

“My constructions include
viewpoint”:
the genitive and constructional
compositionality

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constructional meaning

- form-meaning mapping
- various levels of generalization
- question: can formal components of a construction contribute individual meanings?

Viewpoint

- visual artifacts
- narrative
- deictic expressions
- gesture and sign language
- metaphor
- stance (epistemic, emotional, ...)
- ...and constructions

One language's creativity is
another's workaday grammar

(Nick Evans)

one person's X is another person's Y

- One person's food is another person's poison
- One person's happy is another person's sad

Dancygier 2009

some X and Y pairs

- loss / gain
- zealot / visionary
- spending / job
- drug / poison
- blather / progress
- heretic / martyr
- propaganda / news

One person's X is another person's Y

- referent not identified in the sentence
- evocation of contrasting frames
- speaker's expression of contrasted evaluative stances
- attributed to unidentified conceptualizers
- hence the generic/proverbial tone of the construction

One person's X is another person's Z

- One person's trash is another's lesson in recycling.
- One person's trash is another person's ...seahorse? (*Washington artist recycles scrap metal in his sculptures*)
- One person's garbage is another's power. (*power provided by methane gas from landfills*)

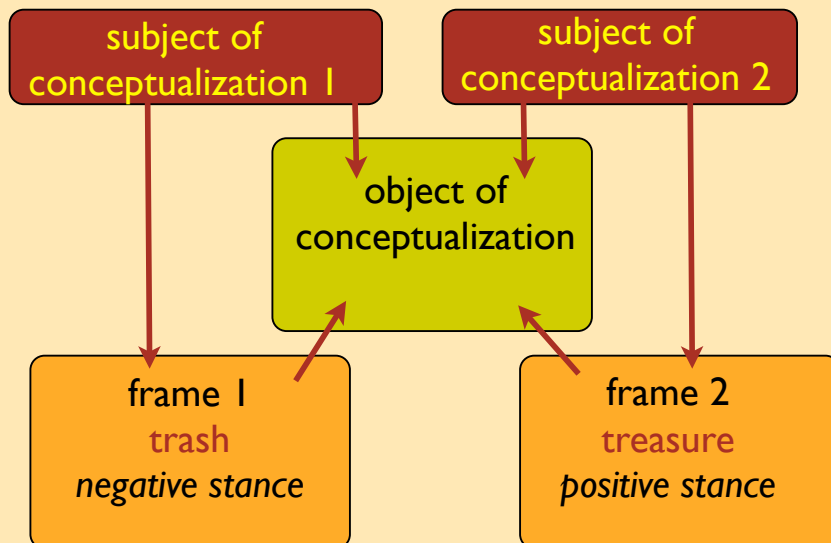
One person's **X** is another person's **Z**

- there is a referent of **Z**
- it is not about contrasting stances
- rather, it profiles one stance and a shift away from that stance
- it is about unexpected productive use of things usually viewed through a negative stance
- the **Z** expression is not a stance evoking noun, but a literal reference to an event or phenomenon

constructional elements

- form-meaning mapping
- but also ...
- genitive (viewpoint marker)
- **X** and **Y** (sources of evaluative frames)
- frame metonymy
- viewpoint outside the frames evoked
- intersubjective construal

One person's trash is another person's treasure



is the viewpoint associated with the construction **as a whole** or with **one specific** aspect of form?

constructional compositionality

- a form may contribute its meaning to many constructions and become a building block in the overall frame of the construction
- the same form may contribute a specific aspect of meaning to more than one construction
- there are several constructions relying in various ways on the genitive as a viewpoint marker and on frame-rich nouns
- because of the dual viewpoint, it is also a construction of intersubjectivity

the genitive

- is the 'viewpoint' meaning available elsewhere?
- *The street was littered with some person's trash / my neighbour's trash*
- other constructions?

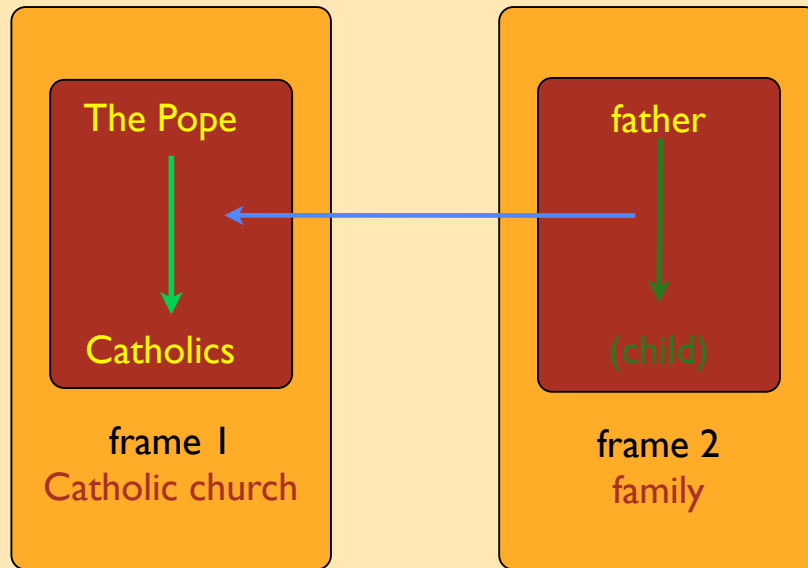
XYZ constructions

- four elements
- three mentioned
- the relation between two is projected as the new relation between the other two

XYZ constructions

- The Pope is the father of all Catholics.
 - X is the Y of Z
- X (Pope), Y (father), Z (Catholics), W (unmentioned [child])
- X is a counterpart of Y; Z is a counterpart of W;
- Y-W relationship is projected into the blend; X-Z relationship thus emerges.

The Pope is the father of all Catholics



X is Z's Y

- Paul is Sally's father
- ??The Pope is all Catholics' father

X is Z's Y

- My Viper is my Sharon Stone. It's the sexiest vehicle on the road.
- ??The Dodge Viper is the Sharon Stone of George (my brother, all drivers). It's the sexiest vehicle on the road.

XYZ versus X is Z's Y

- the Everest of Engineering
- Engineering's Everest

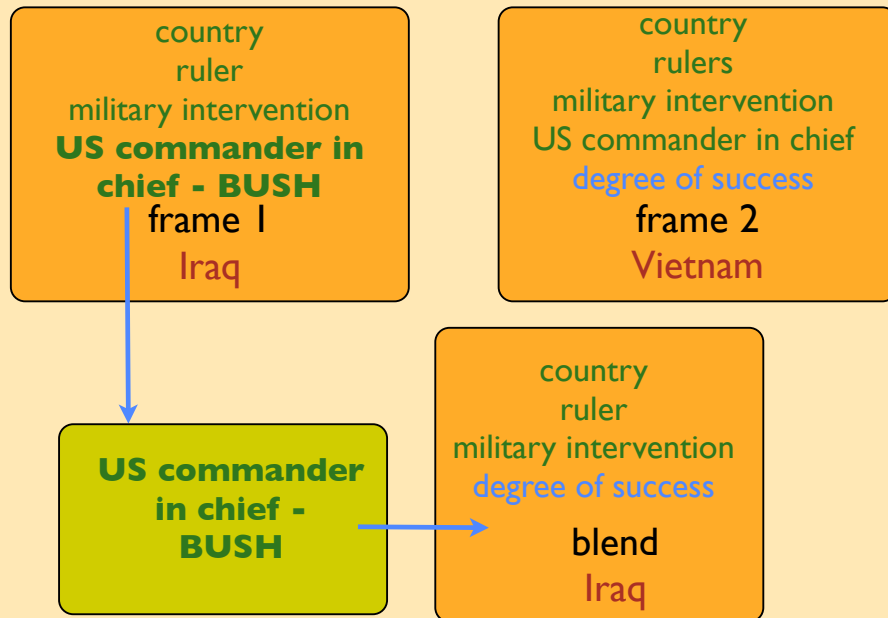
X is Z's Y

- Iraq is **Bush's** Vietnam
- (??Iraq is the Vietnam **of Bush**)

X is Z's Y

- Iraq is Bush's Vietnam.
 - **X is Z's Y**
 - X (Iraq), Y (Vietnam), Z (Bush), W (unmentioned [Johnson])
 - X is a counterpart of Y; Z is a counterpart of W;
 - Y-W relationship (Johnson got into an unpopular war [Vietnam] that he couldn't win or get out of) is projected into the blend; X-Z relationship thus emerges (Bush got into an unpopular war [Iraq] that he won't be able to win or get out of).

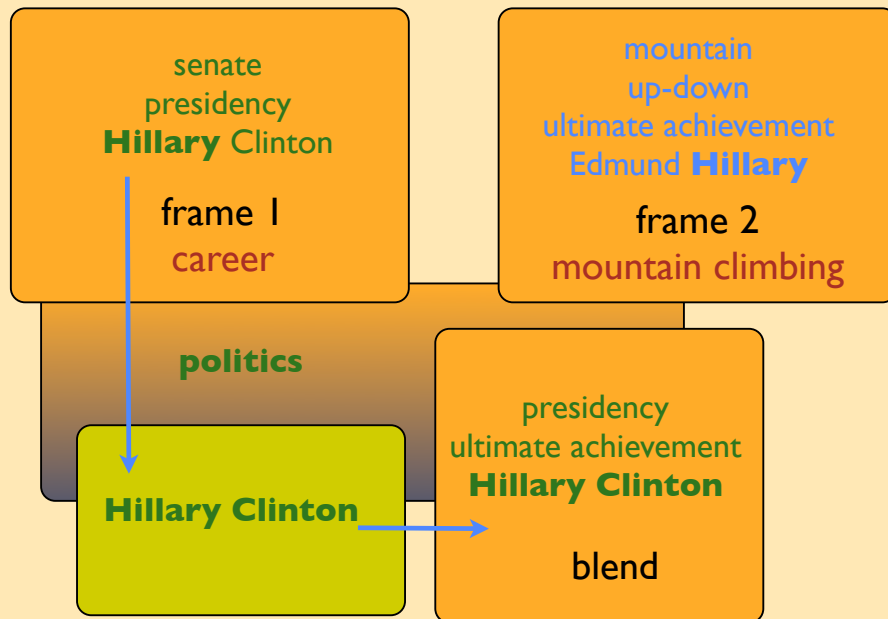
Iraq is Bush's Vietnam



X is Z's Y plus Adj

Even though she has gained the prestigious Senate position, it is believed in certain quarters that this is one **Hillary** who has not yet reached the summit of **her political Everest**.

her political Everest



X's Y includes Z

- My Canada includes Quebec
- Canadian English?

X's Y includes Z

- My CBC includes the CBC Radio Orchestra.
- My Canada includes a racism-free workplace
- My Ontario includes horse racing...does yours?

X's Y includes Z?

- ...my country includes stupidity, and therefore must embrace Quebec.

emergence of a construction

- viewpoint genitive
- Canadian English?
- not like *I'm done my talk* (Hinnell 2012)
- proper names and other frame-rich nouns

proper names and frames

- these constructions manipulate the frames available in discourse
- proper names are carriers of rich frames
- they uniquely identify the referents

Dancygier 2001:1

frame metonymy / manipulation

- multiple framings (*Canada, trash/treasure*)
- partial framing (*Iraq / Vietnam*)
- image schematic frame structure (*Everest*)

constructional meaning and compositionality

- form/meaning pairs at various levels
- independent constructions/recurring forms
- components:
 - frame metonymy
 - viewpoint
 - blending

Questions?