The cognitive linguistics reader

Cognitive Linguistics is the most rapidly expanding school in modern Linguistics. It aims to create a scientific approach to the study of language, incorporating the tools of philosophy, neuroscience and computer science. Cognitive approaches to language were initially based on philosophical thinking about the mind, but more recent work emphasizes the importance of convergent evidence from a broad empirical and methodological base. The Cognitive Linguistics Reader brings together the key writings of the last two decades, both the classic foundational pieces and contemporary work. The essays and articles - selected to represent the full range, scope and diversity of the Cognitive Linguistics enterprise - are grouped by theme into sections with each section separately introduced. The book opens with a broad overview of Cognitive Linguistics designed for the introductory reader and closes with detailed further reading to guide the reader through the proliferating literature. The Cognitive Linguistics Reader is both an ideal introduction to the full breadth and depth of Cognitive Linguistics and a single work of reference bringing together the most significant work in the field.

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Cognitive linguistics emerged as a school of linguistic thought in the 1970s. In the introduction to Cognitive Linguistics: Basic Readings (2006), linguist Dirk Geeraerts makes a distinction between uncapitalized cognitive linguistics ("referring to all approaches in which natural language is studied as a mental phenomenon") and capitalized Cognitive Linguistics ("one form of cognitive linguistics"). "What holds together the diverse forms of Cognitive Linguistics is the belief that linguistic knowledge involves not just knowledge of the language, but knowledge of our experience of the world as mediated by the language." (Dirk Geeraerts and Herbert Cuyckens, eds., The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics. Oxford University Press, 2007). Cognitive linguistics is an interdisciplinary branch of linguistics, combining knowledge and research from cognitive psychology, neuropsychology and linguistics. Models and theoretical accounts of cognitive linguistics are considered as psychologically real, and research in cognitive linguistics aims to help understand cognition in general and is seen as a road into the human mind.