Constructions at the crossroads

The place of construction grammar between field and frame

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Construction Grammar focuses on the meaning encoded in the syntagmatic structures of language. However, syntagmatic meaning and coding interact in a complex way with paradigmatic structures such as lexis, metonymy, and metaphor. How can Construction Grammar capture the formal and semantic structure of entrenched schematic constructions while rigorously accounting for all these parameters? Based on the analysis of the conceptual domain of 'stealing' in English, this study demonstrates that through combining three different approaches to linguistic structure, the study of the semantic frame, the cognitive model, and the onomasiological lexical field, we can more properly appreciate and explain lexical, metaphoric, and constructional interplay.

Keywords: construction grammar, lexical field, frame semantics, conceptual metaphor, verbs of 'stealing'

Preamble

There are few tenets more basic to Cognitive Linguistics than the belief that any division between meaning and form is untenable.[1] It is assumed that meaning and function through lexis to morpho-syntax form continua of inter-related and inter-dependent structures. Talmy (2000: 22–26) distinguishes open-class and closed-class semantics and Langacker (1987: 147–148) between abstract and basic domains. These two distinctions are similar in their attempt to deal with different types of symbolic structure that represent a basic divide in Cognitive Linguistics. Much research within the paradigm focuses on entrenched culturally determined structures while other research focuses on perception

based processing structures. By being able to capture these two dimensions of language, Cognitive Linguistics is in the unique position of being able to describe the entirety of language from discourse and function through lexis and culture to syntax and cognition. However, tying these divergent phenomena together and understanding how they work holistically is far from obvious. It is the notion of the grammatical construction, being both an entrenched semantic unit and a schematic part of on-line language processing, that may help to bridge the divide.

Examining the semantic frame STEAL, this study follows the integrationalist approaches to lexis, syntax, and function developed by Schmid (1993), Rudzka-Ostyn (1995), and Lemmens (1998). The study divides into three parts. Firstly, we consider the need to combine the different approaches to entrenched semantic structure in Cognitive Linguistics and the importance of that endeavour for the study of grammatical constructions. Secondly, we pursue a combined field and frame analysis that is in turn extended to consider syntactic variation. The combined field-frame allows us to propose a constructional network and to identify certain semantic constraints on the productivity of the constructions identified. The third section concentrates on one grammatical construction revealed by the combined analysis. It examines some of the implications of this combined approach for construction grammar and shows how a more complete understanding of lexical variation and metaphoric structure of the field-frame informs the study of constructions.

1.   Model, frame, field, and the constructional network

Langacker (1987:82) describes the grammatical construction as a "syntagmatic combination of morphemes and larger expressions [that form] more elaborate symbolic structures". Lakoff (1987:467) phrases this explanation differently, underlining the semantico-pragmatic role: "the grammatical construction is . . . a form-meaning pair (F, M), where F is a set of conditions on syntactic and phonological form and M is a set of conditions on meaning and use". Although construction grammar is a general term indicating a wide range of competing methodologies and theoretical frameworks, we base our discussion on the most widely accepted version presented by Lakoff (1987), Goldberg (1995, 1997), Michaelis & Lambrecht (1996), Kay & Fillmore (1999), Fillmore (2001, et al. 1988), Michaelis & Ruppenhofer (2001), Boas (2003), and Michaelis (2004).

In this "standard" version of construction grammar, the focus of study is the grey area between processed grammar and entrenched idioms. Talmy's (2000: 23–24) strict dichotomy between open-class and closed-class semantics leaves no place for what he calls grammatical complexes. Moreover, by suppressing syntagmatic relations, Croft (2001: 5) limits the functional-pragmatic role of syntax that frame semantics captures in the study of event construal. Therefore, we follow Fillmore, Langacker, and Lakoff in their understanding of the grammatical construction. More precisely, Fillmore et al. (1988: 502) defines the construction as specifying syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic information, being made up of lexical items that may themselves be constructions. It is idiomatic in that it may "specify a semantics (and/or pragmatics) that is distinct from what might be calculated from the associated semantics of the set of smaller constructions that could be used to build the same morpho-syntactic object".[2] In this sense, grammatical constructions are syntactic forms that contribute to the meaning of an utterance.

The majority of research in construction grammar bases its study on the syntagmatic form: what lexical items and functional-pragmatic structures licence the form, its various meanings, and how this form is related to other similar constructions. This is not to say the semantic frame that a given construction instantiates is left aside, but rather the frame, in its close relationship to event construal, is limited in its ability to account for the diverse lexical and conceptual considerations that are basic to the semantic-pragmatic sanctioning of grammatical constructions. Although the study of the construction in itself is perfectly valid and necessary, there exists another approach. Lemmens (1998) in his study of causative constructions in the field-frame of KILL is one of the few to approach the grammatical construction from the conceptual point of view. His work begins with the concept, rather than the construction, and asks what constructions are available to express this concept. This turn from the semasiological study of a semantic unit to the onomasiological study of the forms available to a given concept may be the key to answering many of the difficulties faced by construction grammar.[3] We develop this approach of Lemmens and argue that a construction analysis should follow a combined frame-field analysis, its basis being a collocation study of the lexical field. Let us consider this proposal.

By combining the study of simple semantic units, such as lexemes, and entrenched semantic relations, such as conceptual metaphors and frames, with the study of schematic semantic units, such as grammatical constructions, we move toward a better understanding of how entrenched linguistic structure in-

teracts with processing on-line systems for language production. Within Cognitive Linguistics, three analytical constructs seek to capture these entrenched semantic structures. Firstly, cognitive models represent conceptual associations in culture and perception. Secondly, lexical fields are an attempt to represent lexical organisation, not only the "meaning" of lexemes but how those lexemes are inter-related. Thirdly, semantic frames describe background encyclopaedic information encoded in the lexicon. In this, they are a combination of the model and field approaches. However, the frame posses no apparatus for capturing conceptual relations such as image schema, metaphor, and metonymy or the detailed lexical variation of dialect and register that is basic to language use. Thus, a combined approach is essential because it is a *combination* of these semantic structures that licence grammatical constructions.

Our task is twofold. Firstly, we need to understand how three analytical approaches, the study of the frame, model, and field, may inform each other, and then how this combined approach may inform construction grammar. In simpler terms, how lexical variation, conceptual metaphors, and encyclopaedic semantics sanction grammatical constructions. Since constructions bridge the paradigmatic-syntagmatic and processing-entrenched divides, a more complete understanding of how these structures interact is essential. Our study, however, is concerned with one half of this equation: the interaction of entrenched semantic structures and grammatical constructions. Our proposal is that instead of beginning with the syntagmatic form, we begin with the concept. In one sense, this is the onomasiological approach to syntax.

Since the paradigmatic context of a semantic unit is basic to its meaning and use, semasiological research should go hand in hand with onomasiological investigation. It is here that frames, models, and fields come to the fore. All three approaches are equally applicable to both the semantic variation "within" semantic units as well as formal variation "across" a concept. Despite the similarity between these three approaches and the overlap in their concerns, few attempts have been made at integrating them. However, if Cognitive Linguistics is to offer a viable and comprehensive approach to lexical study, then a coherent methodology that incorporates these three approaches is necessary.

One of the most important results of combining the onomasiological study of fields, frames, and cognitive models is that it allows us to approach grammatical constructions in a more complete and rigorous manner. The supposition is simple: constructions are entrenched semantic units and so to some extent behave like lexemes, their use is influenced by language community variation such as register and dialect, individual constructions are polysemous, but

Table 1. Three onomasiological approaches to lexical semantics

Cognitive model	Semantic frame	Lexical field
ANGER (Lakoff 1987) Culturally rich knowledge	BUY-SELL (Fillmore 1985) Frame participants and relations	CLOTHING (Geeraerts et al. 1994) Lexical variation – organisation

they also form complex networks of onomasiological variation. However, unlike lexemes, they are schematic and bridge paradigmatic - syntagmatic language structures. This results in two characteristics. Firstly, due to variable syntax and lexis, they are particularly productive in event construal. Secondly, they are licensed by, or made up of, lexemes, the organisation of which we may capture through the study of lexical fields and conceptual metaphors. Proposing a model of how this fits together is the first step of our project.

For practical reasons, we will treat the methodological concerns of integrating the three approaches to semantic structure as briefly as possible and move to the application of this combined analytical apparatus. Glynn (f.c.) offers a detailed discussion of such analytical-methodological integration. Put simply, our study aims to analytically integrate three cognitive approaches to lexis, summarised in Table 1.

We accept cognitive model and conceptual metaphor theory (Kövecses 1986; Lakoff 1987; Johnson 1987; Turner 1987) and frame semantics (Dirven et al. 1982; Verschueren 1985; Fillmore 1985, 2000). We assume also that the study of both semantic frames and cognitive models needs to base its analyses in the study of lexical fields as developed by Lehrer (1982, 1990), Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk (1996), Geeraerts (1997, et al. 1994), and Fischer (2000). Despite some exceptions, such as Schmid's (1993) study of HOME, Rudzka-Ostyn's (1995) work on ANSWER, and Lemmens (1998) on KILL, there is currently little or no integration. The shortfalls of this situation have already been noted. Kittay & Lehrer (1981) argue for the need to base metaphor analysis on field studies and Lehrer (1992) calls for similar co-operation between frame and field.[4] However, a proper methodological apparatus for such integration is yet to be developed.

The difficulties in integrating these approaches originate in the differing object of study. The frame describes encyclopaedic semantics and event structure and the cognitive model captures conceptual metaphors and metonymies, then both approaches contrast with field studies in that they do not consider lexical organisation *per se*. This leads to a methodological rift. Since cogni-

tive models are abstract cultural structures or perceptually based associations there is no need to delimit the models or to discriminate between them. This is equally true of semantic frames. However, this is not the case for onomasiological fields, which due to the complex and wide range of lexical variation, need relatively discreet means for delimitation.

Despite this, there seems to be a relatively simple method for defining the cognitive model, tying this to the semantic frame, and delimiting the lexical field. Based on Verschueren's (1985) frame analysis of speech acts, we propose a method for functionally defining and thus delimiting a domain. We may describe such a definition as a pragmatic model or schema that identifies cultural "conditions" and "participants" of the domain. Although this approach may be less effective in defining perception-based concepts, for culture-based concepts this proves an efficient method of linking the rich cultural information captured by cognitive models to the semantic frame but also offers a "functional-intensional" definition, enabling a means for lexical field delimitation.[5] We may posit different schemata to capture the different construals or framings of the "Idealised Cognitive Model". These various schemata may then be used as functional guides for the structure of the onomasiological variation, viz. parasynonomous lexical clustering.

The extension of this proposed methodology to the study of grammatical constructions is straightforward. Collocation studies of the lexical field reveal syntagmatic patterns that represent the syntactic forms available to the domain-frame. The result is a constructional field, or what we will refer to as the constructional network. Having three sets of three different types of semantic structure – conceptual, lexical, constructional, delimited by a functionally defined frame-domain, a clearer understanding of their interaction is possible. Thus, the constraints imposed by one type of encoding on another, such as partial productivity and constructional-metaphoric conflict, should be more clearly identifiable. This simple methodological hypothesis is the basis to the study.

However, methodology is more than theoretical application, it is also the treatment of data. Despite the fact that Langacker (2000: Chapter 4) argues for a usage-based approach to language, we have inherited from the formalist tradition many introspective techniques of investigation. Although there is not necessarily anything wrong with introspection *per se* (cf. Fillmore 1992: 35–38; Talmy 2000: 4–6), it certainly increases the risk of misrepresenting the complexity of real language use (cf. Geeraerts et al. 1994: 13–14; Lemmens 1998: 17–18; Boas 2003: 11–13). This study, therefore, bases its analysis on found examples.

However, despite advances in corpora and search tools, there is still a lack of spoken language represented in the commercially available corpora, for example only 10 percent in the British National Corpus. This study is largely concerned with verb-particle constructions, a form characteristic of spoken language, and thus this limitation is basic.

For this reason, following the recent work by Michaelis & Ruppenhofer (2001) and to some extent Boas (2003), we base our analysis on language found on the "Word Wide Web" and in "Usenet" archives. This choice of corpus brings with it certain problems. Obviously, the text is not tagged and query and extraction possibilities are considerably limited. Furthermore, the Internet is a mix of dialects and registers, including second language speakers, and the source of the text is largely unknown. This means that detailed variation and salience investigation, such as that developed by Geeraerts (1999, 2000) and Gries (2003), is impossible; an important weakness if we are to integrate frame and field studies. Up to this point, frame semantics has had no concern for sociological variation and salience issues, which are faults that field semantics should, in principle, be able to rectify. Despite the limitations of our corpus, we consider certain issues of dialect variation through the verification of examples with informants.[6]

2.   The frame and field of STEAL

2.1   The frame

The basic event-structure of STEAL is similar to TAKE. However, the frames evoked by these two events are quite different. Instead of a necessary valency of two arguments, *taker* and *taken* and an optional location argument, STEAL necessitates three arguments, *taker*, *taken* (property) and *takee* (plaintiff). Although the *takee* may be fully backgrounded and not syntactically realised, it is necessarily present in the frame due to the relationship of possession between the property and the plaintiff. As for TAKE, the optional oblique argument is common. Another important difference between TAKE and STEAL may be characterised by the intent of the *taker* and/or the injury of the *takee*. The cognitive model is complex involving the concept of possession as well as axiological degrees and the social relationship between the *taker* and the *takee*. It is due to this type of semantic complexity and vagueness of definition that field and frame semantics may not work together in a straightforward manner.

Based on the idea of pragmatic modelling described above, let us attempt a functional definition of STEAL. We will call the Agent *taker* Sb_1, the person from whom the thing is taken Sb_2, the thing-stolen St. and the underspecified TAKE represents the predicate of the event. There are three conditions (C) in the most basic scenario of stealing in English:

Schema A. C1. Sb_1 takes St
           C2. St belongs to Sb_2
           C3. Sb_2 does not want Sb_1 to take St

Although this captures most, if not all, STEAL events, it lacks part of the background knowledge that makes up the cognitive model of STEAL. In English, one often makes a distinction between stealing that injures the plaintiff and stealing that does not injure anyone. It is in light of this that stealing from an international corporation is viewed as "better" than stealing from an individual or a friend or family member. Evidence for this may be seen in lexical choice. Someone duplicating music for a friend will use the term *copy*, where the companies that own the music prefer to frame the event differently, employing the term *pirate*. Similarly, in many shops, one sees signs reading "shoplifting is *stealing*!". Clearly, the shopkeepers wish to re-frame the act of shoplifting as something "more serious" than is implied by *shoplift*. Such examples abound in the lexicon of STEAL. Thus, a second pragmatic schema would add a fourth condition to the typical scenario of STEAL.

Schema B. C1. Sb_1 takes St
           C2. That St belongs to Sb_2
           C3. Sb_2 does not want Sb_1 to take that St
           C4. Sb_2 is hurt by Sb_1 taking St

Another important variation on the schema of STEAL needs to account for the linguistic and extra-linguistic relationship between GIVE and TAKE. This complex relationship results in many instances of STEAL being linguistically expressed as BORROW.

Schema C. C1. Sb_1 takes St
           C2. St belongs to Sb_2
           C3. Sb_1 intends to give back St to Sb_2
           C4. Sb_2 does not know that Sb_1 takes St

Such a pragmatic model would account for instances, such as those below, where *borrow* is used to signify STEAL. Note also, as example (1c) shows, this overlap is also true of STEAL terms being used for BORROW.

(1) a. Italian pen companies *'borrowed'* the American technical innovation in order to produce very lovely...
        <www.pentrace.com/article110500017.html>
        (inverted commas in original).[7]

     b. The independent Lithuania neither appropriated, nor plundered nor *borrowed* the Torah Scrolls.
        <www.ltembassyus.org/political/Torah_Scrolls.html>

     c. As the sun had collapsed on another long boring summer day she had *blagged* the car from her brother, and had gone for a drive.
        <www.buzzle.com/editorials/6-22-2003-41998.asp>

These examples demonstrate the "real-world" vagueness that blurs the linguistic boundary between BORROW-LEND and STEAL-ROB, just as it does for the two "parent" frames GIVE and TAKE.

The corpora revealed other areas of blurred distinction. One instance of this blurring is with the related concept BEG, characterised by items such as *scab*, *freeload*, *live off of* or *sponge*, or the Australian *bludge*, Scottish *sorn* and *thig*, and American *mooch*, *bum*, and *cage*. As a symptom of this blurring, *blag* was widely attested meaning *to get something for nothing*, even though this is not accounted for in Oxford English Dictionary. Although possibly a result of dialect variation in the largely American corpus, we rarely find *blag* attested in its dictionary meaning of "violent robbery". Instead, for the found examples it signified INCONSEQUENTIAL STEAL, BORROW, or even simply *get*. We may not determine whether this is a result of dialect variation or an emerging sense of *blag* due to the nature of the corpus.

Although these pragmatic schemata help delineate more clearly the lexical field of the frame, ultimately one may not make any discreet distinction between onomasiological semantic frames. Such distinctions are merely artificial tools for rendering data more rigorously analysable. In real discourse, situation-context gives STEAL readings to many items not strictly fitting the pragmatic schemata outlined. This is especially true for the closely related frames of BEG, BORROW, and TAKE.[8]

2.2 The field

The items listed below are all chosen by matching their meaning with the definition offered by the pragmatic schemata described above. In Table 2, vt is a transitive verb; vt$_2$ is a bivalent transitive verb that accepts a ground argument, usually encoded by *from* and sometimes *of*, occasionally the ground is encoded with a genitive form; n. is a noun encoding either a nominal profiling of the STEAL event or the AGENT of the event. The items listed come from the consultation of dictionaries and thesauri and are all checked with British and Australian informants for current usage.

   The table does not include lexemes that are exclusively nominals, such as *teal leaf*, *cutpurse*, *brigand*, *yegg*, since this study focuses on the event based STEAL constructions. Some verbal items that might be conspicuously missing include: *nobble off* / *sb out of*, *rifle*, *whip*, *heist*, *glom*, and *tief*. Of these items, *nobble off* and *nobble out of* are not included because despite their appearance in the lexicons, all but one informant said they were unfamiliar with the words. Two other items, *rifle* and *whip*, were unattested with the meaning of STEAL. The others are from dialects for which no informants were available. In addition, where large groups of metaphoric items may be used, a simple example of the metaphor is listed in "small-caps". Two important metaphors, in terms of lexical variation, appear in the field: items meaning CARRY are used for ESCAPE WITH is STEAL and items meaning GO are used for LEAVE WITH is STEAL. This is discussed in detail below.

2.2.1   *Lexical variation*
Three general sense clusters emerge that cross the various more specific senses. These are CONSEQUENTIAL STEAL, INCONSEQUENTIAL STEAL, and MEANS-MANNER STEAL. The first two of these general senses correspond to the pragmatic schemata identified in the delimitation of the frame-field, the third dissects the two other general senses and corresponds to three of the grammatical constructions that will become apparent in the construction network analysis. We do not peruse issues of salience and centrality due the nature of the corpus and the object of study.[9]

CONSEQUENTIAL STEAL e.g.: *hold-up*, *mug*, *plunder, rob*, etc.
 These lexemes signify a theft that is seen as serious and harms the plaintiff. This follows from the pragmatic schema B, used above, to delimit the frame.

Table 2. Lexical variation of STEAL

abduct /tion (vt /vt_2/n)	crib (vt, vt_2)	hand in the till	nab(b)/.ing (vt)	rip off (vt, vt_2, n)
abscond with	despoil (vt)	help oneself to (vt, vt_2)	nick (vt, vt_2)	scrump (vt)
bag (vt)	do a runner with (vt, vt_2)	hijack (vt)	nick off with (vt, vt_2)	shoplift/ er (vt, vt_2/ n)
blag (vt, n)	do off with (vt, vt_2)	hold for ransom (vt)	pilfer (vt, vt_2)	skim (vt)
bone (vt)	elope with (vt, vt_2)	hold-up (vt)	pillage (vt)	smash-n-grab ($^?$vt, n)
bootleg / er (vt/ n)	embezzle /r (vt/ n)	kidnap/ er (vt, vt_2/ n)	pinch (vt, vt_2)	snaffle (vt, vt_2)
break-in (vt, n)	ESCAPE with (vt, vt_2)	knock off (vt, vt_2)	pirate (vt, n)	steal (vt, vt_2)
bugger off with (vt, vt_2)	f*ck off with (vt, vt_2)	larceny (n)	piss off with (vt, vt_2)	stick up (vt, n)
burglarise (vt)	filch (vt)	leg it with (vt, vt_2)	plagiarise (vt, vt_2)	strip (vt_2)
burgle/ ry/ er (vt/ n)	fleece (vt)	lift (vt, vt_2)	plunder/ er (vt, vt_2)	swindle / er (vt, vt_2/ n)
carry off (vt)	GO off with (vt, vt_2)	loot (vt)	poach/er (vt, vt_2/n)	swipe (vt, vt_2)
CARRY off (vt, vt_2)	go walkies (idiom)	make off with (vt, vt_2)	pocket (vt)	take (vt, vt_2)
cheat / er (vt, vt_2) (n)	half-inch (vt, vt_2)	misappropriate (vt, vt_2)	purloin (vt)	take off with (vt, vt_2)
copy / er (vt, vt_2) (n)	fingers in the till	mug(g) / er/ ing (vt/ n)	ransack (vt)	thieve (vt, vt_2)

INCONSEQUENTIAL STEAL e.g.: *shoplift, pinch, nick, pilfer*, etc.

This second general tendency in the lexical field was represented by the pragmatic schema A. It must be stressed that we may only distinguish this group from CONSEQUENTIAL STEAL in "vague" terms since many lexical items could fall into both groups depending on situation-context. However, there are clear semantic tendencies and many items exclusively belong to one of the two axiological poles. For example, as noted above, compare *shoplift* and *steal* or *copy* and *pirate*. The most general effect of this distinction between CONSEQUENTIAL and INCONSEQUENTIAL STEAL is on the lexicon for BORROW. Many items from the STEAL field may be used to mean BORROW, such as *Can I pinch your rubber for a tick, Saïd must have swiped my pen again*, and *My housemate's always nicking the telly*. This is, however, normally restricted to items belonging to INCONSEQUENT STEAL. Thus, one may not say **May I steal your / rob you of your pencil for a tick*.

MEANS / MANNER STEAL e.g.: *run off with, pickpocket, snatch*, etc.

This third lexical group is based on the strong tendency for many items, and not only verbs, to profile the means and or manner of the STEAL event. Important to this group is a metaphor LEAVE WITH IS STEAL that contributes the widest lexical variation to the field accepting essentially all motion verbs. Other than these three general tendencies, six principal sense clusters emerge.

INTELLECTUAL STEAL e.g.: *crib, plagiarise, copy, cheat, pirate, bootleg*, etc.

The patient (St) is intellectual property.

TRICKERY STEAL e.g.: do *x over, dupe x of y, swindle, do one over on x, rip off, cheat, embezzle*, etc.

The predicate and/or event structure profiles ruse.

VIOLENT STEAL e.g.: *mug, rob, hold-up, burglarise, burgle, stick-up*, etc.

The predicate and/or event structure profiles violence.

ABANDON STEAL e.g.: *ransack, pillage, plunder, despoil*, etc.

The plaintiff (Sb_2) is aware but cannot prevent the event.

MONEY STEAL e.g.: *swindle, short-change, skim,* etc.

The patient (St) is financial property.

HUMAN STEAL *abduct, kidnap, hold for ransom, hijack, nab, shanghai, rustle* (livestock).

This small group is clearly distinguished because the patient (st.) of STEAL must be animate. The prototype is human but is more or less extendable to the animal kingdom.
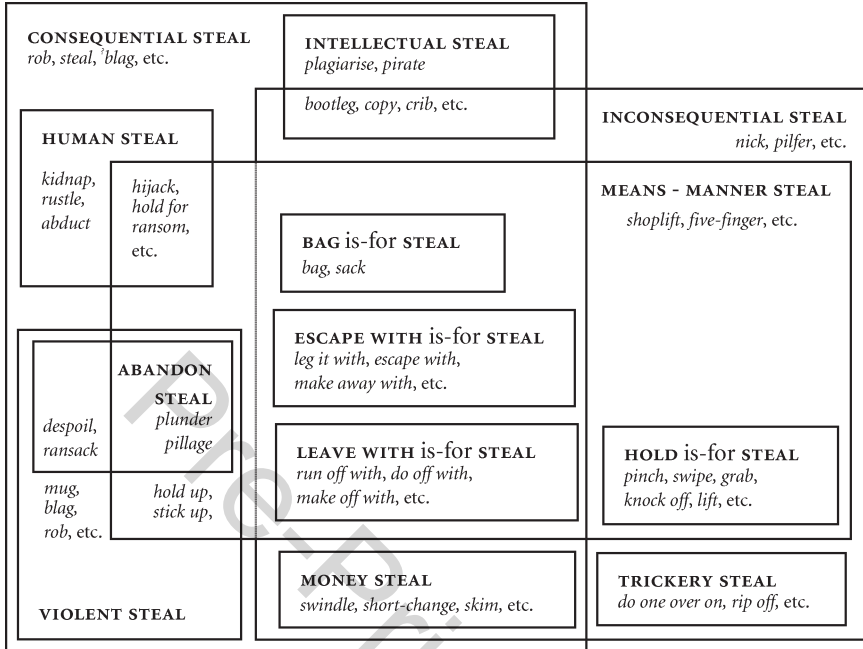
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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ CONSEQUENTIAL STEAL    ┌──────────────────────────┐                       │
│ rob, steal, ?blag, etc.│ INTELLECTUAL STEAL       │                       │
│                        │ plagiarise, pirate       │                       │
│ ┌──────────────────┐   │ ┌──────────────────────┐ │                       │
│ │ HUMAN STEAL      │   │ │ bootleg, copy, crib, │ │  INCONSEQUENTIAL STEAL│
│ │                  │   │ │ etc.                 │ │      nick, pilfer, etc.│
│ │ kidnap,  hijack, │   │ └──────────────────────┘ │                       │
│ │ rustle,  hold for│   │        MEANS - MANNER STEAL                       │
│ │ abduct   ransom, │   │         shoplift, five-finger, etc.               │
│ │          etc.    │   │ ┌──────────────────────┐                          │
│ └──────────────────┘   │ │ BAG is-for STEAL     │                          │
│                        │ │ bag, sack            │                          │
│ ┌──────────────────┐   │ └──────────────────────┘                          │
│ │       ABANDON    │   │ ┌──────────────────────┐                          │
│ │        STEAL     │   │ │ ESCAPE WITH is-for STEAL                         │
│ │ despoil,  plunder│   │ │ leg it with, escape with,                        │
│ │ ransack   pillage│   │ │ make away with, etc. │                          │
│ │                  │   │ └──────────────────────┘                          │
│ │ mug,    hold up, │   │ ┌──────────────────────┐  ┌────────────────────┐  │
│ │ blag,   stick up,│   │ │ LEAVE WITH is-for STEAL│ HOLD is-for STEAL    │  │
│ │ rob, etc.        │   │ │ run off with, do off with, pinch, swipe, grab,  │  │
│ │                  │   │ │ make off with, etc.  │  knock off, lift, etc.│  │
│ │ VIOLENT STEAL    │   │ └──────────────────────┘  └────────────────────┘  │
│ └──────────────────┘   │ ┌──────────────────────┐  ┌────────────────────┐  │
│                        │ │ MONEY STEAL          │  │ TRICKERY STEAL     │  │
│                        │ │ swindle, short-change,│ │ do one over on, rip off, etc.│
│                        │ │ skim, etc.           │  └────────────────────┘  │
│                        │ └──────────────────────┘                          │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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Figure 1. Lexical field of STEAL

Although impractical for the representation of fuzzy set boundaries, Geeraerts' (1995) "box-set" notation simply and accurately captures the broad outlines of onomasiological lexical variation. Based on this representational system, Figure 1 maps the lexical field described above.

2.2.2   *Metaphoric variation*

Having established the field, the identification of conceptual metaphors is a straightforward task. There are a surprisingly limited number of conceptual metaphors considering the amount of metaphoric lexicon involved. Two basic metaphors emerge that divide again into less and more highly specified metaphoric structures.

> LEAVE WITH is STEAL e.g.: *nick off with, scarper off with, piss off with, do off with, make off with*, etc.

> HOLD is STEAL e.g.: *pinch, skim, snatch, swipe, lift, shoplift, nab, five-finger discount, smash-n-grab, have one's hand/ fingers in the till*, etc.

ESCAPE WITH is STEAL e.g.: *escape with, abscond with, do a runner with, leg it with*, etc.

BAG is STEAL e.g.: *bag, pocket, sack.*

The difference between LEAVE WITH is STEAL and ESCAPE WITH is STEAL is unclear since the "manner" of the motion verbs sanctioned by the LEAVE metaphor often profiles speed or clandestinity, which is also characteristic of escaping. It seems clearer to posit a general metaphor-metonym TAKE is-for STEAL, the two more highly specified metaphors representing more highly specified correspondences. A similar situation exists for HOLD is STEAL and BAG is STEAL. Here, however, the POSSESSION "stands for" or "is" STEAL.

This description brings us to two problematic and much mooted issues. Firstly, problems of source and target domain identification and delimitation have lead to important criticisms of Conceptual Metaphor Theory. Attempts at dealing with such issues have been offered by Clausner & Croft (1997), Glynn (1997, 2002), and Grady (1997) who focus on better means for delimiting and defining the domains in question. The solutions provided by these investigations could also inform our results, but must be left aside. Secondly, the discussion on the interaction of contiguity and similarity continues to escape consensus. We assume the Jakobson-Lacan-Lakoff position that metaphor and metonymy represent inherently different cognitive processes. However, this does not explain how they interact and so does not explain how in some situation-contexts, as we will see below, TAKE is metaphorically STEAL and in others, TAKE stands in part for STEAL, and yet in others both relations are involved. Goossens' (1994, 1995) proposal that the two processes may overlap, one process being embedded in / or based upon the other, should be basic to any discussion and this is evidenced by our results.

The problem in distinguishing these processes in our examples is the high degree of conceptual similarity between the domains: are the referents (in Radden & Kövecses' 1999:21 terms the "vehicles") different parts of one cognitive domain or are they members of wholly different domains?[10] Distinguishing similarity from continuity for abstract non-reference based concepts is the most difficult question to answer in the metaphor-metonymy debate and leads straight back to the issues of domain identification and distinction. In Langacker's (1987:152) framework, this is a question of distinguishing domains from domain matrixes, which he stresses is only a matter of degree. What we need is an understanding of the role of situation-context and anaphoric reference in the activation of single versus multi-domain conceptual processes.
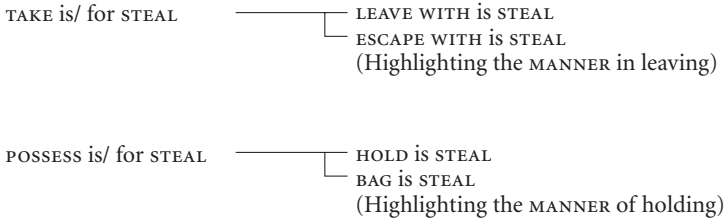
TAKE IS/ FOR STEAL ───────┬─── LEAVE WITH IS STEAL
                          └─── ESCAPE WITH IS STEAL
                               (Highlighting the MANNER in leaving)

POSSESS IS/ FOR STEAL ───────┬─── HOLD IS STEAL
                             └─── BAG IS STEAL
                                  (Highlighting the MANNER of holding)

Figure 2. Metaphoric-metonymic network of STEAL

An apparatus for capturing such effects might be found in the Domain Avail-ability Principle developed by Ruiz de Mendoza (2000, & Pérez 2001) or in a more thoroughly developed approach to the role of illocutionary meaning and the "states of affairs" in metonymic language. Following this second possibility, Thornburg & Panther (1997: 207–209) and Panther & Thornburg (1999b: 336–338, 2003: 129–130 & passim) investigate the use of pragmatically determined "action scenarios" to explain the functioning of metonymic reference. Not only does this approach resolve many of the issues that the metaphor-metonym de-bate raise, it would combine seamlessly with the pragmatic models upon which we base our domain definition. The importance of this proposal is supported by our study. As will be clear below, one may read many of the "metaphoric" examples found in the corpus as either metonymic or metaphoric *depending on context*. Croft (1993) captures the issue at hand, stressing it is the conceptual unity of a domain in the language use context that is at stake; the difference between highlighting a part of a domain or mapping onto another domain is often a result of *ad hoc* categorisation based on anaphoric or situation-context information.

However, the abstract nature of the conceptual relations that we see above suggests another possibility: Langacker's theories of schema instantia-tion (1990: 149–163) and active-zone phenomena (1987: 271–274, 2000: 62–67, 200f.). His proposal of a taxonomic structure between abstract schema and more highly specified instances of that schema on the one hand, and the partial activation of schema and reference to salient parts on the other, could well be the most efficient means for explaining the conceptual relationships witnessed here. For our purposes, we must accept that both metaphor and metonymy are operating in the conceptual relationships identified in the analysis but leave the workings of their relationship open to discussion.

Figure 2 represents metaphoric-metonymic network for the domain-frame. Of these four sub-metaphors it is clearly HOLD IS STEAL and LEAVE WITH is STEAL that are the most important. The other two metaphors are highly restricted instances, in both their event construal and lexical variation, of the two general higher order conceptual relationships of "possessing" and "taking". Let us now turn to the syntactic topology of the domain-frame. Just as these metaphors "fall out" from the field study, simple collocation analysis of the field produces a set of syntactic possibilities.

2.3   Construction network

By looking at the lexical field and the possible collocations, a clear picture of the interrelated constructions becomes apparent. Examples such as *he's the robber*, or *what a thief*, are not included since they are too generalised to inform a study of the syntactic topology of STEAL. Nevertheless, their inclusion in a more complete study of the syntax and lexis of STEAL is a straightforward procedure. The representation of onomasiological variation of schematic semantic units, such as grammatical constructions, is no simple task and we must put off until a later date the development of a means for representing the complexities of event-frame, syntax, and meaning as well as the inter-relatedness, both semantic and syntactic, within sets of constructions. One of the greatest problems is often the abstract nature of constructional semantics. Geeraerts (1998: 203–208), comparing three cognitive approaches to dative constructions, offers a discussion on the problems and complexities of representing the semasiological variation of grammatical constructions. Such issues and more are at stake in onomasiological description and so for our purposes the details of inheritance linking, frame attributes, and the formalities of notation must be simplified.

Moreover, it is worth mentioning at this point that the frame attribute, an important analytical device in Construction Grammar, is largely insufficient to capture register and dialect variation. If an onomasiological approach to constructions is to be successful, we must also integrate these parameters into the semantic description of the syntactic forms. The most obvious example in this study is the important differences between the use of phrasal verbs and simple predicate constructions. In the corpus, the former seemed to be much more pervasive in familiar registers, especially when combined with certain head verbs. However, as stated elsewhere, due to the corpus, we may make no deductions about the constructional-lexical variation. Table 3 presents the six predicate-based constructions used to signify a STEAL event in English. The

Table 3. Constructional variation of STEAL

[TAKE]	[ESCAPE WITH]	[VERB OFF WITH]
TAKE x (*from* y)	ESCAPE *with* x (*from* y)	GO *off* (*from* y) *with* x
[ROB]	[CARRY OFF]	[VERB AWAY WITH]
ROB x (*of* z/ $^?$*from* y)[11]	CARRY *off* x (*from* y)	GO *away with* x

syntactic information listed is kept to a minimum; round brackets representing optional participants and italics necessary lexemes in the argument structure.

Before we attempt to describe the construction network of STEAL, we need to consider in more detail these constructions. In the following section, we focus on the lexical and metaphoric constraints on the constructions, rather than the details of syntactic variation.

The Construction {STEAL [TAKE]}

The verb *steal* and its construction have a similar argument structure to {*take* [TAKE]}, of which it is a more highly specified instance. Since the frame of STEAL is semantically distinct from that of TAKE, we may describe this as more than a simple elaboration link. In construction grammar, elaboration, or instance linking (Langacker 1987: 68, 438–9; Goldberg 1995: 79–81, 1997: 386–387, and Michaelis & Ruppenhofer 2001: 38), is a hypothesis designed to explain a taxonomic structure where the head specifies the semantics of the construction in a similar way that instantiation specifies any abstract schema. Following this, we could treat all the verbs in the STEAL field that are felicitous in this construction as instances or elaborations of TAKE. However, seeing the encyclopaedic richness of the frame, the lexical productivity of the construction, and diversity of the field, we will not deal with {STEAL [TAKE]} as an instance link of [TAKE], but as a basic construction of the frame STEAL. It has three principal realisations:

C   sb$_1$ STEAL st (*from/ off* sb$_2$)
C1$_S$ sb$_1$ STEAL st   (Subpart link of C)
C2$_{My}$ sb$_1$ STEAL st$_1$ (*from/ off* st$_2$)   (Metonymic extension link of C1)[12]

Following the pragmatic schemata, sb$_2$ must " own" st. The corpus examples almost entirely support this where only one instance of STEAL with an sb$_1$ (agent) – st (patient) possession link was attested. This was a borderline case where a mother took "her" children against the will of "their" father. POSSESSION is a culturally complex and prototype structured concept that naturally results in such variation. Some typical [STEAL] examples include:

(2) a. Not only did I smoke, but I f*cking *five finger discounted* the damn things.
<www.lunanina.com/mt/mt-view.cgi/1/entry/003629/print_entry>
(asterisk added)
   b. Sadly, AntiProduct's new van was *half-inched* with all the band's gear in it. <www.eboards4all.com/56478/messages/5.html>

The construction has high lexical variation especially in the literal lexicon, but also for the HOLD-BAG metaphors as in example (3a).

(3) a. She nicked/ pinched/ five-finger discounted/ bagged/ pocketed the watch (from the shop).
   b. She ??escaped, ?ran, ?scampered, sneaked/ snuck the watch (??from the shop).

As example (3b) shows, the LEAVE-ESCAPE WITH metaphors do not license this construction. However, informants accept some phrases, reading them as, what Boas (2003) calls, non-conventionalised resultatives. The resultative reading aside, this form does not normally sanction the metaphors LEAVE-ESCAPE WITH.

Moreover, since this construction is basically a more highly specified form of TAKE, in instances where the item *take* is used, it is only through situation-context that a STEAL reading is possible. In construction grammar, we may capture this with the "frame attribute".[13]

(4) a. Olivia *took the watch* out of the box. She read the inscription and then put on the watch to see how it looked <http://chirstyn.com/emerald-heights/?page=stories&post=40>   TAKE
   b. I had just gone into the back . . .and one of the young men took that opportunity to lean over the counter and *take a watch*.
<http://www.unb.ca/bruns/0001/issue16/news/theft.html>   STEAL

The situation-context dependant STEAL reading is also true, to some extent, of the metaphoric-metonymic items for HOLD and seems to be a result of the taxonomic structure of the TAKE-STEAL frame relationship rather than the construction *per se* since it is equally true of other constructions.

The construction [ROB]
The construction [ROB] is a closely related alternate of [STEAL] that changes the participant profiling of the STEAL event. Goldberg (1995: 44ff.) has already described the frame and argument structure of this alternation. Put simply,

the [ROB] construction highlights or profiles the thief (Sb_1) and the plaintiff (Sb_2) and backgrounds the property (St). For the [STEAL] construction, it is the thief (Sb_1) and the property (St) that is profiled and the plaintiff (Sb_2) that is backgrounded. Such alternation is similar to that described by Fillmore (1985) in his discussion of BUY – SELL. Following Goldberg's (1995: 46) analysis, we may represent the different profiled argument structures thus:

> Argument Structure:
> > [ROB] < Sb1 $Sb2_{obj}$ St >   [STEAL] < Sb1 Sb2 St_{obj} >
> Frame Structure:
> > ROB < *thief plaintiff* property > STEAL < *thief* plaintiff *property* >

Below are the main realisations of the [ROB] construction:

> C Sb_1 ROB Sb_2
> $C1_M$ Sb_1 ROB Some-place

Other forms attested include:

> $C2_I$ Sb_1 ROB Sb_2's St / St *of* Sb_2's/ *of* their St
> > (Single and Double Genitives)
> $C3_I$ Sb_1 ROB St_1 *from* Some-place/ Sb_2
> > (Point of overlap with [STEAL])

This construction is more lexically limited than [STEAL]. Neither the HOLD nor the LEAVE WITH metaphor licenses the construction, but it is licensed by the BAG metaphor. Similarly, it accepts a restricted set of verbs, including most of the items from the VIOLENT STEAL sense cluster. The main lexical characteristic, other than this, is that the predicate slot dictates that the goal argument be either "somebody" or "some-place" depending on the verb employed. This variation is captured by the metonymic link described above as ROB $C1_{My}$.

The Constructions of [CARRY OFF] *and* [ESCAPE WITH]

> C Sb_1 ESCAPE *with* St
> C1 Sb_1 ESCAPE *from* Some-place *with* St
> C Sb_1 CARRY *off* / *away* St
> C1 Sb_1 CARRY *off* / *away* St from Some-place

These two constructions are semantically quite similar, yet syntactically distinct. One distinction lies in the word order. For [ESCAPE *with*], the Some-place is normally, but not necessarily, found in-between the predicate and St argument. For [CARRY *off*], however, this is not possible and the Some-place

argument must follow both the predicate and the object. To note also both constructions have a limited lexical range and the *away* variant of [CARRY *off*] was only rarely attested to mean STEAL, and then only metonymically. Indeed, generally, the construction seems to be restricted to metonymic representations of STEAL and thus is dependent on a STEAL situation-context or frame attribute. Although in many of the attested examples there was not actually any "carrying" involved in the "taking", we find no examples of property being "carried off" that one could not imagine physically carrying. This was supported by the fact that with construed examples, informants rejected categorically this possibility. Example (5a) is typical of the metonymic phrases and (5b) demonstrates the unacceptability of the metaphoric extension.

(5)   a.   I'm sure the Romans had the Hittites all fired up about the Hebrews while they *toted off* the riches of both nations.
           <3B5151EF.2105@gernsback.net> TAKE or metonymic STEAL
      b.   ??She carried/ schlepped/ carted off the power. ??[CARRY *off*] + LEAVE WITH is STEAL

If one argues that (5a) is a metaphoric reading, then it is a clear example of what Goossens (1995: 172) calls "metaphor from metonymy". The form is licensed by any of a range of CARRY verbs, such as *carry*, *tote*, *lug*, *schlep* but also those that profile the "means" of CARRY such as *truck*, *ship*, *cart*.

The construction [ESCAPE WITH] possesses a more restricted lexical range. The predicate slot here is almost exclusively restricted to *escape*, *abscond*, *do a runner*, *leg it with*, and *elope*. Some other lexical items are possible such as *to French leave it*, *to hightail it*, and perhaps *break free with*, or *fly the coop with*. Although strict variation data are not possible with the corpus, *abscond*, in mainly news press reports and *leg it with* and *do a runner with* in personal writing, had relatively high populations. As for [CARRY *off with*], the form was generally restricted to TAKE or metonymic STEAL. Nevertheless, some metaphoric examples, as in (6), were attested.

(6)   a.   Many local Corporate Suits *flew the coop* with bundles of venture capital. <www.angelfire.com/nb/afm/afm163.html>

Note, however, that *bundles of* renders the stolen "venture capital" conceptually something that one may physically GO *with*. Typically, the [ESCAPE WITH] form is limited to metonymic readings.

The Constructions of [VERB OFF WITH] *and* [VERB AWAY WITH]

[VERB OFF WITH]

> C Sb_1 GO *off with* St
> C1 Sb_1 GO *off with* St *from* Some-place
> #C2 Sb_1 GO *off from* Some-place *with* St

C2 is a form that may be construed through context to mean STEAL-BORROW metonymically but normally signifies TAKE.

[VERB AWAY WITH]

> C Sb_1 GO *off away* St

This form is highly specified and does not readily produce any syntactic variation. It takes a small range of non-motion verbs that produce metaphoric STEAL readings, but with motion verbs, it typically only produces expressions that metonymically stand for STEAL. Nevertheless, a few metaphoric exceptions were attested, such as:

(7) [T]he 12th Duke has seized and *made away with* the land
    <3c5750dd.850495@news.freeuk.net>

These two forms also possess a subtle difference in meaning that originates from the literal reading of the PATH encoded postposition. The simplest way to capture this difference is to look at two related constructions that explicitly profile the PATH element in the expression. Consider the difference in meaning between the following two expressions.

(8) a. Jane? She's off.
    b. Jane? She's away.

The semantics encoded by the *away* postposition seems to emphasise the result of the PATH, where *off* profiles the PATH of leaving itself. Thus, (8a) is most likely to mean that Jane is leaving, where (8b) that she is not here, and presumably somewhere far away, such as on holidays. The difference in meaning between the two constructions [VERB *off with*] and [VERB *off away*] seems to follow this semantic difference.

The lexical variation for this last construction is worth investigation in some detail as an example of the interaction between the field-frame and its metaphors and constructions. Therefore, we consider the lexical variation of [VERB *off with*] more closely in the following section.
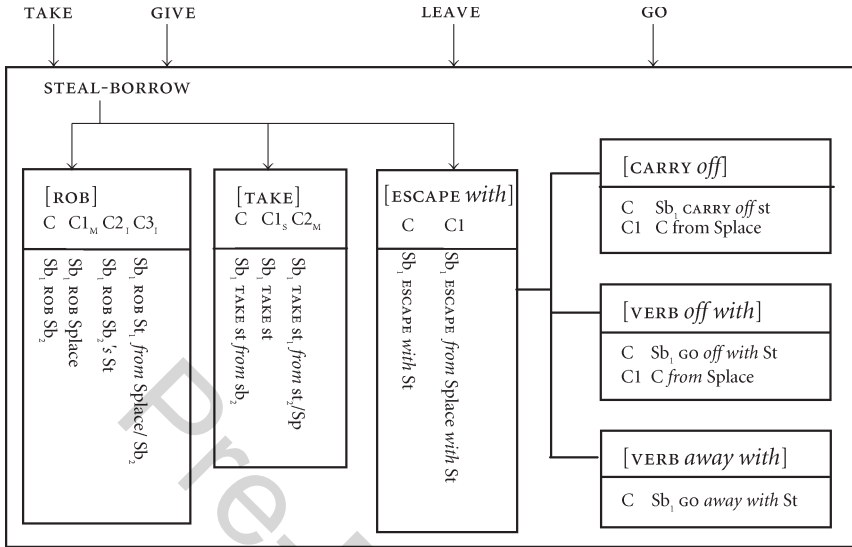
Figure 3. Construction network of STEAL

Table 4. Constructional metaphor-metonym licensing of STEAL

Construction	Metonymic and metaphoric constraints
[TAKE]	metonym TAKE for STEAL, metaphors HOLD-BAG is STEAL. *metaphors LEAVE-ESCAPE WITH is STEAL
[ROB]	limited to direct obj. transitive verbs with literal reading of CONSEQUENT STEAL, and largely VIOLENT STEAL
[ESCAPE *with*]	metonym TAKE for STEAL, ?metaphor TAKE is STEAL
[CARRY *off*]	metonym TAKE for STEAL, *metaphor TAKE is STEAL
[GO *off with*]	metonym TAKE for STEAL, metaphor TAKE is STEAL
[GO *away with*]	metonym TAKE for STEAL, ?metaphor TAKE is STEAL

Figure 3 is a representation of the principal syntactic forms of STEAL and Table 4 summarises the metaphor-construction conflicts.

Ideally some form of representation that captures the metaphoric, constructional, and lexical structure of the domain should be developed. The above attempts at representing the onomasiological variation should be seen as an attempt to summarise the main structures of the field rather than represent its complexity.

3. **Syntagmatic-paradigmatic structure of the construction** [v *off with*]

3.1 Lexical variation of [v *off with*]. Inheritance, constructional polysemy, and partial productivity

The majority of attested verbs for this construction are either metaphoric non-motion verbs or motion verbs of alacrity or clandestinity. For alacritous and clandestine motion verbs, such as *run*, *scarper*, *scamper*, *slink*, *sneak*, *creep*, very few attested examples read as neutral TAKE. In fact, it is difficult to construe phrases that employ these verbs combined this form without a STEAL reading. Furthermore, it must be noted that given context, almost any motion verb is felicitous in the {STEAL[v *off with*]} construction. The non-motion verbs that license this form are largely metaphoric, but their source domains are, for the most part, unclear.

For some motion verbs, the corpus examples reveal a point of overlap with two other frames. Firstly, many of the non-clandestine and non-alacritous verbs are used to signify "take with abandon", the reading of which often boarders on STEAL. Such examples were particularly common in news texts describing sport and entertainment "industry" wins.

(9) Will New Zealand *stroll off with* the cup, or can South Africa, Australia, . . . give them a run for their money?
<wp.netscape.com/netcenter/1999/september/0923_cool.html? cp=cool_old>

Typically, we find motion verbs that encode a manner of self-certainty or care-lessness employed in this instance of the construction. Common attested examples included *lope*, *strut*, *stroll*, *trundle*, *stride*, and interestingly, due to its non-self confident meaning, *traipse*. Despite the semantic similarity to STEAL, these examples do not "match" our pragmatic schemata and thus represent a poly-semic link. This type of constructional polysemy is, of course, unproblematic.

Secondly, a similar polysemic link exists for the domain-frame of KILL. This link was particularly important for the non-motion verbs such as *do off with*, and *to off with* as well as *make away with*. These links lead to another construc-tion network that ties to the results of the lexical-constructional study of KILL by Lemmens (1998).

Attested examples of even the most unlikely of STEAL motion verbs are not uncommon. This is especially true of metonymic readings, such as examples (10a)–(10b), yet metaphoric examples are also attested. For instance, in (10c),

the term *stroll off with* refers to the theft of a "spaceship". Within the text, it is precisely this phrase that expresses the notion of theft, there are no other lexical indications.

(10) a. ...the archaeologists who dug it up and *traipsed off with* the loot.
          <www.chillwater.plus.com/HH/mumphrey%2011.htm>
      b. If you think someone could break into your office/house/whatever and *schlep off with* your fifteen-kilo workstation gaming machine...
          <www.sdc.org/~leila/usb-dongle/README>
      c. '...you mean...er...' Ford looked over his shoulder. 'You mean *stroll off with* it [the spaceship]'. Adams (1980: 112)

For the clandestine and alacritous verbs, both metonymic (11a) and metaphoric (11b) examples are common:

(11) a. Vikings got to hear of this and raided Watchet and *scarpered off with* many silver pennies.
          <www.somerset.gov.uk/archives/exmoor/normanbsummary1.htm>
      b. His law firm *scampered off with* over $100 million from asbestos-related lawsuits alone.
          <www.monkeycube.com/01rantapr23.shtml>

All but one in twelve English informants considered metaphoric examples, such as (11b), to be perfectly acceptable. However, it is worth noting that of the three American informants available, two considered these examples awkward. It is, therefore, possible that the metaphoric use of the construction is dialectically variable.

Tables 5 and 6 offer examples of the lexical distribution of the construction.

Table 5. Non-motion verb lexical variation of [VERB off with]

do off with	make off/ away with	piss off / with	take off / with
f-ck off / with	nick off with	rack/ shove off (ˀrack/ ??shove off with)	knock off (ˀknock off with)
blag off with	leg it off with	bugger/ clear off/ with	ˀthieve off with

Table 6. Alacritous and clandestine motion verbs typical of [VERB off with]

Clandestine Motion	creep, edge, steal, sneak, slink, slip, sidle, slide, ˀstrafe, ˀpad, ˀtiptoe, ˀpussyfoot, etc.
Alacritous Motion	lope, run, scarper, scamper, scurry, scuttle, ˀwhoosh, ˀdash, ˀdart, ˀflew, ??jog, ??zip, ??zoom, ??whiz, etc.

Looking at the non-motion verbs above, it becomes obvious that this construction inherits the lexicon and syntactic form of another construction. There are systematic examples of taboo lexemes normally found in the predicate slot of the form [VERB IMPERATIVE *off*] that mean LEAVE. These examples abound in English and are of the type, *f*ck off, piss off, rack off, bugger off, clear off*, and so on. These expressions are related to another set of expressions that do not employ the imperative but still signify LEAVE. Examples such as "*I'll duck off down the shop*" or "*He's made off without his stuff* " show that [VERB + *off with*] is part of a complex lexical-constructional network.

Offered below is a list of some of the related constructions, or inheritance links, where we may identify the different forms as C, C1, C2, and so forth.

C.   {GO [motion verb]}   e.g.: *go*, *run*, *lope*, *scamper*, etc.
C1. {LEAVE [motion verb *off*]}   e.g.: *go off*, *run off*, etc.
C1b. {INSULT LEAVE [taboo verb imp. *off*]} e.g.: *f*ck off*, *piss off*, etc.
C2. {TAKE/ STEAL/ KILL [motion verb *off with*]} e.g.: *run off with*, *piss off with*, etc.

This type of Inheritance linking is basic to construction grammar (Lakoff 1987: 505–540; Goldberg 1995: 74–81; Michaelis & Ruppenhofer 2001: 60–62, 72–89). Although warranted, a proper investigation of the construction grammar mechanics and inheritance system is not possible here. Noteworthy, however, is the issue of partial productivity that this inheritance structure raises.

Although all verbal items that license C equally license C1, not all the verbs that license C1 are acceptable in C2, our construction {STEAL[VERB *off with*]}. Thus, [MOTION VERBS] are inherited from C via C1, the taboo verbs such as *piss* and *f*ck* are inherited from C1b. Other items such *take*, *nick*, and *blag* assumedly originate from the transitive lexicon for STEAL. However, this leaves questions unanswered. If *piss*, *bugger*, and *f*ck* are inherited, then why not *rack* and *shove*. These two items are commonly used in the same imperative LEAVE expression (C1b), yet informants consider them unacceptable when paired with the {STEAL[V *off with*]} construction. The corpus, which reveals no such instances, supports this. These last two items have more or less the same meaning in the parent construction, the sole difference being they are not, strictly speaking, taboo terms.

Moreover, partial productivity is not restricted to issues of inheritance. We see similar issues in the class of verbs that our construction normally accepts. Table 5 shows some examples of verbs that, although possible in this construction given enough context, are highly unlikely candidates for the head slot. These verbs, such as *whiz* or *zoom*, denote motion and profile speed but were

not attested and often considered awkward by informants. Although one may find an explanation for this in their metonymic and onomatopoeic meanings, this explanation is not possible for similar constraints on the clandestine verbs of motion such as *strafe* and *pad*.

It would seem imaginable that the semantics of the construction should be able to "coerce" the meaning of all the verbs in this class to form felicitous expressions. Coercion between constructional and lexical meaning is basic to construction grammar (Goldberg 1995: 159; Panther & Thornburg 1999a, 2000), but here we see examples where this simple principle seems to fail. Such questions problematise the Override Principle, posited by (Michaelis & Ruppenhofer 2001: 38–39, 45), which states that in the case of verbal-constructional conflict, the semantics of a construction overrides, or coerces, the semantics of the lexicon.[14] The problem with this proposal is that many semantically similar verbs are not felicitous in a given construction. By viewing the *Gesamtbedeutung*, or aggregate meaning, of an utterance as a result of a "competition" between "different types" of semantic encoding, closed class versus open class (cf. Talmy 2000: 22–40, 88–93) or syntagmatic, paradigmatic, and pragmatic (cf. Kay & Fillmore 1999), construction grammar runs the risk of returning to the trap of modularity and linking rules. We need, rather, a holistic unified approach.

In light of this, it seems that the Causal Relation Hypothesis, proposed by Goldberg (1997: 387–395), which posits a context dependent match between head and construction, is more successful in accounting for such lexical-constructional interaction. This is especially true since it places semantic categories such as means and manner, which are neither clear cases of open- nor closed- class semantics, on the centre stage of head-verb construction pairing. It is this means and manner that makes the use of motion verbs such as *dash*, *fly*, *zip*, and *zoom* unlikely, although possible.[15] Nevertheless, as Lemmens (1998: 71–97) and Boas' (2003: 100–113, 215–284) close treatments of lexical licensing shows, issues of partial productivity of verb classes in the relationship between verbal, constructional, and contextual semantics remain largely unresolved in construction grammar. It is only by properly basing the study on the collocation of lexical fields that issues such a partial productivity will be resolved. Moreover, we must not forget the importance of treating the different modes of semantic encoding as a holistic structure, as many in Cognitive and Systemic Linguistics repeatedly stress, and not as separate structures. Let us now consider an example of this mixed semantic encoding that the constructional network reveals.

3.2 Metaphor, metonymy, and the praxis-lexis-syntax continuum

For much of the metaphoric lexical variation of the construction, we have a matched doubling of the semantic encoding. For examples such as (10c) and (11b) above, presumably both the construction and the metaphor are motivating the signification. Although the metaphor, LEAVE WITH IS STEAL is closely entwined with the construction [v *off with*], we cannot simply say that the metaphor *is* the construction because examples, such as (12), demonstrate that the metaphor exists independently of the construction.

(12) a. *Do a runner with* a cruiser! Are you serious do you know how much these things are worth?
          <www.richards-realm.com/stories/tucker13.txt>
      b. I assume that a Minister would not pluck a protocol out of the air and decide to *do a runner with* it.
          <www.irlgov.ie/committees-29/c-justice/20030218/Page1.htm>
      c. …Russian scientists who got fed up and *legged it with* valuable weapons resources such as Plutonium, Berllyium etc.
          <834346345.4501.0@ciskc76.demon.co.uk>
      d. Saddam Hussein *has legged it with* a billion dollars looted from his national bank.
          <e6QnwIFpdhw+Ewww@dmanby.demon.co.uk>

These examples show that the metaphor exists regardless of the construction [v *off with*]. This is not problematic since there is no reason that constructional meaning and metaphoric meaning may not co-habit a single utterance. The metaphoric lexicon aside, even though many of the lexemes employed in the construction are inherited from other constructions, such as *piss*, *bugger*, and *f*ck* or from the literal lexicon for STEAL, such as *blag*, *knock*, and *nick*, other items such as *do* and *make* are not.

(13) Break into a house tie up the owner's and *do off with* the valuables.
      <www.xaprief.com/forums/showthread.php?s=&threadid=594>

In this example, the metaphor is LEAVE WITH IS STEAL, yet there is no lexical indication for this metaphoric structure. For examples employing *make*, one could posit a link with the *way* construction, as in *make one's way*, described by Goldberg (1995: 199–218). This, however, does not explain the use of *do*, which does not license any of the *way* constructions. Thus, assumedly one would argue that this is a literal expression for STEAL, the construction supplying the meaning and the verb being simply a "dummy" verb. This is a

reasonable explanation since *do* certainly possesses a very schematic meaning. There is, however, another more likely explanation: the construction is functioning as a source domain in cross-reference mapping. This possibility is less astonishing than it may seem. If we assume the hypothesis of the lexis-syntax continuum, then it is also reasonable to assume that the conceptual-linguistic structures that exist in the lexicon, such as metaphors and metonymies, exist equally in the syntax. If this were the case, we could argue that the meaning of the form [VERB *off with*], serves as the source domain for the metaphor LEAVE WITH is STEAL. Consider examples (14a)–(14c) in light of this suggestion.

(14) a. So this son of a bitch has *offed with* my cards and obviously had a number of phantom email accounts setup to dupe his stupid clientelle. <35463D97.A5CE637A@ozemail.com.au>
   b. I was stocking shelves that night when some hoodlums came and *offed with* a whole bunch of carts.
      <trasgo-1301981550330001@desm-07-45.dialup.netins.net>
   c. Someone *offed with* my copy, so I am without one for the moment.
      <6dqoe6qlq2@your.mother.com>

The corpus revealed a relatively small, but nonetheless important, set of examples where the [v *off with*] construction conflates to [*to off with*]. However, one may not simply dismiss this as a conflated construction. Without the full syntactic form and with no open-class semantic "clues" as to the meaning of the sentence, how is it possible that all speakers immediately understand the form even without context? It seems that the part of the construction that conflates to the predicate slot is the most salient part of the construction.

What we see here, in Langacker's (1987: 68–71) terms, is the partial sanctioning of this schematic semantic unit. Langacker's (2000: 62–67, 332–38) work on the role of active-zones characterises such phenomena as metonymic, something that this example supports. In short, *to off with* is a metonym for *to go off with*, the path being the salient and active-zone in the schema of this phrasal verb construction. Recent work on metonymy in syntactic meaning, such as Goldberg (1997: 388–90), Dirven (1999), Panther & Thornburg (1999a, 2000, 2001), and Ruiz de Mendoza & Díez Velasco (2003b), has underlined the importance of metonymic relations in the morpho-syntactic encoding of meaning. Indeed, Panther & Thornburg (1999a: 45–50) argue that metonymy is fundamental to much constructional semantics. They offer examples where the reading of the construction is not a metonymic link of another construction, but where the metonymy is inherent to the constructional semantics and

is the vehicle for the lexical specification of the construction. Our findings here further support the proposal that metonymy is a general conceptual process and thus basic to grammar. Metonymy is not a lexical phenomenon, but a conceptual process and thus, in Dirven's (1999: 277) words, "can be expected to operate at all levels of linguistic structure". If indeed metonymic syntax is possible, viz. parts of an argument structure standing for a grammatical construction, then the possibility of the meaning of a syntactic form operating as the source domain in a metaphor is much less surprising.

Thus, it seems the most elegant explanation for examples such as (13) and (14a)–(14c) is that the different codes of meaning, such as the constructional and lexical, may both serve as a source domain in a metaphor or a part in a metonym. Therefore [v *off with*] is, in example (13), the source domain for LEAVE WITH is STEAL. Although it is known that metaphoric structures interact in a profound way with constructional meaning (cf. Lakoff 1987: 509, 511, and Norvig & Lakoff 1987: 201; Goldberg 1995: 81–9), instances such as these would be overlooked if either construction grammar or conceptual metaphor analysis were to proceed independently of one another. Moreover, it supports the idea that much of the creative use of constructions is actually a result of analogy rather than straightforward use of entrenched schematic structure, as would be the positions of Goldberg or Fillmore. Indeed, Boas (2003: 260–269), in his work on resultatives, explores creative uses of constructions in such "metaphoric" terms. Furthermore, treating creative, or less typical, usages of constructions as instances of an abstract schema supports Langacker's (1990: 149–160) theory of instantiation, mentioned above.

These last examples further demonstrate why we must develop construction analysis alongside proper lexical field study and why we must consider both in metaphor and metonymy research. It seems that methodologically the most coherent approach to this combined analysis is to begin with an onomasiological domain-frame and examine the metaphoric and constructional variation of that domain. Following such a procedure, one possesses a clearer and more complete picture of the lexical and metaphoric constraints upon the constructions, but also the inheritance and linking structures between the constructions which is, in effect, a type of onomasiological variation.

4.   Summary

Despite the fact that constructions cross the paradigmatic-syntagmatic divide, they are semantic units and behave in some ways like lexemes and morphemes in their polysemy and onomasiological variation. However, they are also schematic and are sanctioned or constrained by semantic structures that conceptual metaphor theory, field semantics, and frame semantics aim to capture. These different "types" of semantic coding impact on grammatical constructions in complex ways and it is argued that we may only deal with issues such as partial productivity and coercion by properly investigating these parameters of semantic meaning in unison. Moreover, by starting from the onomasiological point of view, first establishing the domain-frame-field and then moving to consider the constructional variation, one has a more complete picture of the variables at hand and is more properly equipped to deal with the vagaries of constructional-lexical pairing.

However, variation is not only restricted to lexical-constructional pairing, but equally exists across the lexical field as well as across the constructional network. Even putting aside issues of onomasiological salience, the study encounted many instances of dialect and register variation in both constructional and lexical usage. This parameter of linguistic structure is often at best a parenthetic concern in Cognitive Linguistics, something that is inexcusable for a usage-based approach, and onomasiological research brings this weakness to the fore. These issues could not be investigated due to the nature of our corpus and to properly integrate such parameters into the study of constructional networks should be a goal for future research. Moreover, further investigation is necessary before we may propose a satisfactory means of representing the complexity of such constructional – lexical variables. This is true not only for the metaphoric constraints on the constructional network, but the variables of situation-context, register, and dialect that must be included in the frame attribute of a construction. Nevertheless, even if this study has not accounted for all of the semantic complexities it revealed, it has demonstrated the need to study these phenomena in tandem and has sketched a methodology to enable this combined approach.

Finally, some of the complexities of conceptual-lexical-constructional interaction that the analysis reveals offer a warning for construction grammar. We must not forget that these different modes of signification, between closed and open class semantics and between paradigmatic and syntagmatic structure, do not clearly divide and we should not fall into the trap of re-modularising

language. Indeed, the analysis revealed clear examples of the untenable division between the semiotic codes of praxis, lexis, and syntax. It was shown that a construction may serve as the source domain in a conceptual metaphor and offered further evidence that metonymic relations are basic to the syntactic encoding of meaning. Similarly, it supported other studies in showing that metaphoric and metonymic structures are often situation-context dependant. Despite the preliminary nature of this investigation, it is hoped that the need and possibility of properly integrating metaphor studies, frame semantics, and field semantics has been demonstrated.

Notes

1. The author thanks the anonymous reviewers of the *Annual Review of Cognitive Linguistics* and Elena Dmitrieva for their insights. All failings that remain are, of course, the responsibility of the author.

2. This is restated formally in Goldberg (1995:4): C is a construction iff$_{def}$ C is a form – meaning pair <F$_i$, S$_i$> such that some aspect of F$_i$ or some aspect of S$_i$ is not strictly predictable from C's component parts or from other previously established constructions.

3. We use the terms semasiological and onomasiological in the sense described by Geeraerts et al. (1994:1–16). In the simplest terms, this may be summarised as " semantic variation of a linguistic form" and "formal variation of a concept".

4. To note, Fillmore & Atkins (1992:76f.) explicitly argue against such theoretical integration. Although it seems their position is concerned primarily with the field studies of the structuralist programme.

5. Other attempts at delimiting lexical fields in Cognitive Linguistics have chosen an "extensional" method for their definitions, for example Lehrer (1982) and Geeraerts et al. (1994). Such an approach is, however, restricted to concepts with an identifiable real-world referent.

6. The University of North Carolina hosts an ongoing discussion group on the possibilities and limitations of Internet based corpus linguistics (http://www.unc.edu/~lajanda/responsible.html). Our study follows the guidelines presented there save that we take the added precaution of checking examples with informants.

7. Italic emphasis is added on all examples and Web "URL" and Usenet "message ID" references are indicated by angled brackets.

8. Cf. Geeraerts (1993a) for discussion of vagueness where he notes that it is problematic to view meaning as static or that the link between symbol and interpretation is necessarily stable, something that "semantic unit" and "entrenched" imply. Semiosis is a process and this type of vagueness is a natural part of language production.

9. The kind of lexical-onomasiological salience study proposed in the cognitive literature, such as Geeraerts (2000), would be difficult to apply to field studies of this kind due to the

abstract nature of the domain. Further research is needed before we may attempt salience studies of abstract onomasiological domains without a "real" referent to act as *tertium comparationis*. To appreciate the difficulties involved, consider Geeraerts (1985: 309–391, 1993b: 260–263), who offers a theoretical discussion outlining the issues at stake.

10. Cf. Pauwels (1999), Goossens (2000), Feyaerts (2000), Geeraerts (2003), and Ruiz de Mendoza & Díez Velasco (2003a) for further discussion of these issues.

11. The *from* object is attested in only a few examples and was rejected by informants.

12. Following Stefanowitsch (2003: 108), we assume that a metonymic inheritance link should be distinguished from a metaphoric link as originally proposed by Goldberg (1995: 81).

13. Michaelis & Lambrecht (1996: 225–6) offer an explanation of the attribute value matrix and the formalisms of construction grammar.

14. Note also that lexical meaning may also coerce, or "specify", constructional semantics. Although this does not directly contradict the Override Principle, it is further evidence that the relationship depicted by this principle is overly simplistic. Cf. Panther & Thornburg (1999a: 44–50) for a discussion of the lexical specification of constructions.

15. Cf. Boas (2003: 100) for examples of highly unlikely head-verb construction pairing made possible through construing situation-context.

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