

Some Particularities of Universal Quantification in English

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The goal of this paper is to build on the cognitive grammar analysis of *every* and *each* as proposed by Langacker (2000, 2005), Talmy (2000) and Taylor (2002) in order to further our understanding of linguistic items expressing the logical concept of universal quantification in English. The paper will begin by a brief discussion of what distinguishes *each* and *every* from *all*, which will allow a view of what *each* and *every* have in common, and move on to characterize what distinguishes them from one another. The approach will be based on a wide range of attested usage, as judgements of de-contextualized sequences gravitate to stereotypical scenarios that do not reflect the full potentialities of the two quantifiers.

The distinction between *each* and *every* will be described as that between actual and virtual summation, *each* denoting the actual process of adding members individual by individual to constitute a whole, while *every* sweeps over all the individuals in a set, taking whatever ones are there and leaving none out. Langacker's proposal (2005: 192-193) of an opposition between sequential examination (*each*) vs simultaneous visibility (*every*) will be discussed and shown to be inadequate as regards the notions of 'profiled instance' (for both quantifiers) and 'simultaneity' (for *every*), as well as being based on insufficient data.

The meanings proposed for the two quantifiers will be shown to account for the contrast in their stereotypical compatibility with respect to the adjectives *possible* (*from every/*each possible angle*), *last* (*I want every/*each last one of them*), *single* (*She found every /*each single one of them*), expletives, adverbs like *absolutely*, as well the way they interact with negation and the well-known restriction of *every* to sets of three or more entities. Less frequent non-stereotypical usage will also be examined as a test for the proposed explanation (e.g. cases where *each* occurs in the scope of negation).

Some general methodological conclusions will be drawn, among them the risks of working with de-contextualized self-fabricated examples, and those of working with theoretical models which draw on concepts borrowed from other disciplines. While hypothesis formulation is necessary for scientific progress, the explanations proposed to date for *each* and *every* have not been based on a sufficient observation of usage and are not capable of accounting for all of the uses of these two quantifiers. This highlights the importance of basing usage-based theories on authentic usage.

References

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