

In this talk I will propose a two-level model for studying the meaning of the Russian Instrumental case marking (Instr) which presupposes a cognitive and a semantic organization of meaning. Contrary to the long-standing tradition of presenting individual Instr meanings atomistically, I pursue to organize them in a more efficient and psychologically more plausible way. In this model all referents of the Instr noun phrases (NPs), irrespective of their semantic role in the situation, are contiguous with and contingent on the action described by the verb and another referent. The specific fine-grained Instr meanings (such as instrument, means, or unit of measure, among others) are meanings borne out in individual constructions and depend on the meaning of the verb and the lexical semantics of noun referents.

The analysis of the Russian Instr presented in this talk presupposes that a given linguistic unit can activate more than one meaning. It is widely accepted in cognitive models that polysemy is pervasive in all aspects of language use. Polysemy is the association of two or more related meanings expressed in a single linguistic form. For example, Brugman's (1981) study of the English preposition *over* and later analyses by Brugman and Lakoff (1988), Dewell (1994), Kreitzer (1997), and Tyler & Evans (2003) have established that prepositions are highly polysemous. More specifically, they have demonstrated that in each individual instance, the English preposition *over* elicits a different scene: in some instances, it refers to different types of motion.

The examination of the English *over* suggests that while its senses are different in each individual construction, they are still shared in one way or another by other constructions with *over*, and thus can be represented as a structured network of interrelated meanings. Within this semantic network, the meanings of *over* are believed to form a radial category in which some meanings are envisioned as central, or prototypical, while others are argued to have stemmed from the central meanings by various types of links, i.e., semantic extensions. Thus, the meanings of *over* that seem to be unrelated at first glance can in fact be connected to one another in a motivated way.

While classical polysemy refers to lexemes, polysemous effects have been reported in phonology, morphology, and syntax (e.g., Janda 1990, Nikiforidou 1991 on the Genitive case marking (Gen) in Indo-European languages; Verhagen 1992 on passives, Dąbrowska 1997 on the Polish Dative case marking (Dat), *inter alia*). If one embraces the assumption that grammatical categories are as polysemous as lexical units, the next step in the analysis is to determine the nature of the relations among the different meanings of each polysemous category. In general, two principles of organization are possible: the meanings may all share a core meaning, as is proposed, for example in Hjelmslev's (1935) or Jakobson's (1936, 1958), Wierzbicka's (1980) models for the Russian Instr, or meanings may be related on a one-to-one basis, forming a network where A shares some traits with B and B with C, but not necessarily A with C. This network organization is known as Wittgenstein's (1953) family resemblance.

I will demonstrate that different meanings of the Russian Instr can be organized in a cognitively and semantically motivated way as a network with a radial rather than a hierarchical structure. I propose that the Instr *per se* indicates a set of cognitive rather than semantic relations that are perceived to hold among the actual referents, individuals and physical objects, in a situation described by the verb. The Instr signals how these referents are related to each other and to the action in time and space, and in what way they affect each other. These relations are contiguity and contingency. Contiguity implies that two (or more) referents are spatially adjacent and as such, they are simultaneously involved in the action described by the verb; hence the referent of the Instr noun phrase is always contiguous with the action. Contingency means that

between two (or more) referents, the emergence of one referent depends on the intention of the other. Contiguity and contingency may entail a collateral relation, which is defined such as that between the two (or more) contiguous referents, the contingent referent is perceived as accompanying or mediating the action described by the verb. Thus, a referent of the Instr NP, irrespective of its specific semantic role in the situation, is envisioned as cognitively adjacent in space and time to other referents in the situation through its contiguity with and contingency on the action described by the verb. The specific fine-grained meanings (e.g., instrument, means, unit of measure, pathway, among others) are instantiated in individual constructions and hinge on the verb meaning and the lexical semantics of the noun referents. Importantly, the individual meanings of the Instr are related to each other through metaphorical and metonymical extensions.

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