Jan-Ola Östman and Mirjam Fried (eds.), 2005. *Construction Grammars: Cognitive grounding and theoretical extensions*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. p. viii + 324.*

Construction Grammar originates from the seminal work of Charles Fillmore (1968), Wallace Chafe (1974) and George Lakoff (1977) (p. 3, 10-13). Conceptual semantics, first introduced by Ray Jackendoff (1983), also has considerable influence on the work of many construction grammarians (p. 191-192). Construction Grammar is no longer a new theory in linguistics but a tradition with respectable history since the late sixties (p. 123). This review highlights the work of Jan-Ola Östman, William Croft, Adele E. Goldberg and Laura A. Michaelis in the volume.

This theory claims that the conceptual fundamentals to language are form-meaning configurations beyond morphemes and words (p. 1). The theory presupposes holistic syntactico-semantic prototypes that govern the distribution of language element in sentences. Construction becomes the overarching basis for sentence formation. The pragmatic constraints in the construction determine the combination of different parts in sentence patterns such as transitive and intransitive across languages (p. 32-33). In its formative phase, this theory professes to be generative and integrative in determining language patterns that have universal impact yet consistent with social interaction and cognition (p.1). These features differ across construction grammars, some of which are mentioned below.

Interestingly in the fifth chapter *Construction Discourse: A prolegomenon*, Östman proposes discourse pattern (*dp*) as a construction. The need to project a metaphysical explanation for the sentences in various discourse patterns becomes a natural development for the theory. Against the generative nature and the descriptive adequacy of the theory (p.1, 12), *dp* is a higher order construction that either makes or breaks the accountability of Construction

Grammar. A discussion on the *dp* construction of the newspaper headline 'Mother drowned baby' follows (p. 137). Three possibilities of occurrence for this discourse type are invoked namely, *Headline, Family Conversation* and *Interlanguage* (p. 138). The first concerns a genre type i.e. textual construct. The second pertains to a face-to-face interaction, i.e. social interactive construct. The third refers to Standard European Language grammatical variation, i.e. difference in syntactic codification (whereby the English learner's language competence as a speaker of second language is invoked).

Östman's *dp* abstraction can take into consideration the coercion relations of the construction grammar in the third chapter. *The Override Principle* in Michaelis' construction grammar model enables the type-selecting and type shifting constructions to perform concord relations and derivations respectively (p. 50). Construction grammar, in this respect, works along a unified superimposition between the grammatical constructions and the lexical items (p. 49). Michaelis points out that both types of construction denote and invoke types whereby implicit type shift may occur when the type realised in language is not the type invoked, for example, *a beer* (p. 46, 50). A count determiner co-occurs with a mass noun following an internal type shift, which creates a coerced sisterhood relation in the construction.

Worth mentioning, the Malay version of *mother drowned baby* (*ibu melemaskan anak*) sounds perfectly fine to Malay speakers who would use numeral quantifiers on nouns to designate quantification. The *dp* of the English headline might have to specify a coercion relation to invoke the particular noun type reference that lacks the sisterhood relation of licensing from the determiner heads for the number and specification attributes. On the other hand, the *dp* of the Malay headline does not need internal type shifting coercion. A type selecting construction is suffced for the Malay headline. This construction variation behind the English

and Malay headlines supports Croft's claim that all constructions are language-specific (see below).

Michaelis offers constructive details behind English aspectual conversion by positing the *Aktionsart Preservation* principle for aspectual mapping. The principle preserves the causal and/or temporal representation in the verbal valence (p. 68). The representation of the Aktionsart structures in verbs can be selected through permutation or concatenation. Permutation, for example, can be realised through the inchoative operator BECOME and or with frequency adverbials (p. 69, 72). This principle provides description for verb constructions. The division of internal (aktionsart) and external (aspect) verbal information remains a useful basis upon which a coerced verb mutates to a construction complex (p. 71, cf. Sew 1998).

In the second chapter, Goldberg's construction grammar enables an entity to be omitted or shaded in the discourse construction through the notion of recoverability. Recoverability licenses an entity in the argument from being explicitly mentioned or profiled in the transitive argument (p. 32). Although the specification of the noun *mother* is necessary in the Malay headline that informs on a particular case recoverability allows for the under specification of this noun. This is due to the headline eventually leads to the full details of the information.

Along this vein, the abstraction of *dp* needs to consider *Deprofiled Object Construction* (DOC) informed in the second chapter as this construction constraint hinges on discourse context (p. 32):

"…if a verb appears frequently in a particular discourse context, which generally allows the omission of the non-subject argument, the omission may over the time become a conventional or grammaticalized option for that verb, through a process of reanalysis."

Goldberg's version of DOC is an interesting construction that accounts for why some transitive verbs can optionally drop the object while some low frequency verbs like *imbibe, peruse*, and *draft* do not allow for the intransitive use as a lexical option (p. 33). Similarly, the Malay verb *tanak* (cook only to refer to rice cooked in the traditional method on fire) must remain overt with its argument when compared with verbs like *baca* (read) and *makan* (eat). The contrastive constructions in Malay are provided below:

Saya membaca buku (I read a book)
I   meN-read book

Saya selalu membaca (I always read)
I   always meN-read

Saya sudah makan nasi (I have eaten some rice)
I   have   eat   rice

Saya sudah makan (I have eaten)
I   have   eat

Saya sudah   menanak   nasi (I have cooked some rice)
I   have   meN-cook   rice

*Saya sudah menanak   (I have cooked)
 I   have   meN-cook

Ultimately, *dp* is a potential all encompassing meta-construction that is comprehensive enough to describe all discourse types, including the dramatic discourse pattern in theatrical performances such as *Romeo and Juliet*. Further analysis might want to examine the issue of semantic frame shift when Juliet is framed in Malay discourse pattern and cultural frame (cf. Sew 2005). This is where intercultural cognitive-semantic frame shift becomes pronounced. This kind of meaning complex is explored in other types of cognitive linguistics, particularly those involving cognitive blend. Sinha (2005), for example, examined the intricacies of blending in the Portuguese child play of a Brazilian primary school classroom.

In the ninth chapter, Croft introduces *Radical Grammar Construction* (RGC), which points out an important metaphysical default in current syntactic analysis. Honestly, Croft explains the faulty assumption in *a priori* syntactic analysis (p. 282):

"…distributional test/criteria do not match, both across languages and within languages. That is, different constructions define different distributional patterns, within and across languages…the commonest response…to look around for distributional patterns that produce the results that the analyst is looking for; or not to look for distributional patterns that might produce results that the analyst is not looking for…"

This is an observation made many times even before the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis such as the anthropological linguistic observations from Malinowski but fails to impact on major English-based typological analyses and syntactic theories. Croft shows that many fallacies of English-based linguistic analyses previously left unaddressed had been assumed to be language universals. The English possessive construction in the current syntactic analysis is at odds with simple Malay examples, as Malay offers opposite possessive construction that has the order of the possessee before the possessor. The phrase *my house* is alternated as *rumah* (house) *saya* (I) in Malay, so is Lily's husband which translates into *suami* (husband) Lily in Malay.

Also, the word order for adjective in Malay is different from English in that the Malay adjective is preceded by the noun it describes:

rumah besar (big house)
House big

buku merah (red book)
book red

Croft propounds a nonreductionist RGC that rejects syntactic categories as the primitive element in language. Instead, he projects construction as the primitive elements of the syntactic

representation (p. 283). Construction Grammar in RGC is based on a semantic map that corresponds with a conceptual space (p. 285). The relationship in the construction, i.e. the syntactic element and the semantic component is a symbolic correspondence. This symbolic relation is equivalent to linking rules in a componential model (p. 292). The operation relation in RGC is quite similar to Cognitive Grammar (CG) expounded in Langacker (1991). The major difference is that CG is in a reductionist bottom-up scheme whereas RGC is a nonreductionist top-down scheme that does away syntactic relation and syntactic categories.

Notice that there are many discrepancies between construction grammars. Versions from Goldberg and Michaelis have syntactic relations underlining the varying constructions whereas Croft's version has all constructions as the primitive with syntactic categories as the dependent outcomes. Another difference is that all constructions are language specific for Croft whereas Goldberg's version of construction attempts to provide descriptive adequacy extensively. The traditional syntactic pre-patterning preoccupations underpinning many linguistic thoughts, with the exception of Systemic Grammar and Tagmemics (p. 124) are noticeable in construction grammars *a la* Goldberg and Michaelis because the grammatical constructions are fundamentally syntactico-semantic. In direct contrast with RCG, unification *a la* Michaelis posits atomic value concordances in the semantic ependency between two or more types in a construction from which *The Override Principle* is the spins off (p. 51).

Grammatical categories are not independent categories as there are no a priori grammatical classes in RGC. The fallacy of syntactic autonomy is removed with the significance of language specific constructions in RGC. Consequently, Croft's RGC can be used to formulate a versatile *dp* as RGC prevents *dp* from the specification of grammatical agreements like the sisterhood relation in (in)definite noun reference. Without the burden of twigging

syntactic relations, nor the task of equating word agreement, the RGC-based *dp* has huge explanatory potential. Besides formalization, social interaction is an important factor to be considered in the deliberation of *dp* in various discourse types (cf. Sawyer 2001). However, RGC might have to deal with the semantic bleach of *going* and other similar occurrences in American English that assumes a more grammatical function over time. The original construction that subsumes the progressive verb *going* cannot simultaneously have a separate construction in a non-reductionist model *a* la Croft because the grammatical *going* is of a later development in English grammar.

Other articles in this collection (in simplification) include *Finnish permissive construction* by Jaakko Leino, *Embodied Construction Grammar* by Benjamin K. Bergen and Nancy Chang, *Constructions in Conceptual Semantics* by Urpo Nikanne, and *Constructions in Word Grammar* by Jasper W. Holmes and Richard Hudson. These articles examine different aspects of construction grammars focussing on areas like formalisation, linking rules and dependency relation between words in the constructions.

Construction Grammar is a welcoming development to grammatical studies. The construction grammarians in this volume describe language patterns in a concerted effort albeit different standpoints within a holistic view. Each article offers a variant to the larger schema of construction grammar, which suggests that construction grammar is at the developing stages. This book is well edited and makes a worthy reading for researchers and students alike as fresh ideas on language studies add vibrancy to theoretical linguistics.

*This is an extension of the review to be published in *WORD*.

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