**REVIEW**

## Evans, Vyvyan. 2013. *Language and Time: A Cognitive Linguistics Approach*

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Time permeates all spheres of our lives and every aspect of our human experience. It is a backdrop against which we are able to comprehend concepts embedded in our everyday social reality. Hence, it is our awareness of time that at least to some extent defines us as human beings. The question of how humans perceive and conceptualize time has preoccupied scholars of different provenances for centuries. The most fundamental to human experience but also the most immaterial and abstract at the same time, the domain of time has been a formidable challenge that psychologist, anthropologist, neuroscientists as well as linguists have been trying to tackle. A comprehensive cognitive linguistic account of this phenomenologically real experience that manifests itself in our subjective experience via interoceptively real sensations is an ambitious task that Vyvyan Evans sets for himself in his monograph entitled *Language and Time: A Cognitive Linguistics Perspective*. Specifically, drawing up a taxonomy of linguistic and conceptual resources for fixing events in time, referred to as temporal frames of reference (t-FoR, henceforth), he meticulously illustrates that while the domain of space has some bearing on how humans conceptualize time, the domain of time is quite distinct from the domain of space. Hence, being a self-contained domain, time cannot simply pattern after space in all respects. As Evans admits, the book continues his research on time first addressed in his 2004 book *The Structure of Time*, yet it is clearly much broader in scope with respect to both descriptive and theoretical goals as it not only provides a detailed taxonomy of t-FoRs but also addresses the issue of linguistically mediated meaning construction as operationalized within the framework of LCCM Theory, a theory of lexical concepts and cognitive models proposed by Evans in his 2009 monograph *How Words Mean: Lexical Concepts, Cognitive Models, and Meaning Construction*. Hence the book is not only the first monograph-length study of t-FoRs from the cognitive linguistics perspective but also a testing ground for LCCM Theory.

In Part I: Orientation (pp. 1 – 50), which comprises two chapters, Evans spells out his research questions and outlines the theoretical and methodological design of his study. The first chapter is concerned with the nature of temporal reference and tFoRs,

which are operationalized in terms of Goldberg's (1995) argument-structure constructions. Evans briefly outlines previous research on deictic, sequential and extrinsic temporal reference and discusses the tradition of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT henceforth), which posits that time is elegantly conceptualized in terms of motion through space. To complement the research tradition of CMT, Evans introduces his framework for studying t-FoRs, which derives from LCCM Theory, the primary focus of the next chapter.

Chapter two is a comprehensive account of the fundamental theoretical and methodological assumptions underlying LCCM Theory. It is in *Language and Time* that Evans, for the first time, renames his LCCM Theory as *access semantics*, which most probably takes its name after the nature of interaction between the linguistic and the conceptual systems, that is, open-class lexical concepts facilitate access to vast multimodal resources in the human conceptual system. The chapter closes with a section presenting a methodology for identifying t-FoR lexical concepts, which is in accord with the main tenets of LCCM Theory.

Part II: Temporal frames of reference (pp. 51 – 166) consists of five chapters. Chapter three discusses the nature of temporal reference and hence constitutes a background for the analyses of t-FoRs carried out in the three following chapters. Drawing upon evidence from psychology and neuroscience, Evans convincingly argues that temporal representation is grounded in phenomenologically real experiences. In his discussion of the relationship between time and space, Evans refers to three parameters, namely, magnitude, dimensionality, and directedness, which make comparison of the two domains possible. Additionally, he introduces another parameter, namely, transience, which is unique to the domain of time and legitimizes the dissociation of time and space. He further extends the notion of transience to prove and illustrate that its different types, namely, anisotropic, succession and duration transience, give rise to three distinct temporal relations, namely, a future/past relation, an earlier/later relation and the matrix relation, which in turn underpin the deictic, sequential and extrinsic t-FoRs respectively.

In chapters four, five and six, respectively, Evans provides a thorough and lengthy discussion of the deictic, sequential and extrinsic t-FoRs, of which the deictic t-FoR is depicted in an amazing level of detail. The three chapters have roughly the same structure: first, the reader is presented with some neurological basis for a given t-FoR; second, the nature of a particular t-FoR is discussed, including its coordinate system used to identify an event in respect of a given transience type; third, the linguistic evidence for the existence of a given t-FoR is provided, which consists in the LCCM Theory driven identification of distinct conventionalized lexical concepts relevant to a given t-FoR.

Part II closes with chapter seven, which focuses on the relationship between the domains of space and time. Comparing and contrasting reference strategies in the two domains, Evans demonstrates that, on the one hand, the domains of time and space share some common properties but, on the other hand, they are characterized by some domain-specific properties. He also addresses the role conceptual metaphor plays in supporting the representation of time via structure borrowed from the domain of space.

Part III: Meaning construction and temporal frames of reference (pp. 167 – 251), which features four chapters, delves into the question of how language users arrive upon the utterance-level meaning in linguistically mediated meaning construction. Chapter eight introduces some interesting observations concerning figurative language and the domain of time. It is here that, drawing on Zinken's (2007) concept of discourse

metaphor, which Evans simply equates with his notion of lexical concept, the author of *Language and Time* argues for a clear dissociation between conceptual metaphors and lexical concepts, and ascribes different roles to the two phenomena in figurative meaning construction in the domain of time. In doing so, he challenges the long-standing assumption in cognitive linguistics that figurative conceptualization of time is straightforwardly accounted for by means of the TIME IS MOTION OF OBJECTS (ALONG A PATH) conceptual metaphor. Evans proposes that, while they have an important role to play, conceptual metaphors do not directly motivate figurative language; it is lexical concepts, and hence the knowledge inherent in the linguistic system, that guide the figurative meaning construction process.

Chapter nine is a detailed account of figurative meaning construction within the framework of LCCM Theory. Evans discusses here the nature of semantic compositionality in figurative language by illustrating how lexical concepts, embedded in the linguistic system, undergo the process of integration and how they interact with large multimodal knowledge structures inherent in the conceptual system, operationalized in terms of cognitive model. He also argues that LCCM Theory (a theory of front-stage cognition, as he calls it) is consonant with Fauconnier and Turner's (2002) Conceptual Blending Theory (a theory of backstage cognition) in accounting for the role of the linguistic and conceptual systems in figurative language understanding.

Chapter ten is an LCCM Theory-driven approach to t-FoR lexical concepts in figurative meaning construction. Analyzing two examples, namely, *Christams is approaching* and *Christamas has disappeard (over the horizon)*, Evans claims that there are two types of non-linguistic knowledge, namely, conceptual metaphors and semantic affordances, responsible for figurative meaning construction. The former structure cognitive models in that they provide links which connect them and allow mappings between them, while the latter are a function of the activation of a cognitive model which a given lexical concept affords access to. In his analysis of the second example, Evans quite convincingly argues that conceptual metaphors do not have to be involved in the figurative meaning interpretation. Towards the end of this chapter, he also delves into the issue of the provenance of t-FoR lexical concepts, which, as he argues, are motivated by conceptual metaphor, metonymy and usage-based for-function reanalysis.

The last chapter of the book is an attempt to account for the temporal representation of time in language. Evans reviews a number of conceptual metaphors for time as well as the lexical concepts encoded by the vehicle *time* in English and speculates on the cross-linguistic and cross-cultural nature of temporal reference.

*Language and Time* is certainly an impressive achievement and makes a notable contribution to our understanding of time and temporal reference in language. Its undeniable value lies in extensive evidence from research in various disciplines, such as neuroscience, psychology or anthropology, which Evans uses to support his arguments.

A serious concern might arise, however, with respect to the language data used to build the argument. Evans himself admits that, as evidenced throughout the book, LCCM Theory provides "a useful methodology to generate hypotheses as to the range and nature of lexical concepts in a given language" (250) and immediately adds that only when supported with corpus-based techniques can it "provide a powerful tool for examining the semantic space associated with language and languages" (250). In light of this claim, it might seem striking that Evans, in his discussion of t-FoRs, relies on a preselected set of examples originating, most probably, on the grounds of introspection and a native

speaker's language intuition. Admittedly, there are only two real data examples provided by Alan Wallington (91) which Evans incorporates into his analysis. Such a choice of data may cast some doubt on the theory's explanatory power. Similar concerns with respect to LCCM Theory's applicability to actual language data have also been expressed by Taylor (2010) in his review of Evans's 2009 book.

Nonetheless, the monograph undoubtedly offers an interesting approach to temporal reference. Evans's quite innovative perspective on figurative language meaning construction, which challenges, albeit to some extent, the long-standing tradition of conceptual metaphor space-to-time mappings in the domain of time, may prove, if only verified against real language data, a useful and valuable alternative to other semantic theories.

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