

Il verbo *prendere* e le sue estensioni semantiche: prodotto della casualità o delle esperienze corporee dei parlanti?

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the multiple senses of the Italian verb *prendere*. The analysis is carried out within the theoretical framework of Cognitive Linguistics: theories of embodiment, image schema and force dynamics. In accordance with these linguistic approaches, the array of distinct senses of the verb *prendere* is accounted for by showing how each sense can be described based on a *scenario* consisting in the concrete event of *taking* performed in the physical world. A scenario of the prototypical act of *taking* entails the idea of manipulation, force dynamics, possession and control. Hence, these concepts are appealed to in describing the various metaphoric expressions of the verb under consideration.

The two basic assumptions underlying the study are: a) the scenario can provide a departure point for comparison of figurative senses generated by the verb *prendere*; b) different senses can be described in terms of profiling, that is, some elements of the scenario can be foregrounded or backgrounded, giving rise to cognitively motivated metaphoric extensions deriving from the central meaning of the verb.