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Over the last twenty years, construction grammar has established itself as a successful theory of language that has spawned a large body of research, including lexical, morphological, and syntactic studies, in a wide range of languages in fields such as first and second language acquisition, psycholinguistics, and neurolinguistics. Yet, somewhat surprisingly, no construction grammar textbook had been published so far. This book by Alexander Ziem and Alexander Lasch now closes this gap by offering an introduction to usage-based construction grammar approaches.

After a short introductory chapter, Ch. 2 outlines basic constructionist assumptions and notions, including the view of grammars as cognitive and social phenomena, the definition of constructions as form-meaning pairings, and psychological evidence supporting constructionist approaches to language.

Ch. 3 first surveys the history as well as development of construction grammar as a linguistic school. After that, Ch. 4 discusses cognitive, usage-based, and typological constructionist approaches (namely cognitive construction grammar, cognitive grammar, and radical construction grammar), while Ch. 5 looks at more formal approaches (Berkeley construction grammar, sign-based construction grammar, embodied construction grammar, and fluid construction grammar). Ch. 6 then summarizes the major methods and data sources used in construction grammar (from introspection to corpus linguistic approaches to experimental approaches).

Chs. 7–8 focus on major aspects of usage-based constructionist approaches as cognitive linguistic theories, and introduce central construction grammar tenets (the lexicon-syntax continuum, taxonomic constructional networks and inheritance, and the role of frequency, productivity, and prototype effects in usage-based approaches). Finally, Ch. 9 provides an in-depth analysis of the internal structure of constructions and constructional meaning from a usage-based point of view.

The focus then shifts to constructionist analyses of selected phenomena of German. Ch. 10 outlines the potential of usage-based constructionist approaches for various types of linguistic research on German (from language change studies to work on interactional linguistics and language acquisition). This is followed by two sample studies, one on the lexically-specified Leonhard abgeholt construction in Ch. 11, and the other on the sound-as-motion-verb rumpeln construction in Ch. 12.
Finally, Chs. 13–15 consist of a short summary chapter as well as a glossary and solutions to all exercises, while Chs. 16–17 comprise the list of abbreviations, tables, and figures, as well as the reference section.

This book is not only written in German but its focus is also on the usage-based constructionist analysis of German phenomena. Nevertheless, since it is the first officially published introduction to construction grammar, it is a landmark publication that should inspire many future generations of German linguists to fruitfully adopt a constructionist approach in their own research.