
The present book, a revised version of Kleinke’s 1999 Habilitationsschrift (Schematische und prototypische Bedeutungen infiniter Komplementstrukturen im Englischen. Eine kognitive Analyse, University of Greifswald), focuses on the question of how a cognitive linguistic framework assigning schematic meanings to various complement types can accommodate English gerunds, infinitive constructions as well as finite complement clauses. Specifically, the author takes a closer look at gerundives, i.e. non-finite –ing clauses, bare infinitive clauses, and to-infinitive clauses, and attempts to show that it is possible to work out a descriptive system for complement structures that combines schematic meanings with prototypical ones. It is claimed that the former aspects of the meaning of complement structures reside with the non-finite complement part of the constructions in question, while prototype effects can be more readily observed concerning the meaning of matrix verbs.

The organization of the book largely reflects its dissertation origin. When one disregards the front and back matter (references, subject index and index of predicates) with their 40-odd pages, out of the remaining 285 pages roughly a third (115 pages in the first 5 chapters) is devoted to backgrounding Kleinke’s study by providing the overview of research so far as well as the presentation of the framework she adopts.

A brief Introduction stating the books goals, hypothesis and procedure, is followed in Chapter 2 by a quick critical tour of various types of descriptions of the semantics of non-finite complement structures that have been put forward since the 1970s. The whole of Chapter 3 is devoted to Langacker’s approach to the complementation of verbs. Complement structures are seen in Cognitive Grammar as constructions with complex semantic structure that are conceptually dependent and whose profile is overridden by that of their main clauses. In terms of the layered semantic functions of grounding, quantification, instantiation and type specification—abbreviated as (G(Q(I(T))))—, complement clauses may range from fully articulated finite complement clauses, exhibiting all the four functions, to those exhibiting just the last three, i.e. (Q(I(T))), as in to-infinitives
and –ing clauses, to those exhibiting just (I(T)), as in bare infinitive clauses. It is also assumed that these complement clauses are somewhere on a path leading from a processual to a nominal profile.

Kleinke argues, however, that English complement structures can be more finely positioned on this path of cline. This is made possible, she claims, by integrating into what can be basically seen as Langackerian model a system with three types of entities, as developed by Lyons’s, and extended by Dik. These are discussed in detail in Chapter 4. The resulting combination model (Verknüpfungsmodel) that rests on bi-directional tolerance or accommodation relations is presented in a compressed form in Chapter 5. In a somewhat less than successful attempt to extend Lyons’ entities model that consists of three orders of entity, the author classifies gerunds, i.e. –ing clauses, as second-order entities, finite that complement clauses as third-order entities, while infinitival clauses occupy an intermediate position. To-infinitive clauses are claimed to be 2.5-order entities, and bare infinitive clauses are considered to be 2.3-order entities. Even if we swallow such odd quantifying labels as the above (they are not sufficiently argued for, to say the least), there are number of open issues that cast doubt on this classification. Most importantly, if the three order model be extended in some way, why not propose a new, distinct order for infinitives instead of cramming them between second and third order entities? Infinitives, and particularly to-infinitival complement clauses are, after all, both cross-linguistically, as well as in English, much more wide-spread and important complement type than -ing clauses. The remaining part of Chapter 5 then discusses the non-schematic aspects of the meaning of complex complement structures by focusing on matrix verbs. The notion of prototypicality that also crops up in the second part of the title of the book under review is here as good as replaced by Schmid’s notion of typicality, which is claimed to be more appropriate to abstract categories such as grammatical phenomena.

Chapters 6 and 7 are extensive discussions of schematic meanings of to-infinitive clauses and –ing clauses, respectively. Both chapters are organized around a number of groups of matrix predicates established on semantic grounds, e.g. verbs of trying, implicative verbs, verbs of beginning, verbs or daring, etc.

Chapter 8 is then intended to present the other aspect which is supposed to be central for the bi-directional accommodation model envisaged: (proto)typical meanings of and family resemblances obtaining between predicates taking to-infinitives and gerunds, respectively. On the basis of ten semantic dimensions (such as existence of the situation, temporality, reference domain, volitional-desiderative attitude, manipulation, etc.) involving a variable number of
attributes, ranging from a single attribute to up to four contrasting attributes per dimension, the author distinguishes 14 groups of matrix verbs taking to-infinitive clauses, and as many as 19 groups of matrix verbs taking –ing complements. It turns out that there are actually no prototypes, as none of these groups of predicate verbs combined with complement structures under investigation exhibits the expected cluster of values for the above set of attributes. Rather predicate groups are related by family resemblances thus forming chain-like structures. Although the combination model is said to crucially rest on bi-directional tolerance or accommodation relations, there is no systematic attempt to show how such mutual accommodation of matrix structures on the one hand and complement structures on the other actually works, which is one of the biggest causes for the disappointment with the book for any hopeful and/or credulous reader. Finally, Chapter 9 is a brief summary of findings and an outline of possible avenues for further research on this vast topic.