

PHRASALEX

Approcci fraseologici alla Lessicografia di apprendimento

Phraseological Approaches to Learner's Lexicography

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ABSTRACTS

Plans for an English Constructicon

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In this talk, I will argue that the traditional distinction between grammars and dictionaries should be overcome by creating a unified reference tool for a language in the form of a constructicon.

I will briefly go into the theoretical background and outline the basic principles of the model of Construction Grammar, which, like other usage-based approaches, takes the linguistic knowledge of speakers to consist of a network of constructions. Constructions in this sense are pairings of form and meaning, ranging from words to very abstract patterns such as valency or argument structure constructions.

Since Construction Grammar has been gaining ground in theoretical linguistics, it is time to think about applications in terms of applying the model to language teaching and lexicography. The talk aims to illustrate some aspects of the design of such a constructicon.



La sintassi del lessico: classi di oggetti e schemi di relazioni

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Di fronte al dato della polisemia, le prospettive di uno studioso (che compie una sorta di *Epochè* rispetto alla sua lingua) e di un parlante (che utilizza la propria lingua nella vita quotidiana per comunicare) divergono radicalmente. Per il primo, la polisemia è *il* problema da risolvere; per il secondo, invece, non solo la polisemia non pone alcuna difficoltà alla comunicazione, ma non è neppure percepita.

Queste prospettive possono essere illustrate con l'esempio seguente:

(1) *I muratori hanno abbattuto l'ala vecchia dell'ospedale.*

Di fronte a (1), da un lato, chiunque comprende subito l'accezione di *abbattere* pertinente: da questo punto di vista, la polisemia è neutralizzata. Dall'altro lato, ci si può chiedere: come facciamo a individuare il senso esatto di *abbattere* tra tutti i possibili? Da questo punto di vista, la polisemia diventa un problema. Una buona teoria del lessico deve essere in grado di spiegare entrambe queste prospettive.

Le nozioni di "uso" e di "classe di oggetti" elaborate da G. Gross (1994, 2012) permettono di identificare le diverse accezioni di un lessema polisemico e, contemporaneamente, di giustificare l'estensione e l'innocenza della polisemia stessa. La nostra presentazione sarà dedicata ad una discussione critica di queste nozioni.

Le Pesant, D. et Mathieu-Colas, M. (éd) (1998) : *Les classes d'objets*, Langages n° 131, Paris : Larousse.

Gross, G. (1994) : « *Classes d'objets et description des verbes* », Langages n° 115, Paris, Larousse.

Gross, G. (2012) : *Manuel d'analyse linguistique*, Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, Villeneuve d'Ascq.



From the relational dimension of lexical contents to syntax

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Lexical units display a relational dimension, so that their definition requires that a complex structure is taken into account, either cognitive – a frame (Fillmore) – or linguistic: a sentence (Gross). In particular, lexemes display different layers of distributional restrictions depending on their contents, which can be detected at sentence level. These distributional restrictions are relevant for both unsaturated relational terms, which are potential predicators – verbs, adjectives, relational nouns – and saturated classificatory nouns, which are potential arguments.

Since the relevant unit for lexical analysis is no longer the lexeme but the complex structure of a sentence, a question naturally arises: is there an essential difference between lexicon and syntax, and, in the case, what is it?

The cognitive paradigm draws no distinction between lexicon and grammar. According to Langacker, for instance, language is a system of symbols – of pairings of forms and meanings. Lexicon is seen as a repository of meaningful words and idioms, whereas grammar is described as a repository of meaningful complex forms. In my presentation, I shall argue for the alternative hypothesis of an essential discontinuity between lexicon and syntax.

The meaning of complex expressions is not an autonomous conceptual structure associated with a construction in the same way as an atomic meaning is associated with a word, but the outcome of an ideational process made possible by formal syntactic structures. The most powerful argument for this conclusion is the opposite attitude of lexicon and syntax with regard to the requirement of conceptual consistency.

Lexical contents and relations are tautologically consistent. The distribution of the verb *pour* that is relevant at lexical level includes concrete liquid substances in one sense, money in another, but not, for instance, light or feelings. This restriction does not hold for syntax.

Syntax may perform its function in two ways. Syntax is instrumental when the combinations it ideates simply mirror independent and consistent conceptual structures: for instance, *John poured some wine in Mary's glass*. Syntax is creative when it ideates complex conceptual structures that do not mirror independent conceptual models: *And Winter pours its grief in snow* (Emily Brontë); *He poured his light & all his Sons & daughters poured their light* (Blake).

The empirical datum of inconsistent complex meanings is a revealing phenomenon. Consistency is not the *quidditas* of a complex meaning but simply one *qualitas* it can display among others. If this is true, the function of syntactic structure is not to carry independent conceptual structures, which would be tautologically consistent, but to construct complex meanings by combining atomic concepts.



L'uso di dizionari e di risorse online da parte degli studenti di lingue straniere

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La *ricerca sull'uso del dizionario* (ingl. *Research into dictionary use*, ted. *Wörterbuchbenutzungsforschung*) è l'ambito più giovane della metalessicografia. Per decenni l'utente di un dizionario era "der bekannte Unbekannte", l'ignoto conosciuto (Wiegand 1977: 59, citato in Hartmann 2001: 80). Negli ultimi anni le ricerche sull'uso del dizionario sono in aumento (cfr. Lew

2011, Töpel 2014, Welker 2014) e l'utente si trova al centro di vari studi empirici: „Users' needs have become a central issue not only for practical lexicography but also for lexicographic theory.“ (Granger 2012: 4) Tale tendenza può essere osservata anche con l'uso di risorse online. Al momento si può ricorrere a vari studi e ai loro risultati circa l'uso concreto e autentico di dizionari/ risorse online all'interno dell'insegnamento delle lingue straniere.

Al convegno si presentano i risultati più importanti concernente l'uso dei dizionari e delle risorse online da parte degli studenti di lingue straniere, in particolare uno studio empirico a cui hanno partecipato degli studenti italiani, spagnoli e portoghesi. (Müller-Spitzer/ Domínguez Vazquez/ Nied Curcio/ Silva Dias/ Wolfer 2018)



Using Verb Patterns in English Language Teaching

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The *Pattern Dictionary of English Verbs* is a research project currently in progress at the University of Wolverhampton. It is based on the Theory of Norms and Exploitations (TNE; Hanks 2000, 2004, 2013; Hanks and Pustejovsky 2005), which argues the words do not have meaning; rather, they have *meaning potential*. Different aspects of a word's meaning potential are activated in different contexts. TNE says that words are hopelessly ambiguous, but phraseological patterns are unambiguous. Unfortunately, phraseological patterns are not well described in current dictionaries.

At the time of writing (July 2019), 1432 verbs have been analysed for PDEV; analysis of a further 450 verbs is in progress. Each normal pattern is associated with a meaning (which PDEV calls an 'implicature'). Completed verbs are publicly available for inspection at www.pdev.org.uk.

According to TNE, any piece of idiomatic usage either conforms to normal patterns of usage or exploits a norm in any of various ways (i.e. by using an anomalous argument; by using a figurative expression such as a freshly coined metaphor or simile, or using syntax in an unusual way). Attempts to answer any questions about the meaning, composition, or idiomaticity of an utterance should start by identifying the verb in each clause, then proceed to identify the verb's arguments of each verb and other distinctive phraseological features.

Because of restrictions of time, the presentation will illustrate this argument with just one verb, namely *sweep*. Among the many questions that PDEV can shed light on are the following:

- What is the most common meaning of *sweep*?
- Is the most important meaning of *sweep* what you do with a brush?
- Is this more or less common than its use as a verb of movement?
- How is *sweep* used to form phrasal verbs, what do they mean, and how common are they?
- What idiomatic phrases are formed with *sweep* as a verb?

References:

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Using the T-PAS resource to identify semantic verb classes for Italian

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We introduce the T-PAS resource (Jezek et al 2014), consisting in a collection of about 7000 corpus-derived predicate-argument structures that include the specification of the semantic types of the arguments for each verb sense. The resource has been compiled by manual clustering corpus occurrences, and represents a gold standard for linguistic analyses and text processing tasks of Italian. In the presentation, I will briefly illustrate the resource and focus on two linguistic case studies we conducted using the data in the resource.



Verbario: A database of Spanish verbs as source for pedagogical lexicography

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In this communication, I present Verbario (verbario.com), a database of Spanish verbs built following the Theory of Norms and Exploitations (Hanks, 2013) and with the technique of Corpus Pattern Analysis, CPA (Hanks, 2004). The database has the form of a dictionary in which the most frequent patterns of usage of the verbs are shown, with a definition -or 'implicature'- for each one of them, together with a link to corpus concordances showing the usage of the pattern. Lexical patterns such as the one's proposed by CPA consist on the argument structure of the verb (e.g. [[Fuente de Luz | Artefacto]] iluminar [[Objeto Físico]] --> [[Light Source | Artifact]] illuminate [[Physical Object]]), and this structure is paraphrased to explain its meaning (e.g. [[Fuente de Luz]] proyecta luz sobre [[Objeto Físico]] --> [[Light Source]] projects light in [[Physical Object]]). In this presentation, we will postulate that this sort of analysis is convenient for pedagogical lexicography, providing an easy method to convert patterns into folk (phraseological) definitions and offering connection with the context of usage of the words.



Fraseografia basata sui corpora per apprendenti di italiano

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Non è esagerato parlare di una grandiosa rinascita della fraseologia negli anni 2000. Le ragioni di un nuovo studio approfondito di quest'area tematica si possono trovare in diverse influenze convergenti, tra cui innovazioni empiriche, nuove teorie linguistiche e, negli ultimi tempi, didattica della fraseologia.

E non è neanche un segreto che i fraseologismi siano tra le "ultime cose" che si possono padroneggiare in una lingua straniera. Anche se questo è noto da molti anni (es. Kühn 1992, Ettinger 2007), con poche eccezioni (es. Hallsteinsdóttir 2001, Jesenšek 2009), non è cambiato molto nei

concetti didattici e lessicografici (per apprendenti) (s. v. la panoramica in Mellado Blanco, a.c.di 2009, e in Giacomina 2012). I risultati per la lessicografia, in particolare, sono sobri (cfr. Schafroth 2013, per esempio).

Nella mia conferenza, vorrei presentare il progetto di ricerca “Fraseologia d’uso della lingua italiana (GEPHRI)”, finanziato dalla Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, che si è prefissato il compito di descrivere olisticamente (nel senso della Grammatica delle Costruzioni, cfr. Croft 2001) circa 600 idiomi verbali dell’italiano (ad es. *piovere sul bagnato*, *scoprire l’acqua calda*, *mangiare la foglia*) secondo una struttura onomasiologica (basata su campi semantici) e in maniera contrastiva (italiano-tedesco). Il “sapere fraseologico” estratto dalle analisi di corpora dell’italiano viene distribuito su due livelli di apprendimento concettualmente differenziati: conoscenze di base e conoscenze dettagliate (cf. Imperiale/Schafroth (in stampa)).

Riferimenti bibliografici:

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Syntactic patterns and their lexical fillers: Extraction from parsed data and representation in a pre-dictionary data collection

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This contribution discusses desiderata and existing solutions for data collection in the field of syntactic (valency) constructions and collocations. We first show examples of phenomena where valency patterns and collocational combinatorics interact closely (called “collo-constructions” in constructionist linguistics, cf. Herbst 2018). A major issue is to identify which shorter combinations are typically part of longer sequences and how certain lexical fillers interact with valency patterns.

For the preparation of lexicographic projects, an internal representation in a table-like format seems to make most sense for such phenomena: it would give the valency patterns, as well as the fillers of the subject and complement slots; ideally, it would have to indicate whether a slot only accepts a (mostly) closed set of lexical fillers, or which degree of lexical variation is possible. Similarly, the presence or absence of adverbials may need to be taken into account.

Starting from a phenomenon-oriented view, the talk will address available techniques for subcategorization extraction, collocation identification and their possible combination, and discuss the extent to which they could be used to fill the table-like data collection.

Herbst, T. (2018). Is language a Collostruction? – A Proposal for Looking at Collocations, Valency, Argument Structure and Other Constructions. In Pascual Cantos-Gómez & Moisés Almela-Sánchez (Eds.), *Lexical Collocation Analysis: Advances and Applications* (pp. 1-22). Cham: Springer.



Word combinations in first and second language speakers of Italian: Psycholinguistic and computational studies

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In this talk, I will present the results of current research in collaboration with Irene Fioravanti (Università per Stranieri di Siena), Anna Siyanova (Victoria University of Wellington) and Marco Senaldi (Università di Pisa). We have investigated the competence on various types of word combinations by native speakers and second language learners, using priming, eye-tracking and computational modelling with distributional semantics. In particular, I will focus on the peculiar behavior and complexity of collocations, as a kind of “middle ground” between fully compositional word combinations and idiomatic expressions.



Mapping lexical resources: Drawbacks and pitfalls

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Lexical resources originally meant as human-readable dictionaries, or lexical-semantic databases designed for other purposes, are most often developed isolated from each other, so that a linking of data across resources, which doubtlessly means an added value to both human readers and knowledge-based computational applications, implies some sort of mapping strategy. This presentation offers a brief survey of automated and manually supervised approaches for mapping content of different machine-readable lexical resources (digitized or digital born) on lemma level, as it has been done in multiple occasions, and on concept (word sense) level, as undertaken in current research projects. In this context, we pay special attention to WordNet as pivot resource for lemma and sense linking, and limitations from a lexicographer's point of view, together with some ideas for possible workarounds.