IRINA NICULA, *Modalități de exprimare a percepțiilor fizice. Verbele de percepție în limba română* [Means of expressing physical perception. Romanian Perception verbs], Bucureşti, Editura Universității din Bucureşti, 2012, 216 p.

Irina Nicula's book represents a monographic research dedicated to the semantic-syntactic class of perception verbs in Romanian. Besides the description of this heterogeneous class of verbs in Romanian, the main aim of the book is to reveal the lexical and syntactic specificity of Romanian compared to other languages. As mentioned in the *Introduction* (pp. 13−18), the author's perspective is both semantic and syntactic: there is a strong relation between the polysemy of these verbs, and the syntactic configurations in which specific meanings are expressed. This book represents the first extensive research of this class of verbs in Romanian: even if the international literature on perception verbs is very rich, in Romanian linguistics, this book is preceded only by a few studies dealing with restricted problems regarding perception verbs − Cazacu (1950)[1], Manoliu-Manea (1977)[2], Dima (2002)[3], and Iliescu (2009)[4].

In the first chapter, *Delimitarea clasei lexico-semantice a verbelor de percepție* [The delineation of the lexical-semantic class of perception verbs] (pp. 21−37), the author describes the concept of *perception,* using the definitions given in psychology, neurobiology, and more particularly in cognitive psychology. The classification of perception verbs is realised according to the following criteria: (i) the organs through which perception is formed and (ii) the existence of the semantic feature [intentionality of perception]. According the first criterion, five classes of perception verbs are identified, each one containing a prototypical member: visual (***a vedea*** 'see', *a privi, a se uita* 'look, watch'), auditory (***a auzi*** 'hear', *a asculta* 'listen'), tactile (***a atinge*** 'touch', *a mângâia* 'stroke', *a palpa* 'palpate', *a pipăi* 'finger'), olfactory (***a mirosi*** 'smell', *a adulmeca* 'trail'), and gustatory (***a gusta*** 'taste', *a degusta* 'degust'). The second criterion delimits verbs that can denote non-intentional perception (*a vedea, a auzi,* etc.), intentional perception (*a privi, a asculta,* etc.), or evidential perception (verbs expressing states indirectly interpreted as perceptions: *a arăta* 'look', *a suna* 'sound', *a mirosi* 'smell'). By comparing the inventory of perception verbs in English and Romanian, the author concludes that the Romanian paradigm is incomplete, containing certain 'lexical gaps', such as those for tactile evidential perception (corresponding to Engl. *The cloth* ***felt*** *soft*) and for gustatory evidential perception (corresponding to Engl. *The soup* ***tasted*** *good*).

In the next chapter, *Semantica internă a verbelor de percepție* [The internal semantics of perception verbs] (pp. 38−64), the semantic classification of perception verbs is correlated with the existing aspectual classifications, especially with Vendler's (1967) proposal, and with the thematic

[1] B. Cazacu, "Despre înțelesul unor verbe *sentiendi*", *Studii și cercetări lingvistice,* 2, 257−267.

[2] M. Manoliu-Manea, *Elemente de sintaxă comparată romanică. Tipologie și istorie,* București, Universitatea din București, 137−151, 226−229.

[3] G. Dima, *Verbele* ***sentiendi*** *în limbile engleză și română,* Galați, Editura Fundației Universitare "Dunărea de Jos".

[4] M. Iliescu, "Notes sur deux verbes visuels perceptuels roumains: *a se uita* and *a privi* 'regarder'", in: S. Reinheimer Rîpeanu (ed.), *Studia linguistica Mariae Manoliu,* București, Editura Universității din București, 146−151.

RRL, **LVIII**, *3*, p. 345–350, Bucureşti, 2013

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roles licensed by perception verbs. The conclusions of this chapter are as follows: non-intentional perception verbs are semantically dependent on the subordinated predication, and they express either durative states or punctual events/achievements; intentional perception verbs always denote activities/processes; evidential perception verbs denote states or properties.

In chapter 3, *Polisemia – trăsătură semantică a verbelor de percepție* [Polysemy – a semantic feature of perception verbs] (pp. 65−106) the author makes use of two theoretical frameworks for investigating multiple meanings, i.e. the cognitive model (Rosch 1973) and the generative lexicon (Pustejovsky 1995), which are considered by the author to be complementary in the study of perception verbs viewed as a source for semantic transfers. The starting assumptions of this chapter are the following: there is a strong relation between the syntax and semantics of perception verbs; perception verbs can express multiple meanings, from different perceptual domains; there is a mechanism that explains the systematic association between the physical meanings of perception verbs and the more abstract ones; certain meanings are contextually independent, whereas others depend on the context. One of the main points of interest of this chapter is the analysis of the verb 'see': after a brief review of the analyses put forth in the literature for the verb 'see' in English and French, the author focuses on the verb corresponding to 'see' in Romanian, i.e. *a vedea*; she analyses the multiple meanings of this verb in Romanian starting from the definition in DLR (the thesaurus dictionary of Romanian) and she concludes that a precise description of the semantic structure of a verb such as *a vedea* needs to take into account the syntactic configurations specific to each meaning, and the semantics of other constituents of the clause, both being instrumental in determining the meaning of the whole predication. Subsequently, the author describes the polysemy (as source for semantic transfers) from a more general, cross-linguistic perspective: distance senses (visual and auditory) are strongly related to the cognitive-intellectual domain, whereas contact senses (tactile and gustatory) are related to affectivity. Another general observation is that in all Indo-European languages the verb 'feel', specific to tactile perception, can cover a wide range of sensorial perceptions. By the end of the chapter, the author mentions another theoretical framework that has been used to account for the polysemy of perception verbs, i.e. the anthropology of senses, in which it is argued that cultures value the types of perception in a different manner: while in Indo-European languages (including Romanian) visual perception is the main source for semantic transfers, in Australian languages, auditory perception is the common source for the semantic transfer towards other cognitive meanings.

The final chapter, *Structura sintactico-semantică a verbelor de percepție* [The syntactic-semantic structure of perception verbs] (pp. 107−193), deals with a fine-grained syntactic-semantic analysis of perception verbs. Certain distinctions operated in the domain of perception are taken into account: physical vs. cognitive, direct vs. indirect, concrete vs. abstract; these distinctions interfere in cases such as *Văd că a plouat mult* 'I see that it rained a lot' – inferential indirect perception vs. *Văd că urcă scările* 'I see him / her climbing the stairs' – physical direct perception. The author describes the syntactic patterns specific for non-intentional and intentional perception (the null direct object pattern, the pattern with two arguments and with a raised object in secondary predicate structures), concluding that intentional perception verbs are more restrictive than non-intentional ones. Evidential perception verbs are analysed separately, because their syntactic behaviour is different: they take either a subject predicative complement (*Copiii arată obosiți* 'The children look tired') or a special type of manner predicative (*Muzica sună bine* 'The music sounds fine'). The conclusion of this analysis is that the meaning of these verbs depends on the semantic nature of their arguments. The final section of this chapter is dedicated to the passivisation of transitive perception verbs; from this perspective too, perception verbs have a heterogeneous behaviour, certain members of the class allowing both type of passivisation (with *a fi* 'be' and with *se*), while others allow only one type.

In this book, Irina Nicula is very successful not only in minutely analyzing Romanian data compared to other languages, but also in combining several perspectives: syntactic, semantic, lexical, psychological, cognitive. What is of a great importance is the fact that the author went beyond the

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difficulties related to the heterogeneity of this class of verbs and to the absence of coherent studies for Romanian, and that she elaborated a coherent semantic-syntactic analysis for a 'class' of verbs which, at first sight, seemed to contain verbs with very divergent behaviour.

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GILLES AUTHIER, KATHARINA HAUDE, *Ergativity, Valency and Voice,* Berlin/Boston, De Gruyter Mouton, 2012, 388 p.[5]

Besides the editors' introduction, this volume contains eleven studies on languages with predominantly ergative features, with a precise focus on voice alternations and transitivity phenomena found in these languages. These articles are based on oral presentations given at the monthly seminar, "Ergativité: typologie, diachronie et cognition" (Villejuif – Paris, 2005–2009), organised by Francesc Queixalós. As is well-known, ergative languages are very different, but despite this fact, the volume has an obvious guiding line; all the contributors are fieldwork linguists, and all the data presented here are first-hand data from more or less known ergative languages.

The editors' *Introduction* (pp. 1–14) contains a short presentation of ergativity and of specific terminology relevant to the volume, mainly based on Dixon's work (1972, 1994). The notions defined in this section are well known from literature on ergativity and include: morphological ergativity, syntactic ergativity, pivots, alignment splits such as pronominal and aspectual splits, etc. Voice alternations (the key notion of the book) "determine the number, formal encoding, and semantic role of verbal argument(s)", "serve to describe an event from different perspectives, and to retain the same participant as the central argument through larger stretches of discourse", and "ideally form a productive system" (p. 5). The editors define several voice alternation mechanisms described in this volume: voice-decreasing devices (e.g. passive, antipassive, middles, anticausatives, noun incorporation); devices that maintain the same number of arguments (e.g. symmetrical voice, inverse systems, lability and lexical alternations, and a related phenomenon, namely differential object marking); and voice-increasing devices (e.g. causatives, benefactives or applicatives). A short outline of each article is provided at the end of the introduction.

The first two chapters deal with Mayan languages. *Ergativity and voice in Mayan languages: a functional-typological approach* (pp. 15–49), by Colette Grinevald and Marc Peake, starts with a brief presentation of the Mayan family. Section 2 deals with the multiplicity of verbal markers encoding transitivity (i.e. Pan-Mayan characteristics), and then presents data from specific Mayan languages (i.e. Jakaltek Popti', Tojol Ab'al). Section 3 summarises the specific features of ergative marking in Mayan languages, taking into account two different terminologies: the "primitives" A/P/S; and the person markers of ergativity, "set A" and "set B". Finally, in Section 4, the authors highlight the role of markers in the identification of voice systems (e.g. active-transitive, passive, antipassive, agent-focus, and applicative). Their conclusion is that ergativity is a major Pan-Mayan trait, and that Mayan patterns of verbal ergative alignment (including the voice system) are typologically relatively rare.

In the chapter *Ergativity and the passive in three Mayan languages* (pp. 51–110), Valentina Vapnarsky, Cédric Becquey, and Aurore Monod Becquelin offer a comparative analysis of the passive in Yucatec, Ch'orti', and Tseltal. The extended presentation of the main characteristics of these languages and of their features related to ergativity and voice ends with some generalising conclusions: transitivity is a very important feature in all Mayan languages, where the authors identify

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