

6. Semantics

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In this section on semantics, I would first like to start with a couple of recently published books that might be of a general interest to scholars working within the framework of cognitive semantics (with relevance to English). The first volume under review here is Sarah E. Duffy and Michele I. Feist's *Time, Metaphor, and Language: A Cognitive Science Perspective*, which offers a sweeping review of how the target domain of TIME is metaphorically understood via the source domain of SPACE. Although the book does not focus solely on English per se, and incorporates data and findings from a wide range of other languages as well, it provides a wealth of linguistic metaphorical examples from English by drawing on several corpora (BNC, NOW Corpus, iWeb Corpus, etc.) and the rich English-based metaphor literature that is available on the topic of TIME. The main observation that the authors make is that SPACE–TIME metaphors are not exempt from a multitude of contextual and personal factors (just as most probably any other metaphor). For example, languages use alternative spatializations for conceptualizing duration: while English prefers TIME IS LENGTH metaphors (as in 'a long time'), Greek and Spanish frequently employ the TIME IS QUANTITY metaphor (as in 'a lot of time'—as reflected in *poli ora* and *mucho tiempo*, respectively). Thus, the spatialization of time can only be accounted for through a nonstatic, interactive model of metaphor. Yet another comprehensive study on metaphorical—and metonymical—conceptualizations across languages is *Metonymies and Metaphors for Death Around the World*, by Wojciech Wachowski and Karen Sullivan. Building on data from dozens of languages (including several varieties of contemporary English as well as OE) and a wealth of sources (news articles, websites, literary works, historical documents, personal communication with native speakers, etc.), the authors present a systematic account of how metonymy (Part 1 of the volume) and metaphor (Part 2) can help humans deal with death and dying. The authors conclude that '[t]he conceptualisation of death is undeniably creative and complex' (p. 143), due to a large part to processes other than metaphor, such as metonymy and blending. These conceptualizations show similarities across languages to some degree, such as the BODY IS A CONTAINER metaphor, according to which a part of us (spirit or soul) leaves our body when we die, and which is rooted in our 'longing to deny the loss of our loved ones, and our own fear of annihilation' (p. 148). Despite its evident bodily basis, Wachowski and Sullivan argue that even such a metaphor has a cultural foundation that needs to be learned by interacting with others.

Moving onto politics and society, Marcel Danesi investigates how lies, deceptions, and conspiracy theories can be dissected with the cognitive linguistic toolkit in *Politics, Lies and Conspiracy Theories: A Cognitive Linguistic Perspective*. As emphasized by Danesi, while there is a strong tradition of political metaphor analysis in the cognitive linguistic literature, very little has been written on the topic of political lies and lying. Danesi brings in a very wide selection of examples from primarily—though not exclusively—US politics, to uncover how metaphorical framing can be applied to disambiguate politically motivated lies. His main premise is that 'metaphorical framing is what makes these falsehoods believable, since the frames affect cognition and beliefs in an unconscious way' (p. 92). Metaphors can be argumentatively exploited in climate change discourse as well, which is the subject of Anaïs Augé's monograph on *Metaphor and Argumentation in Climate Change Discourse*. Augé relies

on a vast corpus of English-language text spanning (social) media discourse, scientific discourse, NGO communications and political discourse to advocate the view that metaphors do not only have an explanatory function in the communication on climate change but are also employed by stakeholders to advance certain viewpoints and interpretations of scientific observations. Yet these 'exploitations' of metaphor also evolve with the 'context(s) of production which is attached to socio-cultural and socio-political interests and the new oppositions these can generate' (p. 166).

A number of journal articles have appeared on metaphorical conceptualization that also target political and socioeconomic issues. Olaf Jäkel uses the concept of 'persuasive metaphor' to investigate how the US presidential elections have been metaphorically conceptualized by Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump and Barack Obama in 'Conceptualising Presidential Elections: Competing Metaphorical Models, and Alternative Approaches to Their Critical Analysis' (in Monika Reif and Frank Polzenhagen, eds, *Cultural Linguistics and Critical Discourse Studies*, pp. 36–51). The analysis indicates that all three politicians relied on alternative metaphorical models during their campaigning, as compared to the well-established POLITICAL ELECTION IS A WAR/RACE often featured in the literature. Accordingly, Clinton made use of the POLITICAL ELECTION IS A JOB INTERVIEW metaphor, Trump favoured the POLITICAL ELECTION IS A LAWSUIT metaphor, while Obama preferred the POLITICS / POLITICAL PROGRESS IS A JOURNEY metaphor. Jäkel (p. 50) emphasizes that by selecting a particular metaphor, politicians not only purposefully highlight, but can also purposefully hide or downplay aspects of the political election, in order to best fit their political agenda. Monika Reif's study on 'Opening the Thinkgates? The Discourse Dynamics of Migration Metaphors in Online Debates' (in Reif and Polzenhagen, eds, pp. 52–104) also places the dynamicity and contextuality of metaphor in the spotlight, by looking at the metaphorical language use of reader comments on migration in four online British news outlets. Reif argues that language users are ready to mix metaphors in order to enhance the emotional effect of their position on migration and migration policies. Thus, as Reif claims, 'metaphoric meaning is not static, but arises in discursive contexts, and that the salience and activation of certain facets of the source and target domains mainly depend on the co- and context of the metaphor in question' (p. 94). The identity-building function of language is explored by Ksenija Bogetić, Frazer Heritage, Veronika Koller and Mark McGlashan in 'Landwhales, Femoids and Sub-Humans: Dehumanising Metaphors in Incel Discourse' (*Me&SW* 13[2023] 178–196), who analyse the manner of metaphoric dehumanization in an online incel community. The findings suggest that incel language use makes heavy reliance in dehumanizing metaphors not just for out-groups (such as women or men in general) but also for in-group members (i.e. incels themselves). The out-group metaphors strengthen misogynist ideology and commitment to patriarchal models, while the in-group metaphors combine with 'self-directed dehumanisation and self-loathing' (p. 186) that—in the authors' view—can be an indicator of mental health problems. Yuting Xu, Terry Royce and Chunyu Hu offer a corpus-based comparative analysis of English and Chinese metaphorical conceptualizations of the target concept ECONOMY as reflected in media discourse in 'Economy Is Human: A Corpus-Based Comparative Study in English and Chinese Economic Media Discourse' (*RoCL* 21[2023] 411–443). Although both languages rely on the widely established and conventional generic-level ECONOMY IS HUMAN metaphor, with more than half of the metaphorical expressions instantiating the ECONOMIC SITUATION IS HUMAN CONDITION specific-level metaphor, the English examples are more frequently based upon specific names of illnesses and/or drugs, while the Chinese examples use more generic medical terms. This difference, in the authors' view, is accountable by the opposition between the Western and traditional Chinese medicine cultures.

While HEALTH and ILLNESS are often used as source concepts to conceptualize various abstract concepts such as ECONOMY, they can also become target concepts themselves, subject to metaphorical conceptualization—as reflected in the following contributions under review. In ‘Wellness: A Cultural Linguistics Analysis of the Conceptualisation of Health’ (in Reif and Polzenhagen, eds, pp. 146–169), Penelope Scott examines how HEALTH and WELLNESS have been conceptualized in contemporary English, by analysing wellness-themed podcasts from goop.com and Reddit wellness-themed communities within a cultural linguistic framework. The analysis uncovers three larger cultural models through which the concept of WELLNESS is understood: the countercultural approach to science and medicine model; the whole health model; and the detox model. These models are also complemented by several cultural metaphors: FOOD IS MEDICINE, WELLNESS IS A JOURNEY, THE BODY IS A BALANCED SYSTEM, and WHOLE FOOD IS CLEAN FOOD. According to Scott, how WELLNESS is conceptualized (through which model and/or metaphor) can have a profound effect on how we respond to medical advice coming from different sources. Sandra Rossi, Andreas Maercker and Eva Heim offer a much-needed review on the metaphorical language use of older adults when describing extremely stressful situations and stress-related symptoms in ‘Metaphors and Related Expressions in Older Adults in the Field of Trauma and Stress-related Disorders: A Scoping Review’ (*M&Sym* 38[2023] 50–69), by analysing samples collected from thirty-nine qualitative studies with older adults from psychology, gerontology and related fields. The data imply that body and damage were the most prevalent themes across all trauma- and stress-related disorders, by which people who experience a traumatic event are considered as ‘wounded’. This conceptualization reflects older adults’ relationship with their bodies; ‘a tendency of somatizing mental disorders, either due to focusing more on the physical aspects of a problem, stigmatization, or lack of education in regards of newly established psychological concepts’ (p. 64). Still within the area of ageing, Gavin Brookes’s study on ‘Killer, Thief or Companion? A Corpus-Based Study of Dementia Metaphors in UK Tabloids’ (*M&Sym* 38[2023] 213–230), investigates the media discourse surrounding dementia in British tabloids over a period of ten years (2010–2019), by adopting a corpus-based approach to metaphor identification and analysis. The results suggest that the British media has a predilection for metaphorically conceptualizing dementia as a violent agent and the patients as passive victims, which strengthens the stigmatization of the disease by placing emphasis on pharmacological solutions and behaviour change. Alternative source domains, however, such as COMPANION or JOURNEY, do exist, which can not only help in destigmatizing dementia, but can also offer an understanding of how to live with the illness.

Several papers delve into word meaning and conceptualization. In ‘Words of Wonder: The Cognitive and Semantic Dimension of the Literal and Figurative Denominators for WONDER in Old English Sources’ (*CogSem* 9[2023] 418–441), Francisco Javier Minaya Gómez provides a cognitive linguistic account of OE expressions for the concept ‘wonder’ by drawing on several OE resource tools. Contrary to the widely held belief that OE poetic and prose vocabulary are different, Minaya Gómez’s results imply that there are no significant deviations in the case of the lexical domain of ‘wonder’, and OE speakers were able to rely on a wealth of terms that were used literally to refer to this emotion. These literal terms were complemented by those that were already used in a figurative sense (e.g. *wundor* used in the sense of ‘miracle’), offering a wealth of lexical choices to describe both the more passive perspective of this emotion and its more active, aesthetic variant. Emotions are also the topic of Halszka Bąk and Jeanette Altarriba’s article on ‘Basic Emotion Prototypes in English and in Polish’ (*CogSem* 9[2023] 254–280), which investigates the differences in conceptualization between the prototypical categories of the six basic emotions—anger, disgust, fear, joy, sadness, and surprise—in English and Polish along the evaluations of valence, arousal

and dominance, as based on specially designed corpora of emotion words in the two respective languages. With regard to similarities, 'joy' shows the highest scores for both valence and dominance in both languages. Considerable differences can be detected with respect to arousal, however: lowest scores of arousal emerged for 'anger' in English and 'sadness' in Polish. Such patterns 'echo the findings from the analyses of conceptual metaphors and metonymies which point to broad similarities between conceptualizations based on valence and arousal as well as on dominance in some of the negative emotions' (p. 276). Montserrat Esbrí-Blasco and Ignasi Navarro i Ferrando's study is also a comparative analysis, this time between English and Peninsular Spanish, on the scope of metaphors evoked by the verb *bake* (as based on COCA data) and its Peninsular Spanish equivalent *hornear* in 'Thematic Role Mappings in Metaphor Variation: Contrasting English *Bake* and Spanish *Hornear*' (PSCL 59[2023] 43–64). The data suggest that the source frame of *bake* expresses a wider range of target frames than the Peninsular Spanish *hornear*, which entails that *bake* and *hornear* are not actual equivalents. The experiential focus of the two investigated verbs can be linked to different frame elements and thematic roles, pointing to 'differential cognitive preferences between both cultures' (p. 43). Linguistic synaesthesia in English is the topic of Yin Zhong, Kathleen Ahrens and Chu-Ren Huang's article on 'Novel Metaphor and Embodiment: Comprehending Novel Synesthetic Metaphors' (LV 9[2023] 245–255), in which the authors approach synaesthesia as a type of conceptual metaphor and test the comprehensibility of novel synaesthetic metaphors in English. The findings demonstrate that novel synaesthetic metaphors that are based upon conventional mappings were evaluated as more common, appropriate and even less metaphorical, as compared to those that were based upon nonconventional mappings. The domain of SPATIAL DISTANCE as applied onto the domain of CONCEPTUAL DISTANCE within American Sign Language and Irish Sign Language is the topic of Terry Janzen, Barbara Shaffer and Lorraine Leeson's article on 'What I Know Is Here; What I Don't Know Is Somewhere Else: Deixis and Gesture Spaces in American Sign Language and Irish Sign Language' (in Terry Janzen and Barbara Shaffer, eds, *Signed Language and Gesture Research in Cognitive Linguistics*, pp. 211–242). While the past is typically referenced as being behind the signer in both languages under investigation, there is evidence to suggest that past events can also be positioned directly in front of the signer in both ASL and ISL. This implicates that the relationship between time and spatial indexing in both ASL and ISL is rather complex, and that the spatial locational choices of the signer depend on both the signer's construal of the event and the 'embodied expression of the relationship between time and space itself' (p. 237). Kajsa Törmä explores how we imagine and describe moving around in outer space by studying the verb collocates of *space*, *outer space* and *deep space* in COCA in her article titled 'Flying, Floating, Hurtling—a Corpus-assisted Study of Astromotion Verbs in American English' (CogSem 9[2023] 227–253). The author establishes a new subcategory of motion, ASTROMOTION, the conceptualization of which is then compared to already established and researched subcategories of motion (AQUAMOTION, AEROMOTION and TERRAMOTION—motion in/on water, air and earth, respectively). The analysis implies that while the lexical field of ASTROMOTION is relatively large, it does not contain either neologisms or space-specific words. Instead, quite a few verbs are general motion verbs (such as *travel* or *send*) or verbs that conflate both cause and motion (such as *blast*), which can be used to describe motion in other motion subcategories as well. In fact, some of the verbs have been metaphorically relexicalized from other categories to include motion in outer space, such as *loft* and *fly* from AEROMOTION, or *ferry* and *navigate* from AQUAMOTION. The fact that such a wide array of verbs exist for describing motion in outer space is a reflection of the difficulty we face in 'lexicalizing an abstract, unfamiliar experience' (p. 251).

Moving on—so to speak—to semantic organization and grammar, Zeki Hamawand gives a comprehensive account of how one the of the main tenets of cognitive grammar, the construal of specificity (i.e. the speaker's choice/ability to describe something in greater detail), permeates language use and influences meaning in various modes of modification in 'The Construal of Specificity in Modification in English' [*CogSem* 9[2023] 315–343]. The key finding of the study is that modification is a manifestation of specificity in that it enables the description of a situation in greater detail. In 'Paradigms as Second-Order Schemas in English Noun-Participle Compounding' (*RoCL* 21[2023] 542–575), Hongwei Zhan, Sihong Huang and Lei Sun examine the categorizational processes and schematization of English noun-participle compounds, based on COHA data within a cognitive linguistic framework. The study establishes two schemas as generalizations of compounds of deverbal (e.g. *man-made*) and denominal (e.g. *life-sized*) participles, and two, simultaneously active schemas in the case of compounds of an ambicategorical character (such as *snow-covered*), allowing for morphosemantic ambiguity. Such findings underline the 'labor division' (to cite the authors' succinct metaphorical term) between mother-daughter and sister links within a schema network. Schematicity is not restricted to spoken language; as a default organizational principle of language, it also emerges within sign languages. This is the position that Erin Wilkinson, Ryan Lopic, and Lynn Hou adopt in 'Usage-based Grammar: Multi-word Expressions in American Sign Language' (in Janzen and Shaffer, eds, pp. 357–388). Going against the prevailing structuralist view that considers the individual signs of a signed language such as ASL as 'beads on a linear string' (p. 383), the authors contend that signed units can differ in terms of length, complexity and schematicity, and units can be 'recycled' during language use to create new units. Essentially, it is proposed that sign languages—similarly to spoken languages—also rely on recycled units similar to prefabs, collocations and constructions, which have a nondecompositional, 'holistic' nature. Iksoo Kwon, Hanbeom Jung, A. Young Kwon and Ji-in Kang provide a comparative study on the constructional and functional properties of *I promise (you) + X* and *I guarantee (you) + X* constructions in 'A Cognitivist Approach to *I Promise* and *I Guarantee* Constructions' (*CogSem* 9[2023] 41–72), by building on a mental spaces model and relying on hundreds of tokens extracted from COCA. What the analysis has shown is that while the *I promise* construction assumes the speaker's intent to make a particular target situation happen, the *I guarantee* construction does not necessarily suppose an intent from the speaker but instead focuses on the speaker's prediction of a target situation.

In this last section on Semantics, I will turn to a couple of contributions on EFL. Jeeyoung Jeon and Min-Chang Sung employ Leonard Talmy's linguistic typology of the lexicalization patterns of motion events in 'L2 English Learners' Verb Lexicalization of Motion Events: Effects of Proficiency and Salience of Manner' (*RoCL* 21[2023] 266–292) to investigate how native speakers of Korean (which in Talmy's typology is a V-language that maps the path on the verb and optionally expresses manner) use motion verbs in English (which is an S-language that lexicalizes path in a satellite and manner in a verb). Results indicate that when the manner is not salient enough in a particular motion event, Korean learners of English may adopt L1-based lexicalization patterns that tilt toward non-manner elements such as path and motion. The paper also offers an account of the possible pedagogical implications of the study. Korean learners of English are the subject of Min-Chang Sung's article as well in 'Top-down and Bottom-up Approaches to Teaching English Verb-Particle Constructions: Construction-Based and Metaphor-Based Instruction' (*RoCL* 21[2023] 486–514). Sung compares the efficiency of teaching English verb-particle constructions via a top-down method that focuses on the motion and resultative constructions that these phenomena are manifestations of, and a bottom-up approach that emphasizes the figurative

meaning of particles. While both types of instruction were effective in improving learners' knowledge, the top-down approach was significantly more successful in long-term retention. The role of metaphor in aiding non-English speakers' understanding of English academic texts is the topic of Dennis Lindenberg's contribution on "'The Genome Is the Brain of the Cell!' How Japanese English Learners Mediate Understanding of Academic Content through Metaphor' (*Me&Sym* 38[2023] 23–49). The study demonstrated that metaphor in academic texts was both utilized and expanded by Japanese learners of English; furthermore, participants were also ready to coin novel metaphors in order to frame concepts. Such observations imply that metaphors can function both as 'cognitive maps' (p. 43) and as mnemonic devices for learners of English that can be 'unpacked' (*ibid.*) whenever information needs to be accessed.

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7. Lexicography, Lexicology and Lexical Semantics

Ai Zhong

Since the studies on dictionaries and the studies on words overlap so much, this section will be grouped thematically, rather than going through the disciplines listed in the section heading one by one. A significant book this year is *The Cambridge History of Linguistics*, edited by Linda R. Waugh, Monique Monville-Burston and John E. Joseph. Several chapters are extremely relevant to this section. In chapter 21, Alain Polguère discusses two interrelated disciplines, namely 'Lexicology and Lexicography' (pp. 682–703). He looks at the modelling of major properties of lexical units, phraseology and its treatment in lexicography and the latest developments in lexicography in the computer age, giving readers a quick guide to the relevant topics in modern lexicology and lexicography. However, diachronic studies of words, such as etymology, are not covered. At the very end of the chapter, Polguère comments that 'The twentieth century may have been the golden age of lexicography, but paradoxically we could now be entering its dark age. There is a present trend for lexicographic teams to wither and disappear' (p. 703). For the golden age, we have the *OED*, a major undertaking of 'British Linguistics' in 'Late Nineteenth Century to 1970' (mentioned in part 1 of chapter 15, by Michael K. C. MacMahon); *COBUILD*, impacted by 'Neo-Firthian Corpus Linguistics to 2000' (in part 2 of chapter 15, by Tony McEnery and Andrew Hardie); and also, Webster's dictionary for 'American Linguistics to 1960' (chapter 16, by Julia S. Falk). The dark age is a cause of worry in many studies this year, and they will be mentioned later where pertinent topics are discussed. A major section of chapter 19 'Semantics and Pragmatics' (pp. 618–55), by Keith Allan, is dedicated to 'Lexical Semantics',