MULTIMODAL PATTERNS IN COGNITION AND COMMUNICATION

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1. Introduction

When a speaker describes a woman with an infant in her arms by saying "Ann was cuddling the baby" rather than "Ann cuddled the baby" they are not merely making a grammatical choice. They are building a specific scene with temporal boundaries constrained by the verb's grammatical form (Kermer, this volume). When a translator chooses to use "An early bird gets the worm" as the equivalent to the Polish proverb "Kto rano wstaje, temu Pan Bóg daje" (lit. "God provides to those who rise early"), despite the disparity between a bird and a person as well as the worm and God, they have decided that something about these two statements makes them alike (Mandziuk-Nizińska, this volume). When we compare narratives of near-death experiences, such as "I know a boy named Henry. Another boy threw a bottle at him right in the head, and he had to get seven stitches" (Labov & Waletzky 1967, cited in Badio, this volume), to poems and children's dramatic play, we recognize the similarities in how humans string together events into chains that make up stories.

Thee three papers in this collection talk about issues at different points of interest for cognitive linguistics. Janusz Badio shows that the narrative, a category of cognition, culture, communication, and language encompasses a much broader scope than originally thought. Justyna Mandziuk-Nizińska illustrates how the translation of proverbs, the cultural, social, and cognitive heritage of a linguistic community, may change the outward shape of the story they tell while retaining its meaning. Finally, Franka Kermer discusses how the grammatical choices speakers make in their native language affect what they say in other languages. Kermer, Mandziuk-Nizińska, and Badio come from different ends of the field of inquiry in nearly all respects: their data,

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methodology, and focus. But at the heart of their research, we see an important question: what is the relationship between the story that gets told and the means we use to tell it.

2. Concepts, categories, image schemas and stories

A concept is a relatively stable cognitive entity representing the perceptual experience with the environment (Barsalou 2017, after Kermer, this volume). Lakoff and Johnson see them as consisting of image schemas (1999), while Kermer (this volume) points out that although they are relatively stable, over time concepts are reshaped by recurrent experience. Concepts are derived from embodied experience (Evans & Green 2006: 7), linked to the meaning of linguistic symbols. and form schematic categories (Talmy 2000).

Categories are also best viewed as dynamic. Each new exemplar affects category structure by changing the prototype's gravitational pull; every dog we meet will slightly change how we see dogs in general, and with enough exposure may become the new prototype for the category to which exemplars will be compared. Rosch's paradigm-shifting studies on category structure (e.g., Rosch 1973) have paved the way for Badio to argue that many types of utterances previously not counted in this category, including children's dramatic play, proverbs, and jokes could be seen as types of narrative. In terms of category structure, Badio proposes that a narrative schema can be found at the grammatical level. Turner (1996) embraces a similar narrative perspective on image schemas. He sees the source-path-goal schema as the simplest story: movement along a path, where the points on the path correspond to the stages of the story. For Turner, image schemas are foundations for simple stories that not only organize perception and experience, but eventually permit abstract reasoning. "Abstract reasoning", he writes, "appears to be possible in large part because we project image-schematic structure from spatial concepts onto abstract concepts" (1996: 29). At a basic level, stories can be used to organize almost any pattern of human cognition and communication: to observe the painstakingly slow movement of the progress bar when downloading a file from the Internet is to be consumed by a story that is inching towards a happy ending. Here, Badio (this volume) makes an interesting observation: that sayings such as "dirty money" also evoke schematic narratives. In other words, the meaning of a saying relies on the knowledge of a broader story and is impossible to understand without it. In case of "dirty money", the required knowledge includes stories about money obtained through unsavory means.

Mandziuk-Nizińska also touches upon this subject. Her investigation of the reconceptualization of the proverb "once bitten twice shy" as the Polish "kto na gorącym się sparzył, ten na zimne dmucha" (lit. "if you got burned on something hot then you will blow on a cold thing") shows that both proverbs evoke the same

narrative schema: we tend to hypercorrect our actions following a negative experience. Though the specific experience varies in different languages, the basic story – narrative schema – does not. Just as Badio's radial category predicts, the narrative schema motivates new exemplars, one story retold and reshaped in many languages.

Hence, stories in stories in general can be seen as a category with the narrative as a prototype (Badio proposes the Labovian narrative for this), and a narrative schema as the underlying structure. Many conceptual and communicative patterns could be analyzed through the lens of the story. More dramatically, Turner proposes that the process used to turn experience into thought depends on the story: "partitioning the world into objects involves partitioning the world into small spatial stories because our recognition of objects depends on the characteristic stories in which they appear: We catch a ball, throw a rock, sit in a chair, pet a dog, take a drink from a glass of water" (1996: 17). This is particularly enticing in light of the recent developments in the affordance hypothesis. We are primed to see objects in the world in terms of affordances – opportunities for action (Gibson 1979). A sphere can be identified as an orange, because it presents the opportunity for being peeled and eaten, or as a ball on the basis of looking as something that should be thrown or kicked. Recently, McClelland (2020) proposed the notion of mental affordances. Mental affordances arise when "subjects perceive opportunities to perform a mental action and their doing so leads, under the right conditions, to the automatic preparation of that action". In short, we identify objects by placing them in the story of an action being performed. We might even be "sensitive to affordances for mental actions such as attending, imagining and counting" (McClelland 2020: 514), understanding abstract concepts through their potential mental use. Stories, it seems, are a powerful tool for understanding patterns in both cognition and communication.

3. The resilience of a story

Here, I use the term story not in the sense traditionally encountered in narrative research (e.g., "small story", cf. Bamberg 2006; Georgapoulou 2007) but rather more loosely in the sense Turner uses in *The Literary Mind*: as a mental activity essential to human thought. I refrain from using the term "narrative" due to the heavy gravitational pull exerted on it by the Labovian narrative which does put it at the center of Badio's (this volume) narrative category but at the same time implies a linguistic rather than cognitive focus (for a broader discussion on the terms narrative, micronarrative, and story see Jelec & Fabiszak 2019). Moreover, I see Turner's "small stories of events in space" as the narrative schema underlying the category, where a variety of patterns in language and thought

would be understood as exemplars. The story as a schema of the broad narrative category permits a unifying perspective on the cognitive linguistic studies contained in this volume.

A grammatical choice made by the speaker reflects their perception of a situation: selecting construal is choosing which story gets told. Proverbs in translation retain their meaning even with extensive recontextualization due to the resilience of the story, or the narrative schema they are built around. While the translator changes the details, they retain the basic shape of a story. The narrative as a radial category is built around the prototypical narrative but includes proverbs (Badio, this volume), jokes (Kiełkiewicz-Janowiak 2016), accounts of individual experience (Labov 2013), micronarratives (Jelec & Fabiszak 2019) and more. Even grammatical structures can be seen as bare-bones narratives (Turner 1996). After all, what are grammatical patterns, if not the bare bones of a story stripped of the flesh of the sentence.

Kermer's paper contained in this issue shows that the construal of time of a learner's native language influences their second language. She suggests a cognitive approach to the investigation of how learners' entrenched L1 construal patterns may carry over to their L2. If we view construal as "the ability to parse the properties of a situation and select the most fitting structural choice from among the open-ended inventory of linguistic choices" (Givón 1989: 90, after Kermer, this volume) then grammatical choices are indicative of the speaker using a specific spatial story. Concept transfer between L1 and L2 suggests, that the schematic stories we tell through grammar are resilient. The story remains stable even when the language is changed.

Similarly, Mandziuk-Nizińska investigates the changes in meaning of proverbs that underwent translation, taking the recontextualization approach proposed by Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk who observes that "translation involves a number of cycles of recontextualization of the original SL message expressed eventually in the TL" (2010: 105, after Mandziuk-Nizińska, this volume). The meanings of "once bitten, twice shy" and "kto na gorącym się sparzy, ten na zimne dmucha" are very different at the level of lexical semantics: one is about being bitten, the other about getting burnt. They are, nevertheless, considered equivalents, because they tell the same *story:* people who are careless learn to be (too) careful. Mandziuk-Nizińska finds the proverbs' status as translation equivalents despite the fact that "divergent in this respect is almost everything, but the meaning. Different metaphors, concepts employed, construal, structures" quite infuriating. The situation is much less surprising once we see it through the lens of the story. Despite their obvious differences, the two proverbs are built around the same narrative schema and embody the same small spatial story: of experiencing an unpleasant force and subsequently being repulsed from acting in similar circumstances. It could be argued that Mandziuk-Nizińska's paper shows that the recontextualization

of a proverb changes its outward shape, retaining the basic story as the real vehicle for meaning. The SL original is transformed in cycles until it fits the expectations of the TL, changing all but the bare bones of the story.

4. Conclusions

The relationship between the schema and the exemplar, a story and its linguistic telling is complex and dynamic. As Mandziuk-Nizińska shows, the same story can be told differently in two languages (or not, as many proverbs and sayings have direct translations). Kermer's paper demonstrates that, at a basic level, a narrative schema can be so compelling that it will cross the language border, grammar of one language attempting to colonize another. Since construal is linked with conceptualisation (e.g., Kokorniak 2018) we might conclude that bilinguals and multilinguals are unwilling to let go of the stories their native language is used to telling. The two papers tie into Badio's investigation of narrative as a radial category. His paper explains how a broad variety of linguistic phenomena can be understood as exemplars of the narrative as a category.

The leitmotif of this issue is Multimodal Patterns in Cognition and Communication. Our authors represent three different perspectives, different methodologies, and types of insight into those patterns. The story, the narrative schema, and narrative as a radial category provide a unifying perspective for research in this volume, but also perhaps an intriguing way forward for cognitive linguistics. Multimodal patterns in cognition and communication are, simply put, stories at different levels of schematicity.

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