

# MEANINGFUL ENGLISH GRAMMAR

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There is wide consensus among Cognitive linguists that grammar is symbolic and no less meaningful than lexical items. A meaningful approach to grammar should be particularly appropriate in presenting and understanding the structure of a foreign language. A workbook entitled *Meaningful English Grammar* is in the process of being written with the purpose of familiarizing students of English and linguistics with the conceptual principles motivating grammatical structure. The book follows the structure of the widely used *Cognitive English Grammar* by Radden & Dirven (2007) and may be used as a supplementary workbook. It makes use of rich and authentic study material and shows ways in which cognitive-linguistic insights can be applied to foreign language teaching and learning.

The exercises focus especially on those areas of English grammar that are known to be difficult to non-native speakers. The presentation will illustrate the meaningful approach to grammar by looking at two notoriously difficult constructions of English grammar: the progressive and the present perfect. Both grammatical constructions fundamentally rely on the type of situation they represent and both invite rich conversational implicatures. It will be shown that the meaning evoked by the progressive is motivated by the interplay between the constructional meaning of unboundedness with implicit boundaries, the situation type, and the situational context. Similarly, the meaning evoked by the present perfect is motivated by the interplay of the constructional meaning of current relevance, the situation type, and the situational context. In the Present Perfect Progressive, both constructional meanings conspire together.

## References

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