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WHY DO WE *PASS ON* INFORMATION AND *GET ON* WITH OUR LIVES? A COGNITIVE ACCOUNT OF SELECTED VERB-PARTICLE CONSTRUCTIONS

The aim of the paper is to examine verb-particle constructions and the nature of their composition to find out what mechanisms account for the figurative reading of so-called phrasal verbs. By means of the findings of cognitive linguistics, I aim to show that verb-particle expressions can be analyzed on several levels of formation and that they are constructions in their own right, whose idiomaticity lies not only in the way in which the components affect each other's characterizations, but it also results from the quality of the constructional schema which they instantiate. For the purpose of this paper, the discussion will focus on the constructions composed of a verb and the prepositions IN and ON. This will be followed by a context-embedded study of sentences including the verb+ON combination extracted from the articles published in the magazine "Newsweek" (the online version).

INTRODUCTION

The most apparent problem in the study of verb-particle constructions seems to be lack of a systematic description involving the conceptual structure and the mental processes underlying formation of these linguistic units. This requires an insightful analysis of human basic cognitive mechanisms, as well as the motivations for grammatical composition between the two linguistic structures: a verb and a particle/preposition. Thus, in order to find the meaning of a verb-particle construction we need to explore a number of processes which allow for the conceptual and linguistic integration of its components. In search of this, I will employ the research tools proposed by R. Langacker's Cognitive Grammar and A. Goldberg's Construction Grammar, as well as the assumptions of the theory of embodied cognition and the Conceptual Metaphor Theory, for they point to the pre-conceptual and imagistic aspects of grammar in the light of which linguistic constructions reflect universal human manner of conceiving reality.

METHODOLOGY

WHY DO VERBS AND PREPOSITIONS COMBINE?

Language constitutes a distinctive code which a particular community has established to communicate thoughts. In the framework of cognitive linguistics, the structure of language is recognized as *iconic*, so the manner in which language users perceive reality manifests itself in grammatical patterns, such as verb-particle constructions. In other words, the integration of the verbal and the prepositional item in English grammar takes place on the basis of sensations which human beings experience while interacting with the world, and on which they subsequently perform imagistic manipulations. These basic cognitive skills of perception and reasoning allow the language users to construct a scene, i.e., create a particular viewing arrangement of the phenomena they come across. However, this construal is determined not only by the universal experiential patterns, but also by the characteristics of the particular language which tends to impose its dimensions on the manner in which its users understand phenomena. In this perspective, verb-particle constructions should be regarded as a natural conceptual phenomenon embedded in the English linguistic convention rather than an English-specific oddity.

As Langacker (1987) sees it, human knowledge should be considered as encyclopedic. This means that any sharp demarcation lines between domains or categories do not exist. Human cognitive structure is a network of knowledge systems with an infinite number of nodes (vertices) linked by a number of relationships (Langacker 1987:162). A node refers to a conceived entity and it can participate simultaneously in various relationships thus forming matrices at different levels of conceptualization. Each predicate evokes a matrix of relations which constitute its *conceptual base*, and acts as the node shared by the specifications. In other words, the predicate achieves the status of the *profile,* and the specifications in the matrix of the relevant domains make the *immediate scope of predication.*

In Langacker's framework, constructions are symbolic assemblies that are connected in a network of categorizing relationships (an inheritance network). A lexical item (as well as a grammatical element) forms a continuum itself with a multitude of possibilities or radial category with no precise boundary. What is critical for the definition of a grammatical class is profiling:

> What determines an expression's grammatical category is not its overall conceptual content, but the nature of its profile in particular. It stands to reason that the profile should have a determining role in categorization, for it is what an expression designates; the profile is the focus of attention within the content evoked (Langacker 2008: 98).

Thus in the Cognitive Grammar account of language, both verbs and particles/prepositions share the conceptual content, and the difference between them lies in the nature of mental processes involved in construing the scene by the conceptualizer. In the light of the above, the two essential assumptions which, in my view, underpin the study on verb-particle constructions, are as follows:

i) verb-particle constructions emerge in the process of combining two interrelated *conceptual* structures which participate in the construal that underlies verbal lexemes and the other motivating prepositional expressions;
ii) this integration takes place at the very basic level of conceptualization, and involves image-schematic concepts of the *trajector* and *landmark* as entities whose interactive behavior is always assessed with respect to *space*.

IMAGE-SCHEMATIC CONCEPTUALIZATION

The concept of *image schemas* lies at the core of cognitive linguistic research on mental operations and processes governing cognition. The assumption holds that human beings perceive their body as a bounded *three-dimensional container* with an in-out spatial orientation and the ability to move. These body-related properties constitute the pre-conceptual schematic patterns that enable us to conceptualize the world and to make sense of our experiences. In brief, our conceptualization of both physical and abstract concepts is assumed to be rooted in our bodily experience with the world, i.e., it is *embodied*. Our anthropocentric nature tells us to impose boundaries on the external world, and conceptualize entities in terms of three-dimensional objects located in space.

The pervasive FROM-TO schema, for example, is a simple configuration consisting of a source point element, terminal point element and a path between them, and can be graphically presented as in Fig. 1:

Figure 1

This highly abstract pattern may represent various events such as throwing an object to a person, walking from place to place, or an act of giving. The parts within the schema pertain to entities such as people, events or goals, whereas the relations may include causation, part-whole patterns or relative locations (Johnson 1987: 28).

On the other hand, the CONTAINER schema represents our basic conception of *spatiality*. The schema is conceived as a structured entity having an inside, a boundary, and an outside – parts which are meaningful only with reference

to the whole. The container image schema is by nature conceptual, though it can be instantiated physically, i.e., it can be projected as either abstract or physical regions in space, such as visual fields (a football pitch, a lake) or physical objects (a box, a room). The perspective of spatial boundedness drives us to recognize objects as capable of being *in*, *outside* or *within* another object. Expressions such as *to back out of an agreement*, *to weasel out of a contract* are metaphorical projections, whereby social agreements or obligations are treated as bounded entities located in physical space. Moreover, the boundary of the container can be mentally enlarged, narrowed or distorted. For example, to refer to a butterfly flying in the garden, we employ our imagistic capabilities to conceptualize the garden as a three-dimensional container, with the interior extending into the air. We perceive the butterfly as an entity located inside the container, i.e., as a figure (*trajector*) observed in reference to the garden (*landmark*) (Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 31).

Another ubiquitous experiential dimension is that of forceful interaction (Fig. 2).

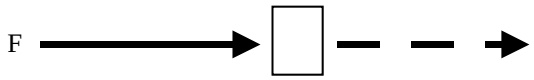

Figure 2

The force gestalt pervades our system of meaning, expression and communication, though the schema is pre-conceptual and non-analyzable in terms of logic. Our daily existence abounds in forceful causal acts which easily escape our notice, like negotiating *gravity* or *breathing* (Johnson 1987: 43-44). According to Langacker (1990: 24), these *force-dynamic* experiences derive from the archetypal relationship between two participants (role archetypes): *an agent* (volitionally performing a physical action, exerting force) and *a patient* (one affected by the force). With the phenomenon of *conceptual archetypes* Langacker points to the universal properties of verbs. The physical action in which the two participants are engaged involves a form of *energy transmission*, which belongs to the schematic characterization of verbs. For example, the verb *pass* in *I passed the ball to Amy*, incorporates the archetypal roles of agent and patient involved in the thematic process of *transfer*. If the thematic process is instantiated by physical motion, it represents the prototypical semantic value of transfer. Physical transfer may also be conceptually extended to non-physical domains of perception, thought and emotion, as in the expressions: *pass (on) knowledge to students* or *pass positive energy onto others*.

The FROM-TO schema and the forceful interaction pattern belong to the generic human experiences which underlie the SOURCE-PATH-GOAL schema – an image-schematic structure sanctioning lower-level schemas, such as that

of *transfer*, instantiated by a huge number of linguistic units, for example, *give* or *pass*. To use Langacker's (1987) terminology, in the case of *give* and *pass*, the schematic act of transferring an entity from the source point to the terminal point makes up the coarse-grained (most schematic) representation of the conceptions of giving and passing objects. The schema then becomes elaborated by fine-grained (specific) instantiations in the form of the lexemes *give* and *pass*. These may be further extended metaphorically or transformed to fit a particular meaning in a number of contexts.

METAPHORICAL TRANSFER AND VERB-PARTICLE CONSTRUCTIONS

Lakoff (1993) introduced The Event Structure Metaphor to illustrate how some source domains apply to a number of targets. EVENT as a generic-level category induces a hierarchy of such mappings as: STATES ARE LOCATIONS - CHANGES ARE MOVEMENTS - CAUSES ARE FORCES - ACTIONS ARE SELF-PROPELLED MOVEMENTS - PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS - MEANS ARE PATHS - DIFFICULTIES ARE IMPEDIMENTS TO MOTION etc. The Event Structure Metaphor is evoked by way of elaboration of the image-schematic structure pertaining to the conception of process, i.e., the SOURCE-PATH-GOAL schema, which can be further equipped with the causation/forceful interaction component. The ubiquitous LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor, for example, emerges from our cultural assumption that life is a "purposeful long-term activity with self-propelled movements along a path". The schema sanctioning the LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor allows for a number of extensions from the domain of JOURNEY, which in turn map on other domains yielding entailments reaching beyond the initial source domain. The newly arisen metaphors do not necessarily contain all the parts constituting the JOURNEY gestalt structure. Via the part-whole metonymy, only the selected elements take part in the process of successive metaphorical extensions, leaving the unrelated properties ignored.

The transfer schema may underlie a number of metaphors pertaining to abstract acts of agent-patient interaction. The outcome of this mechanism are for instance verb-particle expressions which seem semantically unrelated, but still share the domain matrix generated by the transfer schema (*take in*, *pass on*, *give out*, *cast away* etc.). The polysemy of verb-particle constructions may be sought in the interaction of metonymy and metaphor and their image-schematic origin. The following sentences display gradually further metaphorical extensions of the phrasal verb *take in* elaborating the transfer schema:

(1) If a child with flulike symptoms has trouble breathing, appears blue, can't stay hydrated (due to vomiting or inability to **take in** fluids) is less responsive than normal, or relapses

after a few days of seeming to improve, take her to a doctor, says Dr. Nathan Litman, a pediatric infectious-diseases specialist at Montefiore Medical Center in New York City (Dailey, "Newsweek Blog", posted November 04, 2009).

(2) And lastly, one of the most frequently mentioned stumbling blocks would be the fact that the United States itself has not let anyone in from Guantánamo. So you often get people saying, "Well why don't you **take in** people first?" (Ephron 2008).

(3) In my own case I find it a problem to **take in** enough to pay expenses and there is nothing left for investment (Roth 2008).

(4) I'm happy to **take in** the night with him every few weeks, but still a little uncomfortable belting out "Sweet Caroline" to a bar full of people, and tickled pink when I'm back home with my girlfriend – soon to be wife (Dokoupil 2008).

In sentence (1) *take in* denotes a physical process of transferring a substance into the body. Hence, the expression elaborates most elements of the transfer schema, i.e., it constitutes a fine-grained conceptualization with respect to the schema, which can be sketched as:

AGENT (child) → THEME (fluid) → CONTAINER (body)

Both the agent and the theme are instantiated as physical entities, and they undergo the actual forceful interaction resulting in a change of location on the part of the theme. In (2), the thematic process remains 'physical', as well as it results in a change of location. However, the element of force is ignored (or at least minimized) while causation is expressed in terms of the ACCEPTING IS TAKING metaphor. In (3) the transfer schema is exploited only in terms of family resemblance, and neither of the participants is represented by concrete objects. Forceful interaction between the agent and the theme remains unprofiled, and the agent's role is narrowed to that of the recipient rather than the source of force. The theme is not specified and it may be instantiated by a variety of possible concepts (though restricted by the contextual frame). Thus, the properties of the theme are given little prominence. As a result, we achieve a metaphorical reading of *take in* with a much more figurative flavor than that in (2). In comparison to this, *take in* in (4) represents a further metaphorical extension from the prototypical transfer, for it involves an interaction between the MIND IS A CONTAINER and the UNDERSTANDING IS TAKING metaphors. In this construal, however, the conceptualizer employs metonymy and ignores the most prominent entities in the transfer domain: forceful interaction and change of location. With respect to the SOURCE-PATH-GOAL schema, the reading of *take in* in (4) seems to be achieved mostly through metaphorical manipulation performed on the components of SOURCE and – to some extent – motion along a path.

A COGNITIVE ACCOUNT OF PREPOSITIONS

In this paper I shall employ Langacker's (1987) position, according to which particles and prepositions differ in terms of explicitness of their landmarks, which means that they do not designate distinct grammatical categories, but represent different construals within a given figure/ground organization. Langacker rejects the distinction between the particle and preposition classes and treats particles as prepositions used in grammatical constructions with an unelaborated/a fully schematic landmark.

In general terms, a preposition is conceptually understood as a particular schematic relation of elements in the conceptual structure derived from the way we experience the objective physical three-dimensional space. The essential role in the conceptualization of the relation designated by the prepositions plays the characterization of the landmark which is prototypically designated by a nominal entity denoting a concrete physical object or its constitutive part:

> We define a preposition as a symbolic expression categorized semantically as an atemporal relation, whose landmark is commonly elaborated by an overt nominal that directly follows it (Langacker 1987: 234).

In search of the categorial prototypes of prepositions, Hawkins (1993) makes use of Leech's (1969) criteria of dimensionality of spatial configurations: [3DIME], [2DIME] and [1DIME], which are referred to as MEDIUM, SURFACE and CHANNEL, respectively. He adds the notion of NODE as an "integral, internally unanalyzed whole" (Hawkins 1993: 337). Thus, conditions defining the categorial prototype of the preposition are found in the configurational properties of the trajector (TR) and the landmark (LM). The configurations of TR involve:

a. NODE
b. 1D expanse of PATH
c. 2D expanse of AREA
d. 3D expanse of SPACE.

Similarly, the configuration of LM may take the form of:

a. NODE
b. CHANNEL (1D, pertaining to the relational potential of passage, conveyance, transmission, etc.)
c. SURFACE (2D, with the relational potential of contact, support, resistance, contiguity, etc.)
d. MEDIUM (3D, with the relational potential of enclosure, inclusion, containment, etc.).

Prepositions in their non-prototypical senses emerge by way of invariant mappings from image-schematic domains onto abstract domains (such as the temporal domain, perceptual domain, the domains of emotions or social struc-

ture), and reveal fundamental relationships between the grammar of a language and sensory perception. The semantic structure is dynamic by nature, capable of continuous development and extension, and polisemy of a preposition (like other linguistic units) consists in multiple diverse semantic operations performed on the central sense of the unit, such as elaboration, metaphor, metonymy, transformation, contextual inference.

An interesting classification of prepositions is offered by Dirven (1993). In his taxonomy prepositions are organized into sets in terms of their spatial positions:

a) basic space prepositions: *at*, *on*, *in*
b) proximity prepositions: *by*, *with*
c) path prepositions: *through*, *about*
d) vertical prepositions: *under*, *over*
e) separation/source prepositions: *from*, *off*, *out of*.

Not unlike Langacker (1987), Dirven points out that prepositions form a radial network of extensions. Moreover, he recognizes AT, ON and IN as the most productive prepositions which have the potential of extension into all the global abstract domains:

a) TIME (*at five o'clock*, *on Tuesday*, *in summer*)
b) STATE (*at work*, *on holiday*, *in love*)
c) AREA (*good at math*, *expert on history*, *be in computers*)
d) MEANS/MANNER, *at full speed*, *on foot*, *dressed in black*)
e) CIRCUMSTANCE (*at these words*, *on advice*, *in order to be promoted*)
f) REASON/CAUSE (*laugh at somebody*, *story based on facts*, *fortunate in that she has friends*).

Let us focus on the basic space preposition ON. In Dirven's perspective, ON (as in *on the ground*) denotes physical contact between TR and LM and thus requires perceiving LM as 1D space (a line) or 2D space (a surface). As a consequence, when extended to abstract domains, the preposition ON "presupposes longer and more profound contact with, preferably, a mental area" (Dirven 1993: 88). This is what, according to Dirven, accounts for the verb+on combinations such as *concentrate on something*, *lecture on something* or *ponder on something*. By comparison, in the case of the CIRCUMSTANCE domain, ON denotes a bordering action, i.e., it signals contact with a follow-up action (such as *on arrival*) or it indicates a static circumstance, where one situation is conditionally supported by some other fact (e.g., *on condition that...*).

In another study on prepositions, Przybylska (2002), the semantic value of ON is discussed in a two-way fashion. The default meaning of the [ON+loc LM] schema is viewed as follows: TR is found in contact with the outer region of LM, particularly its surface, and is applying pressure to LM by the force of gravity, for example:

on the pavement (LM as line)
on my hands (LM as three-dimensional object, focus on the surface)
dog on the leash (TR is a mobile object, LM is an object linking TR with another object which controls the range of movement of TR)

In turn, the [ON+acc LM] schema includes the element of "motion along a path", which ends at the outer region of LM, for example:

throw a book on the ground (TR moves along the path to the goal, LM is the outer region/ surface of LM)

With the non-spatial uses of ON, the concept of gravitational force is extended metaphorically, yielding such expressions as:

He imposed his will on me.
I called on the chairman (*formally invited*).

In the former sentence, TR of ON (*his will*) is conceived as applying force, while LM of ON (*I*) is experiencing force from TR. In the latter, TR moves along the path oriented towards the goal and imposes some (mental) force on LM (*the chairman*). As a result, in this context, the chairman may feel obliged to respond to the invitation.

Let us study some examples where the spatial-relations concept ON operates in verb-particle constructions *look on* and *take on*:

(5) One day there will be no more barriers to breach, no more "firsts" for society's former outsiders to claim. But that day has not yet come. So as Sonia Sotomayor seeks to become America's first Latina Supreme Court justice, many of her supporters **look on** with a mixture of gratitude and disbelief (Cose 2009).

(6) And another former associate of Khamenei says the ailing cleric's fixation on his utopian goal has given him a kind of tunnel vision, so that at times he can be oblivious to the present-day realities of his country and the burgeoning aspirations of a population that is young, educated and increasingly urban. They are, in fact, the kind of people who **look on** Ahmadinejad as an embarrassment, or worse, a provocateur who could drag the country into needless, costly confrontations with the rest of the world (Dickey 2009).

In (5) and (6), the landmark of ON metonymically refers to the particular viewpoint of the characters of the article (Sonia Sotomayor/Ahmadinejad). The contextual frame of ON is found in the mental AREA and thus it gives *look on* the metaphorical reading of "consider in a particular way" (specified by the complement phrase in each of the sentences). The preposition ON denotes contact only with the surface or the outer region of the medium. Therefore we may expect that one who *looks on* somebody/something is not much involved in the situation, he/she does not put effort in investigating it or is unable to do so.

On the other hand, the "surface" sense of ON may be incorporated in a causal act such as exemplified below:

(7) The Pakistani Army is composed almost entirely of Punjabis, so now you're asking them to **take on** their brothers and their cousins. That's a much more risky proposition (Bast 2009).

(8) So I hope Michelle comes to see Copenhagen as a starting point. If she steps out again, she'll certainly risk controversy and maybe even failure. But if she doesn't use this chance to **take on** the issues that really matter, that's just a failure of another kind (Samuels 2009).

(9) Employees who left early and came in late after the salary reduction aren't strong candidates for a raise. Those who **took on** extra responsibility without complaining and can point to their achievements over the past several months have a reason to ask for more money (Weiss 2009).

Again, the usage of the verb+on construction in the above sentences has a number of conceptual motivations. In their schematic meaning, the agent causes an entity to move towards the goal along a path directed by ON. This schema further undergoes metaphorical extension. Each of the elaborated trajectors – the Pakistani Army, Michelle Obama, employees – is conceived as the medium but, via metonymy, the focal attention is given only to the upper surface of the medium. The landmark of TAKE is represented by "brothers and cousins", "issues that matter", and "extra responsibility" respectively. This is all because our embodied outlook on the world forces us to see people, problems or obligations as bounded objects. These objects, when put on the surface, apply on it a certain amount of pressure, proportionally to their weight/importance/required effort etc. Simultaneously, we may observe that the verb *take* becomes extended metaphorically by means of the ACCEPTING IS TAKING metaphor.

CONSTRUCTION GRAMMAR

The fundamental assumption shared by all construction grammar models is that within linguistic knowledge there is a large number of non-productive grammatical constructions, many of which are idiosyncratic and highly idiomatic. The present paper incorporates two powerful construction-oriented frameworks, i.e., the Construction Grammar (Goldberg 1995) and Cognitive Grammar (Langacker 1987), whose common analytical standpoint is that the primary object of description are not rules, but constructions, which need to be studied in a non-derivational (or monostratal) framework. Lexicon and grammar thus form a continuum of constructions, i.e., form-meaning pairings, which are arranged in a network of inheritance/categorizing relationships.

In Goldberg's Construction Grammar paradigm, a construction is recognized when one or more of its properties are not strictly predictable from knowl-

edge of other constructions in the language (Goldberg 1995: 4). In fact, constructions possess unique meanings in their own right. Facets of the schematic regularities are imposed on instantiating them expressions, as a result of which the expressions take on a unique construction-specific reading. Goldberg shows how a sentence can inherit an aspect of meaning from the construction it instantiates with an exemplary sentence *Sam sneezed the napkin off the table*, where the verb *sneeze*, by default intransitive, inherits the quality of transitivity immanent in the particular construction. In other words, the construction affects the actual interpretation of the verb and may impose on it the construction-specific characterizations, such as:

> X ACTS
> X ACTS ON Y
> X DIRECTS ACTION AT Y
> X CAUSES Y TO UNDERGO A CHANGE OF STATE (Goldberg 1995: 20).

With respect to those characterizations, Goldberg introduces the most powerful constructions pertaining to English argument structure:

> 1. DITRANSITIVE (X causes Y to receive Z) further instantiated by Subj V Obj Obj2, as in *Pat faxed Bill the letter*.
> 2. CAUSED MOTION (X causes Y to move Z) further instantiated by Subj V Obj Obl, as in *Pat sneezed the napkin off the table*.
> 3. RESULTATIVE (X causes Y to become Z) further instantiated by Subj V Obj Xcomp, as in *She kissed him unconscious*.
> 4. INTRANSITIVE MOTION (X moves Y) – Subj V Obl – *The fly buzzed into the room*.
> 5. CONATIVE (X directs action at Y) – subj V Obl at – *Sam kicked at Bill*. (Goldberg 1995: 3-4)

It needs to be emphasized that in Goldberg's view, the symbolic nature of a form-meaning pairing consists in the link between a semantic and syntactic element which constitutes a construction. To Langacker (1987, 1990, 1999, 2005, 2008), however, the symbolic link pertains to the pairing between the semantic structure (pole) and the phonological structure (pole), where the form pertains to the phonological structure, not grammar per se. Grammar is thus inherently symbolic, for it incorporates semantic and phonological structures, as well as their configurations (Fig. 3). In other words, grammar is drawn from schematized configurations of semantic and phonological elements residing in two independent domains of human experience, i.e., conceptualization and sounds (Langacker 2005: 106), which as such have become entrenched and conventionalized. In this perspective, constructions are *assemblies of symbolic structures* and range from fully schematic to fully specific in terms of the semantic content, and are formed by way of composition, i.e., integration of the constituent symbolic units (Langacker 2005: 102).

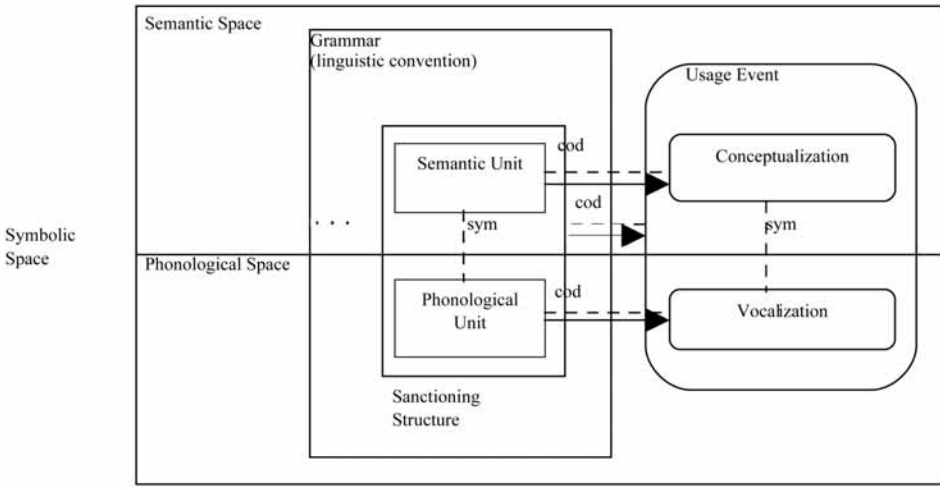

Figure 3

TRANSFER AS THE CONCEPTUAL BASIS FOR THE CAUSED-MOTION CONSTRUCTION

Transfer of an entity from one person to another is a basic human experience, and hence it underlies the prototypical verb argument constructions, where verbs perform participant roles, and constructions – argument roles. As Goldberg (1995) argues, the Caused-Motion Construction is a metaphorical extension from CAUSAL EVENTS ARE PHYSICAL TRANSFER, where to cause an outcome equals to transfer the outcome. The prototypical structure of the Caused-Motion Construction involves manipulative causation and actual movement performed by the participant roles of CAUSE, THEME and GOAL, whose characteristics are imposed on the argument to form the "X causes Y to move (towards) Z" pattern. For example, in *Fred stuffed the papers in the envelope* neither the verb nor the preposition, when interpreted individually, implies motion or causation. Similarly, motion is not an inherent feature of *laugh*, but when incorporated in the Caused-Motion Construction the verb takes on the additional sense of causal force: *They laughed the poor guy out of the auditorium*. When organized into a linguistic unit, the sentence necessarily instantiates the caused-motion pattern X CAUSES Y TO MOVE Z, with Z representing the path of motion and expressed by a preposition. At the syntactic level the schema is prototypically expressed as [SUBJ [V OBJ OBL]], where the oblique is realized by a prepositional phrase (PP) (Fig.4).

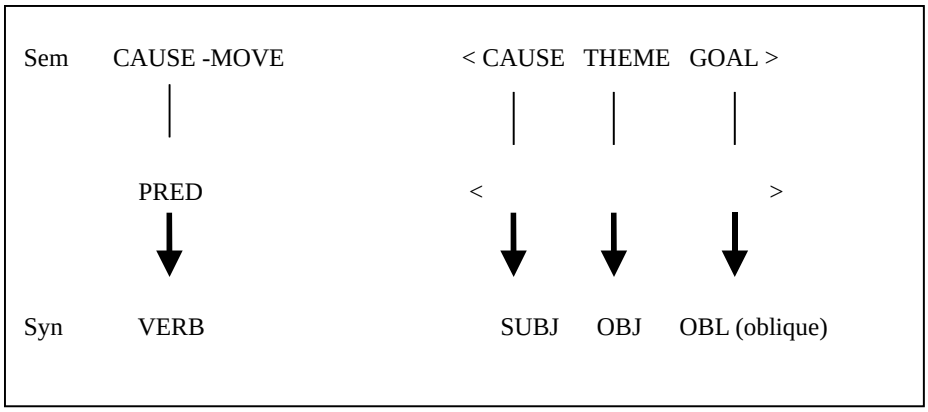

Figure 4

In prototypical instances the preposition is directional (*towards, into*), but in other cases the Caused-Motion Construction imposes the directional interpretation on the locational preposition as "the construction is able to coerce the locative term into a directional reading" (Goldberg 1995: 159). If we refer the Caused-Motion Construction to the fundamental SOURCE-PATH-GOAL schema, we may assume that location prepositions (in, into) profile the termination point (goal), while directional prepositions (towards, through) designate the path of motion. Both types of the construal are inherent in the processual transfer schema, thus directional prepositions required by the Caused-Motion Construction can be easily replaced by those of spatial location, as in (10). Fig. 5 displays the process of elaboration of the Caused-Motion Construction by sentence (10):

(10) He *took* us all *in* (with his words).

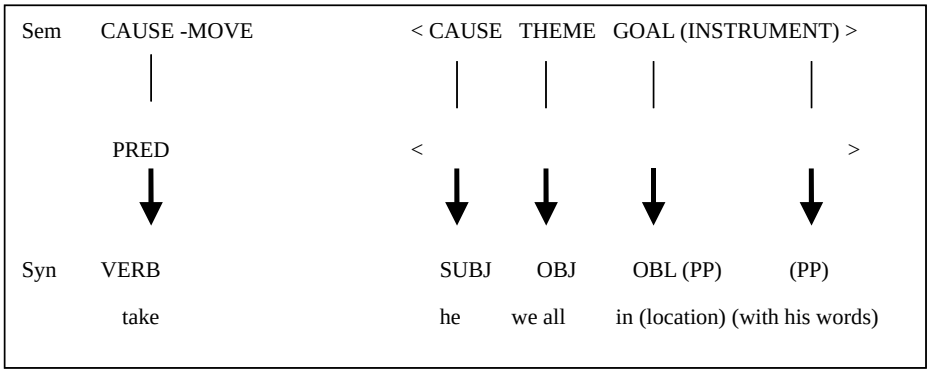

Figure 5

The participants within the Caused-Motion Construction, though, do not always retain salience, which in turn gives rise to other entailments inside the radial category spawned by the Caused-Motion schema. The Intransitive Motion Construction resides in the Caused-Motion Construction for it consists of a non-stative verb and a directional phrase (oblique), and the construction adds motion interpretation to the verb which lexically does not code motion (Fig. 6 shows how the Intransitive Motion Construction refers to the Caused-Motion Construction).

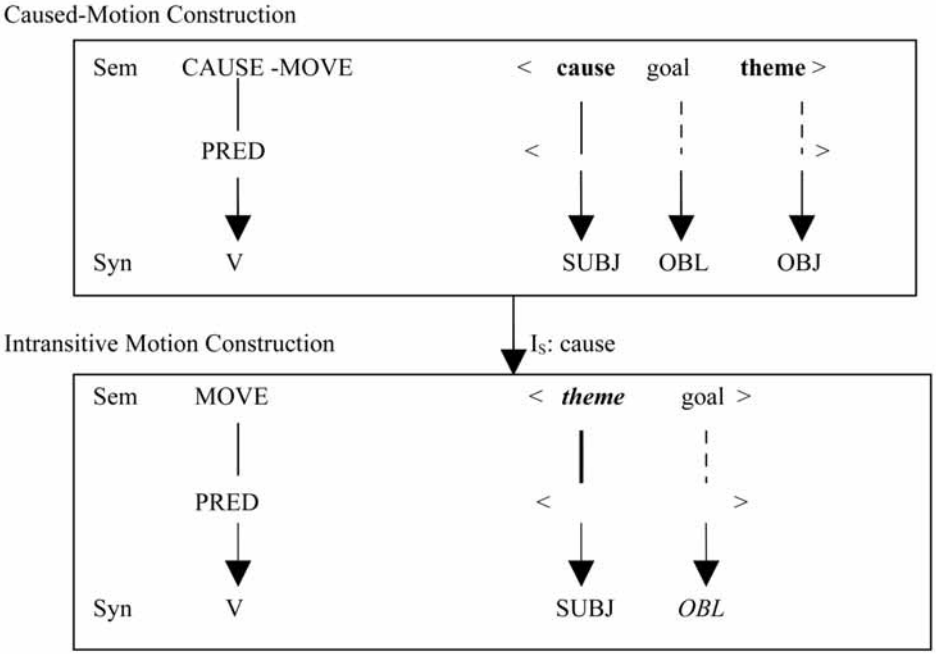

Figure 6

In this respect, the two constructions consist of the same argument participants of THEME and GOAL, but in the Intransitive Motion Construction the CAUSE participant is ignored, yielding the "X moves (towards) Y" pattern (e.g., *The bottle floated into the cave*.) (Goldberg 1995: 160). In the case of verb-particle constructions, as I see it, another property of the Intransitive-Motion Construction is that it may deprive the transitive verbal component of its transitiveness, as a result of which the verb does not take on a direct object, but it is combined with a preposition indicating the Goal of motion:

(11) Telescopes and cameras can be focused by changing the distance between two or more lenses, but spectacles have only one lens for each eye. Focusing them would mean changing their shape – making them bulge in the middle or flatten out. After a few months of tinkering, however, Silver **hit on** a solution: fill a thin plastic sack with clear silicon oil to form a lens, and use a syringe to adjust the level of fluid (Underhill 2009).

(12) No other regional head of state had visited Iraq before Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad paid a call last year. (An Iraqi official says American diplomats tried to discourage the trip but finally **gave in** and facilitated Ahmadinejad's travel from Baghdad airport to the Green Zone.) (Kaplow 2009).

In (11) the verb *hit*, otherwise transitive, is used to denote a metaphorical act of intransitive motion resulting in some location with respect to the goal. The casual force is not specified, because by performing the act of hitting, the agent (Subj) is simultaneously the Theme of motion, rather than the Cause. Similarly, *give* prototypically designates an act of transfer and therefore requires a recipient instantiated by a NP that will follow the verb. In (12), the Intransitive-Motion Construction instantiated by "(they) [finally] *gave in*" imposes on the verb an intransitive quality, and motion incorporated in the transfer schema is completed with the locative position indicated by the preposition.

To sum up, constructions are essential to the description of language for their basic argument structure involves dynamic scenes such as experientially grounded gestalts, someone causing something to move or change state, someone transferring something to someone else, something moving (Goldberg 1995). This means that constructions elaborate universal image schemas and are language-specific structures reflecting basic cognitive abilities to perceive "the archetypal conception of an asymmetrical energetic interaction, specifically an event in which an agent does something to a patient" (Langacker 1999: 10).

A CASE STUDY. THE VERB+ON CONSTRUCTION

The sentences below have been extracted from the articles published in the magazine "Newsweek" (the online edition). They have been studied with the use of the research tools discussed in the present paper. Let us begin with a few examples of the contextual application of the construction *pass on*:

(1) It remains an enduring mystery to me why my health-care costs rise in the high double digits each year while inflation putters around 2 percent. I only wish I had the market power to force such hikes on my customers. Instead, it is a cost we simply eat, unable to **pass on**, except to employees (Kelly 2009).

(2) There have been hints from laboratory experiments and epidemiological studies that epigenetic changes in one generation – caused, for example, by smoking or diet – can be **passed on** to children and even grandchildren. (Hall 2009).

(3) Lead researcher Harriet MacMillan, a psychiatrist and pediatrician at McMaster University in Canada, and her colleagues studied 6,743 women ages 18 to 64 who had gone to ERs, family-practice offices, obstetrics and gynecology clinics, and other health-care locations. About half completed a domestic-violence screening questionnaire; information about women who reported abuse was **passed on** to their physicians. (Kantrowitz / Wingert 2009).

As discussed in the previous parts of the presentation, ON denotes coincidence between the TR and the 1D or 2D LM, where coincidence means physical contact between TR and LM, which then can become extended to abstract domains. As Dirven observed, ON tends to "presuppose a longer and profound contact with a mental area". Consequently, the above uses of *pass on* instantiate image schematic motion along a 1D path or 2D surface, whose prototypical meaning is that of a physical act of moving an object (such as a book) from one side to the other side of a surface (such as a table top). The verb *pass* naturally attracts the preposition *on*, because in their semantic base both of the items incorporate the feature of "close contact with a surface" with "no gap between the entities". Additionally, such a profound contact with a surface involves pressure imposed on it by the object due to force of gravity, the experience of which may become metaphorically extended to an abstract domain such as psychological pressure. The preposition intensifies the sensation of motion along a path, whose final point is defined by the preposition *to*.

In terms of grammatical composition, *pass on* in sentences (1-3) instantiates the Caused-Motion argument structure, whereby X causes Y to move Z. The verb *pass* represents the CAUSE-MOVE predicate instantiating a schematic act of transfer. The SUBJECT (CAUSER/X) remains unelaborated, though its trajector requires a nominal, which is in fact either mentioned or suggested in the discourse:

(*we*) *pass a cost on to employees*
(*people*) *pass epigenetic changes on to children*
(*researchers*) *pass information* (…) *on to their physicians*

The THEME (Y) is syntactically embedded in the object in the form of *a cost*, *epigenetic changes*, *information (…)*. The oblique instantiating the GOAL (Z) may be elaborated by either a directional or locational prepositional phrase. The locational sense of *on* used in the construction shares the processual character with the verb, and it now implies motion along a path, which must be directed towards some goal as required by the construction structure. Consequently, the preposition *to* is added to complete the act of transfer and terminate the motion:

VERB → pass
SUBJ → nominal ([unelaborated]/person) (X)
THEME → (cost/epigenetic changes/information) (Y)
OBL → on (direction) to …. (goal) (Z)

Drawing on Goldberg's (1995) graphic figures, the construction is structured as shown in Fig. A:

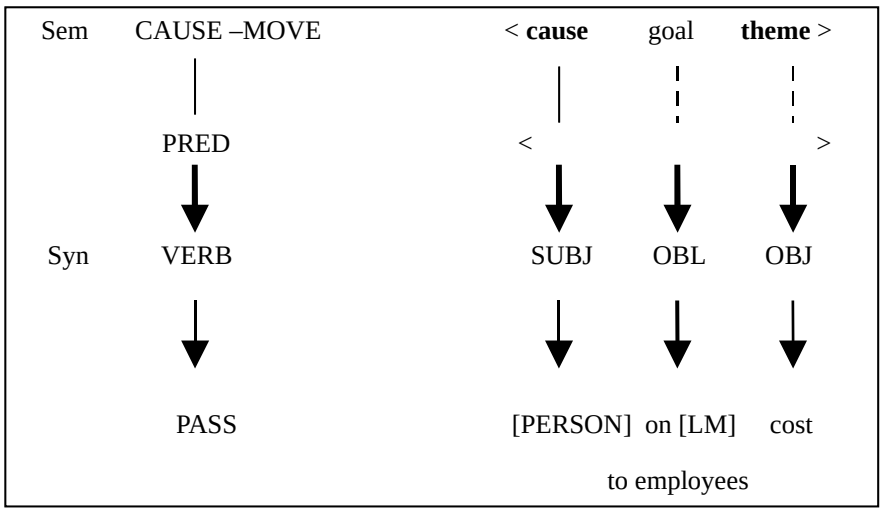

Figure A

Causation in the PASS+ON structure is its prominent aspect, whereas the Theme reveals a great amount of passivity. Otherwise, the linguistic unit instantiates the Intransitive-Motion Construction, for *pass on* denotes an act of volitional motion performed by the Theme in some direction:

(4) Warren Buffett – who **passed on** making his own bid for the company – gives Dimon credit for making a gut decision based on limited information (McDonald 2009).

(5) You didn't talk to Zuckerberg for the book, though. Why do you think he **passed on** an interview? (Soller 2009).

This is because an interview, as well as an act of making a bid are found in the CIRCUMSTANCE domain, and they involve contact with a mental area, all of which justifies the *pass+on* combination.

The Caused-Motion Construction sanctions many instances of combination formed of a transitive non-stative verb and the preposition *on*. Let us study the following example:

(6) The problem with the opposing side is you think protecting steel will create jobs in the steel industry. But you are opening up a whole series of additional effects. One, of course, is that downstream industries typically become more uncompetitive. When President Bush **put on** steel tariffs, the effect was to price out a whole lot of steel-using industries, including autos. There was a famous study that about 200,000 jobs may have been lost (Kantor 2009).

Here, *President Bush* stands for the CAUSER→Subj, whereas the THEME→Obj is specified by *steel tariffs*. The PATH-GOAL→Obl is instantiated as *on* [*landmark*], which indicates the motion towards a goal, while the preposition

takes on the directional profile. The conceptual content of the preposition is profound physical contact between TR and LM, where LM is represented by 2D surface with gravitational force imposing pressure on it by means of TR. When metaphorically extended, the physical pressure is replaced with some abstract burden brought by the financial inconvenience of paying tariffs. *Put on steel tariffs* is then an extension of *put steel tariffs on [landmark]*. The landmark of the preposition is unelaborated though implied by the discourse.

In the case of the [GET+ON] construction, in most instantiations of the schema *on* implies its basic property, i.e., profound contact with the surface and continuous motion along a directed path. In such cases, *get* loses its transitiveness, as well as its transferring feature remains beyond the immediate scope of predication. The most of the meaning is taken over by the preposition *on*, so the terminative point is not profiled, and the path is a directive one (directed and unbounded):

(7) Tarbouni suggests writing a few sentences for several prospective essays. Let them percolate for a few weeks; then whichever makes you want to read the next sentence is the winner. Or, as Miller says: "Pick something you know, trust your instincts, write about it, and **get on** with your life." (Starr 2009).

(8) Even now, the forces of disorder are never far from the surface. The prime minister knows this in his bones. He thinks he can keep it all together, but he also knows the danger of believing that he's indispensable. "I'm telling you – let's **get on** with it," he said. "Let's have elections. And whoever wins, wins. Let the better guy win." (K. Peraino 2009).

The above sentences instantiate a conceptualization, whereby TR moves along a path or is oriented along a path, but is not focused on the goal. In (7) and (8) life and the political situation are metaphorically conceived as areas/paths to traverse, where stepping on the ground, again, involves applying pressure on its surface via the force of gravity. The figurative flavor of sentences like (7) and (8) seems to directly come from the Event Structure Metaphor, which yields such entailments as the LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor – structured in reference to the schematic purposeful long-term movement along a path (in sentence (7)), and STATES ARE LOCATIONS ALONG A PATH (sentence (8)). The constructional schema may optionally include the INSTRUMENT participant in the form of WITH NP. As Lakoff and Johnson (1980) observed, the AN INSTRUMENT IS A COMPANION metaphor allows for the conception of conceptual consistency between instrumentality and accompaniment, which finds reflection in the identical grammatical structure of *with a hammer* and *with somebody*. Finally, the metaphoric status of the companion ("life", "it") is then cast on the GET+ON construction and determines the figurative reception of the entire utterance.

CONCLUSION

In the perspective of cognitive linguistics, verb-particle phrasal combinations are constructions in their own right, whose idiomaticity lies in the way the component structures affect each other's characterizations within a particular configuration. To the extent that the characteristics of the verb and the particle lap over, the linguistic complex units are formed with respect to the established correspondences between the semantic structures of the verb and the preposition. On the highest level of conceptualization, these correspondences are sought between the image-schematic structures of the components, which then allows for certain projections consisting in a juxtaposition of the verbal and prepositional component. The peculiarity of verb-particle constructions is that while combined with the verb, the preposition loses its variability in profiling and seems to accept the processual character of the verb. However, in view of cognitive linguistics, locative prepositions are enriched with directionality and dynamicity, which may remain latent in their conceptual bases. Verbs, on the other hand, may denote physical motion or fictive motion along an orientation path (Talmy 2003), which is either volitional on the part of the agent or results from the agent's causal activity. In other words, verb-particle combinations elaborate either the Caused-Motion or the Intransitive Motion constructional schema. The argument structure affects the choice of grammatical items and the semantic value of the participants. At the same time, the interacting components of the construction impose the final characteristics on the meaning of the entire composition giving them an idiosyncratic flavor, which is why verb-particle constructions (phrasal verbs) are often judged as fully idiomatic rather than, at least partially, analyzable structures.

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