

德古意特认知语言学研究丛书

INVESTIGATIONS  
IN COGNITIVE  
GRAMMAR

认知语法探索

Ronald W. Langacker 著

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## 出版说明

认知语言学是语言学的一门重要分支学科，自20世纪80年代诞生以来，受到了国际和国内学界的广泛关注。近年来，外教社陆续推出了一系列相关丛书，集中体现了国际、国内的优质研究成果。其中“国际认知语言学经典论丛”收入了Ronald Langacker、Leonard Talmy、Dirk Geeraerts等国际认知语言学领域顶尖学者的经典作品；“外教社认知语言学丛书·普及系列”、“外教社认知语言学丛书·应用系列”则体现了国内学界的最新研究成果。这些丛书因内容权威、见解独到受到了外语界的广泛好评。

在过去几十年中，中国认知语言学研究从最初萌芽到蓬勃发展，逐步走向成熟，形成了系统化、多元化的研究格局，跨学科领域的理论及应用研究都取得了长足进步。为进一步拓宽国内认知语言学研究的视野，方便国内读者查阅和借鉴相关研究成果，我们特地从德古意特出版社近年推出的相关学术图书中精选了7种，组成“德古意特认知语言学研究丛书”，引进出版。丛书汇集了Ronald Langacker、Dirk Geeraerts、René Dirven、Martin Pütz等多位国际认知语言学界权威编著的力作，其中既有关于认知语言学基本理论的必读经典，也有认知语言学与语言习得、语言教学、社会语言学等领域的融合研究，视野广泛，观点新颖，方法多元，文献丰富。

相信本套丛书可帮助广大认知语言学的研习者深入了解认知语言学的理论，把握认知语言学的研究热点和发展趋势，开拓多元化的研究方法思路，进一步推动我国认知语言学研究的长远发展。

# Investigations in Cognitive Grammar

*by*

Ronald W. Langacker

*To David and Sharon*

# Preface

In its general outline, Cognitive Grammar (CG) has been in existence for roughly three decades. Over this span of time it has not changed in any fundamental way. It has of course been subject to refinement and elaboration. Still, its continued evolution has mostly been a matter of working out the specifics of its application to varied linguistic phenomena. In a symbolic account of grammar, the key problem is to characterize the semantic structures it incorporates and serves to express. Progress in CG has therefore come about primarily through detailed conceptual analysis in numerous domains, requiring no substantial modification of the basic descriptive framework.

Reports of this progress are scattered in many venues often not readily accessible. The need to make them easily available was accommodated by two previous volumes in this series (Langacker 1990a, 1999a) and has now resulted in a third. The present volume brings together a dozen innovative papers reflecting recent work. Although they were first written independently, and pertain to diverse topics, they have been revised and integrated to form a coherent whole. And while they deal with important grammatical problems in considerable depth and analytical detail, the presentation builds from fundamentals and introduces the background needed for comprehension.

One source of the volume's coherence is that a number of overlapping topics are examined in multiple chapters viewing them from different perspectives and in relation to one another. Among the topics covered in this fashion are grammatical constructions (their general nature, their metonymic basis, their role in grammaticization), nominal grounding (quantifiers, possessives, impersonal *it*), clausal grounding (its relation to nominal grounding, an epistemic account of tense, a systemic view of the English auxiliary), the "control cycle" (an abstract cognitive model with many linguistic manifestations), finite clauses (their internal structure and external grammar), and complex sentences (complementation, subordination, coordination). Though necessarily selective, the book thus provides a reasonably comprehensive survey of current research in CG and gives some indication of its future directions.

## Publication Sources

### **Chapter 1. Constructions in Cognitive Grammar**

2003 *English Linguistics* 20, 41–83.

### **Chapter 2. Metonymy in grammar**

2004 *Journal of Foreign Languages* 6, 2–24.

### **Chapter 3. A constructional approach to grammaticization**

To appear *Linguistics*. Special issue. Guest editors: Suzanne Kemmer and Martin Hilpert

### **Chapter 4. Possession, location, and existence**

2004 In Augusto Soares da Silva, Amadeu Torres, and Miguel Gonçalves (eds.), *Linguagem, Cultura e Cognição: Estudos de Linguística Cognitiva*, vol. 1, 85–120. Coimbra: Livraria Almedina.

### **Chapter 5. On the subject of impersonals**

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### **Chapter 6. Enunciating the parallelism of nominal and clausal grounding**

2008 In Jean-Rémi Lapaire, Guillaume Desagulier, and Jean-Baptiste Guignard (eds.), *Du Fait Grammatical au Fait Cognitif [From Gram to Mind: Grammar as Cognition]*, 17–65. Pessac: Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux.

### **Chapter 7. The English present: Temporal coincidence vs. epistemic immediacy**

To appear In Frank Brisard (ed.), *Cognitive Linguistic Approaches to Tense and Aspect*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

### **Chapter 8. A functional account of the English auxiliary**

Original paper.

### **Chapter 9. Aspects of the grammar of finite clauses**

2004 In Michel Achard and Suzanne Kemmer (eds.), *Language, Culture and Mind*, 535–577. Stanford: CSLI Publications.



**Chapter 10. Finite complements in English**

2008 *Journal of Foreign Languages* 10, 2–35.

**Chapter 11. Subordination in Cognitive Grammar**

2008 In Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk (ed.), *Asymmetric Events*, 137–149. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

**Chapter 12. The conceptual basis of coordination**

To appear In Seana Coulson (ed.), *Language in Action*. Stanford: CSLI Publications.

The papers are published with permission. They appear in their original form except for some emendations made to avoid excessive redundancy. Also, bibliographical entries, section numberings, and other typographical elements have been adjusted to the Mouton style, temporary and incomplete references have been updated, and cross-references to the original volumes have been deleted.

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# Chapter 1

## Constructions in Cognitive Grammar

### 1. Architecture

More than one linguistic theorist has voiced the opinion that cognitive linguists, including myself, fail to recognize the existence of grammar. That is simply false. The question is not whether grammar exists – for it does – but rather, what is it like? Cognitive Grammar (CG) diverges from standard assumptions in two fundamental respects: (i) its claim that grammar is symbolic in nature; and (ii) its focus on constructions (rather than “rules”) as the primary objects of description (Langacker 1987a, 1990a, 1991, 1999a).

The first claim denies the autonomy of syntax. Crucially, though, we need to distinguish between two definitions of autonomy that have often been confused. By the first definition, syntax (and more generally, grammar) is autonomous unless it is fully predictable in terms of meaning and other independent factors. Let us call this **weak autonomy**. It implies that grammar does not just “fall out” or emerge automatically from other phenomena. Rather, it has to be specifically learned by children and explicitly described by linguists. Observe that weak autonomy says nothing about the nature of grammatical structure, bearing only on its non-predictability. The second definition says that grammar is autonomous by virtue of being distinct from both lexicon and semantics, constituting a separate level of representation whose description requires a special set of irreducible grammatical primitives. Let us call this **strong autonomy**.

All cognitive linguists accept weak autonomy. Grammar exists and has to be described as such. Only its nature and proper characterization are at issue. The basic claims of CG presuppose weak autonomy but constitute a radical alternative to strong autonomy. For one thing, CG holds that lexicon, morphology, and syntax form a continuum, divided only arbitrarily into discrete components. Moreover, it claims that lexicon and grammar are fully describable as **assemblies of symbolic structures**, where a symbolic structure is simply the pairing between a semantic structure and a phonological structure (its semantic and phonological **poles**). This has several consequences. First, grammar is not distinct from semantics, but rather incorporates semantics as one of its two poles. Second, grammatical description does not rely on special, irreducible grammatical primitives, but only on symbolic structures, each reducible to a

form-meaning pairing. Third, every construct validly posited in grammatical description has a semantic pole and is therefore meaningful (though the meanings are often quite schematic).

Like Construction Grammar, CG takes constructions, rather than “rules”, to be the primary objects of grammatical description (Fillmore 1988; Fillmore, Kay, and O’Connor 1988; Goldberg 1995; Croft 2001; cf. Langacker 2005c). Grammar comprises regularities of varying degrees of generality – patterns that speakers internalize and that linguists need to discover and describe. What are these patterns like, and how can we best describe them? Three kinds of devices have commonly been employed in linguistic description: rules, filters, and schemas. These imply different kinds of relationships between specific expressions (e.g. sentences) and the patterns they manifest.

By **rules**, I mean constructive rules analogous to the phrase structure rules and transformations of classic generative syntax. What is important here is the notion that rules and expressions are quite different in nature and related only indirectly. It is only required that, through their cumulative application, some set of rules serve collectively to “construct” a given expression. Rules do not necessarily resemble the expressions they help derive. **Filters** are negative statements indicating that a particular configuration of elements is not permitted. By definition, filters are distinct from the expressions they help describe. **Schemas** bear the closest relation to expressions. They are templates for expressions, representing the abstracted commonality of sets of expressions parallel in certain respects. Schemas are thus directly analogous to the expressions they characterize apart from their level of specificity.

In CG, grammatical patterns are represented by means of schemas. A **construction** is defined as either an expression (of any size), or else a schema abstracted from expressions to capture their commonality (at any level of specificity). Expressions and the patterns they instantiate are thus the same in their basic nature, differing only in degree of specificity. Both specific expressions and abstracted schemas are capable of being entrenched psychologically and conventionalized in a speech community, in which case they constitute established **linguistic units**. Specific expressions with the status of units are traditionally recognized as lexical items. More schematic units correspond to what is traditionally regarded as grammar. The difference, though, is a matter of degree, and in CG these form a continuum. Every construction – whether lexical or grammatical – is characterized as an assembly of symbolic structures.

CG is highly restrictive owing to the **content requirement**. The elements permitted in a linguistic description are limited to: (i) semantic, phonological, and symbolic structures that actually occur as (parts of) expressions; (ii)

schematizations of permitted structures; and (iii) categorizing relationships between permitted structures. Thus the only elements ascribable to a linguistic system are those which are either part of the primary data (namely, occurring expressions), hence directly apprehended, or else emerge from the primary data by means of the basic psychological phenomena of schematization and categorization. Ruled out by the content requirement are such elements as filters, purely syntactic primitives (with neither semantic nor phonological content), and derivations from underlying structures.

Let us then consider what the content requirement does permit. Permitted first, as shown in Figure 1.1, are semantic structures (abbreviated S) and phonological structures (P). These can be of any size and any degree of internal complexity. A symbolic structure ( $\Sigma$ ) consists in the linkage of a semantic and a phonological structure (its two poles). Symbolic structures combine with one another (in ways to be discussed) to form assemblies of symbolic structures, which can also be of any size and any degree of internal complexity. When these assemblies are specific (rather than schematic), they constitute expressions (E), such as words, phrases, clauses, etc.<sup>1</sup>

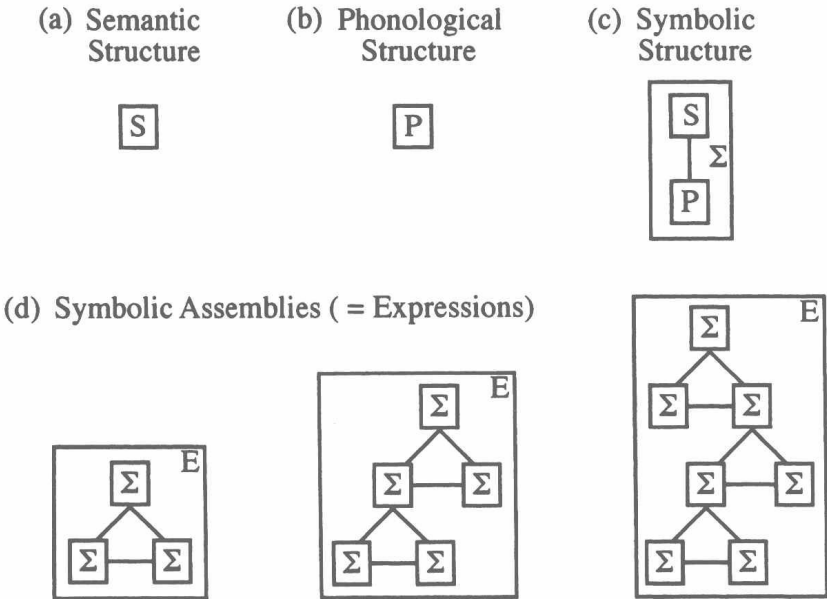


Figure 1.1

1 When those expressions are entrenched and conventionalized, they are recognized as lexical items.



Permitted next, as shown in Figure 1.2, are schemas (Sch). Each represents the abstracted commonality observable in sets of occurring expressions, or in schemas previously extracted. Schematization can be carried to whatever level of abstraction the data supports.

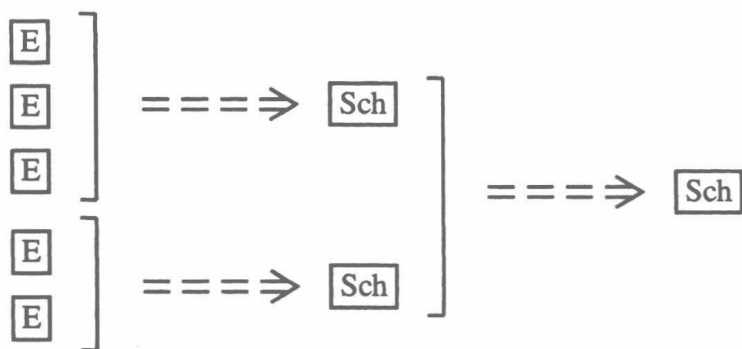


Figure 1.2

Also permitted are relationships of categorization, of which there are two basic sorts, described in Figure 1.3. One sort is the relation between a schema and more specific structures in which the schema is immanent (i.e. observable without distortion). These more specific structures thus elaborate (or instantiate) the schema. For this I use a solid arrow. A dashed arrow represents extension, implying some conflict between the categorizing structure and the one it categorizes. In this case the categorizing structure can be regarded as a prototype (at least in local terms).



Figure 1.3

A linguistic system thus comprises vast networks of structures linked by categorizing relationships, as sketched in Figure 1.4(a). Included in such networks are specific expressions with the status of conventional units, as well as schemas representing various levels of abstraction (or schematicity). Of course, a particular expression – whether fixed or novel – is categorized simultaneously by many schemas, each corresponding to a particular facet of its structure. Collectively, the set of schemas which categorize it constitutes its structural description (i.e. its interpretation with respect to the linguistic system), as shown