



Exploring Language Through Contrast

By Waldemar Skrzypczak

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The volume aspires to portray a panorama of recent linguistic research in Poland in terms of comparison and juxtaposition as driving forces in an attempt to grasp descriptive and explanatory aspects of linguistic use and organization. The spectrum of contributions spans all the levels of language. The constellation of methodological perspectives juxtaposes the generative theory and recent developments in cognitive linguistics, synchronic and diachronic perspectives, and a measure of freedom has also been allocated to a more traditional structurally-oriented and/or eclectic spirit. The notions of comparison and contrast have become the major force and the common denominator for all contributions in the service of explicating the central and the focal from what appears nebulous. A well-documented discussion on horizontal bonds between phonological primes and a refreshing new attempt to handle the phonology of Old English i-umlaut are complemented with equally illuminating topics in derivational morphology such as grinding, diminutives, suffix distributional preferences and compound nouns. In a likewise fashion, drawing upon the fundamental phenomenon of dynamic alternating processes, syntactic topics focus on such problems as grammatical constructions with locatum verbs, the status of English NPN forms and a new typology of Old English verbs.

Cognitively grounded phenomena are handled with equal zest, and range across the vast territory of backstage cognition: from the 'slips-of-the-tongue', through novelty of meaning achieved through collocation/construction environment to a discussion on the emergence of metaphorical senses in Old English lexical concepts for (fire) and (light). This stage inevitably leads us to further juxtapositions championed in the volume embracing subjectification and objectification in viewing arrangement, as well as dynamically anchored viewing impositions of 'the self' of the textual narrator. The contributions dealing with the discourse level aspire to bring us closer to goals and norms in politeness and cooperation strategies, and also to an in-depth analysis of stylistic features based on corpora. The coda falls onto normative linguistics and thus closes the territory of contrast and juxtaposition. It provides an insight into how a reflective thespian and a devoted linguist differ in viewing language without compromising the status and validity of their respective stances.

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Editorial Review

Review

What I particularly like about the volume is the leading theme comparison and juxtaposition. The papers will be no doubt useful for scholars and students of linguistics alike, providing a broad spectrum of language areas and approaches. --Aleksander Szwedek, Professor Emeritus, Adam Mickiewicz University

About the Author

Waldemar Skrzypczak holds PhD and D.Litt degrees in English Linguistics. He is Associate Professor at the Department of English and Head of the Centre for Australian Studies at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun. His interests involve syntax-semantics interface, text linguistics and cognitive stylistics, language contact and language variation, Australian English, Aboriginal English and Aboriginal Creoles. His monograph Analog-Based Modelling of Meaning Representations in English is a cognitive-linguistic account on the topological nature of the segmentation of conceptual reality constructed and reflected in language. Tomasz Fojt holds a PhD degree in Linguistics. He is Assistant Professor at the Department of English at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun. His research relates to cognitive linguistics, construction grammar and corpus linguistics. His recent publication The Construction of Scientific Knowledge through Metaphor is a contribution to the contemporary theory of metaphor. Slawomir Wacewicz holds a PhD degree in Linguistics and an MA degree in Philosophy. He is Assistant Professor at the Department of English and Deputy Head of Center for Language Evolution Studies, NCU. His research interests revolve around the phylogenetic origins of the human language faculty.

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