Cognitive Linguistics

Cognitive Linguistics argues that language is governed by general cognitive principles, rather than by a special-purpose language module. This introductory textbook surveys the field of cognitive linguistics as a distinct area of study, presenting its theoretical foundations and the arguments supporting it. Clearly organized and accessibly written, it provides a useful introduction to the relationship between language and cognitive processing in the human brain. It covers the main topics likely to be encountered in a course or seminar, and provides a synthesis of study and research in this fast-growing field of linguistics. The authors begin by explaining the conceptual structures and cognitive processes governing linguistic representation and behavior, and go on to explore cognitive approaches to lexical semantics, as well as syntactic representation and analysis, focusing on the closely related frameworks of cognitive grammar and construction grammar. This much-needed introduction will be welcomed by students in linguistics and cognitive science.

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Cognitive Linguistics

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Preface

This book provides an overview of the basic principles and methods of cognitive linguistics, in particular as they are applied to semantic and syntactic issues. It is intended to be used as a textbook for a course on cognitive linguistics for advanced undergraduates and postgraduate students, as well as functioning as an introduction to this approach to language for linguists and researchers in neighboring disciplines. Parts I and II may also function as a textbook for a course on cognitive semantics, supplemented by case studies from the cognitive linguistic literature. Part III may also function as introductory reading for a course on construction grammar, followed by readings from the literature that delve into the details of particular theories of construction grammar and the analyses of particular constructions.

The chapters of the book were independently written, but jointly discussed. Croft is responsible for chapters 1–3 and 9–12, and Cruse for chapters 4–8 (this fact will no doubt be obvious to the reader). Cruse also contributed to §3.2.1, and Croft to §8.2. Although we have written our chapters independently, the book represents a single coherent perspective on cognitive linguistics. We agree on all of the major points, and most of the minor ones; what minor disagreements remain do not compromise the integrity of the analysis as a whole.

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