

## Cognitive Syntax and Spoken Language

### Cognitive syntax

- Cognitive Grammar: focus on semantics
- Construction Grammar: “cognitivism” varies
- others: e.g. Deane (1992), Hopper (1998) & other emergentism, etc.y.
- Fundamental properties: usage based ideology, inseparability of form and meaning/function, centrality of schemas

### Spoken language syntax

- written language bias (especially in syntactic theory)
- speech-related challenges in syntax: linear organization, dialogic speech, interaction (processing, variation, ...)

### Schemata, constructions & frames

- states of affairs: events, actions, ...
  - generalized as frames & situation types, constructions & expression types
  - realized as flow of speech
  - organized around frames
  - motivated by constructions

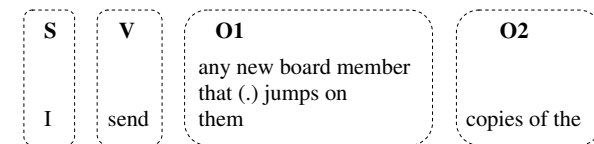
### Problem 1: Linear organization & twisting and turning of speech

- (1) ja/ siit kuka heile anto mittai kuka lie antant/ vihassaa kuka lie antant armossaa- et/ villoja ja kuka anto muutakii kavetta nii/ siit ne niita ketrasiit ja neuloiit sukki ja lapasii ja sit saivat lahjuksii siit sinne haihe./ ‘And there who gave them what, who might have given out of anger, who might have given out of grace, that wool and who gave other useful stuff, so they weaved out of it and knitted socks and mittens and so got presents to take to the wedding. (LA: Nuijamaa)

	S	NP:lle	V	O
ja/ siit	kuka	heile anto	mittai	
	kuka	lie antant/		vihassaa
	kuka	lie antant		armossaa-
et/			villoja	
ja	kuka	anto	muutakii kavetta	

### Problem 2: Dialogic speech and turn-taking

- (2)  
BRAD: (..) Now what I (.) what I have done though is to (.) you know (.) any new board member that (.) jumps on I send them  
PHIL: Good .  
BRAD: (..) copies of the  
PHIL: [because (.) I wanna ]  
BRAD: [(.) Yeah ] .  
PHIL: I wanna [get these (.) b:ooks ]  
BRAD: [but ty- ]  
BRAD: (.) typically they -- no one reads em .



### Problem 3: Interaction

- (3)  
a. A: Buore beaivvi. (‘Good day.’)  
B: Ipmel atti. (‘May God give.’)  
b. A: Kaikkietävän Jumalan kasvojen edessä ja tämän seurakunnan läsnä ollessa kysyn sinulta, Akseli Koskela: tahdotko ottaa Elina Kivivuoren avioaimoksesi ja osoittaa hänelle uskollisuutta ja rakkautta myötä- ja vastoinkäymisissä?  
(‘In the name of God almighty and in the presence of this parish I ask thee, Akseli Koskela: will you take this Elina Kivivuori to be your lawful wedded wife, and show her faithfulness and love, in sickness and in health?’)  
B: Tahdon. (‘I will.’)  
(4)  
IE1: ....as long as the two systems exist and we need them for stability .h we will have no: .h uh unification. This is absolutely clear.  
IE2: May I say something.  
IR: Yes sir.=  
IE2: =on the subject?  
IR: Yes sir.  
IE2: Uh (.) ahem I think it is a big mistake. to equate the NATO alliance and thuh Warsaw Pact....  
[PBS MacNeil 12-4-89] (Concerning the reunification of Germany) (Heritage 1998)

## Two kinds of frames

- cognitive frames
  - event types (e.g. giving frame)
  - organize the situation/state-of-affairs being talked about
- interactional frames
  - speech situations, interactional conventions
  - organize the speech situation

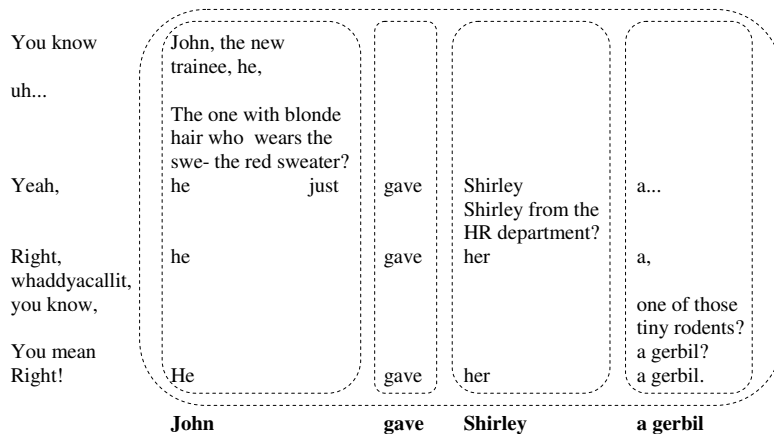
## “Cognitive frames”, constructions, and the organization of speech

- syntactic and semantic structure
  - “traditional sentence grammar”
  - psychological & monological
- proposition, state of affairs, event frame
  - the semantic setting as a force keeping the utterance together
- construction, constructional schema
  - a conventionalized template as a “target structure”
  - association with event types and frames

## Dialogic speech and interactional frames

- interactional functions: turn-taking conventions, situation-specific behavior, etc.
- social-dialogical by nature
  - “what is going on between the speaker and the hearer” (Fillmore 1982)
- types of speech situations, speech acts

- (5) A: You know John, the new trainee, he, uh...  
 B: The one with blonde hair who wears the swe- the red sweater?  
 A: Yeah, he just gave Shirley a...  
 B: Shirley from the HR department?  
 A: Right, he gave her a, whaddyacallit, you know, one of those tiny rodents?  
 B: You mean a gerbil?  
 A: Right! He gave her a gerbil.



## Principles of organization in conversation

- adjacency pairs & sequences
- organization: turn taking, preference, repair, sequence of telling
- syntactic organization & constructions
- semantic organization & cognitive frames

## Frames and (other) constructions

- “the grammar consists of constructions”
- the language system consists of conventionalized, experience-based templates
  - speech situations
  - organization of states of affairs, things, objects, etc. in the world
  - morphosyntax, form, formal structure
- different kinds of models
  - different classes: constructions, cognitive frames, interactional frames
  - different manifestations of the same thing

## Conclusion

- further issues: how do speakers mark e.g.
  - “going back” within a structure?
  - beginnings and ends of a turn?
  - switching to a different frame?
- cognitive linguistics (or Cognitive Grammar, Construction Grammar, et.) has the potential to be developed into a genuinely comprehensive theory of language

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