A Constructional Account of Advising:
Construal Operations and Social Conventions

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The present paper explores the constructional composition of illocutionary meaning from the perspective of the *Lexical Constructional Model* or LCM propounded by Francisco Ruiz de Mendoza and Ricardo Mairal. In the LCM, illocutionary meaning is either the result of filling in constructional variables or of affording metonymic access to high-level situational cognitive models. In this study I examine the cognitive grounding of constructions carrying an advising value. It is my contention that the constructional realization of advising is based upon linguistic mechanisms that exhibit instantiation potential for relevant parts of the corresponding semantic structure in relation to the context of situation. The resulting account seeks to unveil the idiosyncrasies of the act of advising based on the interplay between different kinds of construal operations and general cultural conventions captured in the *Cost-Benefit Cognitive Model*.

Keywords: illocutionary meaning; illocutionary constructions; *Lexical-Constructional Model*; advising; conventionalization; *Cost-Benefit Cognitive Model*

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Un enfoque construccional de los consejos:
operaciones construales y convenciones sociales

El presente artículo examina la composición construccional del significado ilocutivo desde la perspectiva del *Modelo Léxico Construccional* o MLC desarrollado por Ruiz de Mendoza y Mairal. En el MLC, el significado ilocutivo deriva o bien de la realización de los elementos variables de las construcciones o bien de la activación metonímica de modelos cognitivos situacionales de alto nivel. Este estudio explora la motivación cognitiva de construcciones ilocutivas con valor de aconsejar. Es mi objetivo demostrar que la realización construccional de aconsejar está basada en procedimientos lingüísticos capaces de activar partes relevantes de su estructura semántica de acuerdo con el contexto de situación. Los resultados de este análisis tratan de desvelar las idiosincrasias propias del acto de habla de aconsejar que resultan de la interacción entre operaciones de construcción lingüística y convenciones culturales definidas en el *Modelo Cognitivo de Coste-Beneficio*.

Palabras clave: ilocución; construcciones ilocutivas; Modelo Léxico Construccional; aconsejar; convencionalización; Modelo Cognitivo de Coste-Beneficio

1. INTRODUCTION

The study of illocution has deserved the attention of a significant number of researchers within the most diverse fields and frameworks. Traditional theories of speech acts, however, lack an explanation on the relative weight of codification and inference in illocutionary production. Some theories, such as Searle's convention rules (1969), the systemic-functional approach (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004), and Dik's functional account (1989, 1997) give priority to the role of codification. Others emphasize the role of inference (Bach and Harnish 1979, Leech 1983; Levinson 1983). Those accounts which give priority to the role of inference hold that illocutionary interpretation is always the output of inferential activity. Those approaches in which codification occupies a central position claim that inference is not enough to explain illocutionary interpretation, and that basic speech acts are interpreted without the need of inference by means of the three universal sentence types. The remaining speech act types need to be inferred from the literal meaning on the basis of contextual information (Searle 1975; Sperber and Wilson 1995) or can be codified in terms of grammatical conversions (Dik 1989, 1997) corresponding to one of the general functions of language (Halliday 1994; Halliday and Matthiessen 2004). Both theories are fraught with difficulties and neither on its own is capable of accounting for all aspects involved in illocution. Inferential theories, on the one hand, overlook the existence of the three sentence types in most languages and the codification of speech act meaning in realizational resources with an illocutionary force which can be easily identified. Theories based on codification, on the other hand, do not account for the motivation and constraints of illocutionary meaning. The flaws of these theories call for an integrated approach that considers both codification and inference and takes into account the motivation and constraints of illocution.[1]

The development of Cognitive Linguistics offers plausible solutions to these shortcomings with the consideration of the cognitive processes that take place in speech act production. Within Cognitive Linguistics, illocutionary meaning is regarded as a matter of metonymic operations that apply to specific kinds of cognitive models labeled illocutionary scenarios (Panther and Thornburg 1998, 2004) or high-level situational models (Ruiz de Mendoza 2007). More recently, cognitive studies have supplied evidence of the existence and functionality of conventional speech acts and *illocutionary constructions*, defined as linguistic configurations consisting of fixed and variable elements which are highly specialized to convey specific illocutionary values (Pérez 2001; Pérez and Ruiz de Mendoza 2002; Stefanowitsch 2003; Ruiz de Mendoza and Baicchi 2007; Brdar-Szabó 2009; Baicchi and Ruiz de Mendoza 2011). Such insights into the constructional composition of speech acts have paved the way for the incorporation of illocution into

a meaning construction model of language called the *Lexical Constructional Model* or LCM (Ruiz de Mendoza and Mairal 2008, 2011; Mairal and Ruiz de Mendoza, 2009). The LCM, which is heavily grounded in Cognitive Semantics and Construction Grammar, is concerned with developing a comprehensive theory of meaning construction that accounts for all facets of the process. The model is structured around four levels of description: level 1 deals with argument structure representations; level 2 captures implicated and explicated meaning captured by low-level situational cognitive models; level 3 deals with implicated and explicated illocutionary meaning; and level 4 handles discourse structure and relations. Each of the levels is either subsumed into a higher configuration or acts as a cue for the activation of relevant conceptual structure that yields meaning derivation. Two methodological assumptions guide the LCM approach. The first has to do with the idea that all levels of linguistic description may make use of the same or at least comparable cognitive processes. The second assumption relates to the existence of a continuum between linguistic categories. Both assumptions attempt to comply with adequacy criteria of the type discussed in Butler (2009).[2]

The present contribution is a case study of the category of advising and of the illocutionary constructions for this category within the LCM. The type of illocutionary constructions that will be examined consist of a specification of linguistic realizations and a number of meaning conditions structured in the form of a high-level cognitive model. The formal part of the constructions includes a wide range of linguistic properties such as sentence types, lexical items and suprasegmental patterns. The semantic part includes the knowledge of the semantic features that characterize an illocutionary act. Based on real data drawn from electronic corpora, this study carries out a description of the most conventional realizations of advising. I explore the grounding and realization of constructions carrying advising values by focusing on the relationship between their form and their meaning. I contend that the realization of advising is based on linguistic mechanisms that exhibit different degrees of instantiation potential for relevant parts of the corresponding cognitive model. It is shown that the higher the number of parameters of the cognitive model which are instantiated through a construction, the higher its degree of codification for the performance of advising. I finally argue that the LCM develops adequate tools for the development of an integrated account of illocution.

The remainder of the present paper is structured in the following way: section 2 provides an overview of the main assumptions held within the LCM approach; section 3 puts forward a description of the semantic grounding and the conventions associated with the act of advising and the formulation of a high-level cognitive model for this speech act type; section 4 focuses on the analysis of constructions for advising, exploring their motivation and constraints. This study supports the LCM approach to illocution and

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[2] For further information on the LCM, I refer the reader to the Lexicom group research webpage: <http://www.lexicom.es>.

provides evidence of its explanatory power. Finally, section 5 summarizes the essential proposals of this paper and suggests some possible lines for further research.

2. The Lexical Constructional Model approach to illocution

The constructions postulated in the LCM capture different layers of meaning in a highly conventionalized way. The semantic component of the LCM distinguishes four different levels of construction types. At level 1, constructions are described as argument non-idiomatic representations containing elements of syntactically relevant semantic interpretation. Argument structure constructions are based on the Goldbergian approach (1995, 2006) to construction types (i.e. ditransitive, caused motion, resultative, etc.). Non-argument structure constructions signal different levels of non-argumental meaning. Level 2 or implicational constructions capture inferential meaning that arises from cases of everyday interaction in terms of low-level cognitive models. Level 3 constructions deal with conventionalized illocutionary meaning that results from the way speakers interact on the basis of high-level inferencing. Level 4 deal with discourse aspects, including cohesion and coherence phenomena. In contrast to argument structure constructions, constructions belonging to levels 2, 3 and 4 display higher degrees of idiomaticity, as they combine more complex patterns.

The present work is concerned with the description of level 3, or illocutionary constructions. In the LCM, illocutionary meaning is treated as the result of affording metonymic access to high-level situational cognitive models by means of activating one relevant part in them. These models are constructed on the basis of generalizations over cases of everyday interaction where people attempt to satisfy their desires or other people's desires or express their feelings about them. Everyday social interaction is captured by low-level situational models, such as taking a taxi or going to a restaurant, which constitute the base for implicational meaning (see Ruiz de Mendoza 2007). While the access to low-level models yields implicated meaning, the activation of high-level models produces illocutionary meaning, which can become conventionalized and associated with a constructional characterization (Ruiz de Mendoza and Gonzálvez-García 2011). For instance, the utterance *What have you been doing in my room?* at level 2 exploits a low-level model about intrusive behavior. The same utterance at level 3 conveys the additional value of a complaint. This value is obtained by activating high-level knowledge about people's reactions in undesired situations. If some state of affairs is presented as negative to us, we often expect other people not to bring it about. This is possible because high-level situational cognitive models capture cultural generalizations that are part of our knowledge of the world. These generalizations carry different types of pragmatic information like power, politeness, optionality and cost-benefit variables (Pérez and Ruiz de Mendoza 2002). The constructional conventionalization of illocutionary meaning results from the interplay between construal operations (i.e. high-level inferencing) and general socio-cultural conventions specifying the principles of interaction. Such socio-cultural conventions are

articulated in a cognitive model called the *Cost-Benefit Cognitive Model*, first proposed by Pérez and Ruiz de Mendoza (2002) and later developed by Ruiz de Mendoza and Baicchi (2007) and Baicchi and Ruiz de Mendoza (2011). The Cost-Benefit Cognitive Model is described as a high level cognitive model that stipulates that speakers are culturally bound to help other people if it is within their range of abilities and is presented as lying at the root of linguistic expressions used to convey speech act meaning. The conventions of the Cost-Benefit Cognitive Model are part of our knowledge about the world and because of this they are included in high-level representations of interactional meaning. This is the Cost-Benefit Cognitive Model as originally postulated by Ruiz de Mendoza and Baicchi (2007: 111-12):

(a) If it is manifest to A that a particular state of affairs is not beneficial to B, and if A has the capacity to change that state of affairs, then A should do so.
(b) If it is manifest to A that a potential state of affairs is not beneficial to B, then A is not expected to bring it about.
(c) If it is manifest to A that a potential state of affairs is beneficial to B, then A is expected to bring it about provided he has the capacity to do so.
(d) If it is manifest to A that it is not manifest to B that a potential state of affairs is (regarded as) beneficial for A, A is expected to make this manifest to B.
(e) If it is manifest to A that it is not manifest to B that a potential state of affairs is beneficial for B, A is expected to make this manifest to B.
(f) If it is manifest to A that a state of affairs is beneficial to B and B has brought it about, A should feel pleased about it and make this feeling manifest to B.
(g) If it is manifest to B that A has changed a state of affairs to B's benefit, B should feel grateful about A's action and make this feeling manifest to B.
(h) If it is manifest to A that A has not acted as directed by parts (a), (b) and (c) of the 'cost-benefit' model, A should feel regretful about this situation and make this feeling manifest to B.
(i) If it is manifest to B that A has not acted as directed by parts (a), (b) and (c) of the 'cost-benefit' model and A has made his regret manifest to B, B should feel forgiveness for A's inaction and make it manifest to A.
(j) If it is manifest to A and B that a particular state of affairs is not beneficial to B but A has no power to change it to B's benefit, A should still feel sympathy for B over the non-beneficial state of affairs and make this manifest to B.
(k) If it is manifest to A that A is responsible for a certain state of affairs to be to A's benefit, A may feel proud about this situation and make it manifest to B.

From this perspective, speech act meaning arises from the metonymic activation of the conventions that provide the semantic base of illocutionary categories. For example, an utterance like *I am thirsty* functions as a request based on the socio-cultural convention that abides to help others when they make it manifest that they are affected by a negative state

of affairs. Illocutionary constructions are linguistic resources capable of providing relevant points of access to high-level situational cognitive models within the context of situation. The degree of explicitness of constructions depends on the speaker's communicative purpose or the availability of contextual information. The utterance *I am thirsty* clearly indicates that the speaker is affected negatively by the state of affairs, which produces a straightforward request interpretation. In more implicit cases, that information needs to be derived from the context. A case in point is the interpretation of the utterance *I am alone* as a request, which requires contextual information indicating that the speaker does not want to be alone. Contextual parameters contribute to specifying the intended meaning and allow deriving the implicit part by means of a reasoning schema along the following lines: if the speaker is alone and he does not want to be alone, then he is asking the addressee to stay with him or to find someone who bears his company. The linguistic expression supplies the condition part of the schema, but the consequence needs to be accessed metonymically. The inference results from the metonymic activation of the part of the high-level model of requesting that is relevant for illocutionary interpretation. This part of the high-level model of requesting is based on part (a) of the Cost-Benefit Cognitive Model, which stipulates that we have to bring about those states of affairs which are beneficial to other people. The frequent use of expressions originally involved in the selection of points of access to a high-level model conventionalizes the illocutionary force conveyed and gives rise to entrenched constructions. This is the case of constructions such as *Can You X_{VP}?*, *Will You X_{VP}?* or *Would You X_{NP}?*, whose request value was initially inferred by activating the addressee's ability and willingness to act. The request meaning of these constructions has eventually become conventionalized therefore making it unnecessary to work out the reasoning schema. As may be expected, those constructions with an entrenched illocutionary meaning represent optimal devices in the performance of a speech act category due to their ability to produce a default interpretation. Conversely, those which are not conventionalized, require inferential activity to convey their illocutionary meaning. The *I Need X_p*, *I Want X_p* or *I Wish X_p* sequences are examples of constructions which require a specific context to produce a request. Thus, in the LCM approach, the conventionalization of illocution in sequences that produce default meaning values is compatible with inferential activity from the context.

Conventionalized constructions range from full codification to different degrees of conventionalization. Codified constructions activate the defining parameters of the high-level cognitive model of a speech act type. Their use produces an easy illocutionary interpretation which can be cancelled out contextually. For example, constructions based on performative predicates are capable of instantiating the full high-level cognitive model. Conventionalization occurs with the usage of a construction in a given context. In broad terms, conventionalized constructions originally produced inferred illocutionary meaning which became entrenched. This view of illocutionary performance provides an explanation for the reasons which make certain constructions more appropriate than others for the expression of a speech act category. The higher the degree of codification of a construction, the easier it is to grasp the illocutionary value conveyed. By contrast,

if a construction is implicit but still has instantiation potential for a high-level cognitive model, it is likely to become conventionalized for an illocutionary value.

This research takes sides with the notion of illocutionary constructions put forward in the LCM and with the formulation of the Cost-Benefit Cognitive Model as the semantic base of speech act categories. The analysis of constructions carried out in the next section explores the theoretical implications of the LCM approach to illocution in relation to a broad range of instances of advising.

3. The semantics of advising

Advising is used to offer people a recommendation about how they should act if they are involved in a negative situation. Acts of advising are grounded in the socio-cultural convention according to which we have to bring about those states of affairs that are beneficial for others. This convention forms part of the Cost-Benefit Cognitive Model and reads as follows:

> If it is manifest to A that a potential state of affairs is beneficial to B, then A is expected to bring it about provided he has the capacity to do so. (Ruiz de Mendoza and Baicchi 2007: 111)

The act of advising is characterized by the benefit that it intends to involve for the addressee. It may be argued that all the other features of advising depend on the benefit component. As far as the optionality associated with advising is concerned, it is determined by the fact that the addressee is both the person who carries out the action and the beneficiary. Given that advising involves a benefit to the addressee, it offers a high degree of optionality. In orders, the addressee's optionality is restricted by the speaker's power. In requests, the addressee's optionality is constrained by the workings of politeness conventions. In opposition to this, in advising the addressee's optionality is not constrained by any principles. Since the outcome of the addressee's decision only affects him, he has freedom to decide upon the realization of the action. Something similar occurs with the type of power that characterizes advising. In advising, speakers prototypically have what I shall refer to as *knowledge power* or *authority* over their addressees that stems from their greater understanding of a situation (Verschueren 1985). In contrast to the power that is characteristic of orders, the kind of knowledge authority related to advising does not reduce the addressee's optionality, but merely entitles him to attempt to influence the addressee's future actions. The degree of mitigation of acts of advising is also related with the dimension of benefit. Because advising can be perceived as an imposing act, a certain amount of mitigation should be expected, in order to make it clear that the speaker wishes to show the addressee a potential course of action rather than to impose it onto him. In this it resembles requests, although the use of mitigation responds to different motivations in each case. A request is mitigated to minimize the cost that the performance of the proposed action involves for the addressee. Advising seeks the

addressee's benefit, and there is thus no cost that needs to be reduced in the realization of this act. This motivates consideration of the benefit parameter in explaining the nature of its associated characteristics of advising. For this reason, the semantic structure of advising proposed in this study and which takes the form of a high-level cognitive model is based on the benefit dimension. The high-level cognitive model —or generic structure— of advising generalizes over cases of interaction where people tell others what they should do in order to bring about a state of affairs that is beneficial for them. Some possible low-level cognitive models of advising may be the following:

(a) B appears to be involved in a negative situation. A believes that a course of action would help B to change the negative situation. A makes B aware of such a course of action. B may take the course of action proposed.

(b) B appears to be involved in a negative situation. A believes that a course of action would help B to change the negative situation. A makes B aware of the potential benefit of such a course of action. B may be willing to obtain the benefit. B may take the course of action proposed.

(c) B makes A aware that he is involved in a negative situation. A believes that a course of action would help B to change the negative situation. A makes B aware of such a course of action. B may take the course of action proposed.

(d) B asks A's opinion about what he should do to change a negative situation in which he is involved. A thinks about a course of action that would help B to change the negative situation into one that is beneficial. A makes B aware of such a course of action. B may take the course of action proposed.

These low-level models of advising have generic structure in common upon which the high-level cognitive model is constructed. This generic structure captures the semantics of advising:

(e) B appears to be involved in a negative situation.
(f) A believes that a course of action would help B to change the negative situation.
(g) A makes B aware of such a course of action.
(h) A makes B aware of the potential benefit of such a course of action.
(i) B may be willing to obtain the benefit.
(j) B may take the course of action proposed.

This generic structure is realized through a number of constructional realizations with instantiation potential for one or more of its parameters. Some of the most common constructional realizations of the generic structure of advising are illustrated in the utterances below:

(1) You're just lonely, Hank. Take some pills. *You need to* sleep. (Coca)
(2) *You should* eat salad every day. (Bnc)

(3) *How about* some music? (Coca)

(4) When you come back, *you can* show me your treasures. *It will do you good* to have a bit of a distraction. (Coca)

(5) *It may be a good idea to* exercise with a qualified exercise professional for at least your first couple of sessions. (Coca)

(6) If you are a serious writer who can't find a publisher, *I would advise you* to wait until the right editor comes along. (Coca)

Each of these utterances activates a different part of the generic structure and can be interpreted as a piece of advice in the appropriate context. Utterance (1) instantiates the part of the generic structure which presents the addressee as involved in a negative situation. Utterance (2) points to the part of the generic structure in which the speaker considers a course of action that could help the addressee to change the negative situation. Utterance (3) spells out the part of the generic structure that requests the addressee's consideration about bringing about a state of affairs that is beneficial for him. The use of the interrogative sentence type secures the addressee's optionality to decide, which makes the act of advising more explicit. Utterance (4) activates the part of the generic structure in which the speaker makes the addressee aware of the potential benefits that the realization of the proposed action would report to him. The same meaning condition is expressed in utterance (5). Finally, utterance (6), which displays the highest degree of codification for advising, manages to instantiate the full generic structure through the use of a performative verb. The next section shows that these constructions exhibit peculiarities that are motivated by the context of situation.

4. The realization of advising

4.1. Imperative advising constructions

Imperative constructions do not seem to be a very explicit way of performing the act of advising. This is due to the fact that the inherent imposition conveyed by the imperative form clashes with the optionality that is proper of advising. It is possible, however, to reduce the imposition of the imperative sentence type by means of linguistic devices like the adverb *please*, hedges and conditional expressions. In so doing, the variables of optionality and mitigation that characterize advising are activated, and the act is made more explicit. Let us see how these devices increase the degree of codification of imperative constructions for advising:

(7) *Consider* X_{VP}
    Consider getting a housekeeper twice monthly if the budget allows. (Coca)

This construction requests the addressee's consideration about the situation he has to change to his benefit. Because the speaker simply asks the addressee to evaluate the potential

benefits of performing an action, the construction is not felt as impositive. In utterance (7) above, the addressee's optionality is further communicated through a conditional sentence. The hypothetical dimension implied by the conditional, together with the fact that it is up to the addressee to decide if the condition holds, increases the optionality of the act, and consequently, makes it more appropriate. The adverb *please* is also an excellent means for increasing the addressee's optionality towards the piece of advice. Here is one example:

(8) Please consider volunteering. (Coca)

The use of adverb *please* in (8) makes it explicit that the piece of advice is given only because it is the speaker's belief that the action will be beneficial for the addressee and that the addressee is free to decide whether or not to carry out the action. The use of a persuasive device of this type indicates that the speaker acknowledges the addressee's freedom to decide upon his course of action. This increases the degree of optionality, which in turn softens the imposition of the imperative, mitigating the force of the act.

(9) *Think About X$_{VP}$*
     Think about buying an apartment, a condominium unit or a cooperative residence. (Coca)

The reasoning schema behind this construction is the same as in the previous case, with the difference that the verb used here requests a less careful evaluation by the addressee. The use of this verb brings about a different form of parametrizing the advising meaning of the construction. As can be noticed in (9) above, the explicitness of the construction produces a default interpretation of the utterance as a piece of advice. This constructional type can also admit the use of a mitigator in order to decrease the force of the imperative. The adverb *please* is once again a common resource which can be used in this respect. Consider the communicative effects of this lexical item in the following utterance:

(10) *Please* think about providing blue bags half the size of the ones we buy now so
      that old ladies can carry their old newspapers out to the garbage. (Coca)

The use of *please* in these constructional realizations appeals to the addressee's rationality. The adverb attempts to persuade the addressee to carry out an action that is presented as reporting benefit to him. In this way, this persuasive device acknowledges his freedom and therefore activates the variables of optionality and mitigating. However, the adverb *please* may also signal some authoritative insistence on the part of the speaker, which would be motivated by his desire to get the addressee to follow the advice. In contexts of intimacy between the participants, the speaker would persuade the addressee to do what he believes is beneficial to him, and mitigating devices such as *please* would be felt as impositive mechanisms aimed at moving the addressee into performing the action.

4.2. Declarative advising constructions

The declarative form is the most unspecified in meaning of the three sentence types (Risselada 1993). Declarative sentences only involve the presentation of a future state of affairs. This makes the declarative form compatible with the expression of most speech acts, but at the same time, it also makes them less specified for the performance of a particular illocution. It is therefore necessary to consider the use of other linguistic mechanisms with instantiation potential for relevant parts of the generic structure. The use of these devices manages to produce highly specialized declarative constructions for advising:

(11) *I Advise You X_{VP}*
> Well, I advise you to work hard, and not to look back into your past. (Bnc)

The advising meaning can be made explicit by using a performative verb.[3] The interpretation of constructions like the one illustrated above is cued by the explicit use of the performative verb. The example in (11) activates the full generic structure, thereby giving rise to a straightforward advising reading. At the same time, the performative verb endows the piece of advice with a forceful impact, which is justified by the need to make clear the speaker's desire to help. As expected, the variable element of the construction must denote an addressee-controllable activity in order to yield an advising reading. The constituent element can be further mitigated by using a conditional form:

(12) I would advise you to start getting in touch with your lawyer now. (Coca)

The conditional form in (12) suggests that the speaker is not actually giving advice but merely pondering what his advice would be if the addressee was involved in a negative situation. This allows the addressee to decide whether or not to carry out the action when the condition described applies. A further type of realization for the act of advising that makes use of the conditional tense is illustrated in the example below:

(13) *If I Were You I Would X_{VP}*
> If I were you, I'd take the money and run. (Coca)

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[3] The term "performative verb" was first introduced by Austin (1962) in the early times of speech act theory. Performative utterances refer to those speech acts which make explicit their illocutionary force by means of a verb. The Dikkian (1989, 1997) approach to illocution is compatible with Austin's description of performative utterances. In FG, the illocutionary value of explicit performative utterances is obtained derivationally from a basic sentence type through the use of an explicit performative verb (e.g. the offer verb in *May I offer a cup of coffee?* transforms the question into an offer). In opposition to the FG account, the perspective adopted by the LCM maintains that the fact that certain explicit illocutionary values cannot be predicted from grammatical forms calls for a non-derivational perspective and proposes that illocutionary meaning is obtained through conventionalized constructions or inferential activity based on high-level situational cognitive models.

This construction, which is one of the most conventional for advising, consists of a fixed conditional expression (i.e. *if I were you*) and a sentence in the first person singular subject. The meaning value is simple to grasp. The speaker describes a hypothetical situation that is negative for the addressee and how he would act if he were the addressee. Because everybody seeks the best for themselves, it is implicit that the specified action is beneficial in nature. Furthermore, the conditional sentence indicates that the speaker is not really considering performing the action, but merely thinking what his course of action would be for the addressee's sake. This activates the benefit component of advising, since, if the action described in the predication is performed by the addressee, it will be beneficial for him. The degree of conventionalization of this constructional realization is such that the conditional expression can be left out without hindering its interpretation as a piece of advice:

(14) I would take the amber leather suitcase out of the closet. (Coca)

This constructional variant may not seem explicit for the realization of advising, given that it does not point to the addressee as the person who is to perform the action. Nevertheless, it is such implicitness that instantiates the variables of optionality and mitigation characteristic of advising. Since the addressee is not presented as the agent of the action, his optionality is considerably increased, and so is the degree of mitigation conveyed.

(15) *You Must X$_{VP}$*
     You must rest. (Bnc)

One of the most recurring ways of specifying the declarative sentence type to produce codified pieces of advice is by means of modality markers. For Dik (1989), objective modality signals all those linguistic resources that express the speaker's evaluation of the likelihood of occurrence of a state of affairs. In advising, modality markers denote that the performance of the proposed action is not only recommendable but also preferable — nearly obligatory— according to a certain norm. This obligation is grounded on the socio-cultural convention underlying the conceptual representation of advising. In application of part (c) of the Cost-Benefit Cognitive Model, speakers should make their addressees aware of what is beneficial for them if we believe they are unaware of it. The metonymic activation of this convention gives easy access to the generic structure of advising. Since everybody wants the best for themselves, the addressee would be expected to perform the proposed action, knowing that it is beneficial for him. But the addressee should be given enough freedom to decide against the proposal. Because of this, the type of marker used may be perceived as rather impositive. This operator therefore has to be accompanied by other linguistic elements which mitigate its force so that it loses its impositive character and becomes appropriate. The lack of mitigating devices can only fit in contexts where the

social distance between the participants is small and the speaker's willingness to get the addressee to follow his advice is high. We have a similar situation in (16):

(16) *You Have Got To* X_{VP}
      Look, you can't do this. You have got to come to terms with your son. (Coca)

The metonymic inference schema specified for the previous construction is the same in this case but the marker *have to* is not as impositive. However, the imposition conveyed is still high and the construction needs to make use of other linguistic means to guarantee the addressee's optionality. Consider now:

(17) *You Should* X_{VP}
      To develop an understanding of what survey research is actually like, you should read studies in the original. (Bnc)

This type of realization expresses the same meaning value as the previous ones. Through the activation of part (c) of the Cost-Benefit Cognitive Model, the speaker reminds the addressee that he is expected to carry out an action that is beneficial for him. Unlike previous constructions, the degree of imposition conveyed by the type of marker is lower, which makes it much more adapted for the expression of advising.

(18) *You Can* X_{VP}
      You know, you can scream at him, you can send him pictures, you can write to him. (Coca)

Inherent modality is yet another realization procedure that codifies declarative sentences for the performance of advising. According to Dik (1989: 205), inherent modality distinctions define the relations between a participant and the state of affairs in which he is involved. One of these distinctions relates to the ability of a participant to perform an action. The advising reading of the construction is grounded in the assumption that people are expected to bring about those states of affairs that may report benefits to them if they have the ability to do so. Note that the rationale behind this interpretation of the construction works only if the verb in the variable part denotes an action that is proposed to the addressee in order to change a negative situation to one that is beneficial for him. It also needs to be understood that the addressee is intended as the person who is going to perform the action and that the action seeks the addressee's benefit. Otherwise the construction could be interpreted as an order (e.g. *You can wash the dishes*) or as an offer (e.g. *You can have some more tea*).

(19) *You Need* X_{VP}
      You need to ask yourself what you want, and what you can realistically expect. (Bnc)

Inherent modality distinctions can also relate to the addressee's need to perform an action. Expressing certainty about the addressee's necessity to act in a particular way represents an implicit means of making manifest the speaker's belief that the action, if carried out by the addressee, will be beneficial to him. Again in this construction the advising reading depends to a large extent on realization of the variable element by a verb involving benefit to the addressee and on contextual information. Utterance (19) above can be interpreted as a piece of advice only if it is used in a context where it is manifest that the addressee is pondering on diverse courses of action to change a negative situation that is affecting him.

(20) X_{VP} *Is A Good Idea*
     Starting a part-time gig is a good idea. (Coca)

The analysis of the constructions for advising has evidenced the relevance of the part of the generic structure that refers to the benefit that the realization of the proposed action intends to cause to the addressee. The linguistic resources used to codify the advising value in the declarative form are all related to the benefit component. The construction under consideration is not an exception. Here, the advising meaning results from the manifestness of the speaker's belief that an action can be beneficial for the addressee. The recommendation of only one course of action may, however, bring about a reduction in the addressee's optionality that needs to be mitigated:

(21) It may be a good idea to buy two copies. (Coca)
(22) It might be a good idea to start thinking about adoption. (Bnc)

In these two utterances, the force of the construction is mitigated by modality markers of possibility. The resulting instances are more tentative and the addressee's optionality is noticeably increased.

4.3. Interrogative advising constructions

Interrogative constructions are the least specialized means for the performance of advising. The open nature of the interrogative form instantiates the optionality component. Because of this, the interrogative sentence type is adapted for illocutionary acts like requesting which feature a high degree of the addressee's optionality. In requests, the speaker's purpose to obtain benefit from the addressee's action has to be compensated by increasing the addressee's optionality, which finds in interrogative constructions an excellent vehicle of expression. In advising, the benefit of the action is to the addressee and the carrying out of the action is only his decision, which makes it unnecessary to increase the degree of optionality conveyed. This is the reason why only a small number of advising constructions are based on the interrogative sentence type. However, the fact that there is no need to increase the addressee's optionality does not mean that it is not possible

to use interrogative constructions that instantiate this variable of advising. The following constructions illustrate how the optionality element is activated through the use of the interrogative sentence type:

(23) *Why Not X_{VP}?*
     Why not take the chance? (Coca)

The advising reading of this constructional type results from the instantiation of part (c) of the Cost-Benefit Cognitive Model, according to which we must not do anything negative to other people. Asking about the reason for not doing whatever is beneficial to someone functions as a means of persuading the addressee into assent. Because there is no reason why the proposed action should not be carried out, the addressee should follow the piece of advice so that he can obtain benefit from it. The use of the interrogative form further indicates the speaker's acknowledgement of the addressee's state of mind to decide. This activates the optionality component that characterizes advising, thereby making the act more explicit.

(24) *How About X_{VP}?*
     How about making something out of the cockroaches in your room? (Coca)

This construction is based on a reasoning schema that is based on the convention that provides the socio-cultural background for advising and which binds us to make it manifest to others that a state of affairs is beneficial for them if it is not manifest to them. In this construction the speaker indicates a possibility that seems to be a good option for the addressee, leaving him freedom to decide. Since the speaker tells the addressee to perform the action only if he wants to, the degree of optionality conveyed is increased, and so is the degree of mitigation. Observe that, originally, the non-abbreviated expression *How would you feel about X_{VP}?* was possibly aimed at getting the addressee to explore his feelings about following the course of action proposed by the speaker.

5. CONCLUSION

The present research represents a preliminary case study of illocutionary constructions associated with a speech act category within the LCM. The results of the analysis show that the LCM provides us with an explanatorily adequate framework that allows us to account for the characterization of illocutionary acts and their constructional realization. The LCM develops a constructional account of illocution that explains the motivation and the constraints of speech act meaning, as well as the socio-cultural generalizations taking part in illocutionary production and understanding. In the LCM, illocutionary meaning is realized through conventionalized constructions consisting of fixed and modifiable elements that result from the interplay between construal operations and general conventions specifying the principles of interaction. Illocutionary constructions

exhibit varying degrees of instantiation potential for the conceptual representation of an illocutionary category. Those unable to provide relevant points of access require inferential to yield an illocutionary value, which is regulated through metonymic operations that apply to high-level cognitive models that are based on the stipulations of the Cost-Benefit Cognitive Model, and can become entrenched as inferential shortcuts through frequent use in conversation. Those with a high instantiation potential produce an illocutionary force that is easily recognized.

This analysis develops the approach to illocution of the LCM based on a large number of instances of advising. After describing the high-level cognitive model of the act of advising, I have identified the illocutionary constructions that activate the parameters of the cognitive model. I have then examined how these constructions are used in the realization of advising depending on their degree of instantiation potential for each of the parameters that make up the cognitive model. Imperative constructions, though capable of instantiating central parameters of the cognitive model, appear rather impositive, which makes them a poor vehicle for the expression of advising. Declarative constructions only partially instantiate the cognitive model and their interpretation as pieces of advice is largely dependent on their use of specific linguistic mechanisms such as modality markers, conditional expressions or intonation patterns. At the end of the codification scale, interrogative constructions are the least specified due to their low instantiation potential for the optionality component, which is one of the most relevant ones in the act of advising. The results of the analysis seem to point to the convenience of approaching illocution from a constructional perspective that takes both codification and inference into account and considers conventionalized structures in speech act production. However, future research is needed in order to determine the applicability of the LCM tools for the description of other speech act categories.

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