

Oxford
LINGUISTICS

Cognitive Grammar

John R. Taylor

OXFORD TEXTBOOKS IN LINGUISTICS

Cognitive Grammar

John R. Taylor

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

OXFORD

UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide in

Oxford New York

Auckland Bangkok Buenos Aires Cape Town Chennai

Dar es Salaam Delhi Hong Kong Istanbul Karachi Kolkata

Kuala Lumpur Madrid Melbourne Mexico City Mumbai Nairobi

São Paulo Shanghai Taipei Tokyo Toronto

Oxford is a registered trade mark of Oxford University Press
in the UK and in certain other countries

Published in the United States

by Oxford University Press Inc., New York

© John R. Taylor 2002

The moral rights of the author have been asserted

Database right Oxford University Press (maker)

First published 2002

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced,
stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means,
without the prior permission in writing of Oxford University Press,
or as expressly permitted by law, or under terms agreed with the appropriate
reprographics rights organization. Enquiries concerning reproduction
outside the scope of the above should be sent to the Rights Department,
Oxford University Press, at the address above

You must not circulate this book in any other binding or cover
and you must impose this same condition on any acquirer

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Data available

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Data available

ISBN 0-19-870033-4

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

Typeset in Times and Meta

by RefineCatch Limited, Bungay, Suffolk

Printed in Great Britain by

Biddles Ltd., Guildford and King's Lynn

OXFORD TEXTBOOKS IN LINGUISTICS

Series editors

Keith Brown, Eve V. Clark, April McMahon,
Jim Miller, Lesley Milroy

Cognitive Grammar

OXFORD TEXTBOOKS IN LINGUISTICS

General editors:

Keith Brown, University of Cambridge; **Eve V. Clark**, Stanford University;
April McMahon, University of Sheffield; **Jim Miller**, University of Edinburgh;
Lesley Milroy, University of Michigan

This series provides accessible and authoritative textbooks on the approaches, methods, and theories associated with the main subfields of linguistics.

PUBLISHED

A Practical Introduction to Phonetics (SECOND EDITION)

by J. C. Catford

Meaning in Language: An Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics

by Alan Cruse

Principles and Parameters: An Introduction to Syntactic Theory

by Peter W. Culicover

Linguistic Reconstruction: An Introduction to Theory and Method

by Anthony Fox

Semantic Analysis: A Practical Introduction

by Cliff Goddard

Cognitive Grammar

by John R. Taylor

IN PREPARATION

The Grammar of Words: An Introduction to Linguistic Morphology

by Professor G. Booij

Pragmatics

by Yan Huang

Linguistic Categorization (THIRD EDITION)

by John R. Taylor

Preface

This book started life, several years ago, as a short introduction to Cognitive Linguistics. The aim was to offer a compact synthesis of the leading ideas of the main protagonists of Cognitive Linguistics: Lakoff, Langacker, Talmy, Fauconnier, and others.

As the project matured, the focus narrowed to a specific trend within Cognitive Linguistics, namely, Langacker's theory of Cognitive Grammar, to my mind, the most comprehensive, and most fully articulated statement of a Cognitive Linguistics approach. With a narrowing of the focus, the book also grew in size. It soon became apparent that it was not going to be possible to convey the scope and internal consistency of the theory in half a dozen chapters. I also decided early on that it was going to be necessary to address the basic assumptions of the theory, and to show how the theory follows naturally from these. Hence, a good deal of this book deals with methodological and foundational issues. A particular concern was to do justice to phonological and morphological structure, topics which are largely ignored in more semantics-focused approaches within Cognitive Linguistics.

In spite of its length, the book still retains its introductory character. Although the 'ideal' reader will have had some exposure to the methodology and subject matter of modern linguistics, as well as, perhaps, to its theoretical controversies, the book does not presuppose any previous knowledge of the discipline. With this readership in mind, I have endeavoured to present the main issues in Cognitive Grammar, exemplifying them, mostly, on the basis of well-known data, usually from English. I am acutely aware of the many topics that could not be included, such as discourse and textual aspects, the application of the theory to languages other than English, as well as more in-depth analyses of the thornier issues in English.

Different readers might use parts of the book for their own purposes. Those with little interest in methodological issues might easily skip chapters 3 and 4, and indeed most of Part I, while those who want to go straight to the application of Cognitive Grammar can start at Chapter 7. Readers with a special interest in morphology can select Chapters 14–16; those who want to see how phonology is handled in the theory can select Chapters 5, 8, and 13, and so on.

The study questions which follow each of the chapters (except the first one) are intended as suggestions for further investigation within a Cognitive Grammar framework. Many of the questions could easily form the basis of minor (or not so minor) research projects. For this reason, I have not included model answers to the questions. Most of the questions are such that they do not have 'model answers'.

I am grateful to the University of Otago for a ten-month period of study leave, during which time the manuscript was largely completed, and also to Dirk Geeraerts, for arranging a period of residence at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium. Thanks also to René Dirven and Ron Langacker, for their helpful comments on earlier versions of the book, and to my wife, for her unfailing support and encouragement. Last but not least, my thanks to the team at Oxford University Press, who guided what must have been a rather difficult manuscript through to publication.

Contents

<i>List of figures</i>	vii
<i>List of tables</i>	x
<i>Preface</i>	xi
Part 1 Background	1
1 Cognitive Grammar and Cognitive Linguistics	3
2 Cognitive Grammar: An overview	20
3 The symbolic thesis	38
4 The symbolic thesis: Some questions and answers	61
5 Phonological structure in Cognitive Grammar	78
6 Semantic structure in Cognitive Grammar	96
Part 2 Basic Concepts	121
7 Schema and instance	123
8 Schema and instance in phonology	143
9 Schema and instance in symbolic units	164
10 Meaning: Profile, base, and domain	186
11 Nominal and relational profiles	205
12 Syntagmatic relations: Combining semantic units	225
13 Syntagmatic relations in phonology	243
Part 3 Morphology	263
14 Morphology	265
15 Analysability and productivity	281

16	Schema competition	298
17	Kinds of symbolic units	323
Part 4	Nouns, Verbs, and Clauses	341
18	Nouns and nominals	343
19	Count nouns and mass nouns	366
20	Tense and aspect	389
21	Clause structure	413
Part 5	More on Meaning	437
22	Domains	439
23	Networks and complex categories	461
Part 6	Approaches to Metaphor	485
24	Metaphor: The Lakovian approach	487
25	Jackendoff and Langacker on 'go'	505
26	Alternatives to metaphor	519
Part 7	Idioms and Constructions	537
27	Idioms, formulas, and fixed expressions	539
28	Constructions	561
	<i>Appendix</i>	586
	<i>Glossary</i>	588
	<i>References</i>	593
	<i>Name index</i>	613
	<i>Subject index</i>	617

List of figures

2.1	The three elements of a linguistic expression	21
2.2	An alternative view of linguistic structure	22
2.3	The relation between a more abstractly characterized unit and more fully specified units	24
2.4	The relation of similarity	25
3.1	The Saussurean sign, which depicts the association of a concept and a phonological structure	39
3.2	'Strict Saussureanism', in which semantic and phonological units match up, one to one	56
3.3	The phonological and semantic poles of a symbolic unit are subject to distinct organizational principles	57
4.1	A possible extension of the Saussurean conception of the sign	72
4.2	Making sense of <i>The girl with green eyes has blue eyes</i>	73
5.1	A template for syllable structure	84
6.1	The football under the table (first interpretation)	106
6.2	The football under the table (second interpretation)	107
6.3	The football under the table (third interpretation)	107
6.4	The active zone phenomenon	111
7.1	The relation between a schematic concept and some of its instances	124
7.2	A more 'schematic' representation of the relation between a schema and its instances	125
7.3	A hierarchy of schema-instance relations	128
7.4	A partial taxonomy of animals	129
7.5	The relative salience of units at different levels of a taxonomy	131
7.6	Cross-cutting taxonomies	133
7.7	Alternative taxonomies of some common concepts	134
7.8	If it's not a man, what is it?	135
7.9	The relation between cups and mugs	137
7.10	Two senses of the word <i>dog</i>	138
7.11	Some of the senses of <i>tree</i> , related in a network of schema-instance relations	139
8.1	The relation between a schema and its instances	144
8.2	The phoneme /p/ is schematic for its allophones; the allophones are instances of the phoneme	145
8.3	A partial taxonomy of phonological units	146
8.4	Alternative taxonomies for the six segments [p, t, k, b, d, g]	147

8.5	The relation between a phonemic representation and a phonetic transcription, as assumed in classical phoneme theory	151
8.6	Relations among nasal consonants in English	153
8.7	The schema-instance relations for allophones of the three voiceless stops /p, t, k/ can themselves be brought under a schema-instance relation	157
9.1	A partial taxonomy of word-sized symbolic units	166
9.2	A partial network for [VERB]	184
10.1	<i>Hypotenuse</i>	193
10.2	Profile, base, and domain	197
11.1	A relational profile	207
11.2	<i>The picture above the sofa</i>	209
11.3	A relational noun	210
11.4	A simple temporal relation	211
11.5	A complex temporal relation: <i>Joe left the office</i>	213
11.6	The end-point of a complex relation is profiled	214
11.7	A complex atemporal relation (<i>around</i>) in two of its uses	218
11.8	Two uses of <i>across</i>	219
11.9	The semantic structure of <i>tall</i>	220
11.10	A taxonomy of the major lexical categories	221
12.1	The assembly of [THE BOOK ON THE TABLE]	230
12.2	The constituency of [THE BOOK ON THE TABLE]	233
12.3	An appositional relation	236
13.1	The integration of a consonant and vowel into the syllable [bɑ:]	248
13.2	Phonological representations of the aspirated stops [p ^h , t ^h , k ^h] and of a schema which abstracts the commonality of the three representations	249
13.3	The shared-consonant strategy	255
13.4	The strategy of [r] insertion	256
13.5	The strategy of [j] insertion	256
13.6	Glottal-stop insertion	257
14.1	The valence relation between the two component structures of <i>books</i>	269
14.2	The assembly of an agentive <i>V-er</i> nominal	271
14.3	The strength of a schema for combining units X and Y is related to the number and entrenchment of its instances	276
15.1	Analysability of a unit at the phonological pole does not necessarily match up with analysability at the semantic pole, and vice versa	285
16.1	Schemas for the regular plurals of English	301
16.2	A (partial) schema network for the 'Greek' plurals in English	305
16.3	The plural forms <i>feet</i> and <i>men</i> are highly entrenched <i>vis-à-vis</i> the vowel-changing schema	306
16.4	Instances of plurals involving voicing change are highly entrenched	307
16.5	Two groups of words tested in Sereno and Jongman (1997)	309
17.1	Contentfulness vs. schematicity with respect to phonological and semantic structures	327
17.2	Dependence vs. autonomy with respect to phonological and semantic structures	328
18.1	The grounding relation, as exemplified in a definite noun phrase	346
18.2	The relation between a type (T) and its instances (I)	348
18.3	The semantic structure of a grounded nominal	349
18.4	The constituency of a plural nominal, <i>the houses</i>	352

18.5	Kinds of determiners	353
19.1	A fragment of a schema network for the count-mass distinction	380
20.1	Alternative constituencies of the type specification 'Louise walk to the store'	391
20.2	A schematic representation of (a) a perfective process and (b) an imperfective process	398
20.3	A taxonomy of process types	401
22.1	The set of 'red houses' lies at the intersection of things that are red and things that are houses	450
23.1	Alternative approaches to meaning variation	463
23.2	The relation between a prototype, an extension from the prototype, and the schema which sanctions the extension	465
23.3	Schematic hierarchy for <i>run</i>	466
23.4	Schematic representations of some meanings of <i>over</i>	475
24.1	Conceptual metaphors can stand in a schema-instance relation	493
25.1	Sequential scanning and summary scanning	515
26.1	The categorization triangle	523
26.2	A superordinate category is schematic for the 'literal' and 'metaphorical' meanings of <i>jail</i>	530
26.3	Blending	532

List of tables

9.1	Properties of the major ontological kinds	179
9.2	The functions of the major ontological kinds	179
9.3	Average length (in syllables) of nouns and verbs in the 18-million word CELEX corpus	181
9.4	Stress pattern of all disyllabic and trisyllabic nouns and verbs in the CELEX corpus	182
9.5	Number of nouns and verbs in the COBUILD corpus which terminate in a voiced or voiceless obstruent	184
15.1	The relative productivity of noun-forming, adjective-forming, and verb-forming affixes	294
16.1	Children's performance on the creation of novel plurals	313
16.2	Errors produced when adults were required, under time pressure, to give the past-tense forms of English verbs	317
19.1	Co-occurrence possibilities of three kinds of noun with various determiners and quantifiers	372
28.1	Number of Internet hits for collocations involving <i>bang</i> (<i>go</i>)	579

Part 1

Background

The first six chapters introduce Cognitive Grammar against a discussion of general theoretical issues.

Chapter 1 focuses on scope and concerns of Cognitive Linguistics approaches to language study, with special attention on the significance of the word 'cognitive' when applied to a linguistic theory. Cognitive Grammar is the name of a specific theory of language within the more general movement of Cognitive Linguistics. Chapter 2 gives a brief overview of some central concepts and assumptions of Cognitive Grammar, while Chapters 3 and 4 address some of the objections that could be raised against the 'conceptualist' foundations of the theory. Chapter 5 argues that phonology, no less than semantic issues, needs to be incorporated within Cognitive Grammar, while Chapter 6 addresses the status of semantic structure in the theory.

CHAPTER 1

Cognitive Grammar and Cognitive Linguistics

1.1 The cognitive turn	4	1.4 What's cognitive about Cognitive Linguistics?	8
1.2 Non-cognitive linguistics	5	1.5 Neurocognitive linguistics	16
1.3 Chomskyan linguistics as 'cognitive linguistics'	6	Further reading	18

Cognitive Grammar—the subject of this book—is the name which Ronald Langacker has given to a theory of language which he has been developing since the mid-1970s.¹ Initially, Cognitive Grammar occupied a very marginal place in the theoretical linguistic landscape. Over the years, as the theory has developed and become more widely known, it has attracted increasing numbers of adherents and sympathizers. There is now a sizeable literature which has applied the theory of Cognitive Grammar to a wide range of linguistic issues, in a variety of languages.

In this book I make a distinction between **Cognitive Grammar** and **Cognitive Linguistics**.

- I use the term 'Cognitive Linguistics' as a descriptive label for a rather broad movement within modern linguistics. It includes a variety of approaches, methodologies, and emphases, which are, however, unified by a number of

¹ In earlier publications the theory was called 'Space Grammar'; see, for example, the title of Langacker (1982). The earlier name probably alluded to the distinctive pictographic representations which the theory still employs. Whatever the appropriateness of the name, Langacker (FCG1: iv) disarmingly remarks that '[a] theory called space grammar can obviously not be taken seriously'. Langacker's two-volume work (published in 1987 (vol. 1) and 1991 (vol. 2)) is referred to as 'FCG1' or 'FCG2' throughout.

common assumptions. Foremost among these is the belief that language forms an integral part of human cognition, and that any insightful analysis of linguistic phenomena will need to be embedded in what is known about human cognitive abilities. Cognitive Linguistics aims, therefore, for a cognitively plausible account of what it means to know a language, how languages are acquired, and how they are used.

- ‘Cognitive Grammar’ is the name of a specific theory of language, which takes its place within the broader movement of Cognitive Linguistics. Although Cognitive Grammar has its own terminology, descriptive techniques, and pictorial conventions, it shares the basic assumptions of the Cognitive Linguistics movement.

In this first chapter, I set the scene by examining some general features of Cognitive Linguistics, and the relation of Cognitive Linguistics to other current approaches to linguistic analysis. I should point out that the use of the term ‘cognitive’ in linguistics is not free from controversy, and in this chapter I discuss some of the different ways in which the term has been understood. The situation can easily cause confusion for an unwary reader; it also can cause resentment among linguists who understand the term ‘cognitive’ in different ways. There are, for example, those who believe that the term is entirely inappropriate, both for the enterprise of Cognitive Linguistics, as I present it here, and for the more specific programme of Cognitive Grammar. On the other hand, there are those who would argue that the term ‘cognitive’ is valid for a broad spectrum of contemporary linguistics, and that the self-styled ‘Cognitive Linguists’ and ‘Cognitive Grammarians’ have no special claim on the word.

Let us begin by looking at the term ‘cognitive’, and what it might mean for a linguistic theory to be described as cognitive.

1.1 The cognitive turn

‘Cognitive’ is a fashionable term nowadays. Many of the human and social disciplines like to attach the word to their titles. We have cognitive anthropology, cognitive archaeology, and also, of course, cognitive psychology. Many universities have interdisciplinary programmes in cognitive science, with input from psychology, neurology, philosophy, computer science, and, usually, linguistics.

Cognitive science studies the mind and its workings—such things as memory, learning, perception, attention, consciousness, reasoning, and what, for want of a better word, one can call, simply, ‘thought’. Although these look like the traditional concerns of psychology, a number of the human and social disciplines have staked a claim in the cognitive enterprise. The justification for this move is that human behaviour, and the products of human behaviour, in