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Hunting for a missing link: between a cognitive framework and classroom practices

Introduction

The problem addressed in this paper stems from a PACL 2014 Conference session devoted to research on the relevance of cognitive linguistics for language pedagogy, in particular, the presentations by Jakub Bielak (co-authors Mirosław Pawlak and Anna Mystkowska-Wiertelak): "Teaching English with the help of Cognitive Grammar revisited" and Franka Kermer: "Cognitive Grammar and Foreign Language Pedagogy: Evidence from an Experimental Study". My subsequent study of the (relatively scarce) literature reporting experimental investigation into the effectiveness of adopting Cognitive Grammar (CG henceforth) in a foreign language classroom[1] brought me to the conclusion that the inconclusive character of the results of experimental studies, obtained in spite of high methodological standards, may point to a 'missing link' between the conceptualizations available within CG (as this cognitive theory was the theoretical basis for the experiments) and the reality of a 'foreign language classroom' of both practical language and descriptive grammar courses.

[1] J. Bielak, *Applying Cognitive Grammar in the classroom: Teaching English possessives*, [in:] M. Pawlak (ed.), *Studies in Pedagogy and Fine Arts. Exploring Focus on Form in Language Teaching*, Poznań–Kalisz 2007; J. Bielak, M. Pawlak, A. Mystkowska-Wiertelak, *Teaching the English active and passive voice with the help of cognitive grammar: An empirical study*, "Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching", Kalisz 2013; F. Kermer, *A Cognitive Grammar Approach to the Instruction of English Tense and Aspect in the L2 Context*, Joensuu 2015.

State of the art – classroom perspective

I tend to think that the crux of the issue is some disparity between the conceptualization of language postulated within a cognitive linguistics framework on the one hand, and the nature of classroom related grammatical discourse, on the other. Indeed, phrases from the theoretical discourse on language didactics such as: *'form-meaning mapping'*, '*form – meaning pairings'*, '*effectiveness of rules based on Cognitive Grammar'*, '*semantic descriptions of selected grammatical items'* imply a duality of language structure in grammar and meaning, even if the author accepts/subscribes to the 'generalisation commitment' and, accordingly, the assumption that "… there are common structuring principles that hold across different aspects of language and an important function of linguistics is to identify these common principles"[2]. Evidently, the metalanguage of grammatical discourse accords with the students' opinions about the duality of language, reflected in the study by Pawlak & Drożdział-Szelest[3]. As follows from the research, advanced students of English (and future teachers) tend to "view grammar as a static body of knowledge that has to be mastered in much the same way as any other factual information"[4]. The type of conceptualisation of language is reflected in such statements as: '*vocabulary is much more important'*, '*the knowledge of rules does not guarantee that they will be effectively used in communication'*, '*communication is feasible with only the rudiments of grammar'*.

Clearly, the relatively recent and definitely overestimated communicative language teaching is responsible for students' and teachers' attitude to 'grammar' being somehow different from language proper and hardly relevant for communication. If communication is reduced to 'face to face' exchange of basic information, one might even say that mimicry of one's face, hand movements and, generally, body language suffice for the communicative needs, and are thus more important than words. However, when communication is understood as an exchange of information on / about 'beyond now and here / beyond perceptually available reality', drawing on more abstract meaning patterns is indispensable if the exchange of utterances is to meet what the speaker intends to convey via a communicative act, i.e. if the speaker uses language as the most effective though sophisticated cognitive skill.

Arguably, an important but underappreciated obstacle that research into the effectiveness of implementing elements of CG into foreign language didactics is the learners' conceptualisation of language as consisting of form/grammar, on the one hand, and meaning/vocabulary/lexis, on the other. The latter is essential for communication and thus is a priority in foreign language didactics. The more abstract meaning patterns thought of as 'grammar' are viewed by the learner as a kind of troublesome surplus to what really matters. Should this be the case, learners might have viewed the attempts to implement CG based instructions as a matter of different theory and different explanations only,

[2] V. Evans, M. Green, *Cognitive Linguistics: An Introduction*, Edinburgh 2006, p. 28.

[3] M. Pawlak, K. Drożdział-Szelest, *When I think about grammar… Exploring English Department students' beliefs about grammar, grammar learning and grammar teaching*, [in:] M. Pawlak (ed.), *Studies in Pedagogy and Fine Arts. Exploring Focus on Form in Language Teaching*, Poznań–Kalisz 2007.

[4] Ibidem, p. 309.

rather than an opportunity to get introduced into a radically new conception of language as a meaningful system designed in the process of evolution to perform a communicative function. Fortunately, the 'zero option'[5] communicative approach to foreign language teaching, whose proponents must have assumed the narrower definition of communication, is being replaced by 'focus on form' approach to language teaching as a compromise between explicit instruction and communicative practices.

A linguist's prspective

For a cognitive linguist interested in applicability of CG to language pedagogy the idea of FonF oriented instruction in the foreign language classroom sounds really promising. Let us, however, analyse the following fragment from Kermer[6] when she discusses advantages of FonF instructions combined with the approach to language form as existing in three dimensions: form, meaning and use; the case referred to is the English progressive tense.

> For example, learners could be made aware of the prototypical use of the progressive – i.e., current ongoingness – in the beginning. Gradually, then, other usage types, such as the modal usage type, could be introduced to the learners, thereby placing the focus on how the shift in usage is connected to the shift in meaning. Learners could also be made aware of the use of the progressive with imperfectives, not, as is often part of operation in line with many textbooks grammars, be presented with a statement that rules out the occurrence of progressive with stative verbs[7].

Basically, I could agree that the above path for introducing learners to the peculiarities of usage of English progressive promises successful acquisition / learning of this aspect of the language, except that I have no idea of who could be the guide and what didactic materials could support the teacher as a guide. In spite of my deep appreciation of the works by Achard and Niemeier, I disagree with their belief that CG is applicable to language pedagogy "because the kinds of generalisations it posits to describe linguistic organisation can easily [emphasis mine] be made explicit, and thus incorporated into classroom practices" in Kermer[8].

The issue of incorporating CG into classroom practices, its explanatory potential does not boil down to whether or not respective linguistic organisation can be made explicit. Indeed, there are two facets to the problem with applicability of CG and, more generally, cognitive linguistics to language pedagogy: (i) as long as the prospective teachers "view grammar as a static body of knowledge that has to be mastered in much the same way as any other factual information"[9], the teachers will not be able to appreciate the explanatory potential of the radically unorthodox conceptualization of language postulated within cognitive linguistics, (ii) the metalanguage predominating language pedagogy

5 R. Ellis, *Instructed Second Language Acquisition*, Oxford 1990.
6 F. Kermer, *A Cognitive*..., op. cit., p. 74.
7 Ibidem, p. 74.
8 Achard and Niemeier in F. Kermer, *A Cognitive*..., op. cit., p. 74.
9 M. Pawlak, K. Droździał-Szelest, *When*..., op. cit., p. 309.

discourse, both on the theoretical and classroom practice level, is hardly compatible with the descriptions of aspects of language structure offered within the cognitive framework.

In view of the above, a successful implementation of the cognitive perspective to the domain of language education should begin with introducing the students who are teachers-to-be into the foundational assumptions of cognitive linguistics, of which the *embodiment commitment* is presumably essential for understanding the radically innovative character of the framework.

I am aware of the possibility that elements of the cognitive linguistics framework are incorporated into language teachers' curricula. The classroom reality reflected in the research I refer to implies that the courses may not be as effective as one would wish for. Thus, it seems justifiable to argue that to be able to appreciate the unorthodox conceptualization of language posited within the framework (and, subsequently, be able to implement CG inspired instruction in the classroom) the students (and teachers-to-be) could begin their encounters with cognitive linguistics with a kind of priming classes. These would help them 'cross the Rubicon', to be ready to comprehend that (i) there is meaning in all language structure and (ii) the meanings of language expressions reflect conceptual structure – the knowledge system that organizes all human cognitive functioning and is rooted in everyday bodily experience.

The proposal

In what follows I describe a priming activity, a workshop[10], that should help the students 'discover' the interdependency between language and somatic experience. The proposed title of the workshop is *From what we experience to what we say*. It aims to assist students discover the nature of cognitive patterns that are shared by non-linguistic cognitive activities and linguistic / grammatical structure. The workshop consists of two phases: (i) an introduction to the concept of *image schemata*[11] as conceptual structures organizing our cognitive functioning; (ii) a sample analysis of image schemata organizing semantic structure of selected language expressions / patterns.

Phase (i). Image schemata

The first task of the workshop requires students to describe an everyday cognitive activity, such as, for example, drinking coffee/tea. Naturally, the outcomes will differ in details. The proposal offered below represents what the descriptions will share:

[10] The type of workshop was conducted by me in Polish as a plenary lecture during PLEJ PLOT conference (4th edition), University of Łódź, 14–15 March, 2015. The organisers and participants were young researcher and doctoral students. An extended version of the workshop, in English was conducted during the PACL 2015 Conference. My present proposal draws from those workshops.

[11] M. Johnson, *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination and Reason*, Chicago 1987; J. M. Mandler, P. C. Canowas (*On defining image schemas*, "Language and Cognition" 2014) provide an up to date discussion on the nature of image schemata in the context of infants' cognitive development, and their relevance for conceptual structure.

While drinking coffee:
I reach out for the mug/cup;
Raise it to my lips
Take a sip:
Put it back
Reach out for the mug/cup
Raise it to my lips
Take a sip
Put it back
Reach out for the mug/cup
Raise it to my lips
Take a sip
Put it back.
And so on…

The issue opening the discussion of the outcomes of the task is: *how come we know exactly what to do to achieve the intended effect if it does not come from our conscious planning*? For example, to reach out for the mug/cup one has to 'decide' how to stretch his/her arm considering the location of the mug/cup from the perspective of his/her actual position. In other words, the stretching arm movement, which is incorporated in the reaching out movement, is organized by prior identification of the *goal* (the position of the mug), the *source* (the actual position of the person) and the *path* – the 'route' the stretching arm has to follow to reach the goal. Otherwise, reaching the mug would be a matter of a mere chance: an uncoordinated arm movement may hit and brake the mug while performing unpredictably. To sum up, the simple activity such as reaching for the mug/cup requires some *cognitive though pre-intellectual effort* consisting in identification of the *path* that the arm has to follow to the *goal* from the actual *source* position.

Subsequent, interrelated questions are: *What directs our cognitive behavior – the movements – so that we know how to handle an empty mug/cup and how to handle it when full* once we have reached it? *What makes it possible for us to estimate the physical effort enabling successful grasping and handling of the mug/cup at subsequent stages of drinking*?

These are interesting issues because in order to successfully **raise the mug/cup to one's lips** one needs to know how to handle/manipulate a *container* such as a mug or a cup. One also needs to make adequate physical effort enabling the maintenance of *equilibrium* while handling the full *container*. Naturally the physical effort involved in maintaining balance while bringing the mug/cup to the lips requires adequate 'estimation' of the *force* with which the muscles tighten to overcome some *barrier* – the weight of the mug/cup and / or the relaxing position of any part of human body in 'no action' state. Next, besides the movement of the arm with the mug/cup along a certain *path* from the *source* (initial) location of the mug/cup to the lips as the *goal* of the movement, the 'taking a sip' activity is *also* cognitively organized by 'a source-path-goal' pattern as the beverage from the center of the mug/cup (*source*) has to follow a particular route (*path*) to get precisely to the inside of the mouth (*goal*). Needless to say, 'taking a sip' involves simultaneously adequate physical effort necessary to maintain *equilibrium* so that the beverage gets pre-

cisely into the mouth. Summing up, the activity of 'taking a sip' is organized by a configuration of cognitive patterns: *source-path-goal, container, force-barrier* and *equilibrium*.

Mark Johnson and George Lakoff argue that human cognitive functioning (for example, taking a sip of coffee/tee) is organized by mental patterns that develop throughout our entire lives as *representatives* of repeated bodily/somatic experience, and form the entire body of knowledge that facilitates our safe interacting with the environment[12]. In other words, while interacting with the environment we simply **know** what to do because we 'make use', albeit unconsciously, of the structured body of knowledge that is built/formed of the mental patterns encoding types of somatic experience; the mental/cognitive patterns have been called **image schemata**[13]. Thus, image schemata are cognitive structures that represent patterns of somatic/perceptual and cognitive behaviors. These cognitive structures operate at a pre-intellectual level and get activated whenever we undertake a cognitive activity.

To round up the above discussion the following image schemata can be identified as organizing the activity of drinking coffee: *force-barrier* (the action of arm muscles), *source-path goal*, *up – down* (the trajectory the arm/hand 'travels'), *container* (for the identification of the object to be manipulated: the mug/cup), *full – empty*, *equilibrium* (for a safe manipulation of a full container). Indeed, there may be more patterns involved in organizing the activity of drinking coffee. We shall not attempt to identify all of them. Instead, let us analyze the way some of these image schemata 'operate'.

To begin with, the gestures involved in drinking coffee are repeated a number of times and each time the movements are repeated in an established order. Thus, the activity of drinking coffee consists of a sequence of gestures to be repeated a few times: (i) reaching out for the mug, (ii) raising the mug to the lips (iii) taking a sip of the beverage and (iv) putting the mug back. In terms of *image schemata* analysis, each of the gestures (i) – (iv) is organized by a configuration of image schemata as characterized above. Simultaneously, for the four gestures to become an accomplished activity of drinking coffee/tee, they are organized by higher level image schemata: *iteration*, *cycle* and *reflexivity*. Unless the drinking reduces to continuous pouring the coffee into the mouth/body, which is rather unusual, *iteration* schema organizes the drinking into a number of *cycles*. Drawing on Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary (CALD henceforth)[14] definition of a *cycle*, let us assume that the image schema *cycle* organizes a number of cognitive events / gestures to be repeated in specific order. In the case under discussion, the *cycle* schema organizes the movements (i)-(iv) into the sequence: (i) →(ii)→(iii)→(iv).

Interestingly, each of the components within the *cycle* (i) →(ii)→(iii)→(iv) incorporates the *source-path goal* schema in its configuration of image schemata. In the phase 'reaching out for the mug/cup' the hand follows a '$path_1$' form its initial position '$source_1$' – the human body to where the mug '$goal_1$' is located. The movement 'bringing the mug with coffee to one's mouth from its initial location' is also organized by the *source-path goal* schema, where the '$source_2$' is the initial location of the mug / '$goal_1$', the '$path_2$' is the distance

[12] Naturally, this is a very simplified version of the characterization of image schemata. For more comprehensive discussion see the literature referred to.

[13] G. Lakoff, M. Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago 1980; M. Johnson, *The Body*..., op. cit.

[14] P. Gillard (ed.), *Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary*, Cambridge 2003, p. 303.

between that location and the mouth / 'goal$_2$'. Interestingly, 'taking a sip' i.e., 'absorbing a portion of the beverage in one's mouth to the effect the amount of coffee in the mug diminishes by the portion' is *also* organized by the *source-path goal* schema for the beverage to 'travel and reach the intended goal', or the beverage will get splashed all over the face / place. Hence, the 'source$_3$' is the inside of the mug, the 'path$_3$' is the trajectory between the inside of the mug and the mouth / lips, the 'goal$_3$ / end of path' is the mouth. The final phase of the *cycle* (iv) is also organized by *source-path-goal* schema, where the 'goal$_4$' is the initial position of the mug / container, the 'source$_4$' is the lips and the 'path$_4$' is the route from the lips anto the position of the mug on the surface of the table.

Importantly, each of the gestures organized by the *source-path-goal* schema involves energy transfer, as without energy no movement is possible. Thus, for phases (i), (ii), (iii), (iv) of the process, the *force-barrier* schema induces energy transfer necessary for the arm movements and the arm/hand's reaching the goal and handling / manipulating the container. Additionally, in (iii) the 'travelling' of the beverage along the 'path$_3$' from the inside of the mug (source$_3$) to the mouth (goal$_3$) can be viewed as energy transfer from the mug to the mouth. Indeed, the mouth (goal$_3$) is a part of the human body, hence the energy from source$_3$ (the mug) gets absorbed by the human body, which is the initial source$_1$[15] of energy transfer induced to perform movements of the arm.

In view of the above reasoning, the configuration of schemata organizing the activity of drinking coffee incorporates energy transfer from the human body (an overall source of the energy and the primary source$_1$ for source-path-goal$_1$), to a location of an object and the primary goal$_1$ of the source-path-goal$_1$, and from the location of the object/mug (the primary goal$_1$ and the secondary source$_2$) to the lips (goal$_2$), and from the inside of the mug (source$_3$) to the mouth / human body (source$_1$ overlapping with goal$_3$), predictably to the effect that the amount of energy 'absorbed' by the goal$_3$ (the human body) is greater than the one 'invested' into reaching for the mug (source$_1$-path$_1$-goal$_1$), bringing it to the lips (source$_2$-path$_2$-goal$_2$), manipulating while taking a sip (source$_3$-path$_3$-goal$_3$). Indeed, the gestures (i) – (iv) are organized by *repetition* and *cycle* image schemata. Additionally, the gestures (i) – (iii) form the *reflexivity* image schema, by which the energy emitted from source$_1$ travels to the goal$_1$ which becomes source$_3$ of energy that is absorbed by the goal$_3$, which correlates with source$_1$, to the effect the accomplished *cycle* 'leaves' the initial source$_1$ *richer* or, at least *affected*. Accordingly, the *cognitive reflexive behavior* appears to be organized by a configuration of image schemata in such a way that some energy from the *source*, e.g. a human body, is directed to a certain *goal* from which energy is transmitted to the *source* (the human body) causing some kind of change in the *source*, which will symbolized by '+'. The type of configuration of image schemata becomes an image schema at a *higher level* of cognitive organization and thus can be referred to as the *reflexivity schema* to be represented by the following formula:

$$\text{source}_1 \rightarrow \text{goal}_1/\text{source}_2 \rightarrow \text{goal}_2/\text{source}_1+$$

[15] This holds via cognitive metonymy PART FOR WHOLE. Fundamental discussion on cognitive/conceptual metaphor metonymy can be found in G. Lakoff, M. Johnson, *Metaphors*..., op. cit.

The *reflexivity* schema stems from bodily/somatic experience, hence is embodied. Simultaneously, it is a *cognitive schema* because it organizes our *cognitive functioning*, e.g., drinking coffee. Indeed, the *reflexivity schema* is inherent in the concept *reflexivity* in logic and mathematics, which is defined as "(logic and mathematics) a relation such that it holds between an element and itself" (http://www.thefreedictionary.com/reflexivity, accessed 30 04 2016, 12.05). An ultimate question is: *Is the reflexivity schema as discussed above inherent in language structure?*

Phase (ii): A sample analysis of image schemata organizing the semantic structure of selected language expressions / patterns

In view of the above discussion and the subsequent definition of the *reflexivity image schema* and the concept of *reflexivity*, let us consider the following definition of the adjective *reflexive* provided by the CALD[16]: "*adj* describes words that show that the person who does the action is also the person who is affected by it". Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary[17] defines the adjective *reflexive* as "1 a: directed or turned back on itself". The comparison of the characterization of *cognitive reflexivity schema* arrived at in Phase (i) of the workshop with the definition of *reflexivity concept* as it functions in mathematics and logic (http://www.thefreedictionary.com/reflexivity) and the *linguistic definition* of the meaning of *reflexive* as an adjective[18] allows inference that they share the configuration represented in the formula $source_1 \rightarrow goal_1/source_2 \rightarrow goal_2/source_1+$, hence, they share the *reflexivity schema* in that for an action directed on itself ($source_1$) it has to reach some other point $goal_1$ from which it turns back to $goal_2$ which correlates with $source_1$, now enriched by the 'experience' recorded/collected along the 'route' definable as: $path_1$-$goal_1$/ $source_2$-$path_2$.

Reflexivity in language structure

Presumably most typical examples of language expressions categorized as related to reflexivity both in Polish and English are reflexive pronouns: *się* / *self*, respectively. *Słownik poprawnej polszczyzny PWN* [The dictionary of correct Polish PWN][19] defines *się* [-self] as follows "Zaimek *się* **1**. tworzy stronę zwrotną czasowników wskazując, że sprawca tej czynności jest jednocześnie jej odbiorcą" [The pronoun *się* **1**. is used to form reflexive voice of verbs pointing to the performer as simultaneously its recipient/ beneficiary]. *Słownik ojczyzny polszczyzny* [The dictionary of Polish as a Home Country] by Jan Miodek[20] provides a fairly modest definition of *się* as "Zaimek zwrotny używany zwykle przy czasownikach, będący wykładnikiem tzw. strony zwrotnej." [Reflexive pronoun used typically with verbs, encoding the so called reflexive voice.] Miodek does not discuss the meaning/semantic structure of *się*, focusing on syntactic patterns of its

16 P. Gillard (ed.), *Cambridge…*, op. cit., p. 1047.
17 F. C. Mish (ed.), *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster Inc., 1990, p. 990.
18 P. Gillard (ed.), *Cambridge…*, op. cit., p. 1047; Mish F. C. (ed.), *Webster's…*, op. cit., p. 990.
19 W. Doroszewski (ed.), *Słownik poprawnej polszczyzny PWN* [The dictionary of correct Polish PWN], Warszawa 1981, p. 686.
20 J. Miodek, *Słownik ojczyzny polszczyzny* [The dictionary of Polish as a Home Country], Wrocław 2002, p. 616.

distribution. Notwithstanding the fact, because he refers to reflexive voice, which is defined by PWN dictionary as pointing to the performer of an activity as simultaneously its recipient/beneficiary, it is justified to argue that the reflexivity schema represented in the formula *source1→goal1/source2→goal2/source1+* is inherent in the meaning of the Polish reflexive.

As for the English form *-self*, the entries in either of the two excellent dictionaries were not very helpful as regards their characterization of the meaning/semantic structure of *-self*, focusing on its syntactic distribution, only. The Internet resources also offer syntactic definitions of the form, which foreground identity of the object and the subject of the sentence as the requirement for the occurrence of a *reflexive pronoun*, i.e., a personal pronoun with *-self* suffix, e.g. *myself*[21]. Similar, syntax based characterization of *-self*, can be also found in pedagogy-oriented grammar books, such as, for example, Longmans Advanced Learner's Grammar[22]. All in all, I cannot refer to a source that would focus on the meaning/semantic structure of the reflexive ending *–self*. Still, as the syntactic definitions foreground the *identity of the subject and the object* of the sentence with a *-self* ending pronoun, I consider it legitimate to assume that the meaning /semantic structure of *-self* incorporates the schema: *source* $_1$*→goal* $_1$*/source* $_2$*→goal* $_2$*/source* $_1$*+* where the 'source$_1$ and goal$_2$/source$_1$+' are grammatically encoded as the sentence subject, whereas the 'goal$_1$/source$_2$' can be inherent in the function of an object of the sentence. Should the assumption be valid, it would be legitimate to postulate that both languages, Polish and English, base their reflexive voice on the *reflexivity schema*. Another question is whether the *reflexivity schema* is encoded in both languages at the same or different levels of semantic organization, i.e., is it inherent in the pronouns *się / -self* only, or, perhaps the languages differ as regards ways of encoding reflexivity?

The question formulated above seems important in the context of learning English as a foreign language, where usage of words considered as equivalents by bilingual dictionaries causes problems. As an example let us take English *wash* and its assumed Polish equivalent *myć*. The point in focus is the ungrammaticality of English **wash myself* contrasted with the grammaticality of Polish *myć się* 'wash – myself'. Can reference to reflexivity schemata help learners understand the cross-linguistic 'contradiction'?

It should not be surprising that my answer is *yes*. To begin with, *wash* and *myć* differ in that the former is a perfective verb[23] whereas the latter is not. Indeed, it would be more appropriate to pair as equivalents *wash* and *umyć* – the perfective infinitive of *myć*[24]. Next, examples of usage accompanying dictionary definitions imply that *wash* and *umyć* differ in the presence of *reflexive schema* (source$_1$→goal$_1$/source$_2$→goal$_2$/source$_1$+) in the former and the absence of the schema in the latter. Consequently, the simple verb form *wash* incorporates the information that the beneficiary of the washing is the agent, whereas the absence of the reflexivity schema in Polish *umyć* leaves the beneficiary factor unspecified, hence, if it happens to be the performer, the reflexive – *się* does the

[21] http://www.economist.com/blogs/johnson/2013/02/grammar [accessed 30 04 2016].

[22] M. Foley, D. Hall, *Longmans Advanced Learner's Grammar*, Pearson Education Limited, 1987.

[23] R. W. Langacker, *Cognitive Grammar: a Basic Introduction*, Oxford 2008.

[24] Presumably, the prefix *u-* encodes some kind of accomplishment, hence performs a perfectivizing function.

job providing the information. Simultaneously, in English, if the beneficiary of *wash* is **not** the performer, the information about the recipient has to be explicitly provided by respective pronouns: yourself / herself / themselves, etc.

Another example of applicability of the type of analysis based on image schemata is the problem of English words which are similar but their usage can be difficult for a learner of English as a foreign language. Examples of such words are: *see* and *look (at)*. The first entry *see* in CALD[25] is defined in the sense 'use eyes' as follows: "1[I or T] to be aware of what is around you by using your eyes". What follows from the definition is that the language expression *see* encodes a situation of letting visual information into the mind by keeping one's eyes open. Let us analyze thus defined meaning of *see* in terms of image schemata. To begin with, in the meaning structure of the verb the mind functions as a *container* to which visual information has access as long as the eyelids are raised. Should that be the case, when closed, the eyes function as a *blockage* for the mind/*container*, because no information can get into the mind; when the eyes are opened by the eyelid muscles, which is 'triggered' by the *force – barrier* image schema, the information has free access to the mind. Additionally, the flow of information is 'absorbed' in the mind (just like beverage is 'absorbed' in the mug), hence the mind/*container* is also construed as an 'end of path' for the flow of information by the *end of path* schema. All in all, image schemata **central** to the meaning of *see* are: *container*, *blockage*, *up-down* (direction of eyelids movement), *force-barrier, end of path*.

As will have been noticed, in the *semantic structure* of the verb, the *source-path-goal* schema is not *salient*, just like the *source-path-goal* schema is not crucial for the *cognitive activity* of seeing because the information flow need not have a predefined source, as any point/location in the visually accessible surroundings can be such a source from which the information travels along a path to the goal at the end of path – the eyes/mind. Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that the *end of path* schema is a part of the *source-path-goal* schema; there is no *end of path* unless there is a *path*. Hence, it seems legitimate to argue that the *end of path* schema presupposes the *source-path-goal* in the configuration, which is not active in the act of seeing and, by the same token, redundant for characterization of the semantic structure of *see*.

CALD[26] defines the meaning of *look (at)* as follows: "…direct your eyes in order to see". As the definition implies, the meaning structure of *look (at)* incorporates the meaning structure of *see*. Thus, the configuration of image schemata incorporated in the semantic structure of *see* is what the two lexemes share. To identify the differences between their meanings, let us try to discover image schemata that are crucial for the meaning structure of *look (at)* and are absent from the *see* configuration. To begin with, according to the definition and examples illustrating the usage, *look (at)* incorporates in its meaning an intentional activity of directing the eyes towards a particular object. This element in the definition of *look (at)* points to the presence of the *source-path-goal* image schema in its meaning structure, where the *source* is the mind with eyes opened (opened *container*), the *goal* is the object(s) the seeing is intentionally directed at, and the *path* is the route between the

[25] P. Gillard (ed.), *Cambridge…*, op. cit., p. 1129.

[26] Ibidem, p. 737.

eyes and the object(s). Next, because in *look at* the goal of intentional directing the eyes is an object the agent wants to see, i.e., wants to receive backward information about, this object becomes the goal of the *source-path-goal* from the eyes/mind to the object. Simultaneously, the object becomes the *source* of the backward information flow that is to 'travel' the reverse *path* towards the *end of path*/the mind, which correlates with the *goal*. In other words, central to the semantic structure of *look* (at) is reverse configuration of *source-path-goal* image schemata: from the eyes/mind to he object of interest for the agent, and from the object to the eyes/mind. Formally the configuration can be represented as: $source_1 \rightarrow goal_1/source_2 \rightarrow goal_2/source_1+$, which is the formula for *reflexivity* schema.

Summing up the above reasoning, the configuration of image schemata inherent in the semantic structure of *look* (at) differs from that of *see* in the salient position of *reflexivity* schema in the configuration of image schemata organizing the semantic structure of the former.

Closing up discussion

As declared in the introductory part of the paper, undertaking the topic has been motivated by the assumption that inconclusive character of research into applicability of cognitive linguistics into language pedagogy is related to the fact that the learners approach language as consisting of formal – grammatical elements and the meaningful ones – words[27]. Consequently, if grammatical elements are meaningless, hence learning grammar of a foreign language boils down to learning grammatical rules. The type of assumption about the nature of natural language is so incompatible with foundational premises of cognitive linguistics that they may impede even most professional attempts to introduce cognitive linguistics based instructions to the classroom, because the instructions are founded on radically different assumptions about language from those of the learners.

Confronted with the situation described above on the one hand, and appreciating the explanatory potential in the cognitive linguistics framework, on the other one, I have come to the conclusion that a successful implementation of the framework into language didactics largely depends on how language teachers conceive of language. As long as the teacher separates the teaching of grammar from the teaching of meaning, cognitive linguistics based instructions will be a kind of 'occasional change from the routine', without significance for the didactic process. In other words, attempts to implement elements of cognitive framework to the foreign language classroom have to be preceded by linguistic courses familiarising the students who are teachers-to-be with the radically unorthodox conception of language. Reasonable as the conclusion may be, it should be borne in mind that the students are former learners of the foreign language, hence, their perspective on the nature of language, especially a foreign language, will not be compatible with the foundational premises of cognitive framework. This brings us to the idea of a priming activity sketched in the body of paper, the activity whose target would be the students of (cognitive) descriptive grammar courses.

[27] M. Pawlak, K. Drożdział-Szelest, *When*..., op. cit.

It will have been noticed that the workshop, both in the procedure and the content, focuses on one commitment of the cognitive framework, the embodiment commitment, making no overt reference to metalanguage of either Cognitive Metaphor Theory or Cognitive Grammar. The decision to focus on the issue of embodiment is legitimate because, of all differences between pre-cognitive and cognitive conceptions of natural language, the most radical one is the argument that all meaning structure, including abstract meaning encoded in patterns of meaning integration – traditionally viewed as meaningless grammatical rules – is rooted in somatic/bodily experience. Hence, guiding the students to discover through experience what it means that language structure is embodied should prepare them intellectually for understanding the metalanguage of specific cognitive theory and, thus, the cognitive theory based description of respective structures of the language in focus. The question of the extent to which the workshop and its outcome are relevant for introducing cognitive linguistics framework is discussed below.

To begin with, the task of describing the activity of drinking coffee and subsequent analyses of gestures involved in carrying out the activity as cognitive operations familiarize the students with the very concept of cognitive functioning in its pre-intellectual dimension. Simultaneously, directing participants' attention to the fact that even a very simple gesture is organised and controlled by mental patterns facilitating our safe interactions with the environment, aims at helping them comprehend the nature of image schemata. By the same token, the image-schemata analysis of gestures involved in organising 'the reaching out for a mug/cup to bring it to one's lips to take a sip' aims at making the participants aware that complex cognitive activity is organized by a configuration of image schemata, in which some patterns are more salient than others. The discussion on how simple image schemata are organized into the configuration which becomes so entrenched that can be regarded as a reflexivity schema allows the participants to 'cross' the interface between somatic/cognitive experience organized by the reflexivity schema and conceptual structure organized by the same pattern. Subsequent analyses discovered the presence of reflexivity image schema both in the definition of the concept *reflexivity* as used in logic and mathematics and dictionary definitions of the meaning structure of language expressions traditionally defined as encoding *reflexive voice*. Indeed, cross-linguistic analysis of English *wash* and its assumed Polish equivalent *(u)myć* illustrate that the reflexive voice is encoded in Polish in the reflexive pronoun *–się*, whereas in English it is encoded in the pronominal suffix *–self*, though the reflexive schema can also be a salient part of the semantic structure of a 'reflexive' verb, such as *wash*. All in all, what this part of the workshop discussion illustrates is that the reflexivity image schema operates at the level of syntactic integration called *reflexive voice* rather than words. If that is so, embodied, reflexivity image schema organizes bodily cognitive functioning, organizes conceptual structure of the notion *reflexivity*, can be a salient substructure in the configuration defining semantic structure of reflexive verbs, defines fairly abstract semantic structure of 'grammatical' morpheme *-się* / -self, and, presumably, defines the meaning of the highly abstract semantic schema of the syntactic pattern called *reflexive voice*. Having led the participants into the discovery of the relevance of embodiment commitment, the discussion should also help them understand another foundational commitment of cognitive linguistics, i.e.,

that all language structure is meaningful. Finally, the analyses of semantic structures of *see* and *look (at)* can introduce the participants to the notion of meaning as construal. Although in the configuration of image schemata inherent in the semantic structure of the verb *see* the source-path-goal schema is not evident, there are such uses as: *We'll see you tomorrow*, where the presence of *you* specifies the *source* of the information flow along a *path* towards the *end of path* correlating with the *goal*, hence, in the case when the source of information is specified, the *source-path-goal* schema becomes a salient element in the configuration. In other words, the semantic structure of *see* incorporates the *source-path-goal* image schema except that when the verb is used to mean 'use eyes', the schema 'remains outside' the salient part of the meaning construal.

Closing up the above discussion I would like to stress that the analyses I offer should be viewed as examples of exercises guiding the students to the cognitive linguistics perspective on the nature of language rather than final versions of image schemata analyses of the selected aspects of language structure. Nevertheless, being aware of that and other possible weaknesses of the proposal presented in the paper, I decided to publish it in case there are more cognitive linguistics enthusiastic teachers who seek ways of implementing the framework for the benefit of their students, and would like to join in on the path leading from where we are to the goal – a really learner's friendly cognitive language teaching.

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Abstract

Hunting for a missing link: between cognitive framework and classroom practices

The problem discussed in this article is the result of a conference on research on the importance of cognitive linguistics for teaching / learning foreign languages. Despite the high methodological standards, the introduction of cognitive grammar in the classroom showed a "missing link" between concepts and reality. In the article, the author describes exercises that should help students discover the correlation between language and somatic experience. The workshop consists of two stages: (i) introduction to the concept of image patterns as conceptual structures of our organization of cognitive function; (ii) sample analysis of patterns of image organizing the semantic structure of the chosen language expressions.

Keywords: cognitivism, methodology, linguistics, cognitive grammar, teaching, ESL, EFL