

INTRODUCTION

LJILJANA ŠARIĆ
University of Oslo

This special issue of *Oslo Studies in Language* presents four peer-reviewed and revised articles that were presented in the thematic session *Space in South Slavic* at the 2012 Slavic Cognitive Linguistics Conference in Zagreb (27–29 September). The thematic session and this special issue are part of research activities of an international research group gathered around the project *Spatial Constructions in South Slavic* located at the University of Oslo. Within this project, we have been exploring spatial expressions in the South Slavic languages since 2010.¹ The founding of the project relates to the initial joint wish of a few people to contribute to a relatively poorly studied field: the meaning of spatial units (e.g., prefixes, prepositions, motion verbs, and adverbs)² in South Slavic (Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, and Slovenian). An equally important impulse for the project, and hence this special issue, is our belief that studying the shared Slavic characteristics of South Slavic in spatial language, unique features of South Slavic, and features that these languages share with non-Slavic languages contributes important insights to universals in spatial language.

The theoretical approach of the project *Spatial Constructions in South Slavic* is cognitive linguistics, and this approach is also shared by most of the contributions to this special issue. This framework has proved theoretically convincing for analyzing spatial language (Langacker 1987, 1991a,b); (Janda 1993); (Dąbrowska 1997); (Tyler & Evans 2003), particularly motion verbs, prepositions, prefixes, and cases. Its important aspect is its adaptability to teaching contexts: among others, (Tyler 2012) for English and (Janda & Clancy 2002, 2006) for Slavic have demonstrated that the cognitive linguistics framework can be successfully applied in teaching. In this context it is important that approaches within cognitive linguistics present the meanings of spatial units as structured networks and trace relations between those meanings that at first glance do not seem to be related. In these structured meaning networks, central meanings usually relate to a certain spatial relation (e.g., “movement from” or “movement towards”) and everyday spatial experience. The central meanings of spatial units directly or indirectly influence a number of other ones. Apart from determining the central meaning of a spatial unit, the main questions that the contributions in this issue discuss are:

-
- [1] Some of the project’s results were recently published in a special issue of the journal *Jezikoslovlje* (13(1), 2012) titled *A Cognitive Linguistic View of South Slavic Prepositions and Prefixes*.
- [2] For an overview of the state of the art, see (Šarić 2012).

- What is the nature of the spatial and non-spatial meanings of spatial units?
- What are the conditions for meaning extensions of spatial meanings?
- Are there regularities that play a role in the transformation of spatial meanings into non-spatial domains? To what extent are meaning transformations predictable?
- What is the relation of spatial motion to abstract motion (e.g., in the domain of emotions)?
- Although they exhibit striking similarities in coding of spatial relations, South Slavic languages also show challenging differences: how can these differences be accounted for?

All of the South Slavic languages are represented in the four contributions. Two contributions deal with South Slavic prefixes (one of which takes a comparative perspective), one deals with a preposition, and one deals with manner of motion and morphology. The articles are organized alphabetically according to the South Slavic language(s) that are the object of the analyses.

Ljiljana Šarić (Norway) and Ivelina Tchizmarova (Canada) focus on similarities and differences in coding the spatial relation “away from” in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian (BCS) and Bulgarian. The authors develop a semantic network of verbs prefixed with *od-/ot-* in BCS and Bulgarian, showing that the overall meaning network is shared in the languages examined. The main issue that the article discusses is the relation of spatial and non-spatial (metaphorical/abstract) sub-meanings, and an account of how the spatial meanings of several groups of *od-/ot-* verbs influence their abstract or metaphorical counterparts. The authors argue that most non-spatial meanings of *od-/ot-* verbs are derived by applying the idea of movement through space to metaphorical or figurative movement. Although BCS and Bulgarian share the overall semantic network of *od-/ot-* verbs, the analysis of some *od-/ot-* verbs revealed some systematic differences; for example, *od-* is often used in BCS versus *iz-* and *raz-* in Bulgarian (e.g., *odsvirati/izsvirja* ‘play through’), and BCS and Bulgarian often use verbs with the same stems to express similar (but not necessarily identical) meanings. In some cases, the meaning of prefixed verbs in BCS and Bulgarian can also significantly differ (e.g., BCS *odstajati* ‘stay through’ versus Bulgarian *otstoja* ‘stand (for one’s principles)’).

Liljana Mitkovska and Eleni Bužarovska (Macedonia) explore the semantics of the Macedonian preposition *vrz* and its Bulgarian counterpart *vārhu* from a cognitive perspective. Their analysis is based on examples attested in various written sources. Among the main claims of the authors is that *vrz* and *vārhu* represent a special case of coding the functional meaning of affectedness of the landmark. The article seeks to explain the polysemy of *vrz/vārhu* by tracing and explaining

the semantic links between its spatial and non-spatial meanings. The authors also identify the semantic components that *vrz/vārhu* shares with other related spatial prepositions expressing superposition, such as *na* ‘on’, *po* ‘across, over’, *preku/prez* ‘over’, and *nad* ‘over, above’. Traditional descriptions do not pay attention to the meaning of affectedness, which often blurs the difference in the use of *vrz/vārhu* versus other prepositions expressing superposition. The authors show what *vrz/vārhu* shares with other semantically similar prepositions of superposition and offer an explanation for why they differ. The analysis of examples from various registers reveals some differences between Macedonian and Bulgarian: even though the semantic component of affectedness is also characteristic of Bulgarian *vārhu*, the Bulgarian examples suggest that *vārhu* does not strictly adhere to affectedness, which implies a wider distribution of *vārhu* in both physical and abstract domains.

Dejan Stosic (France) focuses on evaluative and pluractional morphology for expressing manner (e.g., Serbian *leteti* ‘fly’ > *letuckati* ‘flutter’), mainly accounting for Serbian data, but also including a comparative perspective. Particular attention is given to the motion domain; that is, to the role of morphology in the linguistic expression of manner in this domain. Verbal evaluative and pluractional morphology seems to be an essential option for encoding manner in some languages. The author argues that taking into consideration this morphological means is crucial for a comprehensive analysis of the expression of manner. He provides an extensive account of numerous evaluative verbs in Serbian, showing that they play an important role in expressing a great number of manner meanings. This analysis shows that motion verbs in Serbian do not readily use evaluative morphology: the base verbs to which the greatest number of evaluative morphemes can be attached are *leteti* ‘fly’ and *skakati* ‘jump’. Italian and French data also show a low compatibility of motion verbs and evaluative morphemes. Interestingly, the verbs that can combine with evaluative morphemes involve manner in their lexical meaning, but never path. This analysis opens a number of issues for further research; for instance, whether the more extended use of verbal evaluative morphology can make manner of motion more salient in a language, and why motion verbs do not seem to be frequent bases for verbal evaluatives.

Agnieszka Będkowska-Kopczyk (Poland) analyzes Slovenian verbs of emotional experience prefixed by *raz-* ‘in different directions, apart’ and their constructions. Her main question is how the type of physical motion that this prefix relates to influences language coding of emotions. She shows how Slovenian *raz-* differently extends the notion of movement in different groups of verbs relating to emotions: in some verbs, the notion of movement on a dispersed path is extended to denote an emotional change. In some other verbs, the concrete physical spread and expansion that *raz-* denotes in spatial contexts extends to denote a metaphorical spread and expansion of an emotional state linked to the emergence of emotions.

In verbs denoting a physical change caused by an emotion, this prefix expresses metaphorical separation of the experiencer participant's body. The author also discusses the interrelation of *raz-* with the meanings of the imperfective verbs it combines with, and how the prefix reinforces the meaning of intensive processes. In addition, she discusses how the spatially based meaning of *raz-* correlates with inchoative, resultative, and intensive senses. The author also discusses metaphors and metonymies that play a role in the conceptualization of events of emotional change.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This special issue has been made possible thanks to grants from the Department of Literature, Area Studies, and European Languages at the Faculty of Humanities, University of Oslo.

The editor and the authors wish to express their sincere gratitude to the colleagues that kindly agreed to serve as reviewers of individual articles: Branimir Belaj, Maja Brala, Hanne Martine Eckhoff, Kjetil Rå Hauge, Laura Janda, Svetlana Nedelcheva, Ida Raffaelli, Katarina Rasulić, Mateusz-Milan Stanojević, and Harry Stojanov. You have all done outstanding work and provided us with extremely constructive comments that helped us improve our manuscripts. Thank you!

REFERENCES

- Dąbrowska, E. 1997. *Cognitive Semantics and the Polish Dative*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Janda, L. A. 1993. *A Geography of Case Semantics: The Czech Dative and the Russian Instrumental*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Janda, L. A. & S. J. Clancy. 2002. *The Case Book for Russian*. Bloomington: Slavica Publishers.
- Janda, L. A. & S. J. Clancy. 2006. *The Case Book for Czech*. Bloomington: Slavica Publishers.
- Langacker, R. W. 1987. *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar. Theoretical Prerequisites*, vol. 1. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Langacker, R. W. 1991a. *Concept, Image and Symbol: The Cognitive Basis of Grammar*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Langacker, R. W. 1991b. *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar. Descriptive Application*, vol. 2. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Šarić, L. 2012. Introduction: A Cognitive Linguistic View of South Slavic Prepositions and Prefixes. *Jezikoslovlje* 13(1). 5–17.

Tyler, A. 2012. *Cognitive Linguistics and Second Language Learning: Theoretical Basics and Experimental Evidence*. New York: Routledge.

Tyler, A. & V. Evans. 2003. *The Semantics of English Prepositions: Spatial Scenes, Embodied Meaning and Cognition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

AUTHOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Ljiljana Šarić

Department of Literature, Area Studies and European Languages

University of Oslo

Norway

ljiljana.saric@ilos.uio.no