

Dr. Andrea Tyler

**“Applying Cognitive Linguistics
in the Second Language Classroom:
Teaching the Multiple Meanings
of English Phrasal Verbs”**

**Friday, 6 February
4-5:30pm
CSE E222**



Abstract

The multiple meanings of English phrasal verb (PV) constructions have largely been considered arbitrary and thus a problem for L2 learners. Until recently, analyses focused exclusively on the contribution of the multiple meanings of the prepositions in the PV constructions and assumed a single meaning for the verb. However, using a Cognitive Linguistic (CL) inspired framework (Goldberg, 2005; Langacker, 1991; Tyler & Evans, 2003), Mehpeykar & Tyler (2014) demonstrated that verbs in PV constructions also have multiple meanings which contribute systematically to the multiple meanings of the PVs. This corpus-based, CL work established that considering the contribution of the multiple meanings of both the verbs and the prepositions allows for a systematic representation of the multiple meanings of the PV constructions. After presenting this framework, I discuss the results of a small-scale, effects-of-instruction experiment which investigated using the CL framework as the basis for classroom instruction. The participants were enrolled in two, low intermediate classes in an intensive English program; 11 participants received CL-based instruction on the multiple meanings of four PVs; 14 received non-cognitive instruction. The intervention consisted of 3 hours of instruction, which combined interactive, teacher fronted ppt presentations interspersed with student centered, task-based instruction. All participants took a pre-test, immediate post-test and delayed post-test; each test item also included a ‘guessed’/‘didn’t guess’ confidence rating. Accuracy results showed both groups improved. The CL group’s average gain scores were 2.5 points; the Control group’s were .9, thus the CL group made larger gains. However, there were no significant between group differences. The confidence ratings showed that the CL group’s ‘didn’t guess’ scores went from 1.5 to 9.1, while the control group’s went from 6.3 to 9.8; a repeated ANOVA analysis showed that the CL group’s confidence gains by the post-test were significantly greater ($p=.000$); this gain was maintained for the delayed post-test. I discuss these findings in terms of readiness to learn.

About the speaker

Andrea Tyler is a Professor of Linguistics at Georgetown University. One of her main research interests has been the interaction between theory and practical application in the field of second language learning. Dr. Tyler has published three research monographs and numerous articles in the top journals of her field. Her latest research monograph is entitled “Cognitive Linguistics and Second Language Learning” (2012).