

**Centre for Intercultural Language Studies
The University of British Columbia**

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Intercultural Language Studies: Looking Back, Looking Forward.

Abstract

Intercultural Communication has been a popular concept for many decades finding its way into such diverse fields as international business and education. Consequently, increased intercultural awareness has led to the development of various contrastive methods in intercultural training and curricular objectives vis-à-vis intercultural sensitivity and mediation. In the meantime, however, it has become clear that cultural dimensions and orientations require more semantic and pragmatic differentiation and cross-cultural validation. Furthermore, teaching intercultural competence to real students has proven to be much more difficult than (fuzzy) political or curricular proclamations suggest. The term 'intercultural language studies' was chosen, after some intense discussion, to reflect a departure from the overly general characterisation of linguistic processes represented by 'intercultural communication'. It was also chosen to mark the crucial role of language in intercultural encounters, both as a means to represent and to construct mental models. During the past 20 years of the existence of CILS, this specific approach to interculturality has led to a number of research projects as well as applications in teaching, curriculum design and material development which often involved electronic media. We propose introducing cognitive linguistics into a "cognitive language pedagogy" that promises to revitalize intercultural language studies and intercultural language teaching and result in both stronger theoretical foundations and new practical applications. The presentation discusses the theoretical implications, practical applications and future opportunities for this enhanced approach to intercultural language studies.

Introduction

As you all know, intercultural communication has been a popular concept for many decades and it has been adapted to and used in very diverse fields. Consequently, increased intercultural awareness has led to the development of various contrastive methods in intercultural training, most of which are commonly associated with the cultural orientations, standards or cultural dimensions approaches of practitioners such as Hofstede, Trompenaars, Thomas, Bennett, Hall and others who were among the first to generate a widespread sensitivity for intercultural issues in the larger general public and among internationally operating businesses. Their seemingly clear-cut explanations of cultural differences and their easily applicable mediation recipes appear to make the complexity of the world seemingly easy to digest. In reality, life is more complex than those largely binary models may suggest. What do we really know when we are told THE Chinese are more collective than others, that the Costa Ricans are the world's most feminine society, that THE French cherish their holidays and that THE Athabascans deny planning? If you know, that THE Japanese never say 'no' and always hand you their business card head-up what does that tell you about how some or all Japanese think and act, ... especially when they do not have business cards?

What is collectivity? Is it that all members of a society do the same things, even if they do them individually and mechanically? How does one distinguish between what is common and what is individual and between self and other? In particular, when one grows up in polycultural environments, as an increasing number of people do? What perspective does a speaker reveal when he or she assumes that someone else cherishes holidays? As opposed to being a workaholic or what? Doesn't that statement express more about the person who utters it than the culture the statement is supposedly referring to? What about the denial of planning? Is planning the unquestioned standard set in the world? Who then is setting the standards for planning?

In other words, it is clear that cultural dimensions and orientations require more semantic and pragmatic differentiation and cross-cultural validation. Similarly, teaching intercultural competence to real students has proven to be much more difficult than (fuzzy) political or curricular proclamations suggest. When CILS was founded – not overnight by the way – its name was also chosen to mark a difference

to the widespread notion of intercultural communication and training that is based on clearcut ascriptions of “us” and “them”. The term was also chosen to focus on the role of language in intercultural encounters, both as a means to represent and to construct linguacultural mental models.

Why Intercultural Language Studies?

Intercultural Language Studies makes explicit the inextricable relationship of language and culture: The study of language implies the study of language use, that is linguistic pragmatics, and that involves communication cultures. Not as systems of surface structures (*parole* in Saussurian terms) but as a system that constitutes linguacultures. In that vein, the Japanese linguist Ikegami (1991) distinguishes between ‘do-languages’ and ‘become-languages’. He shows that Japanese unlike European languages does not automatically assume the perspective of a grammatical subject (Ikegami 1991: 288). Taking the opening phrase of the novel Yukiguni (‘Snow Country’) written by the Nobel Prize for Literature winner for 1968, Yasunari Kawabata, he provides a perfect example of what Intercultural Language Studies is all about. The phrase reads as follows: “*Kunizakai no nagai tonneru o nukeru to, yukiguni de atta.*” In literal translation that phrase has no subject and means: On passing the long tunnel at the border, (it) was a snow country. Not even a semantically empty placeholder such as ‘it’ is required here. In Japanese, the phrase serves as a promising opening for the subsequent narration. A translation such as the one offered by the American Japan Studies expert Seidensticker “The train came out of the long tunnel into the snow country” thus does not adequately represent the meaning in the sense of the pragmatic function of the text, but rather displays a specific linguacultural perspective of a speaker of English who needs to identify a doer in the action (Ikegami 1991: 288-289).

In choosing the label intercultural language studies we wanted to express that

- Intercultural Language Studies puts a focus on differences amongst linguacultures (intercultural) and their relevance for the teaching and learning of languages.
- The term becomes a symbol of CILS’ strategic goals: 1. To join all those disenchanted researchers and teachers among the departments and faculties who had similar interests in languages and communication. 2. Following the

events in Europe, to bring down the walls between the language departments, between the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Education, the First Nations House of Learning and – a *novum* then – between the academic units and the English Language Institute and Continuing Studies. 3. By doing so, to build up a critical mass of energetic, like-minded researchers and teachers on campus, many of whom lived the hybrid lives of intercultural people themselves.

When we began with the Centre, Mackie Chase's unit in Continuing Studies had already been working on a Certificate in Intercultural Education which was to present a departure from a purely intercultural training approach and was to proceed to a cautiously hermeneutic approach in line with Gadamerian hermeneutics, without necessarily using that label. I think most of us at the time implicitly or explicitly embraced the basic concept of intercultural hermeneutics which assumes that intercultural understanding is a contrastive, cyclical and goal-oriented process driven by the supposedly declining differences of self and other.

Incidentally, intercultural hermeneutics probably describes the best possible interface between the CILS-approach and the teaching of the tradition-oriented literature and language departments in the Faculty of Arts. Many of us sympathised with the concept of third place or third space which together with a self-reflective competence has since made its way to broad use in language curricula and teacher education programs.

Subsequently, most traditional intercultural approaches to language teaching in fact have focussed on the change of perspective between self and other as the following quote indicates. It is taken from the 1997 British Columbia public school curriculum document for Modern Languages which benefitted from CILS input, but which – frankly – we as intercultural sympathizers need to review self-critically today:

Learning another language and learning about **another** culture enhance students' understanding of **their own** languages and cultures. This **deeper understanding** gives students greater choice when they make career and life plans. Study of diverse languages and cultures also provides opportunities for students to understand and benefit from multicultural links within Canada and throughout the world...(Learning Outcomes, Ministry of Education B.C. 1997: 3).

What is often neglected in the phrasing of such outcomes is the fact that the categories of self and other, us and them, in reality are hard to define and tend to

dissolve themselves when the perspectives merge. In addition: how can such change of perspectives (back and forth even, as suggested most of the time) be envisaged in cognitive terms? How do I look at myself with the eyes of the other? How does the other get hold of my eyes to look at him- or herself? And what about fourth and fifth spaces? What about the cognitive dissonance that arises from the apparent conflict to manage different world views at the same time?

Transdifference

We have all long struggled with that issue of maintaining perspectives of the self while approaching others – without dissolving our own self and without distorting the foreign other. While it is widely accepted today that cultures are defined as open, multilayered, multi-collective and dynamic entities, it has become clear that such dynamics and openness cannot be covered by binary approaches to interculturality such as the ones initially suggested by interculturalists. In the last decade, then, we have witnessed the emergence of a new concept which addresses those issues without falling into the traps of binaries or (covered) ethnocentrism: transdifference.

The term transdifference refers to phenomena of a co-presence of different or even oppositional properties, affiliations or elements of semantic and epistemological meaning construction, where this co-presence is regarded or experienced as cognitively or affectively dissonant, full of tension, and undissolvable. Phenomena of transdifference, for instance socio-cultural affiliations, personality components or linguistic and other symbolic predications, are encountered by individuals and groups and negotiated in their respective symbolic order. As a descriptive term transdifference allows the presentation and analysis of such phenomena in the context of the production of meaning that transcend the range of models of binary difference. (Breinig and Lösch 2006: 105)

Like traditional hermeneutical approaches, the concept of transdifference does not exclude difference. Rather, it is based on the assumption that the construction of difference in the traditional sense is an indispensable, albeit intrinsically problematic tool for human constructions of order (Breinig and Lösch 2006: 108)

Transdifference causes difference to oscillate for an unspecified duration. It fills an important gap by not pointing in the direction of an overcoming of difference, the blending and merging of properties and the mediation of semantic fields as is the stated goal of intercultural hermeneutics.

Transdifference is inextricably bound up with the difference in many of its

appearances and thus not limited to (inter-)culturality. Rather, it points out the insufficiency and indeterminacy of any difference-based production of meaning. It is therefore essential to study transdifference first of all in relation to forms of difference. (Breinig and Lösch 2006: 105-106)

Let's take the following proverb as a simple, arbitrary example: "to buy a pig in a poke". In German, this sounds like "to buy a cat in a bag" and in Spanish it translates into "dar gato por liebre", to give someone a cat instead of a rabbit. There is no either – or distinction here. There are many ways to express the concepts of hidden risks or the linked notion of the everyday potential for cheating depending on linguaculture-specific ways to conceptualise the world. Moreover, everyone is invited to play with the concept and modify it creatively without dissolving other options. If you want, you could buy a giraffe in a box, and almost everyone would understand you. Or one could use a remotely related expression such as "vender la moto" (to sell a motorcycle) in Spanish or other creative inventions. Typically, advanced multilingual speakers are able to manage various such world views side by side, switch between, modify and mix them when needed and use the conceptual knowledge and the acquired linguistic strategies to generate ever new creations or comment (make fun of) them.

In the context of cultural, ethnic, and territorial identity construction, transdifference refers to a wide range of phenomena arising from the multiple overlappings and mutual intersections of boundaries between cultures and collective identities, no matter whether these are conceptualised in essentialist or constructivist terms. All processes of constructing and marking difference necessarily produce transdifference insofar as they, on the one hand, highlight individual aspects of the self/other relation at the expense of others and, on the other hand, stand in conflict with various other differences along alternative lines of inclusion/exclusion. (Breinig and Lösch 2006: 112)

If it is naive to try to dissolve the complexity and dynamics of otherness by reducing it to cultural orientations or by employing cyclical approaches to a "higher understanding", how then can different concept worlds become accessible to language learners? Let me illustrate this by going right to the heart of language teachers' and learners' favorite pastime: grammar. I would like to do this not by referring to teaching methods, though, but instead would like to explore with you why cognitive linguistics may be a particularly well suited ally for all those concerned with intercultural aspects of language teaching and learning.

Cognitive Linguistics

Cognitive Linguistics is based on a number of premises and principles which seem fitting to language pedagogy:

Cognitive Linguistics' central theses include the

- thesis of embodied cognition
- thesis of encyclopedic semantics
- symbolic thesis
- thesis of meaning as conceptualisation
- usage-based thesis.

What do these theses mean? There are two sub-hypotheses to the principle of embodied cognition:

- Reality is not objectively given but a function of a species-specific and individual embodiment: construal is based on and requires mediation, e.g. colors.
- Mental representations of reality are grounded in our embodied mental states (multimodal representations are determined by body and perceptual constraints).

The thesis of encyclopedic semantics states that

- semantic structure interfaces with representations in the conceptual system (which are not identical)
- conceptual structure constitutes a vast network of structured knowledge, using a "semantic potential", encyclopedia-like to organize the world in both culture-specific and idiosyncratic ways.

Let's have a look at how culture-specific the conceptual system maybe. The following tables refer to data collected by Québécoise Mélody Roussy-Parent in a contrastive study of Québécois and German. In that study she used association experiments first conducted by Rosenzweig in 1970 for psychological research. The tables illustrate the large range of semantic features associated with certain key terms, their

linguacultural specificity and the rather small overlap between languages.

Freiheit (liberty)		Liberté	
Response	Frequency	Response	Frequency
Gefängnis (prison)	5	expression (Meinungsäußerung)	5
Statue	4	voyage (Reise)	3
Grenzenlos (limitless)	3	air (Luft)	2
Weite (open space)	3	bonheur (Glück)	2
Frieden (peace)	2	cheval (Pferd)	2
Luft (air)	2	choix (Wahl)	2
Müchener Freiheit	2	cinquante-cinq (55)	2
Reisen (travel)	2	démocratie (Demokratie)	2
Schön (beautiful)	2	fleuve (Strom)	2
Urlaub (holidays)	2	Fraternité (Brüderlichkeit)	2
Wichtig (important)	2	statue (Statue)	2
Berge, Betrug, Brüderlichkeit , Fahne, Feigheit, fliegen, französische Revolution, Gleichheit, Gut, Heimat , Knast, kostbar, Liebe, Natur, Unabhängigkeit , Uneingeschränktheit, Vogel , wegfahren, wertvoll, Wind, Wunsch, Zeit	1 each	auto, cage, célibataire, conditionnelle, congé , dans mon coeur, défendre, faire ce que je veux, finalement, humanitaire, indépendance , n'est pas une marque de yaourt, oiseau paix , paranoïaque, patrie , Québec, radio, région, respiration, révolution, s'arrête où commence celle de l'autre, servitude, totale, ville	1 each

Table 1. Word association task Québécois-Deutsch "Freedom/Freiheit/Liberté" (Roche and Roussy-Parent 2006)

Frieden (peace)		Paix	
Response	Frequency	Response	Frequency

Taube (dove)	13	amour (Liebe)	6
Krieg (war)	8	guerre (Krieg)	6
Ruhe (silence)	5	monde (Welt)	6
Hoffnung (hope)	3	colombe (Taube)	5
Weiss (white)	3	blanc (weiss)	4
auf Erden (on earth)	2	Noel (Weihnachten)	3
Freiheit (liberty, freedom)	2	tranquillité (Ruhe)	3
		sérénité (Heiterkeit)	2
		terre (die Erde)	2
brauchen wir, Demonstration Freude , Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen, Friedensengel, Kirche, leben, Seelenruhe , Sehnsucht, selten, schön, stiftend, Stille, Utopie, verzeihen	1 each	beauté, bonheur, bonté, doux, Gandi, indien, inférieure, joie , Nations-Unies, religion, romaine, souhait, un jour peut-être, vie	1each

Table 2. Word association task Québécois-Deutsch "Peace/Frieden/Paix" (Roche and Roussy-Parent 2006)

Abstract nouns	Gesundheit/santé	0,36
	Krankheit/maladie	0,36
	Wut/colère	0,32
	Sorge/trouble	0,10
	Bequemlichkeit/ confort	0,24
	Frieden/paix	0,45
	Stolz/fierté	0,14
	Glück/bonheur	0,24
	Eifersucht/jalousie	0,28
	Freiheit/liberté	0,24
	Mean	0,298

	Median	0,28
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Table 3. Word association task Québécois-Deutsch – Mean Correspondances (Roche and Roussy-Parent 2006)

	Adjectives	Concrete Nouns	Abstract Nouns
Mean	0,300	0,319	0,273
Median	0,25	0,32	0,26

Table 4. Word association task Québécois-Deutsch – Average Correspondances (Roche and Roussy-Parent 2006)

Different words express different semantic fields. As can be seen, only a few bold type words mark correspondences between the languages. Interestingly enough, abstract nouns produce more and a broader range of associations than do concrete nouns.

Comparing the Québécois data to other studies on different varieties of French and English Mélody found that the Québécois of her informants is placed between American English and European French varieties.

Back to the next major thesis of Cognitive Linguistics, the symbolic thesis. It states that

- form-meaning pairings are the fundamental unit of grammar independent of their size (symbolic unit, symbolic assembly, construction), e.g. distasteful, good morning, he kicked the bucket ...
- there is a lexicon-grammar continuum, that is, there is no principled distinction between the study of grammar and semantics
- there are differences in schematicity, e.g. lexical form/semantic richness vs. phonological value:
- symbolic units can be related to one another, in terms of similarity of form and semantic relatedness (dis-graceful, dis-respectful, des-aparicion (Spanish), good day, ...).

Please note that the lexicon-grammar continuum constitutes quite a different view on language awareness and focus on form than the one presented by neo-grammatical

language awareness approaches. According to Talmy (2000) the structure of the conceptual system can be illustrated as follows:

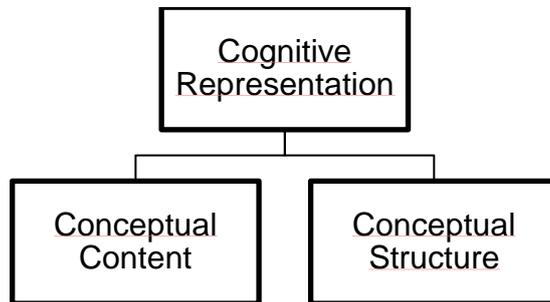


Figure 1. Structure of the Conceptual System (Talmy 2000: 21)

More specifically, meaning is conceptualisation:

- meaning is not the sum of the parts
- meaning involves conceptualisation, some of which is non-linguistic in nature
- there is a distinction between lexical concept and cognitive model (Evans), and other models.

The usage-based thesis states the following:

- The mental grammar of users is formed by the abstraction of symbolic units from situated instances of language use (contextually relevant information and communicative intentions).
- There is no principled distinction between knowledge of language and use of language (in the generative sense of performance and competence):
knowledge of language IS knowledge of how language is used.

While generative theories take constructions to be the output of abstract and autonomous rule applications and constraints (that's why CILS concerns itself with language studies, not generative linguistics), constructions from a usage-based perspective are conceived as what speakers of a language infer from the input (Tomasello 2008). The inference of the input is grounded in speakers' immediate perceptual experience. Constructions, that is patterns of smaller or bigger linguistic units, such as words, morphemes, and phrases, can thus be described both from the semantic and functional perspective ('What is the meaning conveyed by the construction?', 'What is its function in the given context?') and from the formal perspective ('What kinds of items are likely to occur in the construction, and in what kind of configuration?'). This foundation in the transparency of usage-based

categories is most relevant for language teaching. It can help avoid the most fundamental misconception of traditional approaches to language teaching: overburdening the learners with a distracting amount and degree of abstract rules that they cannot apply to reality.

Cognitive Language Pedagogy

Let me now try to explain how the principles of Cognitive Linguistics just presented can be transformed into a *Cognitive Language Pedagogy* which lets us address the very essence of intercultural language studies.

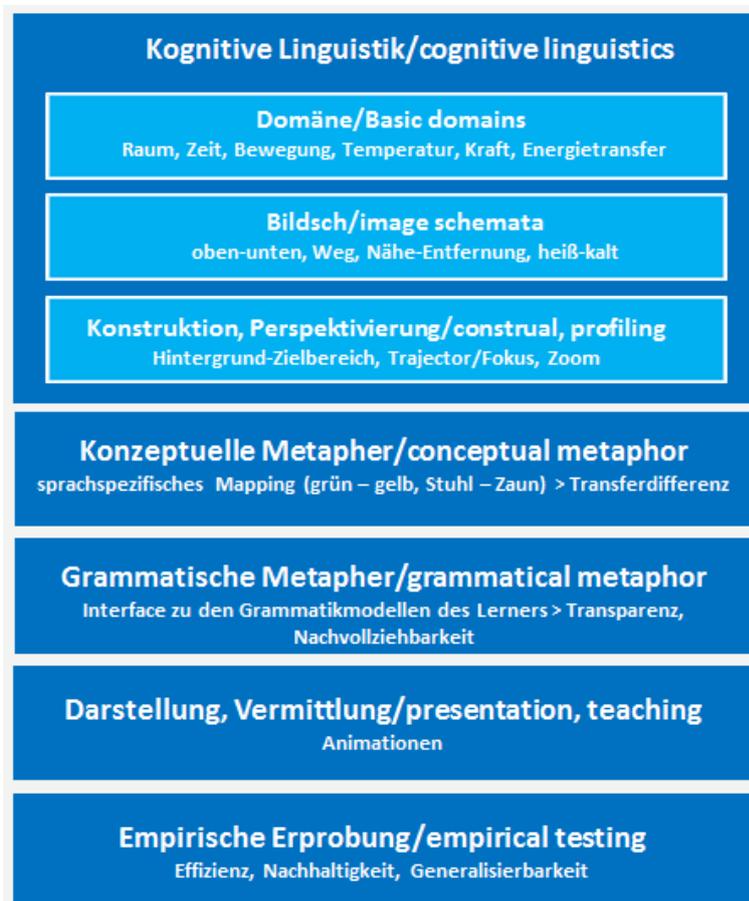


Figure 2. Model of Cognitive Language Pedagogy

- Image schemata are not specific images but are “abstract” in another sense of that word: they are schematic. They represent schematic patterns arising from imagistic domains, such as containers, paths, links, forces, and balance that recur in a variety of embodied domains and structure our bodily experience (Lakoff 1987: 453; Johnson 1987: 29). Image schemas are also not specific to a particular sensory modality (Lakoff 1987: 267; Johnson 1987: 24-25).

SPACE	UP-DOWN; FRONT-BACK; LEFT-RIGHT; NEAR-FAR; CENTRE-PERIPHERY; CONTACT; STRAIGHT; VERTICALITY
CONTAINMENT	CONTAINER; IN-OUT; SURFACE; FULL-EMPTY; CONTENT
LOCOMOTION	MOMENTUM; SOURCE-PATH-GOAL
BALANCE	AXIS BALANCE; TWIN-PAN BALANCE; POINT BALANCE; EQUILIBRIUM
FORCE	COMPULSION; BLOCKAGE; COUNTERFORCE; DIVERSION; REMOVAL OF RESTRAINT; ENABLEMENT; ATTRACTION; RESISTANCE
UNITY; MULTIPLICITY	MERGING; COLLECTION; SPLITTING; ITERATION; PART- WHOLE; COUNT-MASS; LINKAGE
IDENTITY	MATCHING; SUPERIMPOSITION
EXISTENCE	REMOVAL; BOUNDED SPACE; CYCLE; OBJECT; PROCESS

Table 5. Basic Domains and Schemata (Evans and Green 2006: 190)

- Image schemata structure our bodily experience (Talmy 1972, 1977, 1983), and they structure our non-bodily experience as well, via metaphor (Lakoff 1987: 453; Johnson 1987: 29). That is why Méloody found in her study that abstract nouns produce more metaphoric associations than concrete nouns. Lakoff (1990, 1993) argues that image schematic structure is preserved in the metaphorical mapping from a source domain to a target domain, provided it is consistent with already existing image schematic structure in the target domain (i.e., the Invariance Hypothesis, see also Lakoff and Turner 1989; Turner 1987, 1991, 1996).

Here are a few examples for image schematic presentations:

Poor Johnny Depp...

JD's new girl friend forced JD to buy a fancy apt. in Dnebrpetrovsk.

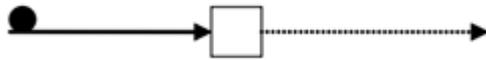


Figure 6.7 The COMPULSION image schema

Evans&Green 2006:188

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Figure 3. The COMPULSION image schema (Evans and Green 2006: 188)

Johnny Depp by accident hit a pedestrian on the street.



Figure 6.9 The COUNTERFORCE image schema

Evans&Green 2006:188

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Figure 4. The COUNTERFORCE image schema (Evans and Green 2006: 188)

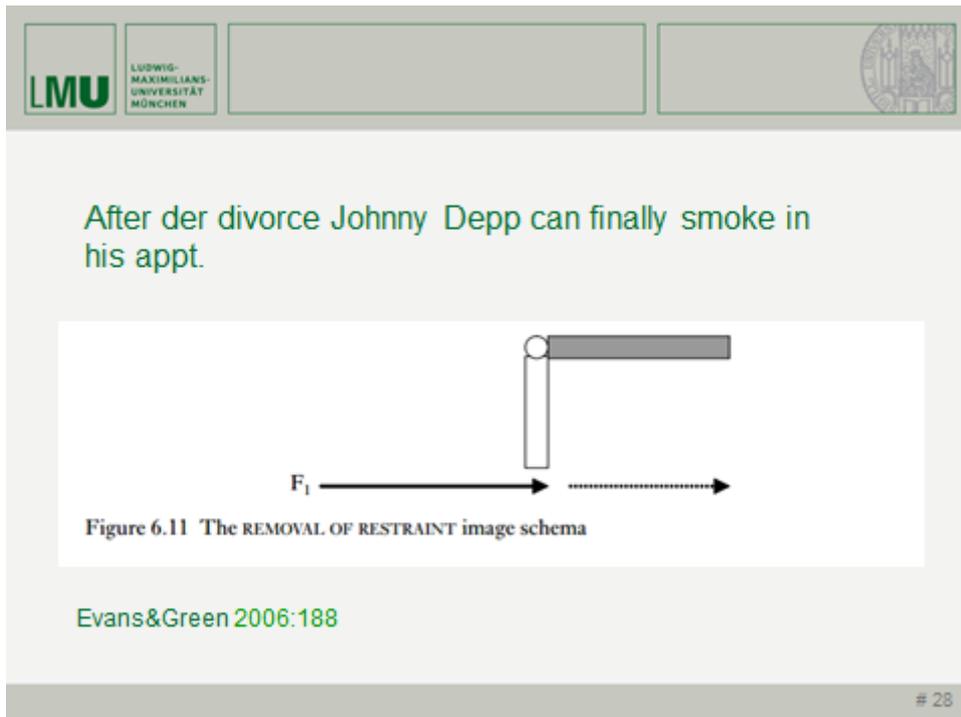


Figure 5. The REMOVAL OF RESTRAINT image schema (Evans and Green 2006: 188)

Mental constructions, according to Langacker (2008:68), are dependent on, and reflect, various cognitive factors: specificity (as expressed by specific lexical items), prominence in terms of profiling and in terms of focal prominence of relational participants, that is, the relationship of foreground and background. In the terms of Langacker those are, trajector and landmark, and perspective (the expression of vantage point, orientation, local versus global perspective as expressed by the temporal aspect in ‘the road is winding’ vs. ‘the road winds through the mountains’). Consequently, the specific shape of mental constructions is largely dependent on the speaker’s attention to specific details.

As we have seen, image schemata are derived from general perception but display a social-constructive dimension (Sinha & Jensen de López 2000, Zlatev 2005, Kimmel 2005).

Metaphorization

Most of our ordinary conceptual system is metaphorical in nature, that is, human thoughts are metaphorical *per se*, since human cognition is based on physical experience but cannot be directly commuted to mental processes without some

measure of symbolic interpretation (Evans and Green 2006; Grady 2005; Oakley 2007). As a result, language is governed by metaphorization processes. Vice versa, language is an important element in shaping humans' perception and mental modelling. Metaphorization processes are thus an important element in the brain's construction of the world rather than a representation of an objective reality (cf. Slobin's 1996 Thinking for Speaking Hypothesis, and the works of language philosophers such as Locke 1690, Vico 1725, Condillac 1746, Humboldt 1801/1802, Weinreich 1953, Osgood et al. 1954 and Vygotskij 1962). Every aspect of human symbolic behavior is grounded in this projection of reality and it is, naturally, influenced by idiosyncratic and culture-specific experiences, ways of thinking, norms and linguistic symbols.

In other words, the culture-specific and idiosyncratic perceptual environment has a large influence on the conceptualisation of the world through the association with metaphors, and, hence, its mapping onto language. Mark Webber (2013) with reference to current teaching practices argues convincingly that neglecting the conceptual context in both the analysis of metaphor and the inclusion in curricula leads to an unjustified and unproductive reductionism which in the end inhibits our understanding of the systematics of metaphors and defeats the purpose of raising awareness of metaphor in and through language teaching.

Metaphors are the interface with culture-based language pedagogy (as presented by Kramsch 1993; Byram 1997), intercultural language pedagogy (Foschi Albert et al. 2010; Reeg 2006; Roche 2001), the sceptical hermeneutics approach based in intercultural hermeneutics (Hunfeld 2004; BMW AG 1997) and, more recently, Conceptual Metaphor Theory (proposed by Danesi, 2008).

The basic motive for using metaphors in the teaching of languages draws on the fact that metaphors represent a conceptual and orientational systematic projection of the world which is easily accessible to learners because of its immediacy and transparency. Take for instance French 'pris entre le marteau et l'enclume'/'(Hammer and anvil, caught between a rock and a hard place'; in German: 'zwischen Pest und Cholera') or compare 'on the street'/'in der Straße' (German) or the different colours linguacultures pick to conceptualize envy: black in Mandarin, red in Russian, yellow

in German, green in English. Or look at the difference of conceptualizing 'in the rain' as a container in English and German versus under a surface in Romance languages such as French and Spanish: 'Sous la pluie', 'bajo la lluvia'.

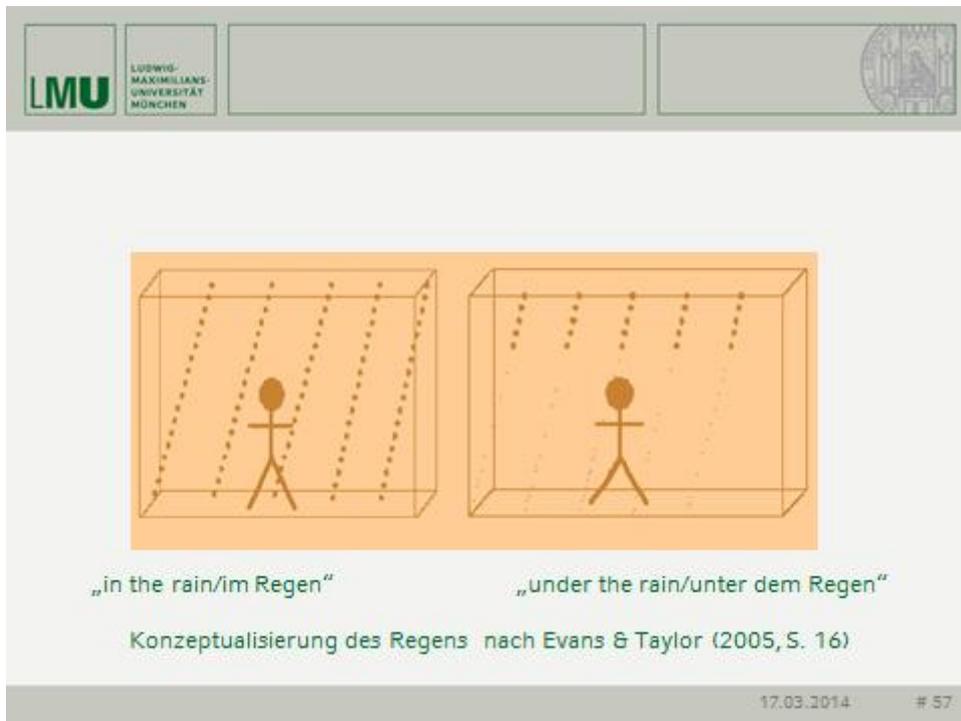


Figure 6. Conceptualisation of rain (Evans and Taylor 2005: 16)

As we have seen, a person who knows or learns various languages needs to have access to various image schemata and he/she needs to organize his/her multilingual lexicon and conceptual system accordingly. That is then the place for transference. Monique Bournot-Trites and Ken Reeder (2001) in their remarkable study of the cognitive effects of bilingualism have shown that the informants who had developed a good level of bilingual competence, that is, who were able to handle transferences more aptly than others, in general also had a big advantage in transferring the skills acquired onto other areas of cognition (interdependence hypothesis).

Grammatical Metaphor

Contrary to common pedagogical belief, dissonance does not constitute a problem per se. The differences in image schemata, that is, the very essence of intercultural understanding, obviously can lead to a greater prominence or saliency of the concepts in question and lead to lasting learning effects. As to the meaning-form continuum we have talked about earlier: this would entail that image schemata are not only at work in the lexicon but also in grammar, as grammar presents a formal

side of meaning. If this were so, then metaphors could be a great tool in making grammatical structures transparent to learners of foreign languages. That is where transference is turned into the pedagogical instrument of transfer difference. To put it simply: the learner's main task in managing different languages is to handle cognitive dissonance, that is to manage different conceptual systems, different image schemata, different metaphors. As mentioned before, difference is not necessarily a problem but rather a chance and a necessary and natural precondition for learning. That is why transfer difference plays a key role in our model of Cognitive Language Pedagogy. That is also why we apply it to grammar, or, more precisely, to the conceptualisation of grammatical metaphors. Grammatical metaphors in our model of Cognitive Language Pedagogy are metaphors suited to explain grammatical principles in a language. They are derived from conceptual metaphors such as the transgression of boundaries, power dynamics, energy transfer and the like. We are relating grammatical metaphors of the foreign language using related grammatical or conceptual metaphors available in the learners existing inventory of image schemata. If possible, we choose easily and widely accessible (common) and highly prestigious schemata such as soccer, golf, formula1 and other sports.

To illustrate the importance and scope of such metaphors in grammar learning and teaching it is instructive to turn to one of the most prominent fields of metaphor-prone grammar across languages: the field of motion. Of particular interest to Cognitive Linguistics in this field has been the relation of moving objects in space as they produce a perceived contrast between a background (landmark) and the moving object (trajector) (Langacker 1999). A landmark in this framework represents the spatial area in which a moving object is situated. For example, in contrast to formal descriptions of grammar, cognitive approaches have stressed the significance of the crossing of an (imaginary) boundary as the determining feature for the choice of the accusative case in German with two-way prepositions (Freitag and Vandermeeren 2005; Wilmots and Moonen 1997; Roche and Webber 1995). Consequently, the differentiating criterion for two-way prepositions in German is not the semantic feature of motion inherent to the verb, as is widely claimed by almost all reference grammars, but the conceptual and functional feature of the marking of a boundary crossing. As a result, the location or movement within a given boundary or area is marked by the dative regardless of whether the verb expresses motion or not. In the

words of Langacker (1999) the criteria for choosing the appropriate case in German can thus be formulated as follows (see screenshot on the boundary crossing below, Figure 7):

- dative: the subject (trajector) remains within the immediate search area of the prepositional object (landmark); the landmark area is not being crossed
- accusative: the subject (trajector) moves into the immediate area of the prepositional object (landmark) and crosses its boundaries.

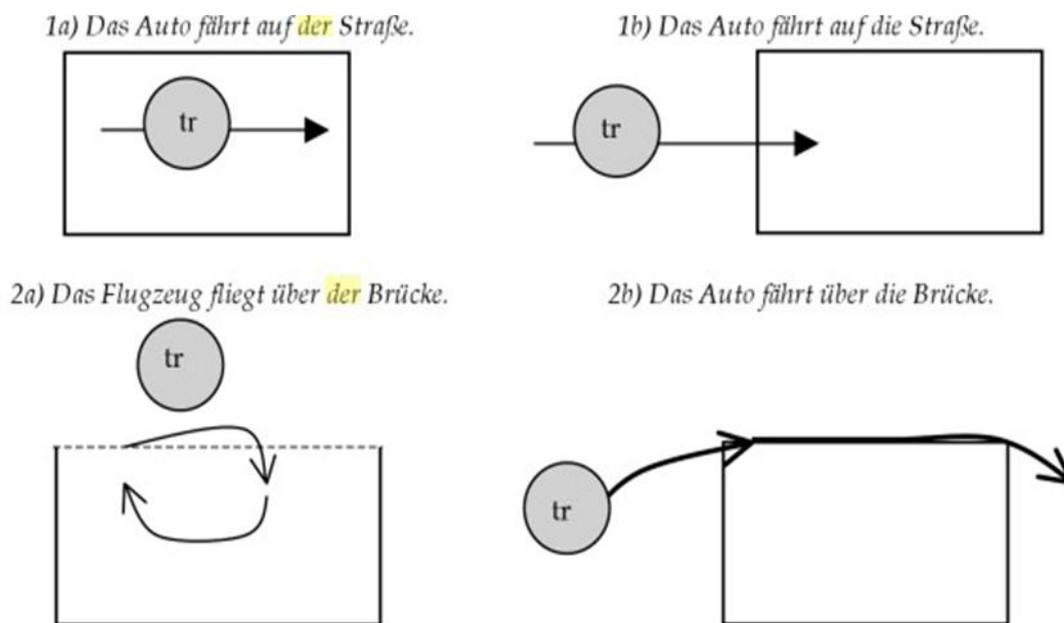


Abbildung 5-6: Trajector-landmark-Konfigurationen (J. Scheller)

Figure 7. Schematic explanation of trajector-landmark-configurations underlying dative/accusative allocation in German

The presentation mode

The presentation mode of the grammatical metaphor appears to matter where it supports the schematic images and concepts behind the grammatical metaphor used. E.g. animations of grammatical metaphors assist the learner in processing the foreign language where motion is a crucial element expressed by the metaphor.



Figure 8. Screenshot of an animation taken from Scheller (2008: 132). Left the dative expression (trajector remains within the perimeter of the landmark), accusative on the right (trajector moves into the perimeter of the landmark)

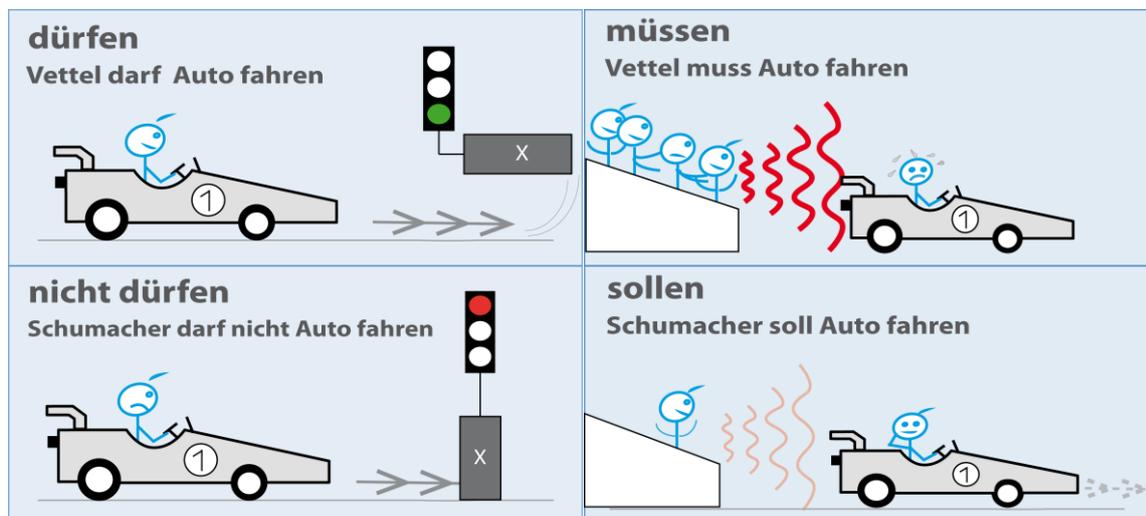


Figure 9. Screenshots of some modal verbs in grammar animations using formula 1 racing as grammatical metaphor

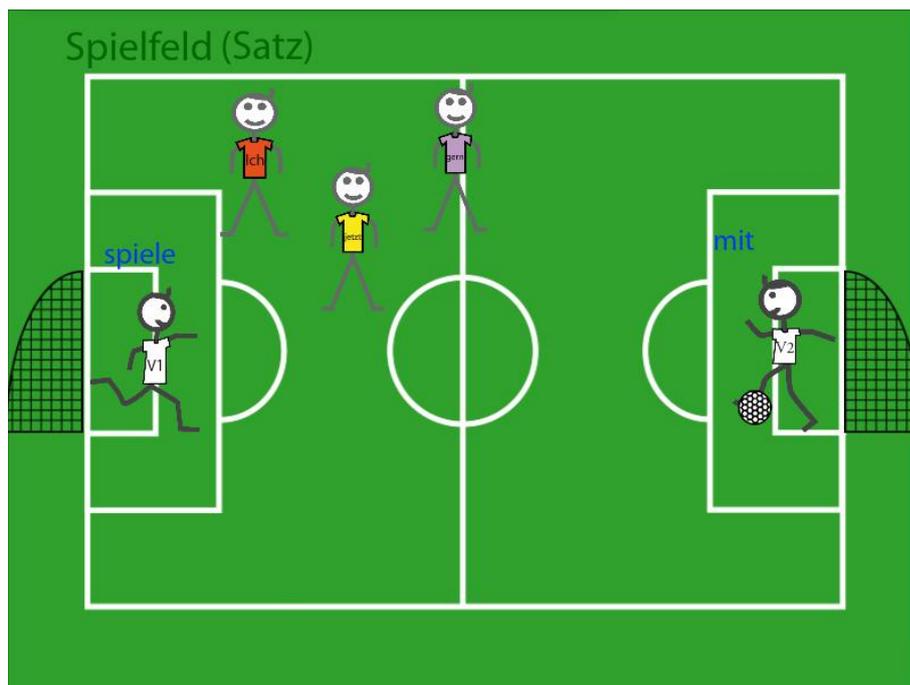


Figure 10. Soccer as grammatical metaphor to explain syntax in German

Results of empirical studies

Recent studies indicate that such conceptual representations of grammatical constraints are productive across different languages (e.g. Özçalışkan 2003, for Turkish) and work well in language learning and teaching (Scheller 2008; Roche and Scheller 2008; Grass 2013). The study by Scheller (2008) is unique in this respect as it combines the investigation of such a conceptual approach to grammar with various modes of input presentation. The success of the programs developed for, and used in, the study is measured in terms of short- and long-term learner performances in the application of grammatical rules. Four groups of informants were formed to test four different combinations of the presented materials. The groups used either a conceptual/metaphor-based or traditional/rule-governed approach to grammar explanation and either an animation or static presentation mode. The results document the overall superiority of the conceptual approach to grammar when presented in the animation mode. The study shows that metaphor-based animations produce significant and lasting improvements in the acquisition of grammar by students who have progressed little or not over a long period of time.

More recently, a study by Grass (2013) which used similar animations and was

based on an approach developed by cognitive psychologists (Ifenthaler et al. 2005) to measure modifications in mental models has traced the nature of the modifications and thus has added evidence to the claims made by Scheller's study.

In support of the findings of the largely quantitative studies by Scheller, the study by Grass shows how diffuse and arbitrary mental representations of grammatical rules based on diffuse representations of traditional grammar approaches may be turned into plausible, structured, and focused mental models by using conceptual animations. I would argue that such models in turn are a precondition for the accurate and lasting application of the rules in authentic communication.

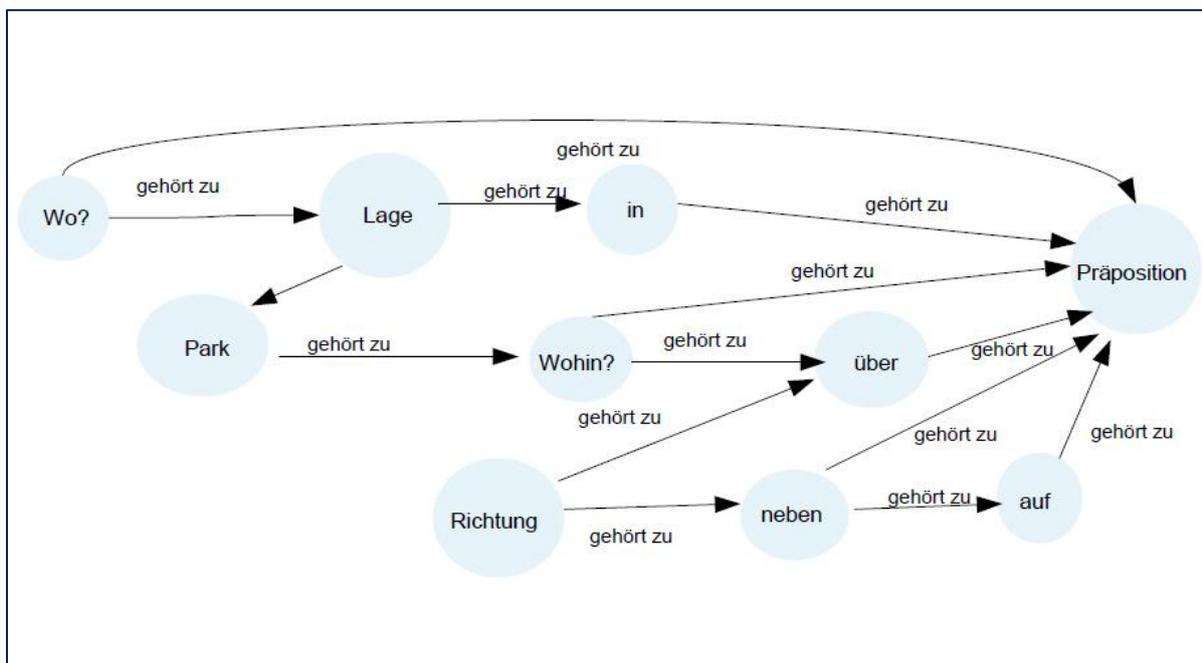


Figure 11. "Chaotic" mental models of two-way prepositions in learners before using conceptual animations (Grass 2013)

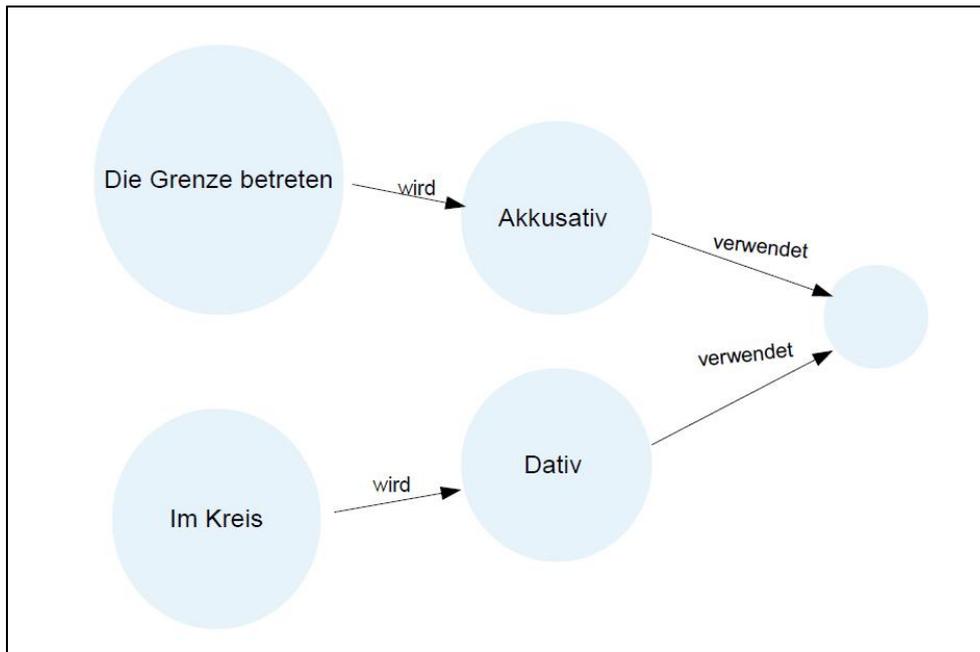


Figure 12. Mental models of two-way prepositions in learners after using conceptual animations (Grass 2013): the assignment of case and function is grounded in systematic mental representations

Concluding remarks

These sometimes sketchy remarks in my presentation were meant to show how the concept of intercultural communication has developed into a concept of transdifference which is no longer based on the assumption that communication requires the unifying, harmonizing dissolution of different world views. I also wanted to show that interculturality is not restricted to curricula that no one reads. Rather, it remains the core issue of language teaching and learning and becomes highly operational even in allegedly abstract fields such as grammar. In my view, the alliance with Cognitive Linguistics leads us to an overdue paradigm shift in language pedagogy and, subsequently, in research.

Finally, I would like to congratulate CILS on recognizing the importance of interculturality in language learning and teaching much earlier than the main-stream field. I would also like to congratulate CILS on its many achievements over the past 20 years and, of course, on a memorable celebration of its anniversary.

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