

“Bring it on”: A semantic analysis of *bring**

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This study is a syntactic-semantic analysis of the English verb *bring*. A similar methodology was used to the one laid out in Fillmore & Atkins (2000) for the verb ‘crawl.’ The analysis in this paper includes the traditional intransitive, transitive, and ditransitive uses, as well as where *bring* occurs as a phrasal verb or in an idiomatic expression. Fifty-two different senses were identified in Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MiCASE) (Simpson et al. 2002), all associated with particular constructions. I was unable to identify a single overarching sense which all of the constructions could be connected back to, although the senses can be connected to each other by metaphorical extension. Thus, *bring* by itself has very little meaning until it is used in a specific construction. The context of the constructions that polysemous words occur in will determine their semantics.

1. Introduction

As speakers of any language know, one word can have several meanings. This is called polysemy. In a study of the English verb *crawl*, Fillmore & Atkins (2000) compared current dictionary definitions with their own semantic categorization of the different senses this polysemous word can invoke. Fillmore & Atkins (2000:101) state that the best way to analyze a polysemous word is by

“a corpus-based research programme looking at a large number of attested examples of each word, sorting these according to the conceptual structures (or ‘semantic frames’) which underlie their meanings, examining the kinds of supporting information found in the sentences or phrases containing the word (in terms of semantic role, phrase type, and grammatical function), and building up an understanding of the word and its uses from the results of such inquiry.”

In this paper, I will be carrying out a similar study with the English verb *bring* using the same methodology as Fillmore & Atkins (2000). This study looks at attested examples, examines the discourse context that

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bring occurs in, and then looks for connections between the different senses. Previous studies have looked at only the traditional uses of *bring* without examining the idiomatic expressions in which it occurs (Abkarian 1983; Coe 1973; Fagan 2004; Hockett 1990). Even the studies that have examined *bring* as a phrasal verb lacked attention to the idiomatic uses (Goyvaerts 1973; Johansson 1975; Kudrnáčová 2001; 2006). This paper fills a research gap by offering a semantic analysis of the verb *bring* including traditional intransitive, transitive, and ditransitive uses, as well as the instances where *bring* occurs as a phrasal verb or in an idiomatic expression. All examples come from the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MiCASE) (Simpson et al. 2002), and the transcript name is given in parentheses. Here are just a few examples of some different uses of *bring*:

- (1) *I usually **bring** spare clothes but forgot today.*
(MiCASE, LAB175SU032)
- (2) *I mean that's, that's an interesting, situation to **bring up**.*
(DIS115JU087)
- (3) *... a look at the religious bearings of his critique of rationalist moral thought, should **bring out** some of the philosophically pertinent motivations that he had...*
(COL475MX082)
- (4) *... things are slowed down. to a pace that might **bring to mind**, the slow introduction even with the change, of, meter.*
(LES420MG134)

To thoroughly analyze the semantics of this verb, I consider all forms of the verb *bring* (i.e. *bring*, *brings*, *brought*, and *bringing*) in all the expressions in which it occurs. I use a similar methodology to the one laid out in Fillmore & Atkins (2000), the main difference being that Fillmore & Atkins (2000) posited a radial categorization for *crawl* with a central sense underlying all uses of *crawl*, whereas in the case of *bring* I show that there is not one underlying sense can be attributed to all *bring* constructions. In particular, Fillmore & Atkins (2000) were trying to show that *crawl* is polysemous. They offer the following as a prototypical situation of polysemy:

“(1) the multiple senses of the word can each be clearly traced back to the same word (this is the polysemy/homonymy distinction); (2) the set of senses permits a network-like description in which pairs of adjacent senses in the network are related by motivated linguistic processes (such as one or another type of metaphoric mapping) that recur across the lexicon; and (3) in all of such links there is a cognitive

asymmetry in that the understanding of each derivative sense is aided by knowledge of the sense from which it is derived”

(Fillmore & Atkins 2000: 100).

In this paper, the situation of *bring* meets the second and third criteria from their definition, but does not meet the first (that all the meanings can be clearly traced back to the same word). I am able to identify connections among all of the senses (except one, *bring it on*, but see section 3.2 for a discussion), but I am not able to clearly trace them all back to one central meaning. Although many of the uses of *bring* do have meanings related to either the literal or metaphorical sense of ‘cause X to become closer to deictic center,’ not all of them can be said to have a relation to that meaning without some major mental gymnastics (e.g. *bring up a child*). The construction grammar approach (e.g. Croft 2001; Goldberg 1995) used in this paper, determines meaning from context in usage based on specific constructions, and therefore does not require one-to-one mapping between the constituents of an utterance and the parts of the scene depicted in the meaning.

1.1. Hypotheses

The main research questions of this paper are: Firstly, what are the different senses associated with the various constructions that *bring* occurs in? Secondly, are the senses identified related to each other semantically, and can they be organized into a concept map-type categorization where all senses identified connect to each other in some way?

Fillmore & Atkins (2000) compared their semantic categorization of *crawl* to the definitions found in current dictionaries. This paper will compare the uses of *bring* in MiCASE (Simpson et al. 2002) to the definitions found in current dictionaries. Many dictionaries, for example the Merriam-Webster and the Oxford dictionaries examined in this paper, use corpora to uncover the various phrases in which words such as *bring* are used, and then identify the senses of the word in context. In particular, Merriam-Webster collects many citations of a word from many different sources (sometimes already put together in a corpus) along with the examples of the word used in context when writing definitions (Merriam-Webster 2013). So, the methodology that the dictionary writers currently use to define words is very similar to what is being carried out in this paper, and I do not expect to find too many differences between the dictionary definitions and the results of this study. The use of corpora and internet data mining to create dictionary definitions has increased in recent years. When Fillmore & Atkins conducted their study in 2000, they did not find the dictionaries to be adequate in covering the range of meanings

found for ‘crawl,’ but dictionaries have since improved their methods for writing definitions (cf. Merriam-Webster 2013 for more on methodology).

However, there is one major difference between my study and what the dictionaries are doing-- the dictionaries are simply listing the senses of a word (still not an easy task!), whereas I am taking it one step further by identifying connections between the senses, in terms of metaphorical extension, and therefore offering more insight into the semantics of *bring* in different constructions. In addition, the data are different in my study because they come from a specific domain, the academic setting. I do not expect to find all of the senses identified by the dictionaries in the MiCASE data because all of the transcripts come from the university setting, and thus there might not be enough context variety to invite the use of every single *bring* phrase. Likewise, I do not expect to find all of the senses that I identify in the MiCASE data in the dictionary definitions from Merriam-Webster and Oxford dictionaries because they did not base their definitions solely on the MiCASE data which come from just one part of the English-speaking world. The frequencies of specific senses will be different based on the discourse domain in different corpora, but this study does not focus on frequency as much as finding intuitive connections between the different senses.

Due to the fact that Fillmore & Atkins (2000) found dictionary definitions to be inadequate in their study, after thirteen years the current study asks the same question: which senses identified in the MiCASE data are not present in the dictionary definitions, and which senses identified by the dictionaries are not found in the MiCASE data? The methods used by dictionary writers have improved in recent years, so it is reasonable to ask this question again. Regarding dialect, the senses which I find in all three sources (the MiCASE corpus, the Oxford Dictionary, and the Merriam-Webster Dictionary) are most likely quite frequent and conventional for their purposes since they are used in both British (Oxford) and American (Merriam-Webster and MiCASE) English.

1.2. Dictionary definitions

The following tables present the definitions of *bring* identified by two major online dictionaries of English: Merriam-Webster and Oxford. The examples given to describe the different meanings have been left out of these definitions to save space; however, the idioms have been given if the dictionary supplied them.

Sense	Construction
To convey, lead, carry, or cause to come along with one toward the place from which the action is being regarded	Bring + OBJ
To cause to be, act, or move in a special way	Bring + OBJ
Attract	Bring + OBJ
Persuade, induce	Bring + OBJ
Force, compel	Bring + OBJ
To cause to come into a particular state or condition	Bring + OBJ
Escort, accompany	Bring + OBJ
To bear as an attribute or characteristic	Bring + OBJ
To cause to exist or occur as	Bring + OBJ
To be the occasion of	Bring + OBJ
To result in	Bring + OBJ
Institute	Bring + OBJ
Adduce	Bring + OBJ
Prefer	Bring + OBJ
To procure in exchange: sell for	Bring + OBJ
Bear	Bring
Give birth to: produce	Bring
Adduce (bring forth persuasive arguments)	Bring forth arguments
Produce to view: Introduce	Bring
To carry (a total) forward (bring home)	Bring home
To make unmistakably clear (bring to account)	Bring to account
To bring to book	Bring to book
To reprimand	Bring
To use with effect (bring to bear)	Bring to bear
To compel to give an account (bring to book)	Bring to book
To disclose, reveal (bring to light)	Bring to light
To recall (bring to mind)	Bring to mind
To compel to agree, assent, or submit (bring to terms)	Bring to terms
To come in last or behind (bring up the rear)	Bring up the rear

Table 1. Merriam-Webster (2012) online dictionary senses of bring

Sense	Construction
Come to a place with (someone or something)	Bring + OBJ
Cause (someone or something) to come to a place	Bring + OBJ
Make (someone or something) move in a particular direction or way	Bring + OBJ
Cause (something)	Bring + OBJ
Cause (someone or something) to be in or change to a particular state or condition	Bring + OBJ
Involve (someone) in a particular activity	Bring + OBJ
Initiate (legal action) against someone	Bring + OBJ
Force oneself to do something unpleasant or distressing	Bring + OBJ
Cause someone to receive (an amount of money) as income or profit	Bring + OBJ
	Bring home the bacon
	Bring something home to someone

Make an audience respond with great enthusiasm	Bring the house down
Cause something to begin operating or have an effect	Bring something into play
Used to express confidence in meeting a challenge	Bring it (on)
Exert influence or pressure so as to cause a particular result	Bring something to bear
Aim a weapon	Bring something to bear
	Bring someone to book
	Bring something to light
Cause one to remember	Bring someone/something to mind
Cause something to happen	Bring something to pass, Bring something about
Cause a ship to head in a different direction	Bring something about
Cause something to return	Bring something back
Reintroduce something	Bring something back
Cause someone to fall over	Bring someone/something down
Cause someone to lose power	Bring someone/something down
Make someone unhappy	Bring someone/something down
Give birth to (archaic)	Bring something forth
Move a meeting or event to an earlier date or time	Bring something forward
In bookkeeping, transfer a total sum from the bottom of one page to the top of another	Bring something forward
Propose a plan, subject, or idea for consideration	Bring something forward
Introduce something	Bring something in
Make or earn a particular amount of money	Bring something in
Give a decision in court (jury)	Bring something in
Be rescued from a ship in difficulties	Bring someone off
Give someone or oneself an orgasm	Bring someone off
Achieve something successfully	Bring something off
Encourage someone who is learning something to develop or improve at a faster rate	Bring someone on
Cause something, typically unpleasant, to occur or develop	Bring something on
Encourage one to feel more confident or sociable	Bring someone out
Introduce a (young woman) formally into society	Bring someone out
Introduce (a homosexual) to the homosexual subculture	Bring someone out
Produce and launch a new product or publication	Bring something out
Make something more evident	Bring something out
Restore someone to consciousness	Bring someone around
Persuade someone to do something	Bring someone around
Restore someone's consciousness	Bring someone to
Cause a boat to stop, especially by turning into the wind	Bring something to
(chiefly of a ship) come to a stop	Bring up
Look after a child until it is an adult	Bring someone up
Vomit something	Bring something up
Raise a matter for discussion or consideration	Bring something up

Table 2. Oxford (2012) online dictionary senses of bring

It can be seen through the numerous different senses offered by these dictionaries that the word *bring* has many varied uses. What we find is that the word *bring* acquires its meaning from use in context, from the construction it is used in, and the particle it occurs with.

2. Data and methodology

The Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MiCASE) (Simpson et al. 2002) was used for this study. The MiCASE consists of 152 transcripts (1,848,364 words) of recorded speech from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The data come from a variety of speech events including lectures, classroom discussions, lab sections, seminars, and advising sessions on campus. This corpus was chosen out of curiosity and personal interest, as I am a native speaker of Michigan English. However, I believe that since *bring* is such a common word and occurs in many constructions, it should not matter which English corpus is used for the process of simply identifying the main uses of *bring*. A search of the MiCASE corpus found 322 tokens of *bring*, 67 tokens of *bringing*, 71 tokens of *brings*, and 145 tokens of *brought*, for a total of 605 tokens of this verb. Each token was examined in context to discover the frequent collocations of this verb. Seventeen tokens were excluded because the utterance was truncated making it difficult to determine the meaning, leaving 588 tokens to be analyzed.

The data were examined for a series of factors. The most important was the sense/meaning of the verb as it was used in context. After thoroughly examining the uses of *bring* in context, fifty-two different senses were identified. Besides just the meaning of the *bring* construction, I also looked at which particle the particular *bring* construction takes in order to identify the *bring* constructions. The senses discovered were then organized in a concept map categorization, and frequency counts were obtained for form-meaning pairings (i.e. form: *bring up*, meaning: 'raise a child'). The concept map made from the senses and the frequency tables of the form-meaning pairings were then compared with the dictionary definitions of *bring*. In the next section, the different senses of *bring* and their corresponding constructions are discussed.

3. Results

As mentioned above, 52 different senses of *bring* were identified in the data. The most common sense of *bring* was meaning 'to introduce something into discourse', not 'carry' as has been traditionally posited. I would not say that 'introduce something into discourse' is the central

meaning. It is merely the most frequent. Because the MiCASE is an academic corpus, containing a lot of lectures and other situations where the speakers are presenting new topics frequently, it is not surprising that the ‘introduce something into discourse’ meaning is most frequent in this study. All of the senses that have been identified in this corpus are organized in a concept map below.

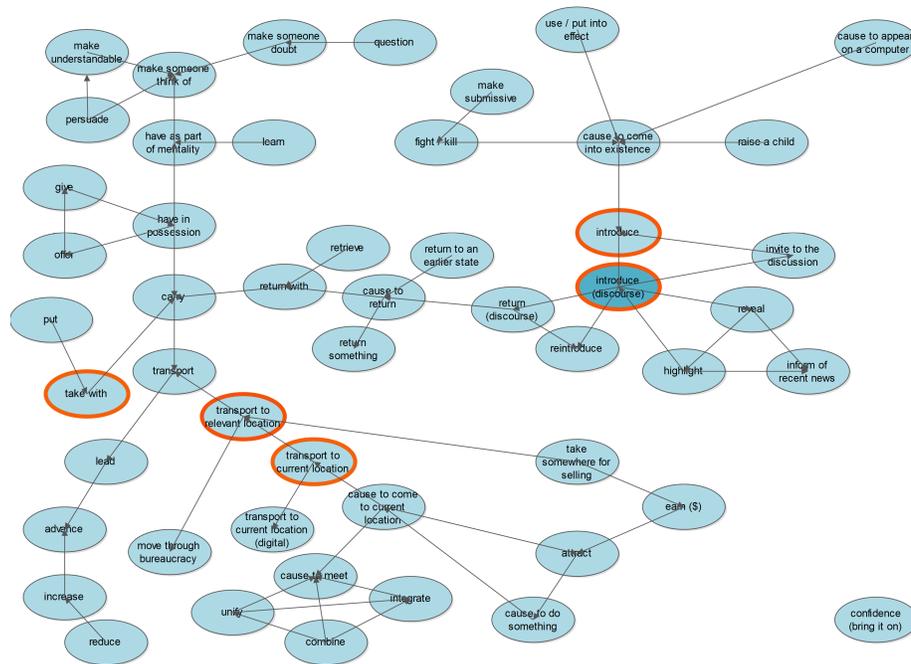


Figure 1: Concept map of bring senses identified in MiCASE¹

It is hard to say that there is one central meaning that is part of every sense by looking at the map, but it is possible to see how the all meanings are related to each other. As can be seen from the map, the traditional definition of *bring*, meaning something like ‘carry’, is only part of some of the senses identified. Interestingly, it seems that when there is a particle (e.g. *in*, *up*, *down*, *out*, *back*, *to*, *together*, etc.) present in the *bring* construction, much of the meaning for that construction comes from a metaphorical extension of the meaning of that particle. In this paper, metaphorical extension is defined as when a word or expression (i.e. *bring* or *bring* + particle) that is used in one domain is extended to be used in another domain (c.f. Lakoff 1993; Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Matthews 2007). Examples (5) and (6) below present a clear example of metaphorical extension from the MiCASE data.

¹ Note that you may use the *zoom* feature in your PDF reader to inspect Figure 1 in detail.

(5) *people want this they want to be able to harvest Canada Geese, we will bring them back.*

(LES17SU028)

(6) *like putting women, like on a lower level like treating 'em like whips and chains is kind of like, bringing them back to when, um slaves were used as like objects,*

(LES565SU137)

I identified example (5) as the 'cause to return' sense because the speaker is talking about influencing the return of the Canadian geese to the area. Example (6) was identified as the 'return to an earlier state' sense and is a metaphorical extension of the 'cause to return' sense (shown on the map by a line connecting the senses). It is a metaphorical extension because we can see that the 'cause to return' sense is a part of the sense of 'return to an earlier state' in example (6). Example (6) still involves retrogressing to where the object has been before, however in (5) the regression is toward a previous state of flourishing in existence, whereas in (6) the regression is metaphorically back in time to an ancestral situation. These senses are very similar, but we can see that one is a clear metaphorical extension of the other.

This is how the connecting lines of metaphorical extension were identified in the concept map above. Metaphorical extension was handled in a similar manner in Fillmore & Atkins (2000: 103) for *crawl*: "The lines connecting the central meaning to its closest neighbors can be thought of as leading to the experiential bases of further extensions; the lines connecting these to the further sense extensions can be taken as representing (recurring) principles of sense extension." Although I did not identify a central sense, I did find groupings of similar senses (e.g. the return group contains senses relating to literal or metaphorical return to an earlier location or state). The following discussion of all of the senses of *bring* identified in the MiCASE corpus is organized by sense groups. The organization of the concept map was based on my own native speaker intuition of the meaning of the entire *bring* construction as used in context. Upon first read of the 588 tokens of *bring* in this corpus, it seemed that there were many more than 52 different meanings. However, I re-read the tokens repeatedly and grouped the similar meanings into coarse-grained (e.g. meanings related to returning) and fine-grained (e.g. meanings related to returning to an earlier state) categories until I came out with the 52 senses in the concept map above.

3.1. A closer look

In this section, various senses of *bring* found in the data are discussed. For the reader's reference, the frequency counts and percentages associated with these data are given below. In Table 3, each sense identified in the figure is listed with its frequency of occurrence in the data (column 1) and the constructions in which the sense manifests itself are given with frequency of occurrence (column 2). The italicized rows represent a one-to-one correspondence between the sense and the construction in which it manifests itself (but not vice versa). The bolded items in the sense column (column 1) represent senses that make up 5% or more of the data (I will call these senses "frequent"); the bolded items in the construction column (column 2) represent constructions that occur with the corresponding specific sense (e.g. 'bring down' meaning 'fight/kill') that make up 1% or more of the data (I will call these form-meaning pairings "relatively frequent"). And, the underlined constructions (column 2) are constructions that occur with the corresponding specific sense that make up more than 10% of the data (I will call these form-meaning pairings "very frequent"). The italicized, bolded and underlined items will be discussed in more detail following the table.

Sense (absolute frequency in the corpus)	Constructions occurring with that sense (absolute frequency in the corpus)
<i>Make understandable (1/588) .17%</i>	<i>Bring down .17%</i>
<i>Persuade (1/588) .17%</i>	<i>Bring to .17%</i>
Make someone think of (8/588) 01.30%	Bring to .17%; bring to mind .34%; bring up .68%; bring off the top of my head .17%
<i>Make someone doubt (1/588) .17%</i>	<i>Bring up questions .17%</i>
<i>Question (2/588) .34%</i>	<i>Bring into .34%</i>
Have as part of mentality (3/588) .51%	Bring to .17%; bring with .17%; bring .17%
<i>Learn (1/588) .17%</i>	<i>Bring back .17%</i>
Have in possession (13/588) 2.21%	Bring with 1.02%; bring 1.70%
Give (12/588) 2.04%	Bring in .17%; bring to .68%; bring upon .17%; bring 1.02%
Offer (20/588) 3.40%	Bring to 2.55% ; bring .85%
<i>Move (1/588) .17%</i>	<i>Bring up through .17%</i>
Carry (23/588) 3.91%	Bring along.17%; bring from .51%; bring in 1.19% ; bring upstairs .17%; bring with .85%; bring 1.02%

Take with (33/588) 5.61%	Bring along .51%; bring back .17%; bring forth .17%; bring from .17%; bring in .34%; bring on .17%; bring some place .17%; bring to 1.70% ; bring with .85%; bring 1.36%
Put (6/588) 1.02%	Bring in .17%; bring into .68%; bring under .17%
Transport (16/588) 2.72%	Bring back .17%; bring from .17%; bring to 1.53% ; bring .85%
Transport to relevant location (44/588) 7.48%	Bring in 2.04% ; bring into .17%; bring over .68%; bring through .17%; bring to 1.19% ; bring up .34%; bring 2.89%
Transport to current location (55/588) 9.35%	Bring back .17%; bring here .68%; bring in 2.72% ; bring over .17%; bring over here .34%; bring to .34%; bring up .17%; bring with .17%; bring 4.59%
<i>Transport to current location (digital) (1/588) .17%</i>	<i>Bring home .17%</i>
Cause to come to current location (5/588) .85%	Bring in .68%, bring .17%
Lead (3/588) .51%	Bring into .34%; bring on .17%
Advance (11/588) 1.87%	Bring along .34%; bring into .34%; bring to 1.19%
<i>Increase (6/588) 1.02%</i>	Bring up 1.02%
Reduce (12/588) 2.04%	Bring closer .17%; bring down 1.70% ; bring .17%
<i>Cause to meet (3/588) .51%</i>	<i>Bring together .51%</i>
<i>Combine (16/588) 2.72%</i>	Bring together 2.72%
Unify (14/588) 2.38%	Bring to .17%; bring together 2.21%
Integrate (4/588) .68%	Bring into .17%; bring together .17%; bring within .17%; bring .17%
<i>Cause to do something (2/588) .34%</i>	<i>Bring to .34%</i>
Attract (15/588) 2.55%	Bring in 1.19% ; bring on .17%; bring over .17%; bring there .17%; bring to .51%; bring together .17%; bring .17%
Earn (\$) (8/588) 1.36%	Bring in 1.02% ; bring to .17%; bring .17%

Take something somewhere for selling (3/588) .51%	Bring in .17%; bring into .34%
<i>Move (bureaucracy) (1/588) .17%</i>	<i>Bring through .17%</i>
Return with (12/588) 2.04%	Bring back 1.36% ; bring home .68%
Retrieve (7/588) 1.19%	Bring back .34%; bring down .68%; bring from .17%; bring in .17%; bring up .17%; bring .17%
Return something (11/588) 1.87%	Bring back 1.70% ; bring .17%
<i>Cause to return (7/588) 1.19%</i>	Bring back 1.19%
<i>Return to an earlier state (4/588) .68%</i>	<i>Bring back .68%</i>
Return (discourse) (9/588) 1.53%	Bring back 1.36% ; bring back in .17%
<i>Reintroduce (1/588) .17%</i>	<i>Bring back into .17%</i>
Introduce (discourse) (104/588) 17%	Bring in 4.93%; bring into .68%; bring to .34%; bring together .17%; bring up 11.20% ; bring .34%
Introduce (36/588) 6.12%	Bring from .17%; bring in 3.23% ; bring into 1.87% ; bring to .85%
Cause to come into existence (18/588) 3.06%	Bring about 1.70% ; bring forward .17%; bring on .17%; bring out .51%; bring up .17%; bring .34%
<i>Raise a child (2/588) .34%</i>	<i>Bring (a child) up .34%</i>
<i>Fight/kill (3/588) .51%</i>	<i>Bring down .51%</i>
<i>Make submissive (1/588) .17%</i>	<i>Bring me to my knees .17%</i>
Use/Put into effect (4/588) .68%	Bring to bear .51%; bring to bear on .17%
<i>Cause to appear on a computer screen (2/588) .34%</i>	<i>Bring up .34%</i>
<i>Invite to the discussion (1/588) .17%</i>	<i>Bring in on .17%</i>
Highlight (9/588) 1.53%	Bring out 1.36% ; bring .17%
<i>Reveal (7/588) 1.19%</i>	Bring out 1.19%
Inform of recent news (2/588) .34%	Bring up .17%; bring up to date .17%
<i>Confidence .17%</i>	<i>Bring it on .17%</i>

Table 3: Frequency of bring senses and the constructions they occur with

Referring back to the concept map, in the upper left corner we can see that the ‘make someone think of’ sense has the most connections to other senses which makes it a central member of what I am calling a “sense group.” A sense group is a grouping of senses that have some common

semantics. The 'make someone think of' sense group contains senses involving mental activity like the other senses in the group (e.g. 'question', 'make understandable', 'make someone doubt', etc.). However, it seems that the 'have in possession' sense is more central in this part of the larger concept map because we can see how 'having in possession' could be metaphorically extended to 'have as part of mentality' (i.e. 'have in mental possession'). The 'have in possession' sense also has two constructions that are relatively frequent, *bring* without a particle and *bring with*.

The 'give' sense and the 'offer' sense also have relatively frequent constructions: *bring* and *bring to*, respectively. However, the 'giving' and 'offering' frames have nothing to do with the 'make someone think of' sense group, but they are related to the 'have in possession' group. The frames that are invoked by the acts of giving and offering are really just profiling different parts of the larger possession frame-- the transfer of possession. Therefore, I am positing that the possession sense group is more central in this part of the concept map, and the mental activity sense group and the giving/offering sense group are different metaphorical extensions of the possession frame.

The second grouping that will be discussed is a bit more complicated than the 'possession' group. The first thing to notice is that there is a section in the middle of the overall concept map, which I will refer to as the 'transport' group, that contains 'transport', 'transport to relevant location', 'transport to current location', and other senses that seem like they all might profile the same situation. However, these senses do not profile the situation in the same way. There are small differences which are communicated by the particle following *bring* or by the communicative context. Methodologically, I also separated senses such as these so that I was able to be equally as fine-grained in other areas of the concept map where these small nuances make more of a difference. Something else relevant to mention is that the 'transport' group, if combined, would be the second most frequent sense overall. This is where the original meaning of *bring* is connected (deictic caused motion). The most frequent constructions in this part of the concept map are *bring* without a particle, *bring in* and *bring to*, all of which are associated with the 'transport/carry/take with' group. These particles are being used in their prototypical directional sense in the frames evoked by this group, and *bring* is being used in its more traditional sense. The frequent constructions in this group have more decompositional meanings. That is, their meanings can be deduced from the sum of the meanings of their parts.

‘Transport’ is the most central meaning in this part of the concept map. One reason for that is that its members seem to have the least information being communicated in their frames and much of the information communicated for those constructions comes from the particle. Also, the particle is not always necessary to invoke these senses; these are situations where the direction of movement is inferred from context. The ‘transport’ group’s meaning was metaphorically extended to computer use in the ‘transport to current location (digital)’ sense. The ‘cause to come to a current location’ is a different kind of extension from the ‘transport’ group because it profiles the causation of the event as more important than the actual movement. The ‘cause to come to current location’ sense then gets extended to the ‘lead’ sense where the causation and the movement towards a goal become more important. The ‘advance’ sense then emerges from the ‘lead’ sense because the causation is still there, but the movement is then toward a metaphorical goal instead of a location. The ‘increase’ sense is a kind of metaphorical advancement along a scale, so we can see how ‘increase’ comes out of ‘advance’. Then, ‘reduce’ is an antonymic metaphorical extension of ‘increase’. We can see the iconicity in the ‘increase’ and ‘reduce’ constructions which have opposite directionals for their particles: *bring up* and *bring down*, respectively. Another interesting point for this section of the concept map is that the ‘take with’ sense has the widest variety of *bring* constructions. This is probably because it is the least semantically communicative sense (e.g. no direction, goal, manner, or purpose being communicated), and also because *bring* is encroaching on discourse territory that used to be occupied by *take* constructions.

The next group to discuss is the ‘combine’ group. The *bring together* construction is relatively frequent in this group and occurs with everything in the ‘combine’ group (e.g. ‘cause to meet’, ‘combine’, ‘unify’ and ‘integrate’). ‘Combine’ is the most central sense here because ‘unify’ means basically the same thing as ‘combine’, but it usually refers specifically to people coming to an understanding, so there is a semantic extension there. ‘Integrate’ is also similar to ‘combine’ and ‘unify’ except that ‘integrate’ also profiles more of an ‘inserting’ sense, which is logical because the particles that occur with the ‘integrate’ sense (*into*, *together*, and *within*) communicate that insertion.

Another sense group found in this part of the concept map is what I am calling the ‘make money’ group. This group contains ‘attract’, ‘earn money’, ‘take something somewhere for selling’ and ‘move through bureaucracy’. These senses all profile different parts of the ‘making money’ scene. The ‘attract’, ‘earn money’, and ‘take something somewhere for selling’ senses all have *bring in* as their most frequent

construction which shows that this construction can evoke several different scenes in the context of money-making. The 'move through bureaucracy' sense also profiles a part of the 'making money' scene, but it occurs in the *bring through* construction, which is probably different from the others because it is more of a behind-the-scenes action in this frame. Tying the 'make money' group and the 'combine' groups together is the 'cause to do something' sense, which is more basic than either of these two because it has less semantic information communicated.

The main sense group in the middle part of the concept map is quite clearly 'return', with the 'cause to return' sense as the most central member. This is the most central member of the 'return' group because it has the most connections but also because it is the least semantically informative of all of the senses in the group. The *bring back* construction is the most frequent construction for all senses in the 'return' group (e.g. 'return with', 'retrieve', 'cause to return', 'return something', 'return to an earlier state', and 'return to in discourse'). This is logical because the particle *back* in English communicates something behind us whether spatially or temporally, and in this context *bring* indicates some kind of movement towards what is behind us. Other constructions that don't contain *back* as the particle in the 'return' group are either the non-particle *bring* where the 'return' sense can be deduced from the discourse context, or *bring* occurs with more specific directionals to indicate where the return destination is. This second situation happens in the case of 'retrieve' because the location of the item being retrieved is important for the person doing the retrieving, and therefore the direction gets encoded in the particle.

The 'return with' sense is kind of in between the 'carry' sense (in the 'transport' group) and the 'cause to return' sense (in the 'return' group) which shows that it is not clear whether the transportation part or the returning part is really more important, and thus the 'return with' sense is somewhat bleached like the 'take with' sense. The 'return something' sense is very similar to the 'cause to return' sense except that the volition of the Agent is a little bit more important in the scene profiled by the 'return something' sense. The 'return to an earlier state' sense is a metaphorical extension from returning in space to returning in time. The 'return to in discourse' is a metaphorical extension from 'cause to return' as well, except that the extension is from space to discourse. The 'return to in discourse' sense also has many connections. It has connections between the 'return' group and the 'discourse' group. The 'discourse' group is split between the 'return' group and the 'introduce' group.

The ‘cause to come into existence’ sense has the most connections in the upper part of the concept map. The main construction used to communicate the ‘cause to come into existence’ sense is *bring about*, and is relatively frequent. However, this sense can also be communicated by six other *bring* + particle constructions, as well as the non-particle *bring*. The particles are used to communicate other nuances about the scene of ‘coming into existence.’

The most frequent form-meaning pairing in all the data is *bring up* meaning ‘introduce into the discourse’ (11.2% of the instances of *bring* in the corpus, making it very frequent). The ‘introduce into the discourse’ sense is also the most frequent in the data (17% of the instances of *bring* in the corpus). These figures show that ‘introduce into the discourse’ being communicated as *bring up* has been conventionalized in this speech community. Due to the academic nature of this corpus if this same study were repeated with a non-academic corpus the frequency of this construction may be lower. The non-discourse ‘introduce’ sense is also frequent (6.2% of the instances of *bring* in the corpus). *Bring in* and *bring into* are the most common constructions with the ‘introduce’ sense. Both are relatively frequent, and we can see that they are almost the same construction. Thus, we can say that ‘introduce’ in general is often communicated by a *bring in(to)* construction. *Bring out* is another relatively frequent construction that occurs with a couple of related senses. Both ‘reveal’ and ‘highlight’ are most commonly communicated with *bring out*. These senses are similar in meaning, but ‘highlight’ signals the item being brought out as important whereas ‘reveal’ does not have as much value judgment in the frame.

As mentioned above, ‘cause to come into existence’ is a central sense in the upper section of the concept map. ‘Introduce’ is really a more volitional way of ‘causing something to come into existence,’ and is thus an extension. Clearly, ‘introduce into discourse’ is a metaphorical extension of ‘introduce.’ This sense is then expanded to *how* something is signaled in discourse (‘highlight’ and ‘reveal’), and finally these discourse-signaling senses get expanded into the idiomatic sense of ‘inform of recent news’ in the expression *bring up to date*. *Bring up to date* is the act of highlighting the relevant news. Another extension of the introducing group is *bring in on* which means introducing or inviting people to the event or knowledge.

The ‘cause to come into existence’ sense has also been metaphorically extended to ‘causing something to appear on a computer screen.’ Additionally, there are other senses which represent different extensions from this more central sense, such as ‘raise a child’. *Bring up* meaning

'raise a child' profiles what happens after the child comes into existence, and requires the parent or guardian's volition. *Bring down*, much like for the 'increase'/ 'reduce' pair, is sort of the opposite of bringing a child up. It is an antonymic metaphorical extension of 'cause to come into existence' because the Agent is taking someone/something out of existence, and it requires the Agent's volition. The 'use/put into effect' sense is communicated by the *bring to bear* idiom, which is totally unanalyzable from its elements. This sense is associated with the 'cause to come into existence' sense because it profiles what the Agent does with what is created after it comes into existence, and is this way sort of like 'raise a child' in its connection to the more central sense. The 'make submissive' sense seems to be an extension of the 'fight/kill' sense with the *bring down* construction, but looking at the 'make submissive' construction it is quite lexically filled (i.e. *bring* + personal pronoun + to possessive pronoun + *knees*). In this construction, it seems that *bring* is being used to mean 'cause' and then the rest of the construction gives us the image of someone groveling or awe-struck. This is an idiomatic instance of a *bring* construction. Idiomatic uses of *bring* are discussed in the following section.

3.2. Idiomatic *bring* constructions

There are several constructions with *bring* that appear to be idioms, which are not quite so compositional and analyzable. The title of this paper came from one such construction, the *bring it on* construction, exemplified in (7) below. Other idiomatic uses of *bring* are offered in the examples below as well.

(7) *Alright, so you're good with everything you're ready, **bring it on.***
(DIS175JU081)

(8) ***Brings me to my knees.***
(LAB200JU018)

(9) *The clergy, have to be educators of their people, and they have to **bring the people on board** with a version of the same education they receive.*
(COL605MX132)

(10) *... things are slowed down. to a pace that might **bring to mind**, the slow introduction even with the change, of, meter.*
(LES420MG134)

(11) *Very few scientists can **bring such diverse skills and technology, to bear on** scientific issues.*
(COL200MX133)

(12) *Okay Jeff, why don't uh, try to start here by, **bringing us up to date on**, what you've been thinking about since our last, conversations.*

(OFC285SG135)

(13) *I shall pray with all my heart for your good health. **No one knows what tomorrow may bring.** Be resolute, but still feel pity for me.*

(LEL140SU074)

Example (7) is the only sense of *bring* not attached to the rest of the concept map because I could not identify a connection between that sense and any of the other senses in particular. This suggests that *bring it on* is very idiomaticized. In the following section all of the senses identified in the MiCASE data will be compared with dictionary definitions for *bring*.

3.3. Comparison with dictionary definitions

There were eight senses identified by Merriam-Webster (2012) that did not occur in the MiCASE data: 'to be the occasion of', 'prefer', 'to carry a total forward', 'to make unmistakably clear', 'to compel to give an account', 'to reprimand', 'to compel to agree', and 'to come in last or behind'. The dictionary also identified another construction, *bring to light*, that I did not find in MiCASE, however, the sense associated with it, 'reveal,' was identified in these data with the construction *bring out*.

There were seventeen senses identified by Oxford (2012) that did not occur in the MiCASE data, some of these overlapping with those found in Merriam-Webster: 'initiate (legal action) against someone', 'force oneself to do something unpleasant or distressing', 'make an audience respond with great enthusiasm', 'bring someone to book', 'move a meeting to an earlier date or time', 'be rescued from a ship', 'give someone or oneself an orgasm', 'achieve something successfully', 'encourage someone who is learning something to improve', 'introduce a woman to society', 'introduce a homosexual to the homosexual culture', 'restore someone to consciousness', and 'cause a boat to stop'. Also, one of the idiomatic constructions from the Oxford dictionary, *bring home the bacon*, did not occur in this form in the MiCASE data, but instead occurred as *bring the game to the table*, speaking of hunting. Considering that the Merriam-Webster dictionary listed twenty-nine different senses for *bring* and its constructions and MiCASE only missed eight of those, I would conclude that there is a fair matchup with what Merriam-Webster lists and what is spoken in an academic setting in Michigan (based on the MiCASE).

The Oxford dictionary, on the other hand, identifies 52 senses for *bring* and its constructions, and 13 of those are not found in the MiCASE data. This is a better proportion of senses matching MiCASE even though there

are more senses not identified. One issue that is affecting the matchup between MiCASE and the Oxford Dictionary is that the Oxford dictionary is based on British English. Thus, some expressions such as *bring someone off* meaning 'give someone an orgasm' would occur in American English as *get someone off*; *bring something off* meaning 'achieve something successfully' would occur in American English as *pull something off*; and *bring someone on* meaning 'encourage someone to do something' would probably occur in American English as *cheer someone on*. Thus, the matchup between Oxford and this paper's analysis is improved if we account for dialectal differences. The match is even better if we consider that some of the senses identified in the Oxford dictionary are used exclusively for boating, and the MiCASE data takes place in an academic setting. The only senses identified in the MiCASE that were not listed in the dictionary definitions were: 'inform of recent news,' 'move through bureaucracy,' and the senses associated with computers.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has identified fifty-two different senses of *bring*, all associated with particular constructions, including some idiomatic uses. These senses were organized based on semantic connections into a concept map using native speaker intuition. I was unable to identify an overarching or central sense that all of the senses of the *bring* constructions could be connected to. Thus, the verb *bring* by itself has very little meaning until it is used in a construction, although it does contribute some. It doesn't matter whether *bring* is a word on its own with a specific meaning or not because the constructions in which it occurs acquire their own meanings as whole units. In the same way that we cannot identify exactly what the pronoun *it* is in *bring it on*, we must evaluate meanings based on constructions in usage for verbs and nouns as well. Instead of breaking *bring it on* into 'cause Object to move toward deictic center + locational particle' the construction is non-compositional, and we must read *bring it on* as one unit, like a single word expressing a single idea. Likewise, the particles used in all of these constructions, not just the idiomatic ones, have very little meaning until they are used in the construction in context, but they still contribute some of the meaning to the utterance they are used in. To understand exactly what part of the constructional meaning both *bring* and the particle contribute in each instance, a diachronic study would be necessary with particular attention paid to the metaphorical extensions taking place over time.

This study has found the current dictionary definitions of *bring* from the Merriam-Webster and Oxford dictionaries to be adequate in covering the

many senses of this word as used in different constructions. However, the reason that these dictionaries were successful is that they employed a corpus-based methodology, examining how the word is used in context and defining the meaning based on the whole construction. The methodologies used to arrive at dictionary definitions have improved over the last thirteen years, so it is not surprising that this study agreed with the findings of the dictionaries. Just as Fillmore & Atkins (2000) recommended for the English verb *crawl*, I recommend corpus-based methods to discover the meanings associated with the constructions in which polysemous words occur. The contexts that those constructions occur in determine their semantics both synchronically and diachronically.

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