. In addition, unlike Chomsky's generative grammar, cognitive linguistics does not propose the idea of the 'deep structure' or allow for syntactic transformations. Meaning and extralinguistic context are intertwined; idiosyncrasies and irregularities in language use are always considered. The field of cognitive linguistics has also led to a rethinking of the concept of categorization, which is now understood to be a mental classification process that is fundamental to language and serves to limit the infinite variations between entities. As such, it has proposed the

model classification theory (a departure from the traditional Aristotelian approach). Prototypes, on the one hand, and those members of a category that are more or less liberated from the prototype in a motivated way (via metaphor, metonymy, the principle of family resemblances, gradience, meaning chains, etc.) can be grouped in such a cognitive model.

Keeping with the study's goals mentioned above, we will also provide a brief overview of the basic principles of A. Goldberg's construction grammar (Goldberg 1995 and 2006; Jackendoff, 1997; Goldberg/Jackendoff 2002; Stman/Fried 2005.(

This theory, along with others in the cognitive linguistic tradition that focus on the grammatical level of language structure (such as Unification Construction Grammar by Fillmore, Kay, and O'Connor; Langacker's Cognitive Grammar [capitalized]; Langacker 1987, 1991; and Croft's Radical Construction Grammar (Croft, 2001), is an outgrowth of this tradition. Given the limited space available, we will only briefly discuss one of the many cognitive grammar theories currently under development (A. Goldberg's construction grammar) in the hopes that it will be adequate to illustrate key aspects of the cognitive-linguistic approach to the grammatical (and more particularly syntactic) level of language structure (i.e., of cognitive grammar.(

According to proponents of construction grammar, syntactic, morphological, and phonetic constructions are the fundamental building blocks of language, with the latter being symbols. Each grammatical construction (both morphological and syntactic) can be placed in one of the two sets of extremes below. The first opposition is the one between substantivity and schematicity. One can be wholly schematized (N1 V N2 N3), completely lexically filled (e.g., It takes one to know one), or somewhere in between (e.g., The X-er, the Y-er), with the latter two types naturally prone to getting (further) substantivized (e.g., She gave me a book; the more, the merrier; etc.). Second, all grammatical constructions can be mapped onto a spectrum from the most straightforward (monomorphemic words) to the most complex (polymorphemic words, phrases, clauses, and sentences). Therefore, according to construction grammar, alternative constructions might be distributed between the specified pairs of extremes as if the language system were a continuum of symbolic structures. One of the main goals of this theory is to become closer to the whole of language without privileging any particular level of language. The previous discussion highlights that all grammatical constructs have meaning (however abstract it may be), including fully schematized ones like N1 V N2 N3 and partially substantivized and schematized ones like N1 V time away. One interpretation of the former construction is that x causes y to receive z (a book, a headache, etc.), while another is that x wastefully spends time doing something (He slept the afternoon away, We punked the night away, etc.). The primary argument put forth by the presented theory is that constructions can often serve as the sentence's semantic head. As an example of the latter, a verb usually considered intransitive, such as the verb sleep, can get incorporated into an essentially transitive construction without any significant change in the general meaning of the given construction. We will be discussing this again soon.

Relatedly, construction grammar postulates several mechanisms concerning the interplay between syntactic constructions and embedded verbs. This type of interaction is studied by linguists who specialize in construction grammar, who employ concepts like construction argument roles, verb participant roles, role contribution, fusion, the principle of semantic coherence, the principle of correspondence, the principle of no synonymy, motivation, and others (e.g., see Goldberg, 1995). Due to space constraints, we will only briefly explain one of these terms—motivation (and, to a lesser extent, the concept of no synonymy as well)—despite its significance to our goals here. However, we will do just that in the succeeding sections of the paper (part 2). Here, we will talk about how the core ideas of cognitive linguistics, in general, and of construction grammar, in particular, can be applied to the syntactic level of English language instruction in English departments.

We will use the same lens for the lexical level of analysis. As such, we will first provide a brief overview of the significance of idioms (in both the broad and narrow senses) and idiomaticity in the given theories, as these concepts can be seen as constituting a significant driving force behind these theories in general (see Taylor, 2002:539-560.(

In the narrower sense, idioms are expressions whose meaning is not apparent from the meanings of their words or phrases in other contexts; in other words, their idiomaticity lies in the unique significance ascribed to a grammatically standard expression (such as "red herring," "kick the bucket," etc.). Idiomatic phrases in the narrower meaning may also be defined by unique features of their form, such as restrictions on which words can be used in conjunction with others (for instance, "by and large" but "*by and small"), among other things. Idioms in the broader sense would encompass a) formulas - expressions with a conventionalized function in a language, which can be conventionally associated with a certain kind of situation (e.g., How do you do?), or which have a distinctive discourse-structuring function (e.g., to sum up, last but not the least), or which represent conventionalized ways of expressing a speaker's attitude (e.g. Is that a fact?); b) pre-formed languages, such as texts and texts fragments (eg. There are tens of thousands of such idioms in any given language.

Furthermore, construction grammar (and cognitive grammar in general) aims to demonstrate that idiomaticity is a pervasive feature of the language, demonstrating that even rule-governed and non-idiomatic categories exhibit irregularities, idiosyncrasies, and idiomaticity of varying degrees. At the morphological level, for instance, it is generally accepted as an idiomatic fact in English that the only noun that may be derived from the adjective arrogant is arrogance, not the nouns *arrogant ness, *arrogancy, etc. One possible syntactic example is as follows. One common usage for monotransitive constructs is to describe an action in which the subject referent influences the position or state of the object referent. Particularly with violent action verbs (kill, kick, shove, etc.). However, in monotransitive constructions such as "I saw her in the street yesterday," where a perceptual or cognitive verb (such as "see," "hear," or "remember") is used, and especially in monotransitive constructions where the subject referent expresses the (spatial or temporal) location of an action (such as "This tent sleeps six," "The fifth day saw our departure," etc.), no such relation is expressed. This allows us to characterize the monotransitive structure as having a prototype core and idiomatic variation at its periphery.

Therefore, a person's knowledge of a language consists precisely of the knowledge of idioms in the broader and narrower sense (i.e., constructions/symbols) and of other various idiomatic/idiosyncratic facts related to the use of the various categories of a given language, as opposed to merely considering them to be at the periphery of language. Against this backdrop, construction grammar proposes that the lexicon and syntax are inextricably linked through constructions and symbols rather than being two separate entities. The lexicon is traditionally seen as the repository of the particular and idiosyncratic, while syntax is typically seen as the domain of the regular and predictable.

The word "motivation" is used in at least two different ways in linguistics and cognitive linguistics. First, it can be used to describe the numerous systematic relationships that can be established between distinct language constructions. Second, it can be used to explain why a specific form-meaning relationship (e.g., grammatical or other linguistic construction) exists in a given language, which is an essential but often overlooked question in the study of language. Both of these senses will receive equal attention.

According to construction grammar, distinct constructions are systematically associated with several different forms of inheritance linkages, which correspond to the first sense of the abovementioned concept of motivation. This means that we can now capture the reality that two constructions might be similar and yet distinct, all thanks to the introduction of the concept of inheritance (Goldberg, 1995, p. 72). A) metaphorical connections, b) subpart links, c) polysemy links, and d) instance links are proposed as inheritance links. Again keeping space constraints in mind, this discussion will focus exclusively on the first types of inheritance linkages, which are metaphorical.

Consistent with the rest of cognitive linguistics, construction grammar places a premium on metaphor. Assuming that the reader of these lines is familiar with at least the basics of the conceptual theory of metaphor as pro- pounded, e.g., in Lakoff/Johnson, 1980 or Lakoff, 1987, to name. However,

two relevant sources on the issue; here, we will not go into details of the given theory but instead give several examples that may show how different linguistic structures/constructions can be related through metaphor.

Metaphorical meaning can be extended across constructions of the same form and between constructions of various forms, according to the theory of construction grammar. That is just one example of sentences of a metaphoric expansion of meaning between two constructions of the same form are the ones below. Both "John gave Mary an apple" and "I will give you that assumption" have the same ditransitive structure (that is, they have the form: N1 V N2 N3) because they involve the exchange of anything of value between two people. The transfer of ownership in this example is conceptualized as a relatively solid, physical transfer, such as when one person hands another person an apple. In other words, the following metaphor can be assumed to exist: Ownership changes hands physically when transferred. Such metaphoric meaning expansions have received much attention in the related literature.

Between/among constructions with diverse forms, metaphoric extensions of meaning can also be hypothesized, but this problem has yet to receive comparatively little attention in the relevant literature. Two groups of examples will be provided to illustrate our point. The following sentences (Goldberg, 1995) will serve as an example. After brushing the dust from her hair, he was elected Manchester College Principal in 1956. They are both complex-transitive, but in different ways. For example, the first is an example of the "caused-motion construction," in which the direct object is followed by a prepositional phrase (PP) functioning as a complementing adverb (CA). The second is an example of the "resultative construction," in which the direct object is followed by a noun (OC) ("the result"). One could argue that there is a metaphorical connection between the two sentences. In other words, it is asserted that the transition from an abstract condition, like becoming a principal, can be conceived in the same way as a transition from one actual location to another.

Now, let us look at the following sentence pairs: We found the children to be undernourished; he called the meeting official; he called the meeting official; he got angry; he did not get angry; he did not get angry; he did not get angry; he did not get angry; he did not get angry; he did not get angry; he did not get angry; he did not get angry; he did not get angry; he did not get angry; he did not The sentences in each pair are also noticeably dissimilar; the first sentence of each pair follows this pattern: The first sentence in each pair uses N V DO OC, while the second sentence uses a non-finite to infinitive nominal clause to complement the DO. The sentences in each pair are metaphor-related, as discussed by Lakoff and Johnson in the book above from 1980. Proximity has a powerful effect. Specifically, in each pair, there is a difference in meaning depending on whether the DO is located immediately before or after the adjective/past participle that refers back to it (as in the first sentence) or whether the two are separated by the coordinating conjunction "to be" (as in the second sentence). According to this interpretation, the first sentence in the first pair means something like "we encountered the children in that condition" because of the more direct relationship between the subject and object referents. There is a more indirect relationship between the subject and object referents in the second sentence of the first pair, which might be paraphrased as follows: We conducted an examination, and the assessment results indicated the condition of the provided youngsters. Similar strategies apply to the following two sets of related sentences. In the two phrases, "He declared the meeting official" and "He declared the meeting to be official," the antecedent "He" appears only in the first sentence (the one with the DO). and the OC-functioning descriptor is more closely related) that has a solid performative and resultative force (the meeting became official/formal due to the use of a particular performative speech act on the part of the subject referent).

In contrast, the latter sentence does not hold (that sentence could, for example, be comprehended as follows: the subject referent consulted a particular relevant legal act and, based on that, ascertained and publicly declared that the meeting was being held in keeping with the said act), It is arguable that the relationship illustrated by the pairs They got him angry and They got him to be

angry is the same. Thus, the first sentence (which can be paraphrased as They made him angry despite himself) expresses a more direct relationship between the subject and the object referent than the second (which can be paraphrased as They persuaded him to be angry). The same method can be applied to any of the other examples provided.

Offered the goals of this work (which focus primarily on the pedagogical consequences that the offered theoretical ideas have in the setting described above), at least two key issues should emerge from the (still reasonably rudimentary) debate presented so far. As previously mentioned, construction grammar believes that the grammatical level of language structure is not an unordered list of unrelated data but rather a set of argument structure constructions that are systematically connected and intertwined, much like the lexicon. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that presenting grammatical concepts in a meaningful, logical, and systematically structured manner will aid students in acquiring various grammar-oriented material. This is especially true if students are directed to focus on the numerous (metaphorical and other) links that can be posited among different constructions. Incorporating the idea of motivation in this way also captures a crucial structuralism insight that has been missed by most formal language theories: namely, that elements in a system influence each other even when they do not directly interact (Goldberg, 1995, p. 72). Second, as the related examples to the metaphor CLOSENESS IS STRENGTH OF EFFECT demonstrate, students need to be aware of another crucial point construction grammar insists on the principle that if two constructions are syntactically different (however closely related in meaning they may be), then they must also be semantically and pragmatically different. The examples we have gone over thus far illustrate this, and the theory above has dubbed it the "Principle of No Synonymy." The lines John gave an apple to Mary and John gave Mary an apple are another instance of the same problem. The first, or more generally, the construction N1 V N2 N3, is used when the direct object (DO) should be emphasized in the driven discourse.

In contrast, the second, or more generally the construction N1 N2 to N3, is used when the indirect object (IO) should be emphasized. Therefore, it would be beneficial to discuss these and other similar instances with students, as doing so is likely to aid in students' acquisition and usage of different construction types and raise awareness of the relationships between them. Lakoff and Johnson (1987:126-138) provide an example of how such a class debate could go.

One more way the term motivation is used in cognitive linguistics and construction grammar is by explaining how and why a specific form-meaning correspondence (i.e., a construction) comes to exist in a given language. Discourse needs, grammaticalization principles, generic categorization principles, and the influence of such elements are where this theory often looks for an explanation. We will show you an example.

Consider the sayings "Pat gave and gave, but Chris took and took," "She stole, but she was never robbed," "Tigers only kill at night," and "Why would they give this creep a low prison term?" In cases like He killed!, when the DO is not stated directly, Goldberg (2005:28-32) draws the following conclusions. First, the DO referent is recoverable from context (as in all the examples above) whenever this construction is used. Second, when the DO does not occupy a significant discourse position or another action occupies that position, it is unnecessary to state it explicitly. The repetition of an action (as in the first example), the use of contrastive focusing (as in the second example), the use of a generic example (as in the third example), the expression of a robust affective stance (as in the fourth example), and other similar conditions can all elevate an action to a prominent discourse position. If the English sentence's DO can be recovered from the surrounding text or is irrelevant (i.e., does not occupy a prominent discourse position), then the DO is unnecessary. A possible justification for the construction of the type above, which Goldberg has labeled "the reprofiled object construction" (ibid.), can be found in the combination of discourse and syntactic properties of the provided examples.

Constructions have precise communicative functions, and their very existence is motivated rather than arbitrary and ad hoc, as evidenced by examples like these, in which factors such as the

discourse prominence of a particular sentence element, its semantic predictability, and the pragmatic aspects of its use, among others, play an important role. The implications for the classroom instruction of English should be self-evident: Students should be made aware of the various, incredibly pragmatic aspects of using various constructions. Doing so would provide a meaningful context within which different types of constructions could be studied and acquired, and it would also provide a possible explanation of the various syntactic and other traits of those constructions.

We will also briefly examine the concept of sentence argument construction and discuss its relevance concerning the goals above. For the reasons we discussed, construction grammar has concluded that a construction (such as the very construction N1 V time away) can often function as the semantic head of the sentence, as we saw in the examples He sleeps the afternoon away, We punk-rocked the night away, Fred drank the night away, and the like. Construction grammar holds that constructions are capable of contributing meaning not present in the individual words found in them; in other words, the main verb (such as sleep, punk-rock, or drink) is not always responsible for determining the argument structure of a sentence; rather, the construction itself can play a role in this determination (Jackendoff, 1997). Therefore, we believe it is beneficial to discuss this point with students, and especially to have them compare this particular theoretical stance with that, for example, held by structuralism (on which many contemporary descriptive grammars students use rely) or generative grammar, as doing so will increase students' theoretical awareness of the various linguistic issues they encounter in their studies and equip them with the ability to discuss various theoretical stances.

A significant number of constructions as symbolic units are required by construction grammar. Given our aims in this study, the ramifications of such a position should be self-evident. ''once the basic syntactic structures and the inflection classes of a language have been mastered, intermediate and advanced learners of language do not need any further instruction in formal aspects of the language, or even in vocabulary acquisition; what they need is to extend their knowledge of idioms,'' as stated by Taylor. Using idioms and other figurative language is a hallmark of a fluent speaker of a second or foreign language (Taylor, 2002, p. 542). An argument can be made that any professional who teaches English to students is already attempting to familiarize them with idioms, both in their narrow and wide senses. To that end, we provide the perspective that cognitive grammar takes on the topic to offer theoretical support for an even stronger emphasis on idioms in the abovementioned context.

The concept of metaphorical extension of meaning is strongly related to that of idioms (and the concept of linguistic motivation), both of which were introduced previously when we discussed the significant principles of cognitive linguistics. With this in mind, we would like to quickly introduce a few essential practical reference books that can be invaluable in light of the aims of this paper.

For example, J. Wright's (Wright, 1999) Idioms Organizer provides idioms organized by metaphor, topic, and keyword. The supplied book begins by arguing for the significance of idioms and the metaphors upon which they are frequently founded. This is done after a brief introduction to the idea of metaphor. It does so by emphasizing the following key points: a) all native speaker English [or Serbian, or any other language, for that matter] is idiomatic due to the way the human brain works; b) the figurative use of a word is often more common than its literal use; for example, "It is impossible to speak, read, or listen to English without encountering idiomatic language."

We may talk about plowing fields, but more commonly, we talk about plowing through a long novel or report, plowing money into a business, plowing profits back into the company, a lorry plowing into a row of parked cars, etc.; in all of these cases, the literal meaning may create a mental picture, which, in turn, may make the other meanings easier to understand; and c) that it may be fun to be made aware of the existence and As such, this book, intended for upper-level students, presents over a hundred units with numerous exercises exploring metaphor-based idioms (roughly 1800 of them) in a wide range of contexts (relating to health, holidays, moods, time, business, life, economics, etc.) and thereby demonstrating how different abstract concepts are conceptualized in terms of more

concrete ones, such as those of war, journey, etc. We also propose two other practice books that take a similar tack: Phrasal Verbs and compound words: the power of the written word. Books like B. Rudzka-Ostyn's A Cognitive Approach to Figurative Language and G. Lazar's Meanings and Metaphors: Activities to Practise Figurative Language are great places to start. We want to highlight the dictionary Macmillan Phrasal Verbs Plus, edited by M. Rundell (Rundell, 2005), as an example of a reference work that places equal emphasis on the importance of metaphor and figurative language.

As mentioned above, the lexical level of language structure, as opposed to the syntactic level, has garnered much more attention in the relevant literature. In this regard, the following works can be cited; they not only lay the groundwork for using cognitive linguistic postulates in English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms in English departments but also provide extensive guidance for putting these postulates into practice at the target language level (for example, in the study of prepositions, particles, and other lexical categories). Other sources include Achard/Niemeier (eds.), 2004; Kristiansen, G. et al. (eds.), 2006; Mac Lennan (1994); Ponterotto (1994); Lazar (1996); Boers (2000); Deignan A. et al.

Finally, we would like to highlight several cognitive linguistics textbooks that can be profitably used to teach English in English departments, as they contain helpful, practical exercises (naturally, related not only to the lexical but also to the other levels of language structure). Here are a few examples of such books: Cognitive English Grammar (Cognitive Linguistics in Practice) by G. Radden and R. Dirven (Radden/Dirven, 2007); Cognitive Grammar by J.R. Taylor (Taylor, 2002); and An Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics by Ungerer and Schmid (Ungerer/Schmid, 1996).

Conclusion

Considering the preceding, it is possible to claim that cognitive linguistics, particularly construction grammar, can be used effectively in English language classrooms. As mentioned above, the positive results of language instruction based on cognitive linguistics were proved in a series of controlled experiments; to read more about these experiments and the positive results of language instruction based on cognitive linguistics, see. Secondly, they can increase students' motivation for studying various language materials by organizing them into wholes structured based on the insights of the cognitive linguistic theory. Second, by discussing the various metaphoric and other relations between/among different types of constructions and the various communicative functions different types of constructions are used for, they can provide a meaningful context for the student's acquisition of particular construction types. Third, they can give students access to possible theoretically informed explanations of the English language's extension of meaning. Fourth, they can give students a theoretical grounding for comparing and contrasting the metaphoric (and metonymic) extensions of meaning and the organization of various lexical, grammatical (and other linguistic) categories of the English language with the same phenomena in the student's mother tongue(s) and other languages they might speak. As a fifth point, the provided theories can be used to draw students' attention to the manipulative potential of the metaphor. They also aid ELT professionals in viewing existing teaching materials and how they are presented and used in the classroom with a critical and imaginative eye. To better integrate the various theoretical cognitive-linguistic insights into language teaching curricula, one potential future perspective and research agenda would be to conduct large-scale longitudinal experiments on the efficacy of language instruction inspired by cognitive linguistics.

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