PRIKAZI KNJIGA – BOOK REVIEWS – BUCHBESPRECHUNGEN

Lidija Šaravanja
Čepin

Rybarczyk, Magdalena. 2015. *Demonstratives and possessives with attitude: An intersubjectively-oriented empirical study.* **Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 248 pp. ISBN 978 90 272 6882 2.**

The book under review belongs to the book series *Human Cognitive Processing: Cognitive Foundations of Language Structure and Use* published by John Benjamins Publishing Company. The aim of the series is to combine language, cognition, psycholinguistics and cognitive psychology pursuing the role of semantic and syntactic structure and communicative function of language in human cognitive activities. The book *Demonstratives and Possessives with Attitude* by Magdalena Rybarczyk fits completely into the frame of the series. It provides a well-organized insight into the issue of meaning construction and nominal reference relying on the framework of cognitive linguistics. To be more specific, it is based on the foundations of Roland Langacker's 1987 and 1991 theoretical model of cognitive grammar. Chapter 1 is divided into seven subchapters and ends with a conclusion, as do the other chapters in the book. The preface to the first chapter raises a question about the relation between language and reality. The author does so by presenting a joke which is humorous because of the semantic complexity bilaterally involved in relation between a lexical item and an entity in the real world. The joke is a kind of 'a point of departure for the present book', as the author states, revealing the dynamicity of this relation, which is further discussed later in the text. The aim of the paper, thoroughly explained throughout the first chapter, is to investigate the connection between nominal determiners (focus being placed on demonstratives and possessive determiners) and interpersonal relations in discourse and to determine their role in semantic processes. The author's perspective is an interdisciplinary view of linguistics, psychology, sociology and philosophy gathered around '*shareable* reality mediated through language'. From this perspective the author investigates meaning as a crucial target of linguistic research. Rybarczyk makes two claims about the involvement of all linguistic elements in constructing meaning. Firstly, she supports the conceptual nature of meaning and rejects the idea that some items carry meaning whereas others do not, and consequently denies the re-

spective natural autonomy of syntax and semantics. Both lexicon and grammar are believed to have symbolic structure. Secondly, she claims that words are not semantically strict blocks that build sentences, but rather context dependant, which she illustrates opposing syntagms like *safe beach – safe child* and *red pen – red hair*. The whole chapter strives to explain the importance of linguistic and extra-linguistic context and the encyclopaedic view of meaning in linguistic research. The author provides the often used example of the word 'mother' which, although it might seem as the most common and unambiguous word, consists of a number of cognitive models according to Lakoff (1987); birth, genetic, nurturance etc. This model of Lakoff's is a type of Idealized Cognitive Model (ICM), suitable for the various structuring of human knowledge. However, Rybarczyk identifies its limitations when it comes to some basic domains of human experience like time and space, and discusses them in the following chapters.

When she talks about meaning as a usage based phenomenon, Rybarczyk points out its social nature referring to Thomasello (1996), Sinha (1999) and Croft (2009). To illustrate meaning as a shared phenomenon, she refers to Langacker's (2001) Current Discourse Space model (CDS) and stresses out the dynamic nature of the relation between conceptualization (amounting from discourse), time and context (consisting of a speech event, a speaker, a hearer, their interaction and circumstances). This is the point in which cognitive sciences and social sciences are joined together and language reveals the notion of intersubjectivity. An important and inspiring figure in the author's contemplations about shared knowledge and experience is the psychologist Michael Tomasello. Not only does he consider sociological aspects of context, discourse and communication, but he also takes into account both speaker's and hearer's individual experiences and ability to understand others. The following step in understanding levels of meaning is joining individual and collective elements into "an individuated shared mind", as Zlatev (2008) puts it. Accordingly, 'even though none of us has exactly the same experiences', Rybarczyk claims, 'we are able to imagine the experience of the other and engage with the other in cooperative activities.'

Rybarczyk discusses meaning in cognitive grammar throughout five subchapters named after her main assumptions; that meaning is essential and emergent, that it entails conceptualization, that it is encyclopaedic, usage-based and shared. In the following part she deals with the reference which defines 'refer' as an act of paying shared attention to an item that is being communicated. Introducing non-linguistic communicative means and 'responsiveness of the addressee' the author smoothly directs the attention of the reader towards the main topic of the book. The author agrees with Sinha (1999) that there is no understanding of meaning without inter-
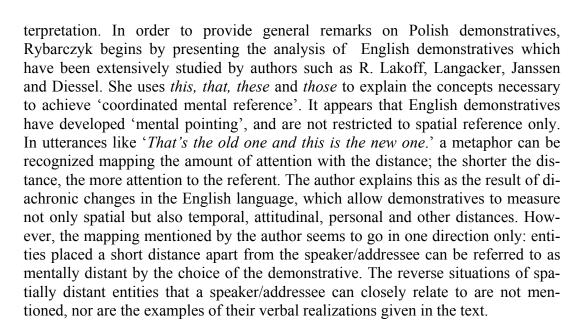
subjectivity of a reference act. All the factors accounted for so far (speech act, interaction between participants, particular circumstances, focused attention, object of conceptualization and intersubjective coordination) can be recognized in Langacker's (1995) framework of 'viewing arrangement' mentioned in subchapter 1.4.. This notion, as well as some others in the book, has a schematic representation followed by a thorough explanation of figures.

The following section about deixis and the grounding predications in English presents a summarized characterization of deictic elements and grounding predications by Langacker (2002) and addresses the grounding sytem of Polish. Introducing grounded elements as a notion, Rybarczyk confirms their deictic nature, but also distinguishes them from other deictic elements. She focuses on three kinds of grounded elements Langacker talks about; grammaticized elements, basic notions like time, reality, identification and grounded entity. There are other kinds, as well, according to Levinson (1983), Lyons (1977) and Fillmore (1975): "discourse deixis", "social deixis" and "empathetic deixis", but the author considers Langacker's analysis the most valuable one for her work and puts emphasis on the third one – grounded entity. This property is considered crucial in 'communicating attitudes without giving them prominence'. Nominal grounding predications in English include elements which are at the centre of the author's attention: the demonstratives, the articles, some quantifiers and prenominal possessives. There are some significant differences between English and Polish regarding grounding system. Unlike in English, grounding does not have a direct reflection on grammatical form in the Polish language. Despite the fact that there are no absolute grounding systems, overt grounding appears to be more common in Polish and covert grounding in English. The thing these two languages have in common, according to the author, is the culture-specific background necessary to recognize alienable from inalienable possession. She uses Heine's (1997) interpretation of inalienable possession and brings it into relation with nominal grounding, i.e. marking and explicitness.

In chapter 2 Rybarczyk relates the choice of nominal expressions to a referent trying to define the role of the construal present in the process of choosing. The chapter is organized in five subchapters including introduction and conclusion. The topics it is concerned with are English and Polish demonstratives and emphatic and attitudinal *ten* 'that'. The author names the subchapters after the topics. The subchapter about *ten* 'that' is further divided into two parts - a part about demonstratives combined with proper names and a part about demonstratives combined with body parts. The introduction of chapter 2 announces the insight into attitudinal or affective nature of Polish demonstratives. Their meaning is loaded with the speaker's emotional stand towards the addressee or the referent, and it has emphatic in-

terpretation. In order to provide general remarks on Polish demonstratives, Rybarczyk begins by presenting the analysis of English demonstratives which have been extensively studied by authors such as R. Lakoff, Langacker, Janssen and Diessel. She uses *this, that, these* and *those* to explain the concepts necessary to achieve 'coordinated mental reference'. It appears that English demonstratives have developed 'mental pointing', and are not restricted to spatial reference only. In utterances like '*That's the old one and this is the new one.*' a metaphor can be recognized mapping the amount of attention with the distance; the shorter the distance, the more attention to the referent. The author explains this as the result of diachronic changes in the English language, which allow demonstratives to measure not only spatial but also temporal, attitudinal, personal and other distances. However, the mapping mentioned by the author seems to go in one direction only: entities placed a short distance apart from the speaker/addressee can be referred to as mentally distant by the choice of the demonstrative. The reverse situations of spatially distant entities that a speaker/addressee can closely relate to are not mentioned, nor are the examples of their verbal realizations given in the text.

The part dealing with Polish demonstratives (2.3) begins with an introductory insight into their prototypical function and evolution. In Polish, demonstratives reveal the referent's number, gender and distance. They have some common features with English demonstratives, but they also have some distinctive ones, like coding distance. Proximal demonstrative, like *to* 'this', can be used both for pointing to the referents that are far away and for those that are near the speaker, whereas distal demonstratives, like *tamten* 'that', primarily indicate distant entities. Some additional language means are necessary to make the distinction and remove ambiguity when it comes to proximal demonstratives. The author provides some possible clues for disambiguation and supports them with Polish examples transcribed into English. The reasons for different behaviour of proximal and distal demonstratives, claims the author, can be found in their processes of grammaticalization, which have reached different stages. Like Heine (1997), she notices the connection between diachronic evolution and synchronic polysemy of certain elements.

The observations about Polish demonstratives are valuable for analysing any language which does not express definiteness using definite article. Polish proximal demonstratives share some features with definite articles and sometimes they are translated into e.g. English as definite articles, but on the other hand they still retain their gestural components, pointing out an intended referent rather than suggesting its uniqueness. This raises the question of the means of expressing definiteness and the results of the ongoing evolution of demonstratives in Polish.

Another feature of demonstratives, also noted by Langacker (1991), is their ability to express certain emotions and attitudes, e.g. annoyance. The author provides situations where demonstratives seem redundant because of the extra linguistic context, but are used nevertheless due to additional motivation. If they were to be left out, the sentence would be deprived of the attitude and it would be considered neutral. A sentence which contains an optional demonstrative is an example of the 'iconic motivation', meaning that it produces more meaning with more form. The author interprets this feature as the result of cognitive processes involved in metaphorical comprehension of distance. Proper names can also be combined with demonstratives in both Polish and English and the conclusions drawn from such syntagms are applicable cross linguistically. According to Lakoff, 'emotional deixis' can contain either discourse deictic or emotional deictic *this*. The former refers to an entity previously mentioned in the discourse, whereas the latter seems to consider inferential relationships rather than the discourse itself. The analysis of the Polish data conducted by Rybarczyk confirms Lakoff's observations of the English system. The following subchapters (2.4.1.1. to 2.4.1.5.), continue to discuss demonstratives used with proper names. They are specifically divided according to the kinds of referents. The reason these collocations are explored the most lies in the fact that they are the most subjectified of all collocations considered in the text. This means that the speaker redirects mental pointing from the objective reality to its subjective emotional interpretation. The idea which threads solidly throughout the text is the interaction of linguistic, social and personal factors present in the dynamic act of interpretation.

After exploring various functions of *ten* 'that' combined with proper names, Rybarczyk concludes chapter 2 with the analysis of demonstratives used with parts of the body. Since the Polish language allows a very high degree of uniqueness when it comes to body parts uttered in a collocation without a demonstrative, adding demonstratives loads the expression with emotional attitude. It is usually a negative emotion, such as disturbance, annoyance or irritation. Even though the author does not mention any positive emotions connected with these collocations, she does not exclude them either. Apart from the emphatic function of *ten* 'that', it can also have anaphoric and verbal pointing function which can, overlapped, strengthen the attitudinal content and weaken the rhetorical power of the uttered collocation, argues Rybarczyk. This issue is further discussed in Chapter 5 and supported by the results of an experiment.

In Chapter 3, Rybarczyk deals with the fluid notion of possession. The chapter is divided into five parts dealing with constructions (focus being on Slavic languages) and with common and distinctive features of demonstratives and possessive pro-

nouns. She acknowledges that the semantic aspect of possession is the most difficult one to comprehend and define linguistically. As the book takes an interest in determiners, internal possessive constructions are being observed and analysed. Using the English example of attributive possession 'John's car', the author defines possessive determiner 'John's' as 'a device for ensuring definite reference'. It is said to be an element with no other communicative goals but to determine *which* car (rather than *whose* car) the speaker is referring to. Quoting Langacker (1993), the author uses the metaphor of "the stars in the nighttime sky" to illustrate how a possessive element (i.e. possessor) serves as the reference point for a less salient entity - possessee. She argues that possessives express viewpoint of a speech participant rather than identifying her/him. The whole chapter is concerned with the impact of the form on the intended viewpoint and consequently on the interpretation of a possessive construal. As the author claims, '…grammar is a reflection of the way we conceptualize the world around us…'. Consequently, demonstratives and possessives create a personal sphere in linguistic environment. They can place an entity on a concrete or abstract location, or establish dominion around a certain speech participant. Several conclusions are made about what can be expressed with demonstratives and possessives respectively. These well-argued assertions based on data analysis can serve as a valuable support for all linguists concerned with the notion of possession and expressing definiteness.

In order to substantiate previously made claims, Chapter 4 presents the results of the case study based on the documentary called "Solidarny 2010" about a plane crash in Poland in 2010. The ninety-minute film contains language spoken by Polish people of different ages and social backgrounds, all talking about the same event. The aim of the study is to investigate the role of demonstratives and possessives in nominal expressions referring to Poland and to the Polish president Lech Kaczyński, who died in the accident. The investigated expressions occur as personal pronouns, descriptive phrases or nominal phrases naming proper names, titles etc. Certain grammatical choice, claims the author, reflects on the message that is being delivered. The choice of the possessive adjective before the noun denoting the president reveals speaker's attitude towards the president, but also towards the hearer/hearers. The choice of *mój* 'my' instead of *nazs* 'our' distances the hearer and bounds the speaker closer with the referent. Analysing proximal demonstrative *ten* 'this' from a functional perspective used to address Poland, Rybarczyk makes conclusions about the way the Polish conceive their country – as inalienable belonging, part of their identity.

Chapter 5 supports the theses from previous chapters with the methodological help of experiments. Three different strategies are used to examine the connection

between syntax and the interpretation loaded with emotional and attitudinal content. The first experiment investigates emotionality scale of rhetorical demonstratives and possessives. Rybarczyk uses "emotion-expressive" and "emotion-inducing" survey, lists the results, explains them and presents them statistically. They confirm that the sentences with demonstratives, unlike sentences without them, have emotional interpretation. The second experiment investigates the connection between special relations and nominal phrases consisting of a demonstrative/possessive and a proper name. It relies on linguistic research on the semantics of metaphor and on socio psychological research on the conceptual structure of distance. Supported by Trope and Liberman's Construal Level Theory (2003), Rybarczyk draws a parallel between spatial and social distance in the area of shared knowledge. However, she considers it a pilot study and is not completely confident about the results. Experiment 3 (Matching for intersubjective coordination) aims at providing empirical support for the assumptions about Polish proximal demonstratives discussed in Chapter 2.

Rybarczyk commits herself to demonstrate the importance and advantages of intersubjective approach to linguistic studies from a cognitive point of view. Exploring Polish demonstrative and possessive determiners used and interpreted in context, she makes a significant contribution to studying language within and beyond syntax and semantics. Providing a rich methodological and theoretical discussion, the book answers many questions, but also raises a number of other issues which stem from the conducted study. It is rich in argumentation and presents interesting data ensuring more comprehensive understanding of the studied Polish language and other Slavic languages as well. As the manifestation of the fact that linguistics welcomes and needs expanding to other disciplines, this book solidly and confidently fits into the John Benjamins' book series. It will undoubtedly serve as reference point for the linguists involved in investigating integration of various branches of linguistics and some other previously mentioned related disciplines within or outside of cognitive paradigm. It is also a valuable source of information for the linguists concerned with expressing determinateness and possession in a Slavic, or some other language group.

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