

REVIEWS

Kudrnáčová, N. (2008) *Directed Motion at the Syntax-Semantics Interface*. Brno: Masaryk University. 132 pp.

The monograph *Directed Motion at the Syntax-Semantics Interface* by Naděžda Kudrnáčová analyses English motion verbs with respect to the directionality of motion. The two main subtypes of motion verbs, namely manner of motion verbs and path verbs, are studied from a semantico-syntactic perspective in order to reveal how directionality of motion is reflected in syntactic configurations characteristic of individual types of motion verbs. The study strives to answer the questions of incompatibility of verbs of directed motion and arguments conveying a change of state, as well as of incompatibility of the traversal of path and manner of its execution. The latter distinction stems from the difference in conceptualisation of a change of location and a change of state which can be, however, sometimes conflated in a single causal pattern. Among the main assertions and findings of this work rank the non-additive status of directionality of motion and the non-incremental character of verbal meanings.

Kudrnáčová, an Associate Professor at the English Department of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, Brno has been dealing with the lexico-semantic and semantico-syntactic aspects of English verbs for two decades. The present monograph builds on her papers focused on grammar and semantics of verbs of (loco)motion published between the years 2000 and 2007. She draws predominantly on the approach of Rappaport and Levin (1998) which is founded on the analysis of the semantic characteristics of English verbs by examining their grammatical behaviour. It is assumed that verbs which contain the same meaning components also share a similar set of syntactic frames. Rappaport and Levin (1998) divide the meaning of a verb into structural and idiosyncratic aspects, the structural aspects being relevant to argument realisation. Idiosyncratic aspects display no grammatical significance in terms of argument projection, but they describe the differences distinguishing between individual verbs within the same class (Faber & Mairal Usón 1999: 26).

Verbs of motion can be divided into path verbs (which do not express the manner of motion) and manner of motion verbs (which do express it). The relevant features of the latter type of verbs include not only the physical characteristics of the motion, but also those with the evaluative function. Thus, the manner of motion is not a compact semantic phenomenon. Kudrnáčová observes that the

presence of arguments does not lead to a simple expansion of the meaning of motion verbs, but it results in a change of meaning, often accompanied by an evaluative function. Syntactic constructions with manner of motion verbs which do not include directional grounding can be seen as minimal semantico-syntactic configurations.

Another important conclusion is that directed motion (unlike non-directed motion) is incompatible with a change of state. This applies to the motion along a path in the physical, not metaphorical sense. However, motion leading to a change of location and that leading to a change of state display fuzzy boundaries and contain some transitional cases. Directed motion is a distinct category from non-directed motion.

Path verbs have obligatory spatial (directional) grounding which is derived from the characteristic of the motion; such spatial grounding involves expressing a point of reference. In contrast, in manner of motion verbs a change in a participant's location bears a lower semantic weight. There are several transitional types of verbs between the main categories, for example verbs of the *zoom* type. Kudrnáčová points out their poor lexico-semantic content which results from the speed of motion. However, this lexico-semantic sparsity enables them (namely the verbs of the *haste* type) to express movements once directional grounding is supplied. The bare (i.e. non-directed) syntactic construction (consisting only of a motion and its agent) possesses its own semantic potential. The adverbial *a lot* restricts the motion's linearity.

Adverbs expressing speed, i.e. pace adverbs, are explored in a separate chapter. Kudrnáčová sees them as a blend of manner and temporal specifications (cf. Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech & Svartvik 1985, who classified them as a blend of manner and duration). In telic predications such adverbs take scope over the motion as a whole, and in telic as well as in atelic ones they also have an evaluative force. In events where an entity in motion is the source of energy, directed motion is not accompanied by a change of state of the entity. In telic predications, characterised by directed agentive locomotion, the difference between *to* and *towards* consists also in the presence of an agent's intention to reach a given point.

The theory of event co-identification claims that an event represented by a concrete physical activity (i.e. one represented by a manner of motion verb) and an event of the traversal of a path are identical activities because they overlap temporally. Motion along a path can rather be understood as an aspect of physical activity, being incorporated in the motion, which complies with the non-additive status of directionality of motion as well as with absence of causality between directionality of motion and the motion itself. A causal relation can thus be

posited between the change of location and the agent's activity (expressed as a concrete physical motion).

Kudrnáčová's monograph continues along the lines of theories such as Role and Reference Grammar, Lexical Conceptual Structure, Functional Grammar and Construction Grammar, represented by works of B. Levin and M. Rappaport Hovav (namely their lexical templates), S. Pinker, R. Jackendoff, I. Kaufmann, A. Goldberg, R. D. Van Valin, R. W. Langacker, J. Pustejovsky and many others whose ideas are referred to throughout the monograph. The general framework of semantico-syntax also draws on the work of Czech linguists F. Daneš and L. Dušková. Kudrnáčová in her monograph has created a very thorough study of complex linkage between semantic and syntactic aspects of the given category of verbs, based on an analysis of nearly 300 sample sentences. The work substantially and creatively contributes to the discourse in linguistic disciplines dealing with the interface of semantics and syntax.

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References:

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