

The Mechanism of Thought Configuration (MTC) in Thought Schemas

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The thought schemas this paper looks into are normally known as event schemas. The finite schemas are created for efficient verbal communication of infinite thoughts. The paper mainly investigates three universal laws governing the concept configuration in thought schemas: the relation principle, MTA (Shihai 2012) and conceptual differentiation, and how they determine the formation of thought schemas in English. It gives a new explanation to the English sentence patterns with respect to their origin and argues against such viewpoints as coercion suggested by Golberg (1995) or imposition in cognitive grammar.

1. The relation principle. 1.1 A relation is a bridge linking two participants, one of the most important cognitive goals and a key factor in any linguistic analysis. The relation in a thought schema links its participating concepts and they in themselves are integrated as a concept, with similar nature and behavior to an entity concept, such as prototypical structure, duality, etc.. 1.2 What relation may occur is determined by the nature of the world, but the role in a relation is identified in terms of the relation. 1.3 A dual argument relation is the protogenous relation. The non-dual argument relations are variations deriving from it and they together constitute the finite thought schemas of a language. The formation of them follows certain mechanisms, some of which are discussed in detail in the paper.

2. The formation mechanisms of thought schemas and their sentence patterns. 2.1 Primary MTA (PMTA), giving rise to the protogenous thought schema (PTS). 2.2 Role fading, forming two types of N-V schemas. 2.3 Role promotion from topicalization or conceptualization, producing, for example, instrument as subject or object constructions. 2.4 Secondary MTA (SMTA), which is the mechanism of the prototypical structure of a thought schema and determines whether a concrete thought is applicable to a prototypical schema. 2.5 Concept differentiation (CD), giving rise to differentiated schemas based on the same conceptual frame, e.g. the ditransitive and caused motion constructions from the same transfer schema. SO the caused motion meaning of the caused motion construction of "sneer" is not because of coercion or imposition of the construction, but CD of the concept SNEER. 2.6 Double relation blending. Three- argument thought schemas are blended from two closely related relations which share an argument, so the ditransitive construction is also the result of relation blending.

Nevertheless, a construction, like a building, is always built based on an overall consideration of all the relevant factors. So the argumentation in the paper integrates some insights from existing theories in cognitive linguistics on conceptual core, reference point, construal (Langacker 2008), blending (Fauconnier & Turner 2002) and frame semantics, etc.,

Keywords: MTC; relations; thought schemas; sentence patterns;

References

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