Book of abstracts

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Session Overview

General Session

Copying Codes, Shaping Minds: Cognitive Dimensions of English in German Blogs

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Research on bilingual and multilingual interaction has highlighted how language contact shapes discourse and communication patterns. Digital genres such as blogs provide particularly fertile ground for these practices, with English often serving as a lingua franca (Vettorel 2014; Cutler & Røyneland 2018). Online communication fosters hybrid and flexible styles that diverge from offline norms, incorporating informal registers, creative spelling, and multimodal features. While sociolinguistic studies increasingly address digital language use (Gnach et al. 2023; Cover 2023; Androutsopoulos & Vogel 2024), cognitive dimensions of code-switching remain comparatively underexplored.

Verschik (2019) is among the few to explicitly integrate a cognitive perspective, analyzing English–Estonian code-copying in blogs. Her Code-Copying Framework demonstrates how contact-induced change aligns with usage-based approaches (Backus 2014, 2015), foregrounding mental representations and processing mechanisms. Copying practices are shaped by social significance, novelty, expressiveness, and discourse prominence (Verschik 2019: 77).

This paper extends Verschik's model to German-language blogs that incorporate English. The study investigates cognitive and structural-cognitive factors promoting code-copying, including linguistic creativity, stylistic innovation, and cross-linguistic perception. Methodologically, over 100 blogs were screened via directories, keyword searches, and social media aggregators. Ten lifestyle, fashion, and beauty blogs (2014–2024) were selected for thematic consistency and representativeness. The corpus comprises 115 posts (45,354 words), each annotated for contact-induced phenomena. Posts were retained only if they contained at least one instance of code-copying or alternation, following Verschik's typology of "global," "selective," "mixed" copies, and "code alternations" (2019: 62).

The analysis is qualitative, focusing on cognitive motivations such as expressiveness, semantic alignment, and stylistic originality rather than frequency counts. Findings suggest that code-switching in German blogs is better explained by semantic and discourse-level factors than by macro-sociolinguistic variables such as typological proximity, prestige, or community type. English insertions frequently involve idioms, set phrases, and syntactically autonomous units with strong emotional resonance (cf. Verschik 2019: 51).

By situating German digital practices within a cognitive framework, this study contributes comparative insights into the triggers of code-copying online. It underscores the role of semantic and expressive motivations in shaping multilingual discourse, advancing our understanding of cognitive processes in digital language contact.

De-constructing the Scottish be-perfect: A Cognitive Historical Sociolinguistic Analysis

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This paper adopts Diachronic Construction Grammar (Traugott & Trousdale, 2013; Barðdal & Gildea, 2015; Smirnova and Sommerer, 2020) and Cognitive Historical Sociolinguistics (Swiggers, 2022; Kristiansen et al. 2021; Claes, 2018) to analyze the Scottish be-perfect as a linguistically and cognitively motivated construction, moving beyond traditional grammaticalization accounts (Mustanoja, 1960; Denison, 1993). Using corpus data from the Scottish Pauper Petition Corpus (ScotPP) (Gordon & Groot, 2022-), this paper demonstrates how constructional competition, language usage and social stratification may jointly shape diachronic change in temporal periphrastic structures.

It will be argued that the be-perfect and have-perfect are two distinct, diachronically competing constructions (Goldberg, 1995; 2006; 2019) that require independent representation in the constructicon, under an overarching [AUX]-perfect construction. The be-perfect construes perfectivity through a CHANGE OF STATE image schema, linking it cognitively to motion and intransitive verbs (Kytö 1992, 1997). This semantic-constructional motivation explains the observed verb-class restrictions: speakers recruit the be-perfect (1) for mutative predicates where the endpoint state is profiled, while the have-perfect possessive-achievement frame suits transitive, agentive contexts. (2)

(1) …but now weakneʃs and infermity with old age are arriaved... [Perthshire, 1837]

(2) That your Petitioner would {therefore} humbly{im}plore to your Honours an offer of what fishes I have caugth ſince the ſaid first day of may last… [Aberdeenshire, 1767]

ScotPP uniquely preserves authentic, unmediated language from lower-class populations, a demographic usually excluded from diachronic linguistic study due to manuscript scarcity (Groot, 2024). Social stratification in the corpus reveals differential usage patterns. By using a newly-created corpus for the first time, the paper will integrate cognitive sociolinguistic principles into the historical analysis. Low-literacy speakers show significantly higher be-perfect frequency, reflecting conservative preservation of this construction despite standardization pressures favoring have-perfect (Traugott, 1992; Tagliamonte, 2000). Rather than treating social differences as surface variations, I argue they reflect genuine differences in how speakers cognitively organized the same construction-semantic space through exposure to different exemplar distributions. This usage-based, cognitive sociolinguistic analysis, grounded in authentic low-class correspondence, suggests a methodology for accessing historical speakers' mental grammars.

By bridging construction-based and cognitive sociolinguistic perspectives to bear on diachronic corpus data from historically marginalized and underrepresented speakers, this paper illustrates 1) how, in historical change, constructional competition can be resolved through usage frequencies, 2) social stratification reflects differential constructional usage across communities and 3) how constructions evolve as cognitively grounded patterns shaped by speakers' embodied experience in social contexts.

Assessing Constructional Creativity: The Constructional Divergent Association Task (CXN-DAT)

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Linguistic creativity has received considerable attention in constructionist research (see, e.g., Hartmann and Ungerer 2023; Hoffmann 2024; Norde & Trousdale 2024; Turner 2020). Now, it is well established that individuals differ greatly with respect to their creative ability (Kandler et al. 2016). Yet, so far, constructionist studies ignore the creativity of individuals (an exception being Van den Stock et al. 2024), while in psychology, most verbal creativity tasks only test single words. In the Divergent Association Task (DAT) (Olson et al. 2021), e.g., subjects are asked to name 10 nouns "that are as different from each other as possible, in all meanings and uses".

To also test the constructional creativity of individuals, we developed a constructional version of the DAT, the Constructional Divergent Association Task (CXN-DAT). In the CXN-DAT, subjects are given the following four constructional contexts:

(1) Yesterday, the man ______ the woman. (Transitive cxn)

(2) Yesterday, the woman _____________ in her room. (Intransitive cxn)

(3) Yesterday, the woman _____________ the hell out of the man. (V the hell out of cxn)

(4) Yesterday, the man ______ his way to the top.(Way cxn)

In the test, the stimuli are counterbalanced so that the order of (1)–(4) is varied and that man and woman appear as the subject (and object) slot of all constructions (to minimise gender stereotype effects). We tested the CXN-DAT in a pilot study by recruiting 55 native speakers of British English (18–60 years | 37 females, 18 males). Subjects first completed a short BIG5 personality questionnaire (Lang et al. 2011) and then DAT and CXN-DAT. As in the DAT, we used GLoVe (Penningston et al. 2014) to get a semantic vector for each verb response. DAT scores were calculated for each subject and construction by averaging all pairwise cosine distances and multiplying the result by 100 (Olson et al. 2021). A mixed effects linear model with PARTICIPANT as a random factor revealed only that CXN-DAT scores are significantly lower than the DAT scores (see Figure 1 below): [see pdf version of abstract] Since constructions constrain the search space for subjects, this effect can easily be explained. More interesting is the fact that we observe evidence for coverage effects (Goldberg 2019). For the V the hell out of cxn, e.g., all speakers drew on the two most frequent verbs (beat and scare) as well as other verbs from their respective semantic frames (e.g. hit, slap, kick / annoy, frighten, worry; Perek 2016; Hoffmann 2021). Finally, using the AI-based scoring tool OCSAI (Organisciak et al. 2023) we obtained originality ratings for all responses. A linear regression model regressing originality against the order in which items were produced in a series, separately applied for each participant and construction, revealed a linear increase of originality, $t(54) = 7.45$, $p < .001$. Across participants, the mean slope of this increase correlated significantly with the openness score of the BIG5 personality inventory, $r = .280$, $p = .041$, after controlling for outliers. This suggests that the CXN-DAT successfully detects inter-individual creativity differences.

Metaphors in political discourse as evaluative instruments

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In present-day research metaphor is understood as a semantic construct (Foolen 2025), that within discursive practice, may be subject to pragmatic activation (Bąk 2025, Musolff 2016, 2025) When metaphors are consciously employed, they can be considered components of communicative acts. They thus function at a minimum as a stylistic device, and more broadly as a rhetorical, persuasive, or evaluative instrument, intentionally deployed to influence opinion and argumentation. Such manifestations of the pragmatization of metaphors occur across different types of discourse. In my presentation, I will focus on the evaluative functions of metaphors in political discourse. I will pay particular attention to the question of how intensification, emphasis, hyperbole and positive/ negative connotations attached to the metaphors contribute to euphemizing and dysphemizing. The detailed investigation will analyze the staged controversy (Holly 2024) of Trump vs. Selensky in the Oval Office (February 2025) and the German Bundestag debate on the 2026 draft budget (Weidel vs. Merz) with their respective use of the source domain "war" mapped onto the target domain of a perceived crisis and their emphasis of we-groups against malevolent agents. These war-based metaphors clearly are used here as evaluative instruments and show an antagonistic perspective in international and national political discourse.

Competition and change in Modern English quantifier constructions

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This paper investigates competition among quantifier constructions in Modern English. Specifically, it will trace the diachronic trajectory of the long-established monomorphemic quantifiers (many and much) in contrast to some of their younger grammaticalized competitors, namely the complex binominal expressions a lot of/lot(s) of and a bunch of/bunch(es) of (Langacker 1991, 2008; Huddleston & Pullum 2002; Raden & Dirven 2007; Biber et al. 2021; Brems 2011). Examples (1-3) illustrate the transition from literal to quantificational/ grammaticalized usage of one of the binominal quantifiers, while example (4) depicts one of the default monomorphemic expressions:

(1) At the highest grows a bunch of flowers, clustering together like grapes. (EEBO 1578, Text_ID: A20579)
(2) With great care they do pluck out, only keep a bunch of hair on the crown of their heads. (EEBO 1598, Text_ID: A05569)
(3) That said Desires were Dropsies, bid the Mind take a Bunch of Reason, that grows in a well-temper 'd Brain. (EEBO 1671, Text_ID: A53048)
(4) So suddenly, that I had no time to read many books written on American subjects. (ARCHER 1787, Text_ID: 1787mark_f4a)

Using data from Early English Books Online (EEBO), A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers (ARCHER), and the British National Corpus (BNC), the corpus study will examine the four quantifiers' distribution of functional labor within the quantificational domain and reconfiguration of the noun phrase (NP), covering Early to Late Modern English and a wide range of genres. The analysis combines descriptive statistics with quantitative modeling, including distributional analyses and logistic regression, to trace frequency developments, genre sensitivity, and semantic domain constraints underlying quantifier choice (Hilpert 2013; Gries & Stefanowitsch 2004; Bohmann & Sommerer 2025). Accordingly, I will be addressing the following interrelated questions:

(i) how the relative frequencies of monomorphemic and binominal quantifiers change over time;
(ii) which linguistic factors (e.g., genre, period, and properties of the NP) best predict quantifier choice; and
(iii) whether competition results in specialized profiles rather than functional replacement.

Preliminary results indicate that binominal quantifiers develop distinct distributional profiles, showing increased preference for informal and narrative registers and greater flexibility in NP-internal contexts, while monomorphemic quantifiers retain more conservative usage patterns. To capture and model this competition, my paper draws insights from Diachronic Construction Grammar (DCxG) and approaches quantified NPs as an evolving network of quantificational constructions, in which newly grammaticalized binominal expressions (e.g., a lot of) enter into competition with canonical monomorphemic quantifiers. It models change as the constructionalization of new semi-specific templates and shifts in productivity (Goldberg 2006; Bybee 2010; Traugott & Trousdale 2013; Hilpert 2013), while remaining compatible with broader linguistic approaches to grammaticalization/lexicalization and variation. Ultimately, I will postulate that quantifier competition reflects a reconfiguration of the constructional network of English quantifiers and newly developing quantificational coding strategies within the NP, driven by frequency effects, analogical extension, and contextual sensitivity. The study shows how competition among alternative quantifying expressions can motivate the development of distinct functional niches, suggesting gradual restructuring within a grammatical domain.

Investigating the prepositions OVER and UNDER in Early Modern English: a constructional analysis of phrasal complexity and meaning

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This paper investigates the diachronic trajectory of the English prepositions over and under and the constructions (PPs) headed by these prepositions throughout Early Modern English (1450 – 1700).

Some diachronic studies have looked at prepositions viewing them as relatively stable grammatical items of minimal change. In cognitive linguistics, however, it is well known that they are highly polysemous form-meaning pairings which get recruited into many different constructional schemas (Tyler & Evans 2003; Guarddon-Anelo 2006; Lindstromberg 2010), with usage preferences, constructional complexity and semantics often changing historically (Kovbasko 2022) making them a premier target for diachronic studies. In this paper, particular attention will be given to their metaphorization trajectories, changes in frequency (Traugott & Trousdale 2013; Hilpert 2013; Perek 2016) and the formal complexity of the PPs. Diachronic Construction Grammar (DCxG) principles and Cognitive Linguistics concepts, such as image schemas, polysemy, and the metaphorical extension of SPACE to conceptualise non-spatial relations (Lakoff & Johnson 1980) will be employed as a baseline theoretical analytical framework.

Over and under were chosen because they share similar (PATH/SOURCE-PATH-GOAL, UP-DOWN) and complementary (ENABLEMENT, RESTRAINT, DIVERSION) image schemas (Lindstromberg 2010; Hampe 2005), while also being part of a contrast set (Tyler & Evans 2003), with similar usage in figurative (ex. 1, 3) and literal (ex. 2, 4) constructions:

(1) Witness the Emperor Caligula, who so demeaned himself in his Empire and tyranny over others… (EEBOv3: 1657, A47013)
(2) … Mustaffa commands all his host to pass over the River Canac (EEBOv3: 1595, A07559)
(3) The last sort of Fanatioism among them, resisting authority under pretence of Religion (EEBOv3: 1671, A61540)
(4) …and that the Army was encamped under the Walls of the Town… (EEBOv3: 1698, A55335)

Note that the study will look solely at prepositional phrases headed by over or under and with NPs headed by proper or common nouns (e.g., over the river).
The paper will focus on the following research questions:

RQ1: How do the variables TIME (HALF-CENTURY) and GENRE (NONFICTION, LETTERS, LAW TEXTS, RELIGIOUS TEXTS, etc.) affect the complexity of the PP in the investigated period?

RQ2: How do the prepositions' semantic profiles differ and which other factors (e.g., lexical biases, and structure of the NP) increase the complexity of the PP?

Empirically, the paper will use data from the Early English Books Online corpus (EEBOv3) and the ARCHER corpus (cqpweb.lancs.ac.uk, Hardie 2012).

COMPLEXITY is defined as the number of words in the PP but more variables (e.g., presence or absence of determination and modification) will also be taken into account.
The collected data will be analysed by running a logistic regression model using TIME, GENRE and COMPLEXITY as variables (Bohmann 2016; Levshina 2020; Bohmann & Sommerer 2025). Among other things, it will be tested if a) semantics and function (i.e., semantic roles of the PP; noun classes in the NP) influence the PP's complexity but also b) how formal complexity, modification and determination of the NP influence the semantic meaning of the PP.

The Concept of HEAVINESS in English, German, and Hungarian: A Corpus-Based Semantic Comparison

Dr. Ádám Galac PhD

The concept of HEAVINESS is grounded in embodied experience and lexicalized by highly frequent and polysemous adjectives across languages. While the basic meanings of these adjectives relate to physical weight and the effort required to lift an object, they display extensive figurative extensions motivated by metaphorical and metonymic processes. A number of contrastive linguistic studies have highlighted differences in the semantic behavior and usage of these adjectives (cf. Yu et al. 2017; Yu & Huang 2019; Ryzhova et al. 2019; Galac & Zayniev 2023: 472) – however, thorough corpus-based analyses incorporating frequency data are still lacking.

The present study seeks to address this gap by examining the semantic structure of the central adjectives encoding the meaning 'heavy' in English, German and Hungarian (English heavy, weighty, German schwer, Hungarian nehéz, súlyos), alongside some related items (e.g., German schwierig, gewichtig, Hungarian nehézkes). Preliminary observations suggest that although the adjectives of the three languages share a wide range of figurative uses – essentially rooted in the primary metaphors IMPORTANCE IS WEIGHT (Yu et al. 2017) and DIFFICULTY IS WEIGHT (Yu & Huang 2019) –, there are considerable differences in the frequency and typicality of these uses. English appears to favor object-oriented profiles focusing on the weight of an object as a source domain and resulting in the extended meaning 'intense' or 'of great quantity' (e.g., a heavy smoker, heavy rain, heavy silence, a heavy accent). On the other hand, German and Hungarian draw more typically on the experiencer-oriented source meaning 'difficult to lift', leading to the extended meaning 'difficult for someone' (e.g., German eine schwere Krise 'a serious crisis', Hungarian nehéz kérdés 'a difficult question', nehéz terep 'a difficult terrain', nehéz álom 'troubled, restless sleep'). In addition, the typical figurative uses of German schwer seem to be somewhere between those of English heavy (typically meaning 'intense') and of Hungarian nehéz (typically meaning 'difficult'), since they often mean 'serious and bad' (e.g., schwere Schäden 'serious damage', ein schwerer Unfall 'a serious accident', schwerkrank 'seriously ill'), thus combining the conceptual metaphors IMPORTANCE IS WEIGHT and DIFFICULTY IS WEIGHT.

The analysis examines the phenomenon on the basis of empirical data drawn from the TenTen corpus family: a collection of large, multipurpose, and comparable corpora consisting of written texts created mostly in digital contexts. The methodology primarily consists of collocational analyses and the manual annotation of randomly generated concordance samples. The semantic differences outlined above are hypothesized to have measurable consequences for the collocation frequencies and the KWIC profiles of the examined keywords. The derivational possibilities of the keywords are also considered (e.g., English usage-heavy, German jemandem schwerfallen 'to be difficult for someone', sich schwertun mit etwas 'to struggle with something', Hungarian nehézfejű 'thick-headed, slow on the uptake', neheztel valakire 'to bear a grudge against someone'), providing further data on the behavior of adjectives meaning 'heavy' in the languages studied.

Rethinking extravagance as a synchronic phenomenon and the implications for empirical research

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Extravagance is a pragmatic phenomenon related to Keller's (2014 [1990]) maxims of action, which Haspelmath (1999: 1055) formulated as 'talk in such a way that you are noticed'. Given the increasing popularity of pragmatics within usage-based, constructionist approaches, it is unsurprising that interest in extravagance has also grown in recent studies (e.g. Baumann & Mühlenbernd 2022; Hartmann & Ungerer 2023; Norde & Trousdale 2025; Ungerer & Hartmann 2024), particularly in studies of language change from a Diachronic Construction Grammar perspective (e.g. Eitelmann & Haumann 2022; Norde & Trousdale 2023; Trousdale & Norde 2025). Nevertheless, the term 'extravagance' is open to interpretation and strikingly underoperationalised (Ungerer & Hartmann 2020). Whilst current research focuses on diachronic aspects, the present project aims to rethink extravagance as a synchronic phenomenon influenced by structural, cognitive and communicative factors. This reconceptualisation requires us to consider the complexity of the mechanisms studied and address the empirical implications by employing a combination of methods focusing on these structural, cognitive and communicative features. This approach enables us to capture the synchronic range of extravagance and may also assist in the comprehension of diachronic processes. The talk presents the current state of the project by proposing a usage-based construction grammar model of synchronic extravagance which aims to identify more feasible empirical approaches to extravagance.

diskutieren = öffentlicher, erzählen = privater Kommunikationskontext? Profile und Granularität der Indexikalität von Kommunikationsverben in Sprachgebrauch und Sprachwissen

assoz. Prof. Dr. Cordula Meißner; Anna-Lena Randermann; Janina Deilke
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Der Vortrag stellt erste Ergebnisse eines Projekts zur Indexikalität von Kommunikationsverben des Deutschen vor. Im Zentrum stehen die Annahmen gebrauchsbasierter Modelle zur Indexikalität (Schmid 2020, Schmid 2014, Bybee 2010) sowie ihre methodologische Abbildung durch die korpuslinguistische Analyse von Gebrauchsdaten (Stefanowitsch 2011). Angenommen wird, dass indexikalische Assoziationen aus wiederholten Ko-Vorkommen sprachlicher Formen mit situativen Merkmalen entstehen und durch Entrenchment und Schematisierung auf Basis des Inputs sprachliches Wissen hierzu aufgebaut wird (Schmid 2020). Die korpuslinguistische Analyse ermöglicht die Untersuchung sprachlicher Phänomene hinsichtlich ihrer Häufigkeit im natürlichen Sprachgebrauch und könnte so im Sinne der Korpus-als-Input-Perspektive Rückschlüsse auf das Wissen der Sprachgemeinschaft zulassen (Stefanowitsch & Flach 2017, Ellis 2012, Ellis 2017).

Im Projekt wird Indexikalität als Assoziiertheit zu Merkmalen des situativen Kontextes auf inventarsystematischer Ebene am Beispiel des Wortschatzes der Kommunikationsverben (KV) im Deutschen (Harras et al. 2004) betrachtet. Es wird gefragt, inwieweit die mit Hilfe der Korpusanalyse aus Verwendungshäufigkeiten ermittelbaren Indizierungspotenziale (Meißner 2025) mit Assoziationen im Sprachwissen übereinstimmen, und zwar hinsichtlich der Felder von KV mit ähnlichen Indexikalitätsprofilen sowie in Bezug auf die Granularität im Vergleich von Indexikalitätsprofilen des Lexems und seiner grammatischen Formen.

Es wird eine Untersuchung vorgestellt, die diese Frage durch eine Triangulation von Korpusanalyse und Rating- sowie Assoziationsexperimenten zu allen KV-Lexemen und drei ausgewählten grammatischen Formen zu beantworten sucht. Einerseits werden häufigkeitsbasiert Assoziationen der Nutzung von KV mit situativen Kontexten im Gebrauch ermittelt. Dazu werden insgesamt 12 Teilkorpora zu jeweils 100.000 Vollverbbelegen ausgewertet, die schriftlichen und mündlichen Sprachgebrauch in einem Spektrum von Kontexten der privaten, institutionellen und öffentlichen Kommunikation abbilden. Andererseits werden zu dieser Korpusanalyse korrespondierend über umfangreiche Online-Fragebögen Erhebungen zum Sprachwissen durchgeführt. Erhoben werden das Rating der allgemeinen Assoziationsstärke zu bestimmten situativen Kontexten sowie spezifische Assoziationsstärken zu privaten, institutionellen und öffentlichen Kontexten. Ergänzend wird in einer freien Assoziationsaufgabe die erste konkrete assoziierte Verwendungssituation erhoben.

Im Vortrag werden zunächst die für den KV-Wortschatz korpusanalytisch ermittelten Indizierungspotenzialtypen auf der Ebene von Lexem und grammatischer Form vorgestellt. Sodann werden die auf Basis der Ratingprofile bestimmten Indexikalitätstypen präsentiert und schließlich Konvergenzen, Divergenzen und Komplementarität in den Resultaten herausgearbeitet. Die Ergebnisse werden sowohl hinsichtlich ihres Beitrags zur Beschreibung von Indexikalität im gebrauchsbasierten Modell auf inventarsystematischer Ebene als auch in Bezug auf die Frage nach der methodologischen Rolle der Korpusanalyse diskutiert.

Do you like what you see? On the relationship between interactive gaze patterns and stance-taking during joint museum visits

Prof. Geert Brône PhD[1]; Julie Janssens[1]; Dr. Steven Schoonjans[2]
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Context - Cognitive and interactional approaches to language (use) have, in the past decades, presented new insights into the dynamics of stance-taking in interaction. Stance-taking, defined by Du Bois (2007) as a public act of positioning oneself towards an object, person or state of affairs, is viewed as an interactionally negotiated phenomenon (Iwasaki 2022). Recent studies have focused on the multimodal realization of stance, looking at the impact of several semiotic resources (including hand gestures, head movements, facial expressions and eye gaze) as well as their co-occurrence patterns (see AUTHORS 2023, 2025a for overviews).
Focus and research question - In this paper, we explore the complex interface of stance-taking and eye gaze in mobile forms of interaction, with participants engaged in conversation while navigating through space. More specifically, we focus on interactions between pairs of museum visitors during an authentic visit to a museum exhibition. The museum context was chosen because it is likely to trigger rich examples of stance expression and negotiation, centered around the 'predetermined' assessables that constitute an exhibition (i.e. the artworks). The main research question that we address is whether there is a default gaze pattern during assessment sequences, taking into account the potential back and forth between shared gaze (two participants jointly focusing on the artwork to be assessed) and mutual gaze (direct eye contact between the participants before, during or after the assessment sequence). Building on a first exploratory study in a traditional museum exhibition setting, involving primarily 16th-17th century paintings (AUTHORS 2025b), the present study adds a comparative perspective by studying assessment sequences in an exhibition of 21st century abstract art, which may – due to its very nature – require more interpretive effort to be understood and/or appreciated. In other words, we explore the question whether the type of assessable significantly influences the multimodal nature of assessment sequences.
Data – For this study, we use a dataset of authentic museum visits by pairs of participants visiting an exhibition in the Austrian art museum MMKK, focusing on the repertoire of a contemporary Austrian artist (Zenita Komad) using paintings, sculptures and installations as means of artistic expression. Concretely, we collected an audio-visual dataset of dyadic interactions (n=10, 300 minutes), in which all participants wore mobile eye-tracking glasses (Tobii glasses 3), combined with an external camera perspective using a shadowing technique. The combination of these camera systems provides fine-grained gaze information suitable for both quantitative (gaze distributions) and qualitative (sequential micro-analysis) studies.
Results – The results of the exploratory co-occurrence analysis presented in AUTHORS (2025b) showed that there is a strong preference for shared gaze towards the assessable during assessment sequences, with the shared gaze being established before the onset of the assessment. First results of the comparative analysis in the present study partly confirm this default gaze pattern, but at the same time show that there is more mutual gaze between the participants in the exhibition of abstract art, possibly reflecting the joint interpretive work and stronger negotiation of stance towards the assessables.

Prototypical views of the proverb

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For his 1985 paper "Popular views of the proverb", Wolfgang Mieder asked 55 English-speaking informants for a definition of the word 'proverb'. As the shortest common denominator, Mieder (p. 119) proposes "A proverb is a short sentence of wisdom." At the same time, he also notes that the informants' views do not necessarily correspond to how proverbs are usually defined in linguistics. For instance, not all informants mention that a proverb has to be a full sentence (or sentence-like unit), while several informants assume that a proverb by definition has to be figurative. This suggests that 'proverb' is a prototype category (cf. also Norrick 2014). In this talk, we will present two studies aiming to pinpoint this prototype.
The first part of the talk focuses on extended replication of Mieder's study, for which we had 120 German-speaking informants with different degrees of education (30 without college/university education, 30 with college/university education without language as a core area, 30 with college/university education with language as a core area, and 30 professional linguists) fill out a questionnaire in which they had to give a spontaneous definition of the word 'proverb'. We also asked to give five examples of proverbs and judge for six features whether they are necessary for an expression to count as a proverb (consists of an entire sentence, mentions worldly wisdom, contains rhyme, is figurative, etc.). Our results are in line with Mieder's observations in that both the definitions and the examples show that the prototype of the category 'proverb' is centered around three features: proverbs are full sentences with a figurative reading and expressing worldly wisdom. There is, however, a striking difference between the definition attempts and the examples in that consisting of an entire sentence is the least central of the three features in the definitions, but more central than the figurative reading in the examples. We will discuss a few possible explanations, including that there seems to be some confusion among the informants as to what counts as a full sentence.
Obviously, a restriction of this first study is that we can only analyze the examples our informants came up with spontaneously; we cannot exclude that other expressions would be considered as even better representants of the category but that they did not think of them spontaneously. To this end, we will also present a second study for which we asked informants from the same four groups to rate expressions with regard to whether they are typical proverbs or not. The expressions were chosen in such a way as to be able to judge the role of the three central features and rhyme (not a central feature, but still repeatedly mentioned in the definitions in the first study) for the typicality of a proverb. In this way, this second study allows us to verify and refine the prototype as defined in the first study.

Investigating the use of the conjunction and in English prenominal adjective sequences

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This study addresses the question of which variables underlie the choice to realize or omit and in English prenominal adjective sequences, see e.g., (1) and (2) below. We report the results of a multifactorial corpus-linguistic analysis testing the claim that this case of variation is driven by both structural-semantic as well as language processing constraints.

(1) A big red ribbon

(2) A big and red ribbon

(3) A (peaceful (political life)).

In the research literature, the use of the coordinating conjunction and is commonly viewed as marking a structural-semantic distinction. Sequences with and are viewed as paratactic constructions in which both adjectives make an "independent attribution of qualities" and that are "of the same kind", typically belonging to the same functional class (Vandelanotte 2002). In contrast, sequences without coordinator or other separator are viewed as instantiating a hypotactic relationship, as illustrated by the bracketing structure in (3), and typically involve adjectives of different functional classes. However, adjective sequences without a coordinator instantiating a paratactic relationship are commonly used, e.g., example (1) above. We put forth the argument that the choice for/against and is not a purely structural-semantic one, but is also driven by language processing constraints. In particular, we test Rohdenburg's complexity principle, that "in the case of more or less explicit grammatical options, the more explicit one(s) will tend to be favored in cognitively more complex environments." (Rohdenburg 1996: 151). Coordination with and is the more explicit variant and should therefore be preferred in cognitively demanding contexts.

We carried out a multifactorial, corpus-linguistic analysis based on two samples extracted from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (Davies 2014). The samples are a token sample containing 1,000 datapoints of each variant and a type sample that contains all prenominal adjective sequences that occur with and without and in the corpus (n>12,000). As mentioned above, a prediction derived from the structural-semantic account is that the two adjectives combined with and are of the same kind. We tested this claim by coding the semantic classes of the adjectives, as well as measuring their semantic similarity via word embeddings (Günther et al. 2015). Regarding the language processing perspective, a number of variables commonly attributed to impact lexical access were coded, namely length, frequency, concreteness, as well as the semantic and phonological neighborhood density of both adjectives, employing data from the English Lexicon Project (Balota et al. 2007).

A random forest analysis was conducted, showing that variables from both perspectives are statistically significant predictors. Semantically similar adjectives favor sequencing with and, in line with the view of coordination of "the same kind". With regard to the processing-related variables we find that characteristics typically associated with ease/difficulty of retrieval from the mental lexicon yield substantial effects. For example, in case adjectives are long and/or infrequent, the probability to overtly realize and increases. This is in line with the predictions of the complexity principle. Overall, the results support the interpretation that the phenomenon investigated is co-determined by both semantic-structural considerations as well as processing constraints.

The Network of Hungarian Mental Verbs - A Corpus-Driven Analysis of the Semantic Properties of Mental Verb Categories

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Mental verbs are generally understood as verbs referring to perception, emotion, and cognition. Nonetheless, the definition of mental verbs, the labels used for their categories, and the identification of their constituent elements can vary considerably across the international literature (cf. Croft 1993; Biber, Conrad & Leech 2002; Israel 2008) and the Hungarian literature (cf. Tolcsvai Nagy 2017; Kugler 2024). In Hungarian cognitive semantic research, mental verbs are commonly discussed under various labels, whereas Croft's (1993) tripartite classification is rarely applied in full. Although text-based analyses of mental verbs are available (cf. Pavlenko & Suetina 2024; Heller 2024), there is still a need for a corpus-based study addressing the specific semantic properties of these verbs.
This presentation focuses on a segment of my ongoing doctoral research on Hungarian mental verbs, conducted on the Corpus of Hungarian Lyrical Poetry (Horváth et al. 2025). Although the corpus is relatively small, comprising approximately 170, 000 tokens, the inclusion of fictional apostrophe (cf. Tátrai 2024) ensures a significant representation of mental verbs. Using MAXQDA software, the study aims to (i) evaluate the efficiency of Croft's tripartite classification model; (ii) explore the possible semantic network of mental verbs in relation to other verb categories; and (iii) compile items that exemplify inchoative mental verbs (cf. Croft 1993).
For this study, the annotation of mental verbs was carried out on the Corpus of Hungarian Lyrical Poetry by taking into account Croft's categories, the contextual meaning of each verb, and, in ambiguous cases, definitions from the Comprehensive Dictionary of Hungarian and the Hungarian Dictionary. The annotation process involved two annotators. The annotation system was based on preliminary annotations and used Croft's tripartite categories, the inchoative category, and an additional "other" category for ambiguous items. Approximately, counting with duplums, 5900 mental verbs were annotated and around 6500 counting the perception, cognition, and emotion.
The findings indicate that while the prototypical categories of perception, emotion, and cognition include easily identifiable elements, peripheral items are not readily associated with the primary categories. Instead, they tend to form networks with other semantic verb categories, such as verb.motion and verb.communication (cf. WordNet, Fellbaum 1998). This observation is further supported by the annotators' comments on additional categories, which reflect a centre-periphery dynamic within the pragmatic structure of these verbs.
By examining the semantic properties of Hungarian mental verbs and gathering verbs relevant to this category, this work contributes to a re-evaluation of how mental verbs are classified and conceptualized in Hungarian scholarship.

Deconstructing Retroactive Gerund Constructions: What is an 'Implicit Argument'?

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[Background] The realization of implicit arguments in English, such as middle constructions (e.g., Bureaucrats bribe easily.), has long been a central issue in generative syntax (Keyser & Roeper 1984; Williams 1987). While cognitive linguistics has offered alternative accounts via figure/ground asymmetry (Langacker 2002) or subjective construal (Yoshimura 2020), “retroactive gerunds” of evaluative verbs (deserve and merit), where an active V-ING form conveys a passive meaning (e.g., Several other points deserve mentioning.), remain under-researched. Syntactic accounts typically rely on NP-movement (Hantson 1984) or Ā-movement (Safir 1991) to explain how the gerundive object moves to the matrix subject. However, these derivational rules face empirical challenges: (i) the stative verbs occur in this construction, and (ii) the gerund retains its own direct object, which should theoretically be blocked by the syntactic trace.
[Research questions] How are gerundive complements of deserve and merit distributed in actual usage? What is the cognitive reality of the “retroactive” reading in these constructions? [Method] A total 235 instances of the evaluative verbs taking gerundive complements were extracted from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), whether the complements are interpreted as retroactive or not. The analysis focuses on the semantic properties of the matrix subject and its alignment with the gerund’s logical subject. [Results] These two verbs display distinct constructional distributions. While deserve typically exhibits three patterns–agentive, patientive, and property-reading–merit maintains a consistent configuration across both active/passive readings. In merit construction, the matrix subject does not function as the gerund’s logical subject; instead, the agent is anchored to the conceptualizer’s perspective. Thus, merit does not specifically select for a “passive” gerund; rather, the implied agent is consistently the conceptualizer, making the “retroactive” reading an epi-phenomenon arising only when the clausal subject corresponds to the gerund’s patient. By contrast, deserve with inanimate subjects is motivated by a subjective construal analogous to middles, in that the usage profiles an inherent property of the subject that facilitates the process denoted by the gerund.
This study demonstrates that the syntactic notion of “implicit arguments” is inadequate for retroactive gerunds. Instead, the constructions can be better captured through the integration of lexical-constructional meanings, where the “passive-like” sense results from cognitive profiling and subjective construal rather than abstract syntactic derivation.

Little Agents of Big Language Change

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There are two general views on the connection between language acquisition and language change. Functional usage-based theories usually argue against children as possible agents of phonological and morphosyntactic changes [1]. By contrast, formal rule-based accounts generally assume that incrementation of new variants in linguistic community can be kicked off by the acquisition process [2, 3]. A controversial point is whether or not children converge on the parental grammar after a period of overgeneralisation. While usage-based researchers claim that early innovations are fully adjusted to the adult model before children reach adolescence [4, 5, 6], acquisition-based studies argue that though children do retract after overgeneralisation, this retraction still leaves them ahead of the input, and that it is the uncorrected input-divergences that socially motivated incrementation later draws on [7, 8, 9]. In this study, based on probabilistic language modelling, we argue that language change can be triggered by language learning (which does not preclude the possibility of life-long linguistic innovation).

Using extensive corpus data of spontaneous child speech (CHILDES [10]; 34 children; 6,252 utterances) and a Bayesian model of collostructional analysis, we investigated how children learn construction-verb relations during the acquisition of two English future-tense constructions: GOING.TO and WILL. The model estimated, for an utterance U encountered in child speech at time T, two probabilities that a lexical item N will be used in either of these constructions: one conditional on the current state of the child grammar C and another conditional on the current state of the parental grammar P (inferred from the observed outputs these grammars produced):

(1) P(utterance UT = construction A | word = N, grammar = C{UChild,1,..,UChild,T-1}),

(2) P(utterance UT = construction A | word = N, grammar = P{UParents,1,..,UParents,T-1}).

To account for the process of choosing one between these options, we conceptualised the choice of grammar on which to model the respective utterance as an action and assigned utility values to the outcomes. The logic is that at the earlier stages of language acquisition, children may want to reproduce their parents' linguistic habits, but in the process of establishing their own collostructional preferences they eventually reach the point where the parental grammar becomes less important. Both probabilities and utilities were estimated from data.

The results reveal that the acquisition of English future tense includes the following developmental stages: (i) children learn which words their parents preferably use in certain constructions and reproduce these patterns, (ii) children introduce some innovations into the acquired system, and (iii) once their own preferences are established, children become less sensitive to the input from child-directed speech; at the same time, as the new system grows more stable and self-contained, further innovations become less likely, albeit not impossible. Crucially, we observe that after the period of overregularization and retraction, the next-generation grammars still remain not fully adjusted to the grammars of the previous generation. The model predicts that as children reach adolescence, there is, on average, a 10 % chance they will select a different alternating construction than their caregivers.

One Frame, Many Uses: Pragmatic Meaning Variation in German and Chinese Gratitude Constructions

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Construction Grammar (CxG) has traditionally excelled at modeling stable form–meaning pairings, yet it still lacks a fully systematic account of how pragmatic meaning shifts emerge from entrenched constructions in context (e.g., Leclercq 2020; Nikiforidou 2009; Cappelle 2017; Finkbeiner 2019). This paper addresses the semantic–pragmatic interface in CxG by examining two high-frequency, structurally parallel gratitude constructions: German "Danke für + X" and Chinese "Xie Xie + X". Drawing on a corpus-based contrastive design, the study investigates how this conventional politeness formulas instantiate a shared Gratitude Frame while also serving as pragmatically flexible resources for stance, interaction management, mitigation, and (less frequently) ironic reversal.

The German dataset comprises 614 analyzable tokens retrieved from the DWDS Die Zeit corpus (journalistic texts, 1946–2024) using transparent query patterns capturing orthographic variants (Danke für, Danke fürs), with exclusion rules to remove false positives (e.g., dafür). The Chinese dataset is based on the BCC newspaper subcorpus, where an initial keyword search for Xie Xie yielded 6289 concordance lines; after systematic cleaning and construction-based segmentation, including both adjacent and non-adjacent complements where a clear dependency is recoverable, the final sample contains 2460 analyzable tokens. All tokens were manually coded for pragmatic function using a shared five-way taxonomy to maximize cross-linguistic comparability.

The analysis reveals robust commonalities in frame-general meaning (thanking for help, support, information, time, and interpersonal virtues), but also clear language-specific preferences. German strongly favors explicit specification of the gratitude object via determiner-rich noun phrases and evaluative modifiers, and it productively exploits negative or politically charged fillers for pragmatic reversal (e.g., Danke für nichts). Chinese, by contrast, more often foregrounds the recipient through pronouns and especially collective address forms, producing a strong newspaper-specific profile of public-oriented thanking. Quantitatively, pragmatic inversions are much rarer in Chinese (0.2%) than in German (7.5%), suggesting that ironic/critical "thanks" are less conventionalized or less acceptable in formal written Chinese media discourse.

To capture these patterns theoretically, the paper proposes a Usage Scenario Model integrating Frame Semantics with CxG. The model distinguishes frame-general meaning (stable core frame elements anchoring constructional identity) from frame-specific scenarios, where peripheral frame elements and discourse cues systematically recalibrate illocutionary force (e.g., stance-taking, mitigation, topic closure, refusal, or irony). The findings demonstrate that gratitude constructions form a gradient continuum between semantic stability and pragmatic variability and illustrate how a frame-based, usage-oriented approach can provide a replicable method for contrastive pragmatic construction research.

Event construals and expression of agents in German political tweets

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Aims of the study

As a core concept in Cognitive Linguistics, construal refers to the way a speaker conceptualizes and describes a situation (Croft & Cruse, 2004). This study focuses on the conceptualization of events (or more precisely, eventualities, an umbrella term for events, processes and states proposed by Bach [1981]), which can be construed as agentive or non-agentive, whereby agents are understood as volitional participants and/or causes (cf. Dowty, 1991). Moreover, the agents can be explicitly expressed or omitted due to demotion strategies or clause deranking. Previous research provides examples of how speakers make systematic use of such different coding strategies: for instance, Henley, Miller & Beazley (1995) show that passive language in news media is significantly more frequent with verbs describing sexual violence compared to control verbs. Importantly, the cognitive processing of events can be affected by such linguistic choices (Faucey & Boroditsky, 2010). The use of different construals is particularly relevant in political discourse, where political actors' conceptualizations of events play a central role in persuasion (Hart, 2014). Our study aims to compare agentivity construals and expression of agents in political X (formerly Twitter) posts by the five major political parties in the German federal parliament (Bundestag).

Data and method

Our data covers the period from January 2025 to July 2025 which includes the months before and after the 2025 German federal election and therefore marks an eventful political time for the country. We collected 70 posts per party. Events and agents are complex categories that have a prototype structure (Lakoff, 1977). Using detailed coding guidelines (Author, 2025), which account for both core and more peripheral cases, we identified all events in the posts, which were then coded for whether they were agentive and whether the agent was explicitly mentioned. In addition, we also annotated the syntactic constructions expressing the events, as well as the tense, agent's person, number, and other properties. To answer the research questions, we fitted mixed-effects logistic regression models with parties as fixed effects and tweets as random intercepts. Agentivity and the agent's expression were treated as the response variables. Other contextual variables were controlled for. To capture event semantics of single-word events, we employed fastText word embeddings (Grave et al., 2018) and analysed their association with agentivity by using the embeddings as predictors in a conditional inference tree. The distributional information was also used to cluster events to facilitate the interpretation of the results.

Preliminary results

Our preliminary analyses show significant differences between parties. In particular, tweets by the Christian Democrats (CDU) contain more agentive events than those of the Green Party (die Grünen), followed by the Left (die Linke). At the same time, the agentive events in the posts by the Alternative for Germany (AfD) have the highest ratio of explicit agents compared to the other parties. To interpret these results, we examine the specific constructions used in the tweets, and compare the semantic classes of agentive and non-agentive events and their rhetorical function in the political discourse of each party.

The German recipient passive in synchrony and diachrony

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The present paper investigates the grammaticalisation of the so-called recipient (or 'dative') passive (Leirbukt 1997; Askedal 2005; Lenz 2013) in different varieties of German. The recipient passive has emerged from a reanalysis of monotransitive active constructions with the meaning 'x receive y' (primary predication) that are augmented with a participial object complement (secondary predication). On the passive analysis, the secondary predication is foregrounded as primary: the participle is interpreted as the lexical main verb of the clause, and the formerly primary 'receive'-predicate undergoes auxiliation. The ambiguity between the predicative and the passive reading of the participle is exemplified in (1). By contrast, if there is no nominal direct object to which the participle could attach (cf. (2)), or if such a reading is ruled out on semantic grounds (cf. (3)), the construction can only be interpreted as passive:

(1) Zu Teeniezeiten hatte ich zwei Paar, die ich bis zum Tod abgelaufen habe. Eins habe ich von meiner Mutter geschenkt bekommen, das andere von meinem Taschengeld bezahlt.

'As a teen, I had two pairs that I wore to death. One I had received from my mother as a present, the other I had bought from my pocket money.' [DECOW16B]

(2) Wenn man von klein auf eingetrichtert bekommt, dass die eigene Existenz schädlich für den Planeten ist, dann glaubt man es irgendwann.

'If you're told from childhood that your own existence is harmful to the planet, you'll eventually believe it.' [DECOW16B]

(3) Die vierzehn Jahre alte Ajla aus Sarejevo hat in der Nacht zum Montag in der Göttinger Universitätsklinik eine fremde Leber eingepflanzt bekommen.

'Fourteen-year-old Ajla from Sarajevo received a liver transplant at Göttingen University Hospital Sunday night.' [DeReKo]

The objective of our study is to measure and compare the relative degree of grammaticalisation that the recipient passive has attained in different diachronic stages and synchronic varieties of German. Our quantification builds on Himmelmann's (2004) understanding of "grammaticization as context expansion" and Diewald's (2002) notion of "isolating contexts" for the new analysis as a particularly crucial stage within the expansion process: specifically, we assume that (i) the construction progressively spreads to new syntactic and semantic environments, thereby increasing in overall usage frequency over time, and (ii) this overall increase involves a growing proportion of unambiguously reanalysed instances that can only be interpreted as passives.

We test these predictions in a corpus study of the German recipient passive in different synchronic (FOLK, DECOW, DeReKo) und diachronic corpora (DTA). In this, we seek to retrace the diachronic development of the construction through time as well as its synchronic diffusion across more vs. less conservative varieties (with a correspondingly lower vs. higher expected degree of grammaticalisation, viz. written standard, informal web forum discussions and spontaneous conversation). Special attention is paid to the extension of the semantic source scenario RECEIVING to ever less similar types of being affected by directed action, and how this gradience in the data can be operationalised.

“You’re such a teacher” - evaluation encoded in grammatical constructions?

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One major phenomenon in construction grammar is coercion, an event in which constructional meaning overrides denotational meaning (cf. Taylor 2012, Hilpert 2014, Goldberg 2019). This phenomenon can inform other branches of linguistics, such as im/politeness studies, where there has been debate regarding the notion of impoliteness being inherent in linguistic forms. Most arguments seem to oppose the view that impoliteness can be inherent in linguistic features, citing the importance of contextual factors (e.g., Fraser & Nolen 1981, Locher & Watts 2005). However, there is evidence that some expressions have a stable association with impoliteness effects – i.e., they are entrenched – and may cause negative evaluation in the hearer, irrespective of a particular social context (e.g., Culpeper’s 2011 conventionalised impoliteness formulae). We propose that particular constructions, specifically the construction embedded in the example You are [such a [noun]], and its equivalents in German and Dutch, may carry relatively stable associations with negative evaluative meaning. We thus apply a construction grammar approach to an im/politeness research question.

When we encounter an example of You are such a [X], the noun X is very likely an epithet (see, e.g., Bolinger 1972, Taylor 2012). This is supported by corpus evidence, for instance, in the Corpus of Contemporary American English (cf. Queisser 2024). Taylor (2012) identifies distributional peculiarities of epithets and points out that the sentence You are such an idiot is acceptable, while You are such an architect is marked. As constructions may cause coercion effects, the neutral noun architect may even acquire a negative connotation due to its occurrence in this particular construction. We argue that this is due to the particle such occurring in the form, and propose an epithet construction with the formal representation of [such + indefinite article + nominal], which occurs predominantly, but not exclusively, in predicative contexts in which the subject is a personal pronoun: [PRON BE such ART N].

To test our theory, we conducted a series of rating surveys in English and German, investigating coercion effects for neutral nouns like architect occurring in the construction (cf. Queisser & Pleyer 2025). We found statistically highly significant evidence in support of our theory. In all studies, informants rated example sentences overall more negatively when they contained such (so in the German condition). Interestingly, an increase in positive ratings of individual neutral nouns was also observed, suggesting an interaction between lexical and constructional meaning as well as a broader evaluative effect. The studies were conducted with first, second, and third person pronouns in the subject slot, and ratings also varied according to the subject pronoun used. For this talk, we will extend our focus and conduct additional studies in Dutch. The construction has already been described (see Ghesquière & Van de Velde 2011). We hypothesize that Dutch zulk/zo’n will show coercion effects similar to those found for English such and German so. As the observed effect was much stronger for German than for English, further exploring the phenomenon across language boundaries is a logical next step.

Übersetzen als kognitive Rekonstruktion_Strategien für politische Metaphern im Chinesisch-Deutschen

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Die vorliegende Studie untersucht die Übersetzung strategisch eingesetzter metaphorischer Ausdrücke im chinesischen politischen Diskurs am Beispiel des 14. Fünfjahresplans und dessen offizieller deutscher Version. Politische Metaphern dienen als zentrale kognitiv-diskursive Werkzeuge zur Veranschaulichung abstrakter Konzepte, zur Übermittlung ideologischer Positionen und zur persuasiven Lenkung (s. Schwarz-Friesel 2013, 2015; Skirl/Schwarz-Friesel 2013). Deren interkulturelle Translation stellt eine besondere Herausforderung dar, da sie nicht nur den sprachlichen Ausdruck, sondern auch kulturspezifische Konzeptualisierungen und intentionale kommunikative Funktionen übertragen muss.
Der theoretische Rahmen der Arbeit integriert die Kritische Kognitive Linguistik (KKL) und das translationsorientierte PEIR-Modell (Political Equivalence + Image Re-presentation). Aus KKL-Perspektive werden Metaphern als sprachliche Ausdrücke verstanden, die auf spezifischen Konzeptualisierungsprozessen basieren. Diese Sichtweise erlaubt es, zwischen konventionalisierten und neuartigen Metaphern zu unterscheiden und deren strategischen Einsatz im politischen Diskurs zu analysieren. Das PEIR-Modell (Yang & Zhao, 2020) operationalisiert diese Erkenntnisse für die Übersetzungspraxis. Sein Kernprinzip ist die politische Äquivalenz, d.h. die getreue Wiedergabe der politischen Kernbotschaft und -wirkung. Als zentrale Strategie zur Zielerreichung dient die Bildreproduktion (Image Re-presentation), also der gekonnte Umgang mit den metaphorischen Bildern der Ausgangssprache im Zielkulturkontext.
Auf der Grundlage einer qualitativen Analyse eines parallelisierten Textkorpus identifiziert und systematisiert die Studie die angewandten Übersetzungsverfahren. Es zeigt sich, dass für kulturübergreifend gut verständliche, konventionalisierte Metaphern häufig die Bilderhaltung (z.B. „harte Technologie“, „Wasserturm“) gewählt wird. Bei kulturspezifischeren oder deliberaten Metaphern kommen flexible Strategien zum Einsatz: die Bildkonversion (Ersatz durch ein funktional äquivalentes Zielkulturbild), die Bilderergänzung (durch erklärende Zusatzinfomartionen) oder, bei unüberbrückbaren kulturellen Diskrepanzen, der Bildverzichtigung zugunsten einer expliziten Sinnwiedergabe.
Die Studie kommt zu dem Schluss, dass die Übersetzung politischer Metaphern aus KKL-Perspektive ein aktiver Prozess der kognitiven Rekonstruktion ist. Der Übersetzer handelt als kultureller Mediator, der die intentionalen Konzeptualisierungen und kommunikativen Ziele des Ausgangstextes decodiert und unter Ausnutzung geteilter kognitiver Grundlagen sowie unter genauer Abwägung des zielkulturellen Kontexts eine funktional und politisch äquivalente Repräsentation konstruiert. Die Arbeit leistet somit einen Beitrag zur theoretischen Fundierung einer kognitionsbasierten Translationswissenschaft und bietet praxisrelevante Einblicke für die effektive internationale Vermittlung chinesischer politischer Konzepte.

Frequency effects on the prosodic production of discourse marker sequences

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It has been established that discourse markers not only frequently co-occur (e.g. Schiffrin 1987, Traugott 2022) but that co-ocurrence patterns are an important indicator of a discourse marker's function (Aijmer 2002) and are constrained by certain rules (Oates 2000, Koops & Lohmann 2013). For example, well and I think commonly co-occur as well, I think and not I think, well. The importance of prosody for both sequencing and function of pragmatic markers has also been previous been remarked upon, i.e., functionally related pragmatic markers tend to be produced in one prosodic phrase more often than those that are functionally distinct or those whose co-occurence is based on self-correction rather than pre-planning (Koops & Lohmann 2013).

What has so far not been investigated in detail is how frequency of co-occurence and prosodic production interact for discourse marker sequences. In grammaticalization research, frequency of use has not only been linked to phonetic erosion in general (e.g., Bybee et al. 1994, Heine & Kuteva 2007) but also to coalescence of commonly co-occuring elements (Lehmann 2015). Since discourse markers arise from grammaticalization-like processes, they experience on the one hand erosion of word boundaries (Zeschel et al. 2025), deaccentuation to omission of elements (Bybee et al. 1994, Dehé & Stathi 2016) and a general increase of internal syntagmatic bonds (Schmid 2020). On the other hand, a key finding in research on pragmaticalization, i.e., the emergence of pragmatic elements, has been that pragmatic markers gain prosodic independence as part of their development (Mrocyznski 2012, 2024) and therefore show a decrease in external syntagmatic bonds (Schmid 2020). Pragmatic markers become more positionally mobile and usually form separate prosodic units in the left and right peripheries of clauses (Brinton 2017). While it is the case that the elements within discourse marker sequences may be produced as separate prosodic units, discourse marker sequences are also produced a single prosodic unit (Koops & Lohmann 2013).

The present study investigates if more frequent sequences are more often produced as a single prosodic unit than less frequent sequences, and if more frequent sequences experience higher degree of internal reduction. The corpus for this study currently comprises YouTube videos and Twitch live streams by speakers of American English. The target sequences of this study will be limited to combinations with monosyllabic pragmatic markers as the first element and the frequent comment clause I think as a second element. But I think, yeah I think, so I think will serve as examples for highly frequent sequences and honestly I think, no I think and well I think as medium to low frequent sequences. The working hypothesis is that more frequent sequences more likely to be produced as a single tone unit and that the elements within them are more reduced than in less frequent sequences. Sound durations within the sequences relative to sound duration of the same elements produced in isolation will serve as a measurement of phonetic reduction.

How central are nonverbal features of multimodal constructions really? (Non-)Evidence from an eye-tracking experiment.

Dr. Claudia Lehmann
RWTH Aachen

Multimodality has become an established topic in usage-based Construction Grammar. Recent work argues that some form–meaning pairings may include verbal as well as para- or non-verbal elements and thus qualify as multimodal constructions (Nikiforidou & Fried 2025; Zima 2025). While frequency-based approaches focus on the recurrence of such pairings, meaning-centered approaches assign a central role to the meaning contribution of nonverbal elements. Despite these advances, the cognitive reality of multimodal constructions remains contested (Schoonjans 2017).

The present paper contributes to the growing body of research in multimodal construction grammar by reporting an eye-tracking study on the multimodal Tell me about it (TMAI) constructions. Lehmann (2025) has shown that stance-related uses of TMAI, in contrast to the requesting uses of TMAI, frequently co-occur with raised eyebrows, a smile, a head movement, gaze aversion and a slower tempo. The present study tests whether hearers actively resort to such features when interpreting TMAI. The stimuli for the experiment were short video snippets from American television involving speakers uttering TMAI, which were manipulated as follows:

Condition 1: TMAI was presented in its sequential context.
Condition 2: TMAI was presented without any sequential context.
Condition 3: TMAI was presented without sequential context and without sound.

Participants (N = 18) watched the videos and indicated whether they interpreted TMAI as requesting or stance-related, while their gaze behavior was recorded. It was hypothesized that reliance on facial regions (eyebrows, eyes, mouth), as indicated by increased gaze to these regions, would increase as contextual and acoustic cues are removed: minimal in the full-context condition, moderate when only visual and acoustic information is available, and strongest when neither sequential nor acoustic information is provided in addition to the visual information.

A preliminary exploration of the results shows that participants perform above chance in choosing an interpretation in all three conditions. However, independent of the condition, participants rarely look at the eyebrow or eye region and only occasionally look at the mouth region of the speaker's face. In addition, informal conversations after the study revealed that only a few participants reported having relied on resources such as facial gestures to arrive at an interpretation. These findings suggest that while multimodal associations may be part of constructional representations, nonverbal features appear to have limited perceptual salience and may not be actively recruited—or consciously accessible—during online interpretation by all speakers.

Conceptual metaphors involving body parts in Taruma (South America): a descriptive study

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Many conceptual metaphors originate directly or indirectly from bodily experience (see Sullivan 2017, Gibbs 2017). However, even though having a body is a shared human experience everywhere, metaphors involving the human body are not universal across all languages (see, e.g., Yu 2007, Ibarretxe-Antuñano 2013, Gibbs 2017). Rather, research on Basque, Mandarin Chinese and Australian Indigenous languages indicates that body metaphors are often culturally specific to some extent (see Ibarretxe-Antuñano 2013, Yu 2007, Evans & Wilkins 2000). This shows the importance both of including underrepresented languages in cognitive linguistic research and of integrating their respective cultural context into the analyses (see also Rice 2017 for an overview of the contributions of Indigenous language research to the field of cognitive linguistics). Conceptual metaphors involving body part vocabulary are also found in Taruma, a highly endangered and as of yet undescribed Indigenous language of Guyana (see Eberhard et al. 2025): examples include doya ada ‘house head’, i.e., ‘roof’, or achirahĩ ‘think’ being derived from achi ‘eye’. Following Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson 1980), these can be analyzed as A HOUSE IS A BODY and as VISUAL PERCEPTION IS COGNITION, respectively. The study proposed here is a qualitative exploration of conceptual metaphors in Taruma compounds, idioms and lexical items derived from body part terms. The aim is to categorize the semantic domains that feature in body part metaphors, and to provide some socio-cultural context for these mappings. The data for this research stems from my fieldwork with the Taruma, which included word list elicitation as well as recordings of culturally significant topics. The vocabulary elicitation was based on the Intercontinental Dictionary Series, which includes 22 semantic domains (Key & Comrie 2023). The lexical items were then entered into a FLEx database (SIL International 2025), which currently comprises approximately 950 entries, in preparation for a Taruma dictionary. Despite the comparatively low number of lexical items, the variety of semantic domains included in the data nevertheless makes it possible to show tendencies regarding conceptual metaphors in body part vocabulary: in compounds, the domains appearing most frequently relate to the natural world, such as plants or landscape features, and to items from everyday life, such as tools. In idioms and derived words, the body serves as source for emotions and cognition. This shows that in Taruma, the human body constitutes a central source domain used to make sense of the environment, both natural and man-made, while also being used to form words for cognitive processes like thinking. While this reflects tendencies common in many languages (see, e.g., Tjuka 2024 for a systematic analysis of body-object colexifications in 396 language varieties), the exact mappings in Taruma are also influenced by sociolinguistic and historical factors, such as the speakers’ Taruma-Wapichan bilingualism, as some of the compounds may be calqued from Wapichan.

Tracing Passivisability: Conceptual Foundations of the German werden-Passive

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This study investigates the restrictions on German werden-passives by tracing them back to their underlying semantic and conceptual properties. Corpus analyses of 432 verbs—including borderline and supposedly non-passivizable verbs—show that passivizability is not determined by a single condition, but emerges from a combination of verb-semantic features and argument-structure properties, with a subject argument exhibiting control as the primary requirement. Crucially, semantic conditions are further grounded in the force-dynamic profile of the construction, integrating passive constructions with and without a subject into a coherent explanatory model and showing that only verbs that conceptually profile an energy transfer at its maximum extent are passivizable. The findings provide a concise account of passivization restrictions and highlight the structural cohesion of passive constructions.

Make patterns great again: Politische Slogans aus konstruktionsgrammatischer Sicht[1]

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Abstract: An der Schnittstelle von Konstruktionsgrammatik und Phraseologie untersucht dieser Beitrag geflügelte Worte aus der Politik bzw. weit verbreitete politische Slogans, die sich zu produktiven Patterns für die Produktion neuer Instanzen entwickelt haben.
Im Bereich der Politolinguistik wurde das Thema politischer Slogans bereits mehrfach behandelt (Elspaß 2007). Dabei herrscht kein Konsens darüber, ob Slogans als formulaic text patterns, Phrasemkonstruktionen, geflügelte Worte oder – im Sinne der kognitiven Linguistik – als Frames aufzufassen sind (Behrens 2001; Lüger 1999; Klein 1998; Steyer 2014). Ausgehend von der theoretischen Unterscheidung zwischen Mustern, deren lexikalische Leerstellen regelmäßig und variabel neu besetzt werden, und Phrasemen, die lediglich okkasionell modifiziert werden, soll die Produktivität politischer Slogans anhand der Slotfiller korpusgestützt (SketchEngine) und kontrastiv (Englisch, Deutsch, Spanisch, Italienisch) analysiert werden. Die zentrale Frage aus theoretischer Perspektive ist, welche Faktoren (z.B. Gebrauchsfrequenz, Salienz, Variabilität, Extravaganz) den Übergang von festen Phrasemen zu abstrakten, produktiven Konstruktionen begünstigen, während der Fokus der vergleichenden Analyse auf der Veränderung der semantischen Bedingungen sowie auf den unterschiedlichen Gebrauchskontexten liegt.
Als Fallstudie dient die Konstruktion [make X great again]. Die Korpusanalyse zeigt, dass die Konstruktion hochgradig produktiv ist, eine Vielzahl von Slotfillern aufweist und die Bildung strukturell sprachspezifischer Patterns getriggert hat (z. B. dt. [mach X wieder Y] vs. it. [rendiamo di nuovo grande X] und sp. [que X vuelva a ser Y]). Zudem lassen sich basierend auf dem englischen Schema auch kreativere Instanziierungen wie make America lasagna-addicted again, sowie die Entstehung weiterer Mikrokonstruktionen feststellen, etwa in Form von Substantivierungen wie z. B. [V el make great again], favorece el make great again, [S del make great again], nel celebre discorso inaugurale che sancì la politica del Make America Great Again; [Das Make America Great Again V], Das „Make America Great Again" trifft einen Nerv.
Schlagwörter: Konstruktionsgrammatik, Slogans, Produktivität, Modifikation, Phraseologie.

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Cognition, Blending and Evolution of Conspiracy Theories

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This paper applies methods of Cognitive Linguistic Analysis, specifically Blending Theory and Conceptual Evolution Theory to "Conspiracy Theories" (CTs). First, I outline the conceptual elements of CTs and their function as building blocks for a narratively presented pseudo-argument. Instead of a pragmatic/logical progress from premises to conclusion, CTs project a figurative conspiracy story onto a crisis or catastrophe, which they suspect to be 'covered up' by official or 'mainstream' discourse.

Although the two basic elements of CTs (i.e. the crisis account and the conspiracy backstory) are shrouded in speculation, they are presented so as to confirm each other, thus providing a seemingly perfect explanation of the crisis and its preferred solution. Blending analysis shows how an integration of diverse input CTs produces emergent blended spaces as well as action scenarios that motivate believers to engage in political activism. As an example, I analyse the integration of logically incongruous mental spaces in the COVID-19-related CTs, on the basis of a corpus of English (US American and British) and German media data. In particular, I show that the CTs' narrative logic – or rather, coherence – demands the filling of a 'traitor' slot, irrespective of evidence or plausibility.

Conceptual evolution theory highlights CTs' adaptive potential to seemingly 'fit' new cultural environments and circumstances. Building on the above examples of COVID-19 CTs, I analyse a special case of their adaptation to the German political context, i.e. the use of these CTs by right-wing parties and extremist groups (AfD, Reichsbürger) as 'proof' for another set of nationalist CTs about Germany's alleged "enslavement" by a "COVID-dictatorship". Although the various input CTs are logically and historically unrelated, they were successfully integrated by CT propagators into a conceptual scenario that motivated parts of these groups to attempt the "storming" of the parliament to start a popular uprising against the perceived traitor government.

This astounding, if short-lived, success of a blending of multiple CTs in triggering violent political activism illustrates the importance of their adaptability to diverse cultural and historical environments, and it throws up the question of how they can be countered in public discourse, beyond the heuristic target of content-oriented "fact-checking". It seems necessary to develop a holistic cognitive approach that is able to deconstruct the apparent narrative coherence of CTs and identify the conditions for their construal into action-leading and identity-building scenarios in new cultural environments.

A cognitive-linguistic analysis of multimodal metaphor and metonymy in Iranian death announcement posters

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This study employs the cognitive-linguistic paradigm to investigate the use of multimodal metaphor and metonymy in death announcement posters across Iran. The dataset comprises 1000 posters collected from diverse urban and regional centers throughout the country, gathered over a 12-month period from June 2024 to June 2025. The selection reflects the sociocultural and geographical diversity of Iran, ensuring a representative sample of contemporary commemorative practices. To identify and analyze verbal and visual metaphors and metonymies, the study applies Forceville's (2002, 2005) framework for visual metaphor analysis in conjunction with the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) developed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007). The analytical framework is grounded in a revised version of Max Black's (1979) interaction theory of metaphor, enriched by insights from Forcevilles's (1994, 1996, 2002, 2005, 2008) contributions to multimodal metaphor theory, particularly in the context of visual and embodied meaning-making.

The research addresses two central questions:

1. How do multimodal metaphor and metonymy interact in the construction of meaning?
2. How does this interaction contribute significance of death announcement posters in the Iranian cultural context?

The analysis of the data reveals that key conceptual metaphors- such as DEATH IS GOD'S MERCI, DEATH IS A JOURNEY, DEATH IS A FLIGHT, and DEATH IS A SUNSET- are systematically realized through the interplay of textual and visual elements. These conceptual mappings are expressed through symbolic imagery (e.g. open skies, ascending birds, fading light), religious inscriptions, typographic choices and spatial composition. Crucially, the verbal and visual modes are not independent, rather, they function interdependently, with each reinforcing and co-constructing the other to produce layered, culturally resonant meaning. This study demonstrates how cognitive linguistic tools can illuminate the deep conceptual structures underlying everyday visual communication, particularly in culturally and emotionally charged genres such as death announcements.

What is so hard about abstract words, anyways? A neuromechanistic explanation using brain-constrained neural network models

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It is well known that young infants first learn words with concrete meaning, whereas abstract ones are typically acquired later(1). To obtain clues about the underlying causes and mechanisms, a brain-constrained neural network model with spiking neurons and Hebbian learning was trained on instances of concrete and abstract concepts(2,3). Before word learning, concrete and abstract concept formation was simulated based on the similarity structure of objects, actions and scenes exemplifying instances of the concept. Subsequently, conceptual instances were co-presented with word forms to establish semantic links and direct grounding of symbols in the world. Concrete concepts were operationalized as visual and motor spiking patterns in which different instances shared criterial feature neurons. For abstract concepts, visual and motor spiking patterns without criterial shared neurons were used. Instead, subsets of instances shared subsets of feature neurons. This follows a characterization of abstract concepts as more varied and flexible than concrete ones(4,5).

When instances of concrete concepts (e.g., different DOGs or HAMMERs) were learnt, the network built conceptual representations as neuronal circuits which consistently activated to each of these instances. The circuits remained active for multiple timesteps after stimulation, which implied sef-sustaining reverberation, revealing a mechanism of working/active memory. Such concept formation was impossible for abstract concepts (e.g., BEAUTY, FORCE). The resultant neuronal circuits selectively responded to their specific grounding instance, but not to any other instance of the concept. Thus, they failed to generalize to the whole concept. Notably, the network response to instances of abstract concepts did not reverberate past stimulation, implying a lack of working memory. When learning word forms in addition to concept grounding, thus forming semantic symbol-concept relationships, abstract symbols developed fully functional neural circuits with generalized activation and working memory, comparable with those of concrete symbols. However, we found a delay in forming representations for abstract relative to concrete symbols.

Our results suggest that well-known differences in developmental trajectories of different symbol types are caused by structural dissimilarities between the real-world events these symbols are used to speak about. We discuss the underlying neural mechanisms and the psychological and linguistic differences they relate to.

Wortbildungsbedeutung und kognitive Salienz: Suffixentstehung in walserdeutschen Sprachinseln

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In der typologischen Forschung zur Wortbildung wird immer wieder betont, dass der Bedeutungsraum von Wortbildungsprozessen prinzipiell offen ist. Bauer (2002: 37) weist darauf hin, dass es Sprachen gibt, in denen Affixe hochgradig idiosynkratische, zugleich aber kulturell saliente Information kodieren. Ein bekanntes Beispiel ist das polnische Suffix -ówka mit der spezifischen Bedeutung 'Wodkasorte aus N' (Carstairs-MacCarthy 1992). Solche Fälle stellen nicht nur klassische Wortbildungsmodelle, sondern auch die Annahme infrage, dass die Wortbildungsbedeutung notwendigerweise abstrakt, breit generalisierbar oder funktional „ökonomisch" sein müsse. Aus der Perspektive der Konstruktionsmorphologie (Booij 2010, Masini & Audring 2019) eröffnen derartige Phänomene einen besonders fruchtbaren Zugang: Wortbildung wird hier nicht als Anwendung abstrakter Regeln verstanden, sondern als Netzwerk von Form-Bedeutungs-Konstruktionen, deren semantische Spezifikation graduell, kontextabhängig und gebrauchsbasierend ist. Der vorliegende Beitrag greift diesen Ansatz auf und untersucht zwei Fälle ungewöhnlicher Suffixentstehung aus dem Titsch, einer walserdeutschen Varietät der Sprachinsel Gressoney im nordwestlichen Italien. Im Mittelpunkt stehen die Suffixe -ral und -elò, die der Nominal- bzw. Verbalderivation dienen (z. B. fòrcht 'Angst' → fòrchtral 'feiger Mensch'; bock 'Ziege' → bockelò 'nach Ziege riechen'). Auf den ersten Blick erscheinen diese Affixe semantisch randständig und nur schwer mit kanonischen Wortbildungsbedeutungen bzw. -kategorien (wie etwa Agens, Resultativ, Inchoativ usw.) in Einklang zu bringen. Eine detaillierte Analyse, die methodisch auf einer qualitativen Analyse historischer und gegenwartsbezogener Belege aus schriftlichen und mündlichen Quellen basiert, zeigt jedoch, dass beide Suffixe hochgradig konsistente konstruktionelle Muster realisieren, die stabile, wenn auch stark spezialisierte Konstruktionsbedeutungen aufweisen.

Im Sinne der Konstruktionsmorphologie lassen sich -ral und -elò als lexikalisch verankerte morphologische Konstruktionen analysieren, deren Bedeutung nicht vollständig kompositionell ableitbar ist, sondern auf wiederholtem Gebrauch, analogiebasierter Generalisierung und kulturell geteiltem Wissen sowie kognitiver Salienz beruht. Die entsprechenden Wortbildungskonstruktionen kodieren komplexe konzeptuelle Strukturen, die evaluative, perzeptive und soziale Dimensionen integrieren und sich nur eingeschränkt über abstrakte morphosemantische Merkmale erfassen lassen. Die Ergebnisse legen nahe, dass solche Fälle eine konstruktionsbasierte Modellierung der Wortbildungsbedeutung besonders plausibel machen. Anstatt Stabilität von Affixen an etymologische Kontinuität oder semantische Abstraktheit zu knüpfen, erlaubt die Konstruktionsmorphologie, auch hochspezialisierte, kulturell eingebettete sowie kognitiv saliente Muster als reguläre Bestandteile des morphologischen Inventars zu erfassen. Minderheitensprachen wie das Titsch liefern damit nicht nur empirisch „exotische" Daten, sondern zentrale Evidenz für eine usage-based, netzwerkorientierte Theorie der Wortbildung, in der Affixe als Konstruktionen mit eigener semantischer Dichte und kognitiver Realität verstanden werden.

Annotating Constructions In Child-Caretaker Dialogues With Universal Dependencies

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A core tenet of usage-based linguistics is its commitment to analyzing concrete instances of language use. Novel technologies, including NLP tools and large language models, can assist linguists with this (Torrent et al., 2023). While the Universal Dependencies project provides a robust cross-linguistic framework for syntactic/semantic annotation (DeMarneffe et al., 2021), annotated spoken data, particularly child-directed and child-produced speech, is still scarce. Recent work has begun to address this gap: Yang et al. (2025) release UD annotations for a large portion of English CHILDES data. We present a novel tagger for utterance-level constructions based on a novel, self-trained dependency parser for CHILDES data, trained with Stanza (Qi et al., 2020) and based on RoBERTa embeddings (Liu et al., 2019). Our goal is to automatically classify child and child-directed utterances into a holistically applicable construction taxonomy, following the classification schemata developed in previous studies on language development (Cameron-Faulkner et al., 2003; Cameron-Faulkner and Hickey, 2011;Cameron-Faulkner and Noble, 2013; Noble et al., 2018; Bunzeck and Diessel, 2025). In line with these earlier studies, we adopt a taxonomy of nine utterance-level construction categories: fixed formulaic expressions, fragments without finite verbs, wh-questions, yes/no questions, copula constructions, imperatives, subject-predicate intransitive, subject-predicate transitive, and complex multi-clausal sentences. Our tagger uses the POS-tags and UD-annotations (provided by the CHILDES-based UD parser) as the base of a decision tree-like classification procedure. We evaluate our tagger on manually annotated test data from the Helen dataset of the MPI-EVA-Manchester corpus (Lieven et al., 2009). Using our CHILDES-trained model yields the highest accuracy at 91.71%, substantially outperforming both a POS-tag-only baseline (87.54%) modeled after the parser by Bunzeck and Diessel (2025), and a sentence embedding model (Reimers and Gurevych, 2019) with an MLP classifier (81.50%). These results demonstrate that dependency information is an extremely valuable source of information for distinguishing utterance-level constructions. In light of these improvements in classification accuracy, our tagger also enables analyses that previously remained out of scope. For example, the studies that our construction taxonomy was lifted from(Cameron-Faulkner et al., 2003; Bunzeck and Diessel, 2025) exclusively focus on child-directed speech. As our tagger also performs well on child speech, it can be used to map out early development more holistically. Whereas CDS results from our analysis align with the studies mentioned earlier, the results for child speech deviate from them quite tremendously, showing considerably more fragments, but less questions and complex utterances. Although the results remain a proof-of-concept, they clearly show that taggers based on UD-annotations specifically created with CHILDES data in mind outperform other automatic classification approaches and offer a novel, robust way of analysing large amounts of developmental data.

Affective ratings for pain words in Bolivian Quechua: A pilot study

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Databases of affective norms aim to provide information on the affective properties of selected stimuli. Affective databases with verbal stimuli exist for a number of Indo-European languages, such as English (Bradley and Lang 1999), Italian (Montefinese et al. 2014), German (Lahl et al. 2009), or Dutch (Dimitrova et al. 2022). Few also exist for non-Indo-European languages, such as Mandarin Chinese (Ying et al. 2024) or Indonesian (Sianipar et al. 2016). However, there is a clear lack of data on non-WEIRD cultures, leading to a strong bias towards Western cultures and considerable limitations concerning the generalizability of affective properties of emotion words (Gerges et al. 2025). This is probably partly owed to the fact that, in order to ensure large participant samples, researchers usually rely on online crowdsourcing for recruitment, which some underrepresented non-WEIRD populations do not have access to.
We conducted a pilot study aimed towards the creation of a database of affective norms for pain words in Bolivian Quechua. We collected affective and psycholinguistic ratings from 17 native speakers of Quechua for two subsamples of 15 pain-related nouns (e.g. uma nanay ‘headache’), verbs (e.g. ñak'ariy ‘suffer’), adjectives (e.g. llakisqa ‘sad’), and interjections (e.g. ¡atatáw! ‘ouch!’). On the affective rating scale, we included valence and arousal, while on psycholinguistic scale, we included familiarity, concreteness, pain relatedness, pain intensity, pain unpleasantness, pain duration, location of pain, and pain cause. The word ratings were collected in person, using visual 5-point and 3-point scales represented by circle sizes (inspired by Wnuk and Majid 2014). Instructions (adapted from Borelli et al. 2018) and stimuli were presented orally only, which allowed us to collect data from both literate and illiterate speakers. The specific subdomain of pain words had been chosen in order to facilitate future collaboration with medical practitioners. For example, a database of affective norms for pain words in Bolivian Quechua could aid in the creation of a Quechua version of the McGill Pain Questionnaire (Melzack 1975), which until today does not exist.
In this presentation we will briefly discuss the results of this pilot study and reflect on our chosen approach to adapt previous methodology for collecting affective word ratings to the Quechua people of Bolivia. For instance, some of the traditional rating dimensions used in previous affectivity studies do not always translate well to non-Western contexts, like arousal, familiarity or concreteness. Andean indigenous cultures are generally highly grounded in nature and the directly perceivable (see Bolin 1998), and as such, the Quechua language often lacks direct one-word translations for highly abstract concepts. Instead, we have paraphrased them using metaphors (e.g. sunqu ukhunchispi t’impurichin/thañirichin ‘makes our hearts boil/calm down on the inside’ for arousal scale) and used examples that the average Quechua person can relate to well (e.g. sara ‘corn’ for high familiarity, jamp’ara ‘counter’ for low familiarity). Furthermore, our conclusions could also provide valuable insights for similar studies that aim to collect affective word ratings with (potentially illiterate) non-WEIRD populations.

The Research Constructicon

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Understanding and documenting the mental inventory of constructions, which form a complex network called constructicon, is an important part of Construction Grammar (CxG) theory. In recent years, the field has seen the emergence of reference constructicons: they are computerized databases (mostly accessible online) of the constructions of a single language (Lyngfelt 2018). The term "reference" distinguishes these digital databases from the constructicons in the mind of speakers, because reference constructicons describe a version of constructions idealized at the level of the community of speakers, rather than a cognitive reality that could vary from one speaker to another (Herbst 2019). One example for German is the FrameNet-Konstruktikon des Deutschen (https://framenet-constructicon.hhu.de/), which has been gradually built up since 2018 by a team at Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf.
In our talk, we will present an ongoing constructicographic project called the "Research Constructicon". It is a reference constructicon with a particular focus on ongoing research, notably that conducted since 2022 by doctoral students at the Research Training Group Dimensions of Constructional Space at Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg (https://www.cxg.phil.fau.eu/).
The CxG community is diverse, with researchers working across many subfields. Early-career scholars in our group explore phenomena across time, languages, or modalities (e.g., speech-gesture interaction), employing varying degrees of formalism. Our project aims to establish common ground within this group, as a microcosm of the broader community.

This project went through several steps since 2022:
The idea to form a database based on ongoing research while adopting a constructionist approach led us to adopt the tools of Semantic Web technologies, which can adapt much more flexibly to evolving requirements than relational databases (Patel et al. 2022).
After agreeing on a database standard, the first step of the project was to define a vocabulary for publishing construction entries. We thus defined different ontologies, based on the current research and practices within the CxG community (Winckel et al. 2025, Winckel et al. 2026). When possible, we based the ontology on already existing ones, and refer especially to OLiA (Ontologies of Linguistic Annotation; Chiarcos 2015) for linguistic terminologies such as semantic roles or verb tense. We would welcome other constructicographic projects to adopt and expand these ontologies, so that we achieve better interoperability between our databases.
In a second phase, we collected construction descriptions and implemented them in the database. Each description includes information on the elements of the construction, their collo-profiles (i.e., the respective frequencies of possible fillers), but also how constructions are linked to each other (within a single language or across languages). They were all provided by the doctoral researchers themselves, as experts on their constructions.
Finally, we designed a web application providing online access to the Research Constructicon at https://bdlweb.phil.uni-erlangen.de/RCxn/.
In this presentation, we will explore the project's development, the challenges we faced, the solutions we implemented, as well as remaining difficulties (e.g., integrating syntactic dependencies in the linearization of the construction elements). Our goal is not only to share our process but to invite dialogue on how such initiatives can evolve in the future.

Stance-Objekte als Anker sozialer Kognition: Zur Klassifikation multimodaler Stance-Objekte in COVID-19-Diskursen

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Ziel dieses Beitrags ist es, die Relevanz einer adäquaten Klassifikation von Stance-Objekten und deren Bedeutung für die metapragmatische Reflexion in X-Beiträgen zum Thema COVID-19 aufzuzeigen. Ausgangspunkt ist der Stance-Taking-Ansatz von Du Bois (2007), der ein Stance-Objekt als "what the evaluation is about" (S. 149) definiert. Diese Definition bleibt jedoch vergleichsweise vage und sollte vor dem Hintergrund neuerer Arbeiten zur Positionierung (Kiesling 2022; Kiesling et al. 2018; Merten 2023; Spitzmüller 2013) präzisiert werden. Der Beitrag argumentiert, dass eine differenzierte Klassifikation von Stance-Objekten notwendig ist, um unterschiedliche Objekt-Ebenen im metapragmatischen Paradigma analytisch erfassen zu können.

Anhand eines Korpus von 558 X-Beiträgen von Christian Drosten (Institut für Virologie, Charité), Hendrik Streeck (Uniklinikum Bonn), Tobias Ulbrich (Sozietät Dr. Rogert Ulbrich & Partner), Friedrich Pürner (Europäisches Parlament) sowie institutionellen Akteuren (Charité, Robert Koch-Institut) wird gezeigt, dass drei Typen von Stance-Objekten zu unterscheiden sind. Dazu zählen erstens Themen, die allgemeine Diskursgegenstände darstellen (z. B. COVID-19-Impfstoffe, Infektion), zweitens Ansprüche, die strittige Aussagen formulieren (z. B. Maßnahmen beenden und zurück zur Normalität. Jetzt.), und drittens Frames, die konzeptionelle Rahmungen für das Stance Taking bereitstellen (z. B. Gesundheitskrise).

Die Analyse umfasst Beiträge aus dem Zeitraum von März 2020 bis September 2023. Zur Identifikation und Klassifikation der Stance-Objekte wird Named Entity Recognition eingesetzt. Die automatisierte Annotation erlaubt es, wiederkehrende Referenzen auf Personen, Institutionen, Ereignisse und Konzepte systematisch zu erfassen und den drei Typen von Stance-Objekten zuzuordnen. Die quantitativen Ergebnisse werden durch qualitative Interpretationen ergänzt.

Die vorgeschlagene Differenzierung ermöglicht es, unterschiedliche Dimensionen des Stance Takings präziser zu erfassen, etwa das indexikalische Verhältnis zwischen Personen- und Verhaltenstypen, die im metapragmatischen Paradigma an bestimmte Stance-Objekte gebunden sind (vgl. Spitzmüller 2013). Während Themen als explizite Diskussionsgegenstände in den Beiträgen auftreten, werden Ansprüche argumentativ gestützt oder bestritten und fungieren als Übergang zu Frames, die übergeordnete Deutungsrahmen etablieren. Diese drei Typen von Stance-Objekten werden daher als wechselseitig konstitutive Eckpunkte verstanden, die die metapragmatische Gestaltung von Positionierungen im digitalen Raum strukturieren.

Abschließend zeigt der Beitrag, dass die systematische Klassifikation von Stance-Objekten einen zentralen Baustein metapragmatischer Diskursanalysen darstellt. Sie macht sichtbar, auf welchen Ebenen Stance-Objekte im digitalen Raum verhandelt werden und wie digitales Stance Taking selbst zum Gegenstand metapragmatischer Reflexion wird.

Schaut man einmal genauer hin, dann löst sich der erste Eindruck wieder auf. I tell my teachers not to beat themselves up when they go out into the real world. Particle verb constructions in German and English academic talks

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Particle verb constructions (PVCs) combine a particle (e.g. an or on) with a base verb (e.g. machen or turn) to create a meaningful whole (anmachen, turn on). PVCs have primarily been discussed in terms of their compositionality/idiomaticity and their status as morphological vs. syntactic units. In our paper, we focus on how speakers communicatively exploit this combination of verb + spatial particle as a linguistic resource in German and English. We compare German and English because there are linguistic differences that can be expected to have an impact on functional use. PVCs with particles derived from prepositions and adverbs exist in both German and English. They can range from transparent (e.g. hinausgehen, go out) to more idiomatic (e.g. herausfinden, find out) combinations. PVCs in German and English exhibit differences with regard to form (orthographic and morpho-syntactic separation), productivity, and use across registers. In German, PVCs are highly productive contributing to the formation of large word families (Barz 2016, Gerdes 2016) and are not per se associated with a specific register (even though differences in token frequency in different text types exist, Stumpf 2023). In contrast to this, in English, PVCs are associated with a more informal, colloquial style, and are less frequent in the more formal registers (e.g. Biber et al. 1999, Hampe 2002, but see also Alangari et al. 2020).

The paper pursues the question of how the use of verb-particle constructions differs in German and English in specific situational contexts, focusing on spoken academic conference talks. We are interested in how the particle verbs are a means to express the often abstract concepts discussed in the academic register, and whether English and German speakers make use of PVCs in different ways. More extensive and functionally diverse use of PVCs is expected in German (cf. Meißner 2014), while we expect PVCs to be less frequent as well as an indication of informality, in English. We use the GeWiss corpus (Fandrych et al. 2014), focusing on conference talks given by German and English L1 speakers, from which we have retrieved all main verbs (ca. 4,000 main verb occurrences in each language) and manually extracted the PVCs. The frequency, distribution, and variation of PVC use is examined with regard to the spatial dimensions expressed by the particles (e.g. IN-OUT, UP-DOWN, CONTACT/PROXIMITY). PV occurrences are annotated for semantic and morphosyntactic features (e.g. the sense in which the PV is used, the realization and semantic type of object and subject, argument structure, voice, position of particle). On the basis of this, behavioural profiles for PVCs in academic talks for German and English are compared.

Tracking Individual Language Change: Analysing a high-density corpus of an American TV personality

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Research on language change in variationist sociolinguistics has predominantly relied on apparent-time designs and real-time trend studies. While these approaches have yielded important insights into language change on the community level, they provide only indirect evidence of the variability of individual speakers' linguistic behaviour over time. Although an increasing number of researchers have recently emphasised the relevance of panel studies for addressing key questions about lifespan change and the "interaction between individual malleability and community-wide language change" (Buchstaller & Wagner 2019: 2), such longitudinal research remains rare due to practical challenges (Anthonissen & Petré 2019: 3; Bülow & Vergeiner 2021: 1). Most existing panel studies tend to be limited in scale, typically tracking only small samples of speakers and often restricting the analysis to two points in time (Beaman 2021; Bowie 2005; Buchstaller 2016; Rickford & Price 2013; Sankoff & Blondeau 2007). Harrington (2006) applies a more continuous approach by phonologically analysing the annual Christmas broadcasts of Queen Elizabeth II over a 50-year period. In their large-scale longitudinal corpus study on written Early Modern English, Anthonissen & Petré (2019) provide evidence of grammatical change across the lifespan.
The present study investigates spoken American English by using a corpus-linguistic approach. The central research question is how linguistic behaviour of an individual speaker develops over time, and how such developments can inform cognitive-linguistic models of grammar. The data used in this study consists of recorded episodes of a US-American daily talk show with time-aligned subtitle transcripts, which allows the creation of individual speaker corpora. The data is analysed using the CQPweb corpus interface. Our pilot study is designed as a longitudinal case study, focusing on a single talk show host in comparison to a larger sample from the community of practice of American TV news. This has several advantages, for example a similar communicative setting and speech style across time, provided by the show's format, while still covering a wide range of topics (and interactions with different interlocutors). In addition, the availability of dense, high-quality broadcast data covering more than fifteen years allows for time-series analyses of gradual, continuous intra-speaker change, similar to Harrington's (2006) investigation, but with roughly 200 recordings per year instead of one. The pilot study focuses on selected grammatical variables associated with well-documented recent community-level changes in American English, for instance the increasing use of the progressive aspect (Leech et al. 2009). If time permits, the investigation may be extended to include pragmatic variables in order to capture intra-speaker variability and related frequency-based shifts across different linguistic levels. The findings are expected to reveal more fine-grained patterns of age-grading, lifespan change, and retrograde change, which have been identified in previous real-time research (Bülow & Vergeiner 2021: 3). From a cognitive-linguistic perspective, this study contributes to a dynamic view of mental grammar as a usage-based and adaptive system, in which individual experience, entrenchment, and adaptation interact with community-level trajectories of language change.

Framing Taste: Shaping People's Perceptions of Products from Vertical Farming

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Frames describe the "structure of expectations" (Fillmore, 1982: 379) evoked by and connected to the words we use. Framing has been shown to influence people's understanding of politics (e.g. Lakoff 2010), their attitudes towards assessments (Boud 2007) or problem solving (e.g. Seelig 2012), among other domains for which framing effects have been demonstrated. Even though taste is seemingly an unmediated experience (e.g. Bagli 2017), several studies (e.g. Hoegg & Alba 2007; Lee & Lim 2023) demonstrate that taste perception can be influenced by cross-modal information, such as by color. This fact renders it an excellent detector of people's hidden attitudes and expectations towards novel food production technologies.

Two of our prior studies have shown that people report significantly different taste experiences when trying cucumber from different farming methods, even though the cucumber they tasted was the same across conditions. We carried out a taste experiment in which we provided students and staff at a university canteen with samples from the same cucumber, but labelled with different food production methods: hydroponics, aeroponics, aquaponics and conventional intensive farming. Four posters explained the different farming methods and their advantages and disadvantages, where the first three methods clearly outperform conventional farming methods in terms of use of land, water and pesticides. Participants filled out a questionnaire for each sample.

In this between-subject experiment with N=93 participants, we found significant differences in the perception of flavor ($F(3,90) = 2.7058$, $p = .003$). Post-hoc testing showed that the cucumber labelled 'intensive farming' was rated significantly tastier than cucumber labelled 'aeroponics' ($p = .0081$) and 'hydroponics ($p = .0108$).

In a follow-up experiment, we tested whether people's perceptions of the properties of cucumber from different farming methods could be influenced by means of framing. We used the same experimental set-up, but in a within-subject design involving only hydroponics, aeroponics and conventional farming (N=28). The framing manipulation was adding "on alpine minerals" for hydroponics, evoking a frame associated with richness and nature, and "with cleanest water" for aeroponics, evoking a frame associated with cleanliness and hygiene.

Regarding hygiene, the framing intervention was successful such that both hydroponics and aeroponics scored significantly higher than conventional farming ($F(2,82) = 7.192$, $p = .0010$). Our richness framing reached a near-significant effect ($F(2,82) = 2.322$, $p = .0951$). Nevertheless, in the final comparison, conventional farming still significantly outperformed the other farming methods in terms of taste ($X2(1,23) = 6.7826$, $p = .0337$).

In our current experiment, we therefore targeted taste directly. We carried out this experiment using the same set-up as Study 2, but instead of framing messages addressing richness and hygiene, we used "tasty" for the cucumber from aeroponics and "delicious" for the cucumber from hydroponics. Initial screening of the data indicates a clear effect of the positive framing, such that the differences between conventional farming and the novel farming methods disappear. Thus, at least short-term, people's taste for products from novel farming technologies can be influenced using apt framing.

Rethinking Spatial Primitives: Locative Constructions and Cognition in Malayalam

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How languages encode spatial location offers a privileged window into the relationship between linguistic structure and human cognition. While influential work in cognitive semantics and typology has proposed universal primitives such as in, on, and under as foundational spatial concepts (e.g. Jackendoff 1983; Landau & Jackendoff 1993), cross-linguistic research increasingly suggests that languages differ in how spatial meaning is distributed across grammatical components (Talmy 2000; Levinson & Wilkins 2006). This paper advances this debate by examining locative constructions in Malayalam, a Dravidian language whose spatial system challenges strong universalist assumption about spatial conceptualisation. The study draws on data from a Topological Relations Picture Series (TRPS) survey, (Bowerman & Pederson 1992), supplemented by native-speaker judgments, to analyse how Malayalam encodes simple locative scenarios and to identify its Basic Locative Construction (BLC). The analysis is grounded in a cognitive-semantic model of locative meaning that extends Talmy's macro-event framework to states of location, distinguishing an inner frame (Figure, Ground, fact-of-location, core spatial schema) and an outer frame (posture, manner, placement, and causal information). The findings show that Malayalam overwhelmingly employs a construction of the form Figure + Ground + LOC + copula as its BLC, with the locative case marker -il functioning as a highly underspecified General Spatial Term. A single locative case marker -il is used in contexts of co-incidence, contiguity, containment, support lexicalised by the prepositions IN, ON, AT etc in English. The locative is used mostly for denoting canonical/underspecified/spatially vague relationship between the figure and the ground as long as the Figure and Ground are co-planar. 1. pusthakam mesa-il uNDə book table-LOC COP 'the book is on the table' 2. meen veLLath-il uNDə fish water-LOC COP 'the fish is in the water'. A more specialized post-position like uLLil (inside) etc. is used only when the figure-ground interaction is non-canonical. Eg.- a stamp inside an envelope instead of on it, which is the canonical location for a stamp. Rather than encoding fine-grained topological distinctions in spatial relators, Malayalam systematically offloads semantic detail to posture verbs and converb constructions. Posture verbs such as irikkuka 'sit', nikkuka 'stand', and kiDakkuka 'lie' encode cognitively salient distinctions relating to prototypicality, functional relevance, and intentionality. Eg. 3. pusthakam mesa-il irikk-unnu book table- LOC sit-PRES 'the book is on the table' (properly placed) vs. 4. pusthakam mesa-il kiDakk-unnu book table- LOC lie-PRES 'the book is on the floor' (haphazardly placed). More complex Figure–Ground configurations are expressed through manner–placement constructions, as in eg.5 which construe location as the result of an implicit agentive event. 5. noolə mezhukuthiri-il keTT-i -vechə- iTTə-uNDə Ribbon candle-LOC tie-CVB-keep-CVB- PRF-COP 'The ribbon is (tied) on the candle' These patterns indicate that Malayalam spatial cognition privileges canonicality, prototypicality, functional interaction, and event structure over purely geometric distinctions. The paper argues that spatial concepts such as containment and support are not universally encoded as discrete primitives, but may instead emerge from language-specific strategies that integrate grammar, pragmatics, and embodied experience. By foregrounding how Malayalam distributes spatial meaning across case, verbal predication, and inference, this study contributes

Creative vessels and eloquent amphibians: What verbal fluency tasks measure depends on the semantic category

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Verbal fluency is a common task in cognitive assessment, asking participants to produce as many words belonging to a category (e.g. “animals“) as possible. Despite its pervasiveness, it remains unclear whether performance in the task primarily depends on language skills (e.g. vocabulary size) or on divergent thinking abilities (which can be seen as a cognitive marker of creativity). Here, we investigate whether prediction of divergent thinking skills and vocabulary is possible using specific semantic verbal fluency tasks.

Three hundred participants performed semantic verbal fluency tasks in 24 different categories (e.g. “animals“, “hobbies“, “flowers“), with a time limit of one minute per category and typed responses. The number of words produced was then used to predict the participant’s score in the Alternative Uses Task (AUT), an established measure of creative thinking, and the Mehrfachwahl-Wortschatztest (MWT-B), a measure of vocabulary size. Linear relationships between each semantic category and the AUT or MWT-B were fitted on training data from 200 participants and will be validated on a held-out test set of 100 participants in future analyses. Preliminary analyses of the training data showed that the categories “fabrics“, “vessels“ and “weapons“ were the best predictors of AUT scores (r=.41-.47) while “precious stones“ , “amphibians“ and “gods of the antiquity“ were the worst (r=.14-.19). Meanwhile, “trees“, “amphibians“ and “precious stones“ were the best predictors of vocabulary size (r=.30-.34), while “clothes“, “hobbies“ and “first names“ were the worst (r=-.07-(-.04)). Future analyses will test how combining performance from multiple categories into multivariate models might improve predictions. The inclusion of additional metrics (e.g. how speakers switch between subclusters within each category) will elucidate what properties of a category contribute to it being more suitable for measuring creativity or vocabulary.

With these analyses we aim to establish verbal fluency tasks as a versatile tool for measuring different cognitive processes, including creative thinking. Prevailing disagreements in the literature regarding the question of what verbal fluency tasks measure might thus be resolved by treating verbal fluency not as a monolithic task, but as diverse collection of tasks, each uniquely suitable to measure different cognitive abilities to different degrees.

KEEPING EMOTIONS UNDER CONTROL: A COGNITIVE LINGUISTIC STUDY OF EMOTION METAPHORS IN ENGLISH, RUSSIAN AND POLISH.

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The primary goal of this paper is to provide a linguistic analysis of English, Russian and Polish idiomatic expressions relating to the domain of emotion from a cognitive linguistics perspective. Prior insusceptible to linguistic analysis, idioms were associated with non-compositionality and were seen as rather peripheral unanalysable wholes. However, following the insights of Cognitive Linguists, idioms are understood as “conceptual in nature, their meaning is not arbitrary, and they are ‘conceptually motivated,” where motivation arises from knowledge of the cognitive mechanisms such as metaphor, metonymy, conventional knowledge that link figurative meaning to literal. Assuming a metaphor-based approach to emotions as delineated in Kövecses (2000, 2002, 2015) and Talmy’s Force Dynamics Theory (1988, 2000), the paper treats emotion metaphors as related to FORCE schema. Within force-dynamic interaction there are two opponents: Agonist and Antagonist. The Antagonist is a feeling/emotion that is trying to overwhelm the Agonist/self and the latter is trying to regain control by subduing the Antagonist. Depending on the degree of Agonist–Antagonist resistance, emotion metaphors drawn from English, Russian, and Polish dictionary sources are “plotted” along an emotion-intensity scale. Examples include: he was driven by anger, hold back from yelling, bottle up his emotions; прилив злобы овладел им внезапно [priliv zloby ovladel im vnezapno] (‘a wave of anger suddenly overcame him’), злоба достигла белого каления [zloba dostigla belogo kaleniya] (‘anger reached the boiling point’), подавлять ярость и гнев [podavlyat' yarost' i gnev] (‘to suppress fury and anger’); emocje wzięły górę nad rozsądkiem (‘emotions prevailed over reason’), kontrolować emocje (‘to control one’s emotions’), and ktoś trzyma nerwy na wodzy (‘to keep one’s nerves under control’). The paper focuses on two emotion scenarios: the “Antagonist-in-profile” scenario and the “Agonist-in-profile” scenario.

Repeat and conquer: The power of reusing viral enunciations fictively in an internet community

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Word-by-word repetitions of a prior utterance may be used to express a recognisable and often complex attitude, feeling, or situation occurring in a different context, yet involving a similar attitude, feeling, or situation. For example, the common phrase 'Eureka feeling', referring to a sudden moment of insight, originates from Archimedes' legendary exclamation of discovery "Εύρηκα!" ('I have found it!', Pascual 2014). Such verbatim non-actual quotes have mainly been studied as adaptation strategy of communication in language pathology (Bánréti 2010; Versluis & Kleppa 2016), and marginally as rhetorical tactic in legal argumentation (Pascual 2014) or satire (Fonseca et al. 2020). However, to our knowledge, the non-quotative use of literal repetitions eliciting new meanings has never been systematically examined in online discourse. We aim to fill this gap by exploring the use of such enunciations in social media. We understand such intertextuality as involving fictive interaction i.e., the use of the Conversation Frame to structure thought, discourse, and language (Pascual 2002, 2006, 2014, Pascual & Sandler eds. 2016).

We collected forty verbatim fictive enunciations on Weibo (China's equivalent of Twitter, now X). We also designed a questionnaire to understand netizens' interpretations of high-frequency instances, also requesting respondents to provide 2-5 extra similar examples. These creative word-by-word repetitions are mainly from memorable communicative events in viral video clips, popular TV shows or movies. An example is the sarcastic use of "真香" zhēnxiāng ('It's so appetizing!') to comment on somebody's drastic change in behaviour or attitude after a video clip went viral of an urban child in a famous Chinese reality show exclaiming "It's so appetizing!" upon tasting the rural food that he had previously shown contempt for. We categorized such instances across dimensions including: (i) syntactic structure, (ii) target meaning, (iii) pragma-rhetorical function(s), and (iv) creativity level.

We found that: (i) Chinese verbatim fictive enunciations may appear at various morphosyntactic levels, from the sentence to the lexical item; and (ii) they involve various cognitive mechanisms, such as frame metonymy (i.e., using a single utterance to evoke the whole situation it originally occurred in, then one prominent aspect of it); fictivity (i.e., both the enunciator and audience are fictive, meeting in a writer-reader blend, Herman 1999; Fauconnier & Turner 2002); and viewpoint mixing (cf. Dancygier et al. eds. 2016, e.g., in its fictive usage, 'It's so appetizing!' is both anchored in and ascribed to the original utterer and ascribed to someone who had undergone a similar attitude change). We argue that: (i) the creative re-use of viral enunciations plays a vital role in community-building and shaping a sociolinguistic and generational subculture, since they are mostly based on trending online content shared by a generation of Chinese netizens; (ii) they enhance the expressive power of written language just as emojis and memes do; and (iii) they show the need for distinguishing between reported speech (as in ordinary quotes) and speech (re)presentation (in fictive speech, whether verbatim or novel).

Metaphors of dementia and caregiving in a German online health forum

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Conceptual metaphors have been shown to be a highly relevant construal operation in (virtual) discourses of illness and health (see, e.g., Semino 2008). It has been shown that people living with dementia as well as their family care partners use metaphor in digital Communities of Practice such as online forums to conceptualise their identity as well as the condition (see Author 2025a,b). Highly prominent construals of dementia as a JOURNEY, LOSS, or WAR highlight the impact of the condition on a person's daily life, specifically stressing aspects perceived as difficult ('so sorry to hear your dad has to travel this pathway as well'; 'I have lost my road sense'), but also seeking to empower the users ('I'm a fighter and always will be'). This research on online forums seeks to give a voice to social actors in dementia care whose voices tend to be marginalised. It is thus in line with Hamilton's (2023: 7) call to "move beyond interviews and casual conversations as primary sources of data."

However, much of the previous work on metaphors used by people living with dementia and their care partners is conducted on English data. Research on other languages are comparatively rare (but see a study on a Spanish forum for family carers by Ivanova (2020)). This paper seeks to address this research gap in investigating how metaphors are used to perspectivise dementia and caregiving in a German digital community.

For this study, pertinent threads were chosen from the publicly accessible section of a dementia forum of a German non-profit. 300 posts each per discourse group (people diagnosed vs. family care partners) were analysed using the MIPVU (Steen et al. 2017) to uncover conceptual metaphors constructing the PERSON DIAGNOSED, as well as DEMENTIA and CAREGIVING as target domains. Using the programme MAXQDA, in a semi-automated top-down analysis, the data were tagged for established metaphorical construals, such as DEMENTIA as a WAR, or CAREGIVING as a THEATRE PRODUCTION (Author 2025a, Wilson et al. 2012). This was followed by a manual bottom-up analysis, which seeks to uncover novel construals that may be particular to this digital Community of Practice.

Preliminary results show that both discourse groups use metaphor to discuss (limited) agency of the self, to come to terms with physical and mental challenges, as well as to express their need for community support. Some construals seem to be highly prevalent in dementia discourses regardless of the specific linguistic context, see, e.g., the JOURNEY metaphor in (1). As they have also been linked to other conditions (see Semino et al. 2018), they thus seem to be integral to illness discourses more globally. In contrast, construals such as dementia as a CONTAINER (2) may hint at framings particularly relevant for a German context.

(1) nun sind wir wieder ein Stück weitergekommen [mit der Diagnose]

'we've gotten a bit further again [with the diagnosis]

(2) '[mein Mann ist] wieder in seiner eigenen Welt'

'[my husband is] in his own world again'

Artificial Languages as a Tool for Research on Semantic Change and Metaphoric Extension

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The study of lexical and semantic change has seen a rise in the use of data-driven approaches to investigate pathways and mechanisms of change (e.g. Allan & Robinson 2012; Geeraerts et al. 2024). One crucial question in this domain relates to the cognitive underpinnings of semantic change (e.g. Brochhagen et al. 2023; Ramiro et al. 2018). A number of recent studies has investigated the contribution that evolutionary linguistics and experimental psycholinguistics can make in elucidating this question (e.g. Fuchs & Piñango 2021; Smith 2025). Such studies often use artificial or 'laboratory languages' as tools for research on language change (Roberts 2017). Specifically, these experimental approaches have the potential to replicate observed pathways of semantic change in controlled settings, to shed light on the contextual and cognitive factors that influence these changes. Here we focus especially on studies that investigate the role of metaphor in semantic extension, a factor that has been recognised as a key driving factor in semantic change (e.g. Anderson 2017; Xu et al. 2017; Ramiro et al. 2018). In this design, participants first learn or interactively negotiate novel form-meaning-mappings. In a second step, these established form-meaning mappings then have to be applied to communicate about an expanded, new meaning space, thereby forcing participants to engage in semantic extension (Smith et al. 2025; Anonymous et al. 2024). For example, participants might first learn the mapping of a novel form to the meaning DOWN. Then, when asked to communicate about an expanded set of meanings, it can be tested whether participants tend to use the form they learned for the meaning DOWN to also refer to the meaning SAD, via the conceptual metaphor SAD IS DOWN (Lakoff & Johnson 1980; Anonymous under review). Through the possibilities of freely manipulating the meaning space in this design, this paradigm can be productively integrated with existing work on patterns in semantic change. Specifically, by determining the original meanings that participants have to learn - as well as the new meanings they have to communicate about using semantic extension - in ways that correspond to documented patterns of change, this paradigm has the potential to replicate processes of semantic change observed in language history. It can therefore provide a valuable methodological bridge between data-driven descriptive work on semantic and lexical change and explanatory accounts grounded in interaction and cognition.

Applying Comparative Concepts to the CASA Constructicon: A Pilot Study on English Adjective and Adverb Constructions

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In this study, we applied Model of Comparative Concepts for Aligning Constructicons (MoCCA; Lorenzi et al. 2024), which aims to create a system connecting constructions cross-linguistically utilising Croft's framework of comparative concepts (CCs; Croft 2022). To evaluate the applicability of the approach and reveal potential methodological issues, CCs were manually mapped to the CASA Constructicon of the English language (Herbst, Hoffmann & Uhrig 2022a) with a focus on the adjective and adverb constructions. Comparative concepts constitute a system of interconnected language-neutral definitions of linguistic properties with a strong hierarchy aimed to define morphosyntactic structure of different languages for cross-linguistic comparison (Croft 2022; Lorenzi et al. 2024). However, we encountered several conceptual gaps and a mismatch in the approaches when tested on CASA Constructicon of English. The following example demonstrates how CCs are mapped to a construction, where cxn stands for construction, sem – for semantics, str – for strategy, and inf – for information packaging. The SUPERLATIVE CONSTRUCTION (which in CASA is deliberately separated from the MOST-/LEAST-CONSTRUCTION referring to the difference between synthetic morphological and analytical (periphrastic) superlatives in traditional grammars (Herbst & Hoffmann 2024: 169)) in Croft's CCs is a referring phrase (cxn). On the level of individual elements, it consists of two slots – the ATTRIBUTE and the ATTRIBUTEE. While the second slot is a referent expression (cxn) and an object concept (sem), the first one provides a more complex picture. The ATTRIBUTE comes in CASA either via affixation or suppletion where the adjective has an irregular superlative form (best/ worst). We labelled the ATTRIBUTE with the following CCs: property concept (sem); superlative degree (sem); modifier (cxn), modification (inf); attributive phrase (cxn), adjective (cxn), superlative form (cxn); degree affix (str). Several problematic issues were revealed showing that CCs are applicable only to a certain extent. For instance, Croft's superlative form (cxn) exclusively refers to the superlative degree marker -est, i.e. it covers the affixation strategy only and does not fully address the adjective. Another issue is that the current MoCCA framework does not explicitly cover suppletive forms with no -est affix or stem allomorphy, thus it remains unclear where such cases are included in the CCs system. Further, the compositionality of these forms would counter usage-based model in which storage plays an important role so that decomposition of such forms would not be plausible. In conclusion, we found that the CCs provide a highly detailed inventory of morphosyntactic properties covering a great variety of linguistic instances. However, we encountered several conceptual gaps and a mismatch in the approaches of CASA and Croft's CCs, which will need to be addressed: in some cases (e.g. superlative forms in English) this approach requires more precision and fine-grained labels. As the CCs framework was tested on the selected English constructions only, for broader MoCCA implementation in cross-linguistic comparison, further analysis is needed to investigate how well similar constructions can be described with MoCCA and examine the constructicons of other languages that are typologically more or less similar to English.

Cogito ergo sum: A cross-linguistic study of the snowclone [Ich X, also Y ich] in Spanish, German and Dutch

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Descartes' Cogito ergo sum (in Principia Philosophiae 1644) is widely known, and many languages have their own fixed translation. Descartes himself had already used Je pense, donc je suis in his Discours de la Methóde from 1637. Spanish has pienso, luego existo; German Ich denke, also bin ich; Dutch Ik denk, dus ik ben, and English I think, therefore I am.
Being fixed, these phrases provide a popular basis for creative variants. In our presentation, we will ask which parts of the fixed phrases are varied. We will look at four variable aspects: Person (alternatives for the first person), the first verb, the conjunction, and the second verb. Of course, the verbs, being open classes, will show the most variation, in particular the first verb. But we also found variants for the second verb, cf., for example, Dutch Ik leef, dus ik lijd 'I live, therefore I suffer' and Ik ben, dus ik denk 'I exist, therefore I think', Spanish juego, luego pienso 'I play, therefore I think' or German ich denke, also irre ich 'I think, therefore I make mistakes'. With respect to the verbs, we focus on two questions: (i) do the verbs belong to specific semantic groups, and (ii) do we find differences between the three languages? For example, we found for Dutch Ik fiets dus ik ben 'I ride bike, therefore I am'. Regarding inner-language variation, the question is whether we see register differences. Cogito ergo sum has its origin in a high register. Do variants stay in high registers, or can we find them used across a broader spectrum of language use? This is where Social Construction Grammar comes into play.
The variation regarding the first person and the conjunction is restricted, but these elements are not completely fixed, see for example on in André Gides On me combat, donc je suis 'They fight against me, therefore I am'. Regarding the conjunction, we observe that Dutch dus is sometimes replaced by daarom. Interestingly, German uses also, a conjunctional adverb, leading to reversed word order V S: (also) bin ich.
The result of our corpus study demonstrates lexical parallels between the languages compared, while also showing variation in the degree of semantic variability. We will embed our presentation in the line of research on snowclones, thus framing it within construction grammar, and subsequently, adding the term of extravagance (cf. Hartmann & Ungerer 2023) and contrastive phraseology research (cf. Mellado Blanco ed. 2022). Our data will be extracted from the Sketch Engine tool (nlTenTen20, DeTenTen 23 and EsTenTen23), supplemented with information from the German-Spanish parallel corpus PaGeS and from more general internet searches. The research presented here is part of the broader project CREACONSTRIDIOMS, see https://constridioms.es/.

The grammatical malleability of adult idiolects and the medium-term dynamics of change

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After having been described as "a vast wasteland in the study of variation" (Eckert 1997: 165) at the end of the last century, individual language development during adulthood is now a flourish research strand thanks to advances in linguistic theorising as well as technology (e.g. Buchstaller & Wagner to appear, MacKenzie 2025, Laitinen et al 2020). This paper first reviews recent findings on adult idiolectal variability at different structural levels, including original corpus studies on morphosyntax that duly take into account both cognitive forces (e.g. frequency-sensitive automation) and socio-pragmatic forces (e.g. extravagance). In doing so, the intersections of major dichotomies merit attention: idiolect vis-à-vis communal language, and synchrony vis-à-vis diachrony. As for the latter pair, this paper's key interest lies in a promising avenue for closing the gap, namely investigating medium-term dynamics on the timescale of days up to a few months.

While there is a wealth of studies about the short-term process of style-shifting on the one hand and about the long-term process of lifespan change on the other, their interrelations are much more poorly researched. The medium-term timescale might well be the missing piece of the puzzle (cf. Harrington et al. 2019). It may serve as the meeting ground for several underlying forces that appear to be congeneric despite being associated with different timescales, such as priming vs. entrenchment and ad-hoc constructions vs. constructional routinisation and conventionalisation (cf. Brône & Zima 2014, Schmid 2020). Usage data with the right temporal resolution for investigating the medium-term dynamics of idiolects has become fairly accessible thanks to recent formats of social media or reality TV shows, such as Big Brother, Utopia and Love Island, that assemble closed communities of practice with adult speakers (often with diverse dialectal backgrounds) for ca. 50 days up to one year. Besides offering high-resolution longitudinal data of individual language users, such reality-TV resources can typically provide multi-style data (e.g. talking to peers vs. talking to the camera in a "dairy room") as well as social interactional profiles regarding innovators, adapters and stable users. Although such resources seem to offer rich material for understanding the malleability of adult idiolects, the study by Sonderegger et al. (2017) on accents is at present the only contribution fully tapping into that potential. Therefore, the present contribution wishes to discuss the potential, feasibility and implementation of similar investigations on medium-term dynamics at the morphosyntactic level.

Emotion in word processing: neurocognitive mechanisms

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Numerous studies have shown that words that humans appraise as emotional (typically either positive or negative) are processed differently from words that are assessed as neutral. Across word classes, such emotional words are responded to faster in lexical decision tasks, they are better remembered and also elicit higher electrophysiological event-related brain responses (ERPs) than neutral words at various temporal stages in the processing stream. Moreover, functional magnetic resonance imaging (fmri) also shows enhanced hemodynamic brain activity in response to emotional words in both typical left fronto-temporal language processing regions and subcortical emotion and embodiment-related regions such as the amydgala. What is currently less clear is to what extent these different indicators of facilitated processing of emotional words reflect primarily attentional mechanisms or are due to genuine representational differences. To address this question this presentation will draw on data from a bilateral redundancy gain paradigm that, via lexical decision in response to words presented to either both visual fields simultaneously or the left or right visual field only. This serves to test to what extent processing of emotional words is contributed to relatively more by the right hemisphere than is the processing of neutral words. Moreover, the semantic network representation of various emotional word categories, related to broad concepts such as positivity or negativity, narrower concepts such as anger, fear or happiness, emotion-label terms themselves will be compared to the network representation of typical semantic classes such as animals, trees or food items. The results reveal no evidence for a specific right-hemisphere contribution to the processing of emotional words in general. They also indicate that, with the exception of emotion-label terms, semantic networks for emotional categories are much broader and the concepts much more dispersed than typical semantic categories. This suggests that while emotional connotation has a facilitating effect on word processing, this effect is in general more due to attentional mechanisms than genuine representational differences. Still, subsets of emotional words such as abstract emotion terms may deviate from this general pattern and have a more specific cognitive and neural representation. Future studies could reveal their representational structure by applying representational similarity analyses to behavioral and neural data simultaneously.

Discontinuous definiteness markers in regiolectal German. An information-structural account

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Across a range of Germanic varieties, demonstrative forms exist that combine a demonstrative determiner (‘this / that’) with a locative adverb (‘here / there’) (e.g. van Gelderen 2007: 301–303; Rauth & Speyer 2021: 2). Examples (1) and (2) illustrate combined forms in Afrikaans (hierdie ‘here this’) and Rhine Franconian (denne do ‘this/that there’), respectively.

(1) Afrikaans

Hierdie	plaatjie	laat	jou	’n	gedetaileer	boom	van	hierdie
ADV DEM	picture	let	you	a	detailed	tree	from	ADV DEM

‘This picture lets you see a detailed tree of this

taal	familie	sein
language	family	see

language family.’ (van Gelderen 2007: 302, glosses by the author)

(2) Rhine Franconian

Wenn	mir	denne	do	ganze	Kram	getrunk	hann.
Once	we	DEM	ADV	whole	stuff	drunk	have

‘Once we have drunk all of this/that stuff.’ (Rauth & Speyer 2021: 12)

The literature widely assumes that the adverb reinforces the demonstrative in such combinations (Diessel 1999: 74; van Gelderen 2007: 275; Rauth & Speyer 2021: 2). Hence, these forms should be expected primarily in the respective demonstrative usage contexts, where the referent is uniquely identifiable either through the situational or the discourse context according to the concept of pragmatic definiteness (Himmelmann 1997: 38).
This paper focuses on a specific determiner-adverb combination in the regiolect of the Ruhr region (Ruhr German). The analysis calls into question the above-mentioned approach which treats combined forms as reinforced demonstratives. The pattern under discussion has a discontinuous structure in which the adverb appears first and is then interrupted by a preposition that may, but need not, cliticize with the following determiner (cf. (3); see also Cirkel 2023: 153–154).

(3) Ruhr German

ja	dann	würd	ich	vielleicht	noch mal	sagen	so	hier	in=er	mitte
yes	then	would	I	maybe	again	say	so	ADV	in=DET	middle

‘Yeah, then I would maybe say again, like, here in the middle.’ (Cirkel 2023: 154, glosses and translation by the author)

My analysis of spoken natural discourse shows that the pattern is not restricted to demonstrative contexts but also extends to semantically definite contexts in which the referent is identifiable independently of the situational or discourse context (Himmelmann 1997: 38–39). Hence, the concept of a reinforced demonstrative does not appear to be adequate for this pattern. To account for these findings, I propose, by contrast, an information-structural account that takes the cognitive status of the referent within discourse into consideration (Lambrecht 1994: 74–116) and is not dependent on the widely established opposition between semantic and pragmatic definiteness originally proposed by Löbner (1985). The locative adverb has accordingly grammaticalized into a formal device, which – together with the determiner – indicates the cognitive status of the referent. I will argue for this account based on a quantitative corpus study of Ruhr German, in which the usage contexts of the pattern are annotated and analyzed for the type of definiteness.

Modeling the 'Evaluative Attribution' Constructional Family (EAC) and Its Development in Modern English

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This study explores constructs such as the following:

(1) He still regards himself as a working farmer.ARCHER-1979-NEW

(2) We consider it almost one of the necessaries.ARCHER-1875-ADV

(3) He finds the bromide to be most suitable.ARCHER-1864-MED

(4) She takes me for a milkman.ARCHER-1820-DRAMA

These examples share an underlying Argument-Structure-Construction wherein an Attributor attributes an Attribute to an Attributee. In contrast to other Secondary Predication Constructions (D'hoedt & Cuyckens 2017a), this attribution does not alter the state of the Attributee like the "Resultative-Construction", but is a subjective evaluation which may not be factual (Halliday 1967. Compare: He considers them husband and wife doesn't mean the couple is actually married, whereas He pronounced them husband and wife confers marital status.). This is why these constructions, also known as "AGENT–ÆFFECTED–JUDGEMENT"-Construction (Herbst & Uhrig 2009), will be termed Evaluative-Attribution-Constructions in this study, as the "evaluative" or "mental" (D'hoedt & Cuyckens 2017b) versions of the Object-Attribute-Construction from Herbst's and Hoffmann's "Constructionist Approach to Syntactic Analysis" (CASA, Object Attribute Construction ATTR: NP & ADJ).

Despite semantic similarities, there is considerable formal variation – in other words, considerably different slot fillers – which is the starting point for delineating different members of the EAC family. Aside from the verb slot, there are differences in the Attribute-slot, which is, e.g., a Noun-Phrase as in (1), (2), and (4) or an Adjective-Phrase (3). Moreover, the EAC connects the Attributee with Attribute-slot with either the prepositions as (1) and for (4), without any filler as in (2) or with to be as in (3).

The study, first, argues against modeling the EAC (a) as a single abstract construction and (b) as multiple allostructions due to its formal variability (cf. Cappelle 2006, Colleman 2011, Herbst & Huber 2022, Perek 2015, Goldberg & Jackendoff 2004). Instead, it advocates for a dynamic constructional family with constructions on multiple levels of abstraction. Constructionhood is hereby motivated empirically and usage-based, so only variants with either high frequency (e.g., in comparison with competing constructional candidates on other levels of abstraction) or some degree of idiosyncracy are considered constructions in their own right (Goldberg 2006).

Therefore, the frequency developments of the EAC variants have to be analyzed. This is done with manually annotated data from the ARCHER corpus (1600-1999). In general, the EAC declines in frequency, especially with Germanic verbs like think (1600-49: 313 hits vs. 1950-1999: 69 hits), in contrast to the rise in French loan words like consider as filler of the verb slot (1600-49: 10 hits vs. 1800-49: 70 hits). Aside from these constructional variants with high-frequency verbs, frequently co-occurring fillers of different slots are promising constructional candidates. The mutual influence of verb and "connector" slot is intriguing due to their low type frequency (verbs: 36, connector: 4) and the resulting likelihood of high-frequent collocations. A covarying collostructional analysis confirmed that especially as and for have a strong attraction to certain verbs (e.g., Gries & Stefanowitsch 2004b), whereas to be does not, so the latter does not seem to have lower-level constructions.

Facticity as Common-Ground Management: The case of the German constructions FAKT-IST und TATSACHE-IST

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Given its relevance in the so-called post-truth era, the question of how facticity is linguistically constructed has received little attention. Previous research has primarily discussed facticity as factive presuppositions (cf. Kiparsky & Kiparsky 1971; Schmid 2011), or in relation to epistemic and evidential marking (e.g. Chafe & Nichols 1986; Zuczkowski et al. 2017; Gray & Biber 2015), or from a genre-analytic (cf. Almeida 1992), discourse-analytic perspective (cf. Stibbe 2015; Potter 1996), or in the NLP-context (e.g. Pszona et al. 2023). What remains underexplored, however, is the cognitive-pragmatic function of facticity constructions in interaction (but cf. Schmid 2011 for schell-nouns). This paper addresses this gap by analyzing the German constructions FAKT-IST and TATSACHE-IST from a construction-grammar perspective (Goldberg 1995) but extends the scope of analysis to their embedding in larger rhetorical moves (Tardy & Swales 2014), arguing that they function primarily as devices for common-ground management. Data for the analysis is drawn from various German corpora (DWDS, DeReKo, Swissdox@LiRI, speeches and debates in the German and Swiss Parliament, archive of spoken language, IDS). Formally, both constructions are highly conventionalized, lexicalized, and morpho-syntactically restricted form-meaning pairings, consisting of a matrix clause with a nominal correlate that functions as a shell noun in the sense of Schmid (2000). While such constructions are traditionally assumed to presuppose the factuality of the embedded clause, corpus data from written and spoken German reveal a more complex picture, cf. (1-3).

(1) Fakt ist, dass Fahrzeuge sich die meiste Zeit nicht bewegen und dass die Produktion von erneuerbaren Energien Schwankungen aufweist, die ausgeglichen werden müssen. (DWDS)

(2) tatsache is auch (0.25) wenn das fünfte und sechste gleis kommt h° (.) dann (0.3) is es eine bauliche veränderung dann brauchen wir lärmschutz (…) (FOLK_E_00068_SE_01_T_07, Z. 8079ff.)

(3) Fakt ist: Trump ist mit einer völlig faktenfreien Kampagne zum Präsidenten gewählt worden. (DWDS)

FAKT-IST and TATSACHE-IST constructions differ in the degree of objectivity and factual commitment they impart, and they also occur in contexts of contested or even non-factive information, particularly in argumentative media and political discourse. This variability points to a pragmatic and cognitive rather than a purely semantic function. Building on the theory of common ground (Clark 2009) and territories of information (Kamio 1997), the paper proposes that these constructions serve to place propositions into the shared common ground while simultaneously presenting their truth as externally grounded and independent of the speaker's subjective judgment. In contrast to epistemic markers that explicitly encode speaker stance, FAKT-IST and TATSACHE-IST background the speaker. Furthermore, these constructions seem semantically redundant, which was already pointed out by Schmid (2000) who views them as instances of conceptual partitioning (2000, pp. 362-363) in Talmy's sense (1991, cited in Schmid 2000, pp. 360-361), allowing speakers to package propositions as single discourse objects (FACT). This explains how propositions are framed as cognitively accessible and socially shareable discourse objects. The analysis thus reconceptualizes facticity as an emergent, interactional phenomenon and highlights the role of grammatical constructions in shaping shared cognition.

Perceptions of linguistic creativity: An experimental comparison of novel metaphor and novel verbing

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Even though linguistic creativity is ubiquitous and diverse (Hoffmann 2019), prior experimental work has focused on investigating selected types of creative language, most notably metaphors (Holyoak & Stamenković 2018). It therefore remains unclear whether findings from metaphor research generalize to other types of linguistic creativity. To address this, we compared the perception of novel metaphors with novel "verbing," that is, the formation of new verbs from nouns (e.g., to porch a newspaper; Clark & Clark 1979).

Specifically, we tested the generalizability of two key findings from metaphor research. First (H1), we predicted that novel verbing and metaphor would be perceived as unfamiliar but nevertheless meaningful, especially if embedded in a supportive linguistic context (Bambini, Resta & Grimaldi 2014). Second (H2), we predicted that verbing and metaphor, in virtue of being both novel (and thus challenging) and effective (i.e., interpretable), would be perceived as aesthetically pleasing (Errington, Thye & Mirman 2022).

We created 81 novel instances of verbing, such as (1a), and 81 novel metaphors, such as (2a). Each creative expression was matched with a prototypical control (illustrating canonical/literal use), as in (1b) and (2b), and an anomalous (uninterpretable) control, as in (1c) and (2c).

(1) a. He used to skillet the onions

b. He used a skillet to fry the onions

c. He used else skillet the onions

(2) a. Her smile clattered to the floor

b. Her keys clattered to the floor

c. Her beach clattered to the floor

In the experiment ($N = 135$), each participant rated one version of each triplet (such as (1) and (2)) on a 7-point scale along one of three dimensions: familiarity, meaningfulness, and aesthetic pleasure. Half the participants read the expressions in isolation (no context), whereas the other half saw them embedded in a short poem (with context).

A linear mixed-effects analysis yielded main effects of condition on familiarity and meaningfulness, indicating that both verbing and metaphors were rated as less familiar (medians ≤ 2 out of 7) than prototypical controls but more meaningful (medians ≥ 4 out of 7) than anomalous controls (all $ps < .001$). For verbing, we also found a main effect of context on meaningfulness ($p = .046$), showing that verbing was rated as more meaningful when embedded in context. These results support H1.

Aesthetic pleasure showed an interaction between condition and context for metaphors, indicating that they were more pleasurable than prototypical controls when embedded in context ($p < .001$). In contrast, a main effect of condition emerged for verbing, indicating that it was perceived as less pleasurable than prototypical controls ($p < .001$), with no effect of context. Thus, H2 was only supported for metaphors but not for verbing.

These results demonstrate that creative verbing, similar to novel metaphors, is perceived as meaningful, especially in context. However, contrary to metaphors, verbing is not perceived as aesthetically pleasurable. This suggests that linguistic creativity is not a uniform construct, and that conclusions drawn from metaphor research should not be hastily generalized to other creative devices.

AI-mediated noticing of formulaic sequences: A usage-based study of learner conceptualization and chunking

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Formulaic sequences play a central role in usage-based models of language, where linguistic knowledge is understood as emerging from frequency, chunking, and the entrenchment of multiword units (Bybee, 2010; Ellis, 2012; Goldberg, 2006). In second language acquisition, however, learners often struggle to notice and categorize formulaic language (Köylü, Z., et al. 2024; Peters, 2016), tending instead to process input analytically at the level of individual words. While previous research has examined instructional techniques for promoting formulaic awareness, little is known about how AI-mediated annotation influences learners' conceptualization of formulaic sequences from a cognitive perspective.
This study investigates whether and how the use of generative AI as a noticing scaffold reshapes learners' identification and categorization of formulaic expressions in L2 texts. The project is grounded in a usage-based and cognitive linguistic framework, conceptualizing noticing as an indicator of emerging schematic representations and chunking processes. In addition, the study draws on theories of distributed cognition (e.g., Hollan et al., 2000), viewing learner–AI interaction as a joint cognitive system that alters the salience structure of the input. Participants were 23 intermediate learners of German enrolled in a university language course. Students completed a noticing task based on authentic journalistic texts. In Phase 1, learners independently highlighted expressions they perceived as formulaic (e.g., collocations, discourse markers, institutionalized phrases). In Phase 2, learners used a generative AI system to identify formulaic sequences in the same texts and were asked to compare, revise, and comment on differences between their own and the AI's output. Data include learner annotations, pre/post comparisons, and written metalinguistic reflections.
Quantitative analyses examine changes in the number, length, and type of sequences identified (e.g., bigrams vs. longer constructions), as well as overlap between learner and AI selections. Qualitative analyses focus on how learners justify their choices and how they reinterpret formulaicity after exposure to AI suggestions. Preliminary results indicate that AI mediation leads learners to attend to longer and more schematic units (e.g., in Bezug auf, eine Rolle spielen, es handelt sich um), suggesting a shift from lexeme-based to construction-based representations. Learner reflections further reveal increased awareness of discourse-level and pragmatic formulaicity, beyond purely lexical collocations.
The findings support the view that AI can function as a cognitive artifact that reorganizes perceptual salience and facilitates the entrenchment of multiword units. Rather than merely serving as an instructional tool, AI here acts as an external representational system that shapes learners' conceptualization of linguistic structure. The study contributes to cognitive linguistics by empirically linking AI-mediated interaction with core constructs such as noticing, chunking, and schematicity, and by offering a novel perspective on formulaic language as an emergent product of distributed cognition.

More interesting, the more you consider it: A cognitive approach to 'reversed' Comparative Correlatives

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The comparative correlative (CC) comprises two sub-clauses, C1 and C2 (1).

(1) [The more I read,]$_{C1}$ [the more I know.]$_{C2}$

Apart from the "canonical" (Hoffmann 2018: 192) C1C2 order (1), they can be "reversed" (McCawley 1988: 176) (2a); a variant also known in Spanish and Slovak (2b-c).

(2) a. [I know more,]$_{C2}$ [the more I read.]$_{C1}$

b.	[Entiendo	tanto	más]$_{C2}$	[cuanto	más	leo]$_{C1}$
	understand:I	TANTO	more	CUANTO	more	read:I
c.	[Rozumiem	tým	viac]C2	[čím viac	čítam]$_{C1}$	
	understand:I	TÝM	more	ČÍM more	read:I	

Previous corpus studies show a preference for C1C2 over C2C1, with ratios ranging from 15:1 to 37:1 in English (Hoffmann 2019; Hoffmann et al. 2020) and 40:1 in Slovak (Horsch 2020). This preference has been explained with the Principle of Iconicity (Bybee 2012: 529), i.e., the "(partial) motivation of a construction's form by its meaning" (Hoffmann 2019: 12): C1C2 is preferred because it "mirrors the semantic [cause-effect] interpretation" of the CC (Hoffmann 2018: 186). However, it remains unclear what function the C2C1 order serves (research question 1). Moreover, the CC highly infrequent. Hoffmann et al., for example, indicate a per-million-word ratio of 30-40 (2019: 32), with implications regarding the positive data problem: "just because a phenomenon cannot be found in a corpus, it cannot be concluded that it is ungrammatical" (Hoffmann 2011: 1). Therefore, it makes sense to corroborate previous studies with more and different types of data (research question 2). Finally, there is a lack of empirical evidence from more languages (research question 3). To address these questions, I opted for a corroborative approach using corpus data and acceptability ratings (Hoffmann 2006, 2011; Horsch 2023).

Corpus data comes from the Sketch Engine web corpora (enTenTen 15; esTenTen 18; skTenTen 11); for each language I drew a random sample of 5,000 tokens. The corpora were selected for maximum comparability; they were composed and annotated by the same researchers (Jakubíček et al. 2013). After removing false positives, a clear picture emerged (Table 1), with C1C2:C2C1 ratios of 35.9 (English), 21.6 (Spanish) and 36.6 (Slovak).

Furthermore, I collected acceptability judgments from 39 L1 English, 39 L1 Spanish and 40 L1 Slovak speakers using the Magnitude Estimation (ME) method (Bard et al. 1996; Cowart 1997; Hoffmann 2013). The data were collected by the author on-site (Trinity College Dublin, University of Santiago de Compostela, Comenius University in Bratislava) using pen-and-paper questionnaires. The questionnaires featured two training sessions to familiarize participants with the method, which allows participants to generate their own scales. Judgments were later normalized using z-scores to make them comparable; grammatical and ungrammatical fillers served as 'yardsticks' against which test items can be compared. I tested the variable ORDER (levels: C1C2, C2C1). Confirming the corpus study, my results (Figures 1-3 and Tables 2-4) show that across languages, C1C2 received better z-score ratings than C2C1, in line with the Principle of Iconicity (see above). However, mixed-effects modelling revealed ORDER to be significant only in Spanish and Slovak ($p < 0.001$***) but not in English ($p=0.07$ n.s.). Regarding the function(s) of the C2C1 order, I argue that since it retains the overall CC meaning it must differ regarding pragmatic function (cf. Goldberg's Corollary A to the Principle of No Synonymy (1995: 67)). That is, the C2C1 order results in "a contrastive focus on C2" and therefore "the semantics are foregrounded.

The probabilistic grammar of demonstrative them: A corpus study of semantic and functional variation in rap lyrics

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Being one of the most prominent music genres, rap has attracted considerable attention from linguists. Previous studies have primarily focused on lexis and found diffusion into other registers such as social media (Grieve et al. 2018). Morphosyntax, however, remains relatively underexplored. Notably, rap incorporates features of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) across ethnic boundaries, creating a unique morphosyntactic repertoire (Werner 2019). Given rap's lasting popularity and global reach, it is plausible that – similar to lexis – morphosyntactic features are also subject to diffusion across linguistic and geographic boundaries. To better understand the grammatical patterns encountered and potentially adopted by its listeners worldwide, the present study applies the concept of probabilistic grammar (e.g. Bresnan 2007) and investigates demonstrative variation in a newly compiled corpus of 57,105 American rap songs.

Probabilistic grammar assumes that syntactic knowledge is not categorical but governed by probabilities and aims to investigate factors driving the choice between functionally equivalent structural variants. The present study follows this approach by analysing the alternation between demonstrative them, these, and those in rap. It focuses on them, a widespread vernacular feature found in AAVE, Appalachian English, and numerous other varieties worldwide (Kortmann et al. 2020). The study therefore offers insights into how non-standard forms compete with standard variants in a culturally influential register. Demonstrative them is illustrated in (1).

(1) What y'all know about them Texas boys [Rob G: Texas Boys, 2004]

3,000 demonstrative contexts were extracted from the corpus and manually coded for semantic and functional variables. Analyses include mixed-effect modelling and random forests among other variationist methods. Independent variables encompass animacy, orientation (a novel predictor operationalized as an alternative to proximity in lyrics where spatial reference is often unavailable), syntactic function, presence of quantifiers, and phonological environment.

Results reveal that demonstrative choice is highly systematic and predominantly semantically conditioned. Animacy emerged as the strongest predictor, with these showing a pronounced preference for human referents (66.1%), while them and those favour non-human heads, with them showing a relative bias towards concrete heads (34.7%). Contrary to expectations based on the proximal-distal distinction, these occurs predominantly with non-speaker-oriented referents (76.5%), suggesting that cognitive accessibility and recognitional uses (Huddleston & Pullum 2002) override proximity effects in this register. A multinomial mixed-effects model of all three variants (predictive accuracy: 55.3%, $R^2 = 0.267$) demonstrates significant effects for all predictors when comparing them with these, while them and those show near-functional equivalence but marked semantic divergence.

By examining patterns in demonstrative variation, this study demonstrates that even in a culturally specific, vernacular-influenced register, grammatical choices follow systematic probabilistic patterns. Given rap's global reach and its documented influence on language use worldwide, these findings illuminate how non-standard morphosyntactic features operate in contexts that may facilitate diffusion beyond traditional geographic and social boundaries.

Theme Session: Konstruktionen in der Sprachlern- und -lehrforschung (S. Amorocho, H. Behrens, P. Gretsch, K. Madlener-Charpentier)

Die caused motion Konstruktion aus didaktischer Sicht: Lernschwierigkeiten, konstruktions- und korpusbasierte Lösungsansätze

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Aufgrund typologischer Divergenzen zwischen dem Italienischen als romanischer Sprache und dem Deutschen als germanischer Sprache (Cenoz 2003; Paradis 1987) stellt insbesondere der Erwerb der im Deutschen idiosynkratisch kodierten caused motion Konstruktion für italienische Lernende eine besondere Herausforderung dar. Häufig existieren im Italienischen keine wörtlichen Entsprechungen, da die zugrunde liegende syntaktische Struktur dort nicht in vergleichbarer Weise realisiert wird. Hinzu kommt die Frage nach den möglichen lexikalischen Füllern (Diessel 2017; Handwerker 2015), d. h. nach den Verben, die in dieser Konstruktion auftreten können und/oder mit konstruktionellen Slots kombiniert werden, die nicht Teil ihrer Valenz sind. Da die caused motion Konstruktion im Deutschen relativ häufig vorkommt, sollten Lernende sie zumindest auf der Rezeptionsebene beherrschen. Dies ist jedoch oft nicht der Fall – wie ein Pretest mit einer Gruppe italienischer Lernender (B2-/C1-Niveau) zeigt. Daher ist eine Methodologie, die das Verstehen und Erlernen dieser Konstruktion gezielt unterstützt, erforderlich. Unsere Präsentation schlägt hierfür einen konstruktionsbasierten und datengestützten Ansatz vor, der auf der unmittelbaren Arbeit der Lernenden mit Korpusdaten beruht. Konkret handelt es sich um data-driven learning (DDL; Gilquin 2021, 2022; Krekeler 2021), unterstützt durch Priming-Übungen und Visualisierung. Auf der Grundlage einer Belegsammlung aus der deutschen Presse sowie aus dem deutschen deTenTen20-Korpus der SketchEngine wird die caused motion Konstruktion zunächst im Rahmen der kognitiven Konstruktionsgrammatik (Goldberg 1995, 2006) beschrieben, wobei insbesondere auf jene Besonderheiten eingegangen wird, die für italienische Lernende typischerweise Schwierigkeiten bereiten. Im Anschluss wird eine DDL-Studie mit einer Gruppe italienischer Lernender (B2-/C1-Niveau) vorgestellt. Nach einem Pretest bekommen die Teilnehmenden eine Unterrichtseinheit, die eine Sammlung authentischer Korpusbelege der caused motion-Konstruktion mit visueller Unterstützung durch entsprechende Bilder präsentiert. Dabei wird insbesondere auf die möglichen verbalen Füller und/oder obliquen Elemente aufmerksam gemacht. In einem weiteren Schritt wird die abstrakte Konstruktion mit Hilfe von Priming-Übungen geübt, die darauf abzielen, Regelmäßigkeiten zu erkennen, typische Füller zu identifizieren und die Konstruktion funktional zu erschließen. Wie der unmittelbare Posttest mit den italienischen Lernenden zeigt, ist die Methode, die einen konstruktionsbasierten Ansatz mit einer direkten Auseinandersetzung mit Korpusdaten kombiniert, vielversprechend. Die Lernenden erzielen Fortschritte nicht nur auf der Rezeptionsebene, sondern sogar beim eigenständigen Ausfüllen möglicher verbaler Füller, die kontextuell abhängig sind.

Von metasprachlichem Wissen zu prozeduralem Können: Nominalgruppenausbau im Schreibunterricht

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TU Dresden

Vorliegende Lernerkorpusstudien zeigen, dass Schüler:innen in der Sekundarstufe I in schriftlichen Texten kaum Nominalisierungen und Attribute nutzen (u. a. Gamper 2022), obwohl ausgebaute Nominalgruppen für spezifische Sprachhandlungen (z. B. Erklären) besonders funktional sind (Feilke & Rezat 2021). Am Beispiel des Nominalgruppenausbaus adressiert der Beitrag die Frage, ob sich die Produktion schriftsprachlicher Konstruktionen durch ein gebrauchsbasiertes genre-didaktisches Unterrichtskonzept (Akın et al. 2021) mit expliziter sprachlicher Aufmerksamkeitslenkung (Madlener-Charpentier & Pagonis 2022) fördern lässt.

In einer Prä-Post-Interventionsstudie mit ein- und mehrsprachigen Schüler:innen der Jahrgangsstufe 8 (N=162) wurde das Verfassen von Lexikonartikeln bzw. das sprachliche Verdichten von Sachverhalten mittels ausgebauter nominaler Konstruktionen unterschiedlicher Komplexität eingeübt. Dabei wurden zwei Interventionstypen miteinander und mit einer Kontrollgruppe, die regulären Deutschunterricht erhielt, verglichen:

a) implizite Vermittlung: eine genre-didaktische Sequenz mit angereichertem Inputangebot an Nominalisierungen, Präpositional- und Genitivattributen,
b) explizite Vermittlung: die gleiche Sequenz mit zusätzlicher Aufmerksamkeitslenkung auf die genannten Strukturen.

Zur Elizitation ausgebauter Nominalgruppen wurden zwei Messinstrumente eingesetzt:

a) Satzebene: eine geschlossene Aufgabe mit Lückensätzen, in der gezielt ausgebaute nominale Konstruktionen unterschiedlicher Komplexität elizitiert wurden,
b) Textebene: eine offene Textproduktionsaufgabe (Lexikonartikel), für die die Verwendung ausgebauter nominaler Konstruktionen funktional ist.

Während die geschlossene Aufgabe Aufschluss darüber gibt, ob die jeweiligen Konstruktionen grundsätzlich beherrscht werden, macht die offene Aufgabe sichtbar, ob diese Konstruktionen bei der Textproduktion auch funktional genutzt werden (können).

Die Ergebnisse auf Satzebene zeigen, dass die Schüler:innen das sprachliche Verdichten von Sachverhalten mittels der elizitierten Konstruktionen prinzipiell beherrschen. Abhängig von ihrer Komplexität bestehen jedoch sowohl hinsichtlich der Zielsprachlichkeit der produzierten nominalen Konstruktionen als auch der Häufigkeit, mit der die Schüler:innen auf alternative Formulierungen zurückgreifen, Unterschiede. Bei der Produktion komplexerer Konstruktionen mit Nominalisierung, die insgesamt fehleranfälliger sind, nutzen die Schüler:innen vermehrt Attribute, während sie bei weniger komplexen Konstruktionen ohne Nominalisierung häufiger auf alternative Formulierungen zurückgreifen. Das deutet darauf hin, dass der Ausbau nominaler Konstruktionen durch den Ausdruck satzwertiger Satzverhalte besonders motiviert wird, für viele Schüler:innen der Jahrgangsstufe 8 aber noch herausfordernd ist. Zur grammatikdidaktisch zentralen Frage, ob unterrichtlich vermitteltes explizites metasprachliches Wissen über Form-Funktions-Zusammenhänge in implizites prozedurales Können bei der Textproduktion überführt werden kann, weisen die Ergebnisse darauf hin, dass eine funktional eingebettete explizite Aufmerksamkeitslenkung implizites prozedurales Können stärken kann. Auf Textebene produzieren die Schüler:innen der expliziten Vermittlungsgruppe nach der Intervention signifikant mehr Nominalisierungen als die Schüler:innen der Kontrollgruppe, in der impliziten Vermittlungsgruppe ist der Prä-Post-Zuwachs weniger deutlich. Hinsichtlich der Produktionsfrequenz von Präpositional- und Genitivattributen bleibt sowohl bei impliziter als auch bei expliziter Vermittlung ein signifikanter Interventionseffekt aus. Das deutet an, dass sich die Produktion schriftsprachlicher Konstruktionen bei kurzer Interventionszeit (3x 90 Minuten) grundlegend unterstützen lässt, messbare Veränderungen im attributiven Ausbau jedoch umfangreichere unterrichtliche Förderung erfordern. Explorative Analysen der Prä-Post-Ergebnisse geben zudem Hinweise darauf, dass sich die Wirksamkeit der expliziten Vermittlung in Abhängigkeit von den allgemeinsprachlichen Fähigkeiten der Schüler:innen unterscheidet. Nicht nur auf Textebene, sondern auch auf Satzebene sind bei sprachlich stärkeren Schüler:innen deutlicher Interventionseffekte erkennbar als bei sprachlich schwächeren Schüler:innen.

Gestaltung adaptiven Feedbacks zu argumentativen Lerner:innentexten auf der Grundlage einer konstruktionsbasierten Sprachbeschreibung

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Im Vortrag wird gezeigt, wie adaptives Feedback zu argumentativen Lerner:innentexten auf Grundlage einer konstruktionsbasierten Sprachbeschreibung modelliert werden kann. Der Vortrag basiert auf Daten aus einem interdisziplinär ausgerichteten DFG-Projekt, in dem das Ziel verfolgt wurde, Methoden für die Generierung automatisierten, adaptiven Feedbacks zu argumentativen Lerner*innentexten zu entwickeln, und folgende Forschungsfragen fokussiert wurden:

- Wie kann die Struktur argumentativer Lerner*innentexte mit computerlinguistischen Methoden erkannt werden?
- Wie lässt sich der Entwicklungsstand/das Kompetenzniveau des Textes bewerten?
- Wie kann adaptives, an den Entwicklungsstand/das Kompetenzniveau angepasstes Feedback generiert werden?

In einem ersten Schritt wurde ein Textkorpus bestehend aus 1320 argumentativen Lerner*innentexten auf mehreren Ebenen annotiert (vgl. Kilsbach et al., 2025), u.a. wurde auf der Mikroebene auf Textprozeduren zurückgegriffen, die sich als Konstruktionen textlicher Ordnungen für den Textaufbau auffassen lassen. In einem weiteren Schritt wurden die Texte qualitativ im Rahmen eines holistischen Ratings eingeschätzt, mit dem Ziel, Niveaustufen der Texte zu ermitteln.

Um ein lernförderliches und adaptives Feedback zu generieren, ist es erforderlich, das Feedback an bestimmten Niveaustufen zu orientieren. Mithilfe statistischer Analysen konnte auf Basis der Annotationen und des Ratings ermittelt werden, welche Textstrukturen, Textmuster und u.a. auch Textprozeduren für spezifische Niveaustufen in argumentativen Lerner:innentexten typisch sind. So zeigt sich etwa bei der Kategorie These, dass sie unabhängig von der Qualitätsstufe ein grundlegendes Qualitätsmerkmal darstellt – fehlt sie, erfolgt stets Feedback. Bei der Kategorie Einleitung hingegen deuten die statistischen Analysen darauf hin, dass ein Feedback zu dieser Kategorie erst ab Qualitätsstufe 2 relevant wird (vgl. Stahl et al., 2024; vgl. Rezat et al., 2025).

Im ersten Teil des Vortrags wird ein Überblick über die Projektschritte und zentrale Ergebnisse gegeben, um darauf aufbauend im zweiten Teil zu zeigen, wie die Ergebnisse der konstruktionsbasierten Sprachbeschreibung genutzt werden können, um ein passgenaues, adaptives Feedback, das textprozedural und an Niveaustufen ausgerichtet ist, zu modellieren. Das im Projekt entwickelte Verfahren leistet sowohl einen Beitrag zur konstruktionsbasierten Sprachvermittlung und -förderung also auch zur Entwicklung domänenspezifischer Feedback-Tools. Für den schulischen Kontext kann zwar auf ChatGPT oder spezifische Feedback-Tools zurückgegriffen werden, doch diese Tools sind in der Regel nicht mit spezifischen Schüler:innendaten trainiert worden, sodass die Adaptivität des Feedbacks bezogen auf eine spezifische Textsorte und Kompetenzniveaus kaum gegeben ist.

The acquisition of nominal inflection in German as L2 by deaf native signers of DGS: A case series study

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Acquiring nominal inflection in German is notoriously difficult, as relevant cues, especially to grammatical gender, are highly unreliable when seen in isolation. This holds for cues available at the noun, which are arguably accessible best for learners, but also for morphosyntactic cues, such as definite articles and adjective suffixes preceding the noun. Morphosyntactic cues overlap substantially both within inflectional paradigms (e.g. indefinite articles) and across paradigms (e.g. indefinite articles, adjectives) and are often reduced articulatorily. Interestingly, combinations of inflectional markers produce highly reliable cues, both paradigmatically (Bittner, 2006, Bebout & Belke, 2017) and syntagmatically (Szczepaniak, 2010). Attending to such groups of morphosyntactic cues is challenging, however, especially so in purely auditory contexts.

In the present study, we investigated the use of definite articles in a longitudinal corpus of written texts of three congenitally deaf children who acquired German as L2 via print only (Wagener, 2016). The texts consisted of retellings of videos that had been collected once a year between grades 5 to 9. Unlike most hearing children acquiring German as L2, congenitally deaf children are exposed to orthographically stable cues to grammatical gender from the start and are instructed by bilingual teachers in a language immersion setting (Hänel-Faulhaber & Wagener, in press).

We annotated all texts with a target hypothesis by correcting minimally any morphosyntactic and positional errors and dependency-parsed the resulting well-formed texts. This way, we obtained for each nominal inflectional marker and personal pronoun its grammatical function and its head, enabling us to compare the forms the children used with the target form. In addition, we analysed the children's spelling accuracy as a proxy of their statistical learning capacities. We found that the children spelt word stems highly accurately, suggesting that they picked up statistical regularities in the visual input effectively. They spelt the inflectional morphemes accurately, too, but frequently misplaced or omitted them, reflecting developmental processes at the morphosyntactic rather than the orthographic level, which are also reflected in their reading comprehension scores.

Analyses of the contexts in which incorrect morphemes were used showed that the children either used a marker from the wrong gender subclass but the right case or vice versa, and that errors violating gender and case simultaneously were rare. Note that due to the syncretism in the inflectional paradigms, some simultaneous errors in gender and case may remain undetected because they both yield the same surface form. In further analyses, we consider pronouns, too, seeking to study the extent to which the patterns seen for definite articles replicate. In terms of teaching the German nominal inflection system, we discuss how didactic approaches seeking to direct learners' attention to morphosyntactic cues to grammatical gender and its associated inflectional paradigms can support not only deaf children learning German via print but also hearing children learning to read based on existing phonological knowledge. We argue that for both groups, increasing the saliency of morphosyntactic information in print by means of highly structured texts, such as children's poems or songs, can foster proficiency in nominal inflection.

Constructions in L1 Grammar Teaching in Germany

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This presentation aims to discuss the potential benefits of a constructional approach to grammar teaching for L1 classroom settings in Germany. I will focus on an area of learning for which language educational research in Germany still has fairly little to offer in terms of scientifically grounded concepts, namely the area of procedural grammatical skills (knowing how) of older students in secondary school. In German L1 education, it was long assumed that procedural grammatical skills don't pose a specific problem for L1 learners, particularly in secondary school. Moreover, there was a common belief that difficulties regarding the procedural knowledge of grammatical constructions could be adressed through explicit descriptions of grammatical forms. Numerous studies have now demonstrated that this is not the case. Even adult L1 speakers can experience significant difficulties in understanding basic as well as more complex grammatical constructions (e.g. Dąbrowska 2012; Cristante 2016). A grammar teaching concept grounded in a usage-based cognitive linguistic framework offers the potential to bridge this gap. I will introduce such an approach and present the results of a quasi-experimental interventional study with 8th-grade students (n = 143) (Michel, forthcoming). The approach builds on two guiding principles of a cognitive linguistic understanding of grammar (Evans 2019: 565):

I. Linguistic (and thus also prototypical grammatical) units can be characterized as form-meaning pairings (symbolic thesis)
II. Grammatical knowledge arises through processes of abstraction from concrete instances of linguistic units in specific situations of language use (usage-based thesis)

The characterization of grammatical units as form-meaning pairings is not new in German L1 education (e.g. Funktionaler Grammatikunterricht, Köller 1997). What is new, however, is the usage-based approach and the emphasis on the importance of general cognitive processes (abstracting, categorizing, etc.) for language learning. Grammatical knowledge is then understood as the result of statistical, probabilistic learning processes based on these general cognitive processes. The interventional study presented in this talk demonstrates how statistical learning can be effectively supported, taking into account the following three considerations:

1. Skewed Input floods can support implicit, statistical learning processes (Madlener 2015, 2016; Madlener-Charpentier 2022)
2. By focusing on relevant semantic aspects of grammatical constructions through appropriate visualizations, a form-meaning mapping can be facilitated (Scheller 2008; Roche & Suñer Muñoz 2015; Gretsch 2016; Mayer 2024)
3. Providing sufficient variation in specific slots of an already acquired grammatical construction enables learners to progressively expand their constructional network (Tomasello 2000, 2022; Koch 2019)

The results of the study show that students' procedural grammatical skills can be significantly improved through a construction-grammar-based teaching approach – even after a relatively short training period (60 min total). The approach can be applied to other grammatical constructions. In German, these include for example object relative clauses (Hempel, forthcoming), active declarative sentences with non-canonical word order (Cristante 2016; Bader & Meng 2023) or certain passive sentences (Cristante 2016; Olthoff 2021).

Konstruktionale Ansätze in der Sprachvermittlung: eine Bestandsaufnahme
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Die Konstruktionsgrammatik (KxG) versteht sich seit ihren Anfängen nicht nur bzw. nicht primär als ein Grammatikmodell, sondern auch als eine Theorie sprachlichen Wissens und Lernens. Als solche lässt sie sich den gebrauchsbasierten Ansätzen zuordnen, die die nativistische Annahme eines angeborenen Spracherwerbsmechanimus ablehnen und stattdessen davon ausgehen, dass Sprache im und durch den Gebrauch erlernt wird (vgl. Backus 2020). Da es somit als entscheidend anzusehen ist, welche Erfahrungen Lernende mit der Sprache machen, kommt der Beschaffenheit des Inputs und der Beteiligung an sozialen Interaktionen eine zentrale Rolle beim Sprachenlernen zu.

Die konstruktionsgrammatischen Annahmen des Sprachenlernens wurden in einer Reihe von didaktischen Ansätzen aufgegriffen, die überwiegend das Lernen einer Fremdsprache adressieren (vgl. z.B. Holme 2010; Herbst 2016). In den vorgelegten didaktischen Überlegungen sind unterschiedliche Schwerpunktsetzungen zu erkennen, die in dem geplanten Vortrag dargestellt werden sollen.

a) Inputgestaltung und -verarbeitung: Gerade bei einem beschränktem Zugang zur Sprache oder bei Problemen mit der Sprachverarbeitung liegt es nahe, Frequenzen im Input zu optimieren, so dass sie ein Lernen der Zielkonstruktionen befördern (vgl. z.B. Schulz / Murphy / Wonnacott 2026). Zudem kann die Verarbeitung des Inputs durch Aufmerksamkeitslenkung verbessert werden (vgl. z.B. Madlener-Charpentier 2022, Kauschke 2022). Damit kommt dem impliziten Lernen eine entscheidende Bedeutung für die Sprachaneignung zu, das aber durch explizites Lernen unterstützt werden kann (vgl. z.B. Handwerker/Madlener 2009).
b) Konstruktionen im lexikogrammatischen Kontinuum: Mit der KxG geht eine Abkehr von einem "Wortschatz & Regeln"-Ansatz einher. Damit gerät verstärkt die Vermittlung von festen Mehrworteinheiten und von Konstruktionen in den Blick, die zwischen dem Lexikon- und dem Grammatik-Pol liegen (vgl. z.B. De Knop/Mollica 2016). Bei der Auswahl der zu vermittelnden Konstruktionen spielen Korpora eine wichtige Rolle (vgl. z.B. De Knop/Mollica 2022).
c) Konstruktionsbedeutungen: Da Konstruktionen Form-Bedeutungs-Paare bzw. Form-Funktion-Paare sind, muss mit der Form auch die Bedeutung der Konstruktion vermittelt werden. Ansätze, die der Kognitiven Linguistik nahestehen, nutzen visuelle Repräsentationen und Körpererfahrungen (emobodied learning), um abstrakte Bedeutungen zu vermitteln. Ziel ist es, die Konzeptualisierungsleistung einer Konstruktion zu veranschaulichen (vgl. z.B. De Knop 2025). Framesemantisch orientierte Zugänge wiederum ermöglichen es, die Besetzungsmöglichkeiten von Leerstellen sowie die Beziehungen zwischen Konstruktionen, die zu demselben Frame gehören, zu verdeutlichen (vgl. z.B. Boas 2022).
d) Handlungs- und Funktionsorientierung: Erweitert man den Fokus auf das sprachliche Handeln und die Beteiligung an Diskursen, stellt sich die Frage, welche Funktionen Konstruktionen für die Bewältigung kommunikativer Aufgaben haben. Dies schließt auch Überlegungen dazu ein, welche Konstruktionen im Rahmen welcher Textsorten und welcher kommunikativen Gattungen vermittelt werden (vgl. z.B. Amorocho/Pfeiffer 2023).

Die Effektivität konstruktionsdidaktischer Modellierungen wurde und wird in Experimenten und in Interventionsstudien überprüft (vgl. z.B. Gilqin 2021; Schulz/Murphy/Wonnacott 2026). Während die Ansätze zunächst vor allem das fremdsprachliche Lernen adressierten, gerät in aktuellen Projekten auch der Sprachausbau in der Erstsprache zunehmend in den Blick (vgl.

z.B. Amorocho/Pfeiffer eingereicht). Auch für die Sprachbildung im Fachunterricht bietet eine konstruktionale Perspektive große Potenziale, die bislang kaum genutzt werden.

Crosslinguistic Usage-Based Constructional Instruction (CrossUBICon) – evidence from a large-scale intervention study in authentic Spanish classes

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Crosslinguistic Usage-Based Constructional Instruction (CrossUBICon) combines Pedagogical Construction Grammar (e.g., De Knop 2025) and the Didactics of Plurilingualism (e.g., Candelier & De Pietro 2025) within a task-supported, hybrid teaching setting. In a randomized controlled field trial (RCT) (e.g., Connolly et al. 2017), the extent to which comparing motion verb constructions in different languages improves accuracy in written productions is examined. The RCT focuses on Spanish prepositions a ('to/at/on') and de ('from/of') after motion verbs, which are frequently omitted or confused in third or additional language acquisition (e.g., Kanli 2024). Two instructional packages of the unit "Planning a weekend in a Spanish city" were developed to improve the accuracy of preposition use: one intervention package foregrounds the function of these prepositions in different Spanish constructions explicitly through input enhancement (e.g., Sharwood Smith 1993) and animations (e.g., Scheller 2009). The second instructional package adds a plurilingual dimension, encouraging learners to compare Spanish constructions with those in their first language(s) and other foreign languages. The unit includes 'motion constructions' [Vmotion a/de N], where a and de have a concrete local meaning (e.g., Talmy 2000), and 'activity/event constructions' [ir de Nevent], such as ir de compras ('to go shopping'), which are described from synchronic and diachronic perspectives in a corpus study carried out by Kanli and Wiesinger (submitted). The RCT was conducted in 16 classes in secondary schools (academic track) in Baden-Württemberg. Participants were randomly assigned to the two intervention groups within each class. The 269 Spanish beginner learners were predominantly L1 German speakers at the age of 14 who study English, French or Latin and add Spanish as a third foreign language. A pre-post design with multiple assessment formats (e.g., cloze tests, writing tasks, stimulated recall) was employed, complemented by a language biography sheet (Kanli et al. 2025). The findings of this study support the hypothesis that the plurilingual intervention package is more effective than the monolingual one. These findings will be presented and discussed in this presentation, considering also the impact of students' language biographies and selected cognitive factors, such as their working memory capacity (OSpan) (Ruiz et al. 2019) and their Multilingual Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (MSILL) (Dmitrenko 2017), as well as students' perception of the intervention. Finally, the extent to which the intervention packages support the reconstruction of students' multilingual constructicon in the acquisition of Spanish as a third foreign language is debated (Höder, Prentice & Tingsell 2021).

Potenziale einer konstruktionsbasierten Sprachbeschreibung und -vermittlung im Französischunterricht - ein Abgleich mit aktuellen Lehrwerken am Beispiel des indirekten Objekts

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In diesem Beitrag soll das Potential einer gebrauchsbasierten, konstruktionsgrammatischen Sprachdidaktik (Amorocho/Pfeiffer 2023, Henk 2022) am Beispiel der Ditransitivkonstruktion bzw. des indirekten Objekts und seines Pronomens im Französischen als Fremdsprache im Vergleich zur herrschenden Praxis ausgelotet werden.

In einem ersten Schritt werden die Strukturen (konstruktions-)grammatisch sowie sprachkontrastiv im Hinblick auf ihre Herausforderungen für Lernende, v. a. mit deutscher Muttersprache beschrieben (Riegel/Pellat/Rioul 1994, Busse/Dubost ²1983, Siepmann/Bürgel/Diwersy 2017, Ellis/Römer/O'Donnell 2016, Klages/Pagonis 2025). In einem zweiten Schritt soll aus konstruktionsdidaktischer Sicht überlegt werden, wie eine Integration der Konstruktion in das lernersprachliche System befördert werden kann. Dabei werden verschiedene Faktoren beleuchtet, die von einem ersten Form-Meaning-Mapping hin zum Entrenchment und zur Generalisierung der Struktur führen können, z. B. die mögliche Rolle von gebrauchsfertigen Mehrworteinheiten/Chunks (Handwerker 2008, Aguado 2017) und prototypischer Realisierungen (Goldberg/Casenhiser 2008), die Inputquantität (zur Frequenz z.B. Ellis 2002, Ellis 2009: 144; Madlener-Charpentier 2025) und Inputqualität (Inputkonsistenz: Childers/Tomasello 2001, MacWhinney 2012, Cordes 2017; Type-Token-Ratio: Goldberg/Casenhiser 2008, Madle-ner 2015), die Fokussierung auf die Bedeutung (Henk 2022, Amorocho/Ender 2025) und Formen der Bewusst-machung.

Vor dem Hintergrund dieser Überlegungen soll in einem dritten Schritt die Darstellung der Doppelobjektkonstruktion bzw. des indirekten Objekts und des indirekten Pronomens in zwei aktuellen Lehrwerken des Französischen für das Gymnasium (Klett, Découvertes und Cornelsen, À plus!) untersucht werden. Dabei sollen unter anderem folgende Aspekte berücksichtigt werden:

- Mit welchen lexikalischen Füllungen sind die Konstruktionen im Lehrwerk vertreten? In welcher Häufigkeit?
- Gibt es im Input überproportional häufig vertretene bzw. prototypische lexikalische Realisierungen der Konstruktion? Wenn ja, welche?
- Wird die Generalisierung der Struktur durch die Vermittlung von gebrauchsfertigen, kommunikativ relevanten, Mehrworteinheiten/Chunks angebahnt?
- In welchen Schritten erfolgt die Einführung von indirektem Objekt und indirekten Objektpronomen?
- Mit welchen Materialien/Verfahren erfolgt die Kognitivierung/Bewusstmachung der Strukturen?
- Welches Übungsmaterial steht zur Verfügung, um den Gebrauch der Strukturen zu trainieren?

Durch den Abgleich der konstruktionsdidaktischen Annahmen mit den Befunden aus den Lehrwerken sollen zunächst Schwächen (und ggf. auch Stärken) der momentanen Lehrwerkspraxis aufgedeckt werden. Abschließend werden Optionen für eine erwerbsförderlichere Behandlung der Konstruktionen im lehrwerksgestützten Französischunterricht formuliert und diskutiert.

Textkonstruktionen und Textbewertungen im Deutschunterricht. Zur Rechtfertigung schriftsprachlicher Normen aus konstruktionsdidaktischer Perspektive am Beispiel der Erörterung.

Prof. Dr. Hans-Georg Müller
Uni Potsdam

Eines der entscheidendsten Postulate des konstruktionsgrammatischen Paradigmas besteht darin, Sprache ebenenübergreifend mithilfe eines einzigen, rekurrenten Beschreibungsinstrumentes, der Konstruktion, zu modellieren (Ziem & Lasch, 2013, S. 18). Diese Annahme impliziert, dass sich auch sprachliche Makrostrukturen wie Texte als Form-Bedeutungs-Paare auffassen lassen, die konventionalisierte sprachliche Formen verwenden, um gezielt sprachliche Funktionen zu erfüllen, i. e. Bedeutung zu kommunizieren. Gegenstand einer konstruktionsgrammatisch orientierten Didaktik muss es mithin sein, die Entwicklung von Textkompetenz als Entwicklung der Fähigkeit zu begreifen, Konstruktionen der Textebene so zu verwenden, dass die eingesetzten sprachlichen Formen den intendierten kommunikativen Funktionen möglichst optimal dienen.

Für dieses sprachdidaktische Ziel, das weit älter ist als das konstruktionsgrammatische Paradigma, haben sich im Laufe der historischen Entwicklung des Muttersprachunterrichts verschiedene Arbeitspraktiken entwickelt, die sich in didaktisch motivierten Textmustern niederschlagen und deren Funktion nicht primär in der Kommunikation von Bedeutung liegt, sondern vielmehr in der kriteriengeleiteten Erprobung dieser Kommunikation. Die dabei eingesetzten Bewertungskriterien lassen sich als institutionelle Normen auffassen, anhand derer die Qualität des produzierten Textes objektiviert wird – so zumindest der theoretische Anspruch.

Indem das konstruktionsgrammatische Paradigma einen konsequenten Form-Bedeutungs-Bezug postuliert, erlaubt es eine kritische Perspektive auf schulische Textmuster und ihre Bewertungskriterien, die im Zentrum des geplanten Vortrages stehen. Denn Ansprüche an die formale Ausgestaltung schulischer Übungstexte erlangen genau dann didaktische Relevanz und mithin gerechtfertigtes normatives Potenzial, wenn sich ihre Bedeutsamkeit für die Umsetzung schriftsprachlicher Funktionen und die Erreichung kommunikativer Ziele nachweisen lässt. Im geplanten Vortrag werden am Beispiel des schulischen Textmusters „Erörterung“ mithilfe von Lehrwerksanalysen zunächst die formalen und funktionalen Merkmale herausgearbeitet, die diesem Textmuster zugrunde liegen. Sie bilden die Basis für die Darstellung und Kritik derjenigen schriftsprachlichen Normen, die sich in typischen, erörterungsbezogenen Bewertungskriterien niederschlagen und ebenfalls aus der unterrichtspraktischen Literatur (Schulbücher, Begleitmaterialien, Übungshefte etc.) herausgearbeitet werden. Dabei zeigt sich, dass entscheidende Teile der im Deutschunterricht vermittelten textmusterbezogenen Normen allenfalls hinreichende, kaum jedoch notwendige Kriterien einer gelingenden schriftsprachlicher Kommunikation darstellen.

Im Anschluss wird skizziert, wie sich der Umgang mit Textbewertungen vor dem Hintergrund des konstruktionsdidaktischen Paradigmas ändern muss, um didaktisch gerechtfertigt zu bleiben. Kern dieses Änderungsprozesses ist es, schulische Bewertungskriterien nicht mehr als Normen, sondern vielmehr als Konventionen zu begreifen, also als mögliche formale Lösungen für funktionale Probleme der Textebene, die keinen Anspruch auf singuläre Gültigkeit erheben dürfen (Müller, i. Dr.). Stattdessen müssen formale Abweichungen von konventionalisierten schulischen Textmustern genau dann als didaktisch akzeptabel gelten, wenn sich ihre funktionale Ebenbürtigkeit konstruktionsgrammatisch nachweisen lässt.

When Constructicons Collide: Konstruktionelle Erwerbsmuster in der L2

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Sprachliche Strukturen werden gebrauchsbasiert erworben, das Erlernen einer Erst- oder Zweitsprache ist grundsätzlich Konstruktionslernen (Tomasello 2003, de Knop 2025, Ellis 2013, Herbst 2016). Im Gegensatz zum L1-Lernen trifft der Input im L2-Lernen aber auf ein bereits bestehendes, mit dem Input nicht direkt kompatibles Konstruktikon (das der L1). Auf der Konstruktionsebene ergeben sich damit verschiedene Ausgangskonstellationen, mit denen wir uns anhand deutschsprachiger Englischlernender theoretisch und empirisch auseinandersetzen: a) einer L2-Konstruktion steht eine L1-Konstruktion mit einer vergleichbaren Grundbedeutung/-funktion gegenüber, die aber semantisch enger oder breiter als die in der L2 ist und/oder die im Detail unterschiedliche Beschränkungen hat (z.B. die Ditransitivkonstruktionen im Englischen und Deutschen, siehe Goschler/Stefanowitsch (2024), Stefanowitsch/Goschler (im Druck); b) eine L2-Konstruktion hat keine solche Entsprechung in der L1 — ihre Bedeutung und Funktion sind dort auf eine Vielzahl unterschiedlicher Ausdrucksmittel verteilt (z.B. analytische Kausativkonstruktionen, die in der englischen Grammatik eine zentrale Rolle spielen, im Deutschen dagegen völlig fehlen); c) einer L2-Konstruktion entsprechen in der L1 zwei oder mehr Konstruktionen, die den Funktionsbereich der L2-Konstruktion unter sich aufteilen (z.B. das englische [SUBJ feel ADJ], dem im Deutschen u.a. die Konstruktionen [NPDATIVE sei-3P.Sg ADJ, z.B. mir ist warm], [NPDATIVE geh- es ADJ, z.B. mir geht es gut] und [SUBJ fühl- REFL ADJ, z.B. ich fühle mich sicher]); d) eine L1-Konstruktion entspricht in der L2 zwei (oder mehr) Konstruktionen, die den Bedeutungsbereich der L1-Konstruktion unter sich aufteilen (z.B. das englische will- und going-to-Futur, denen im Deutschen das werden-Futur entspricht); Für diese Konstellationen sind unterschiedliche Erwerbsmuster zu erwarten, da das vorhandene L1-Wissen aus der Erstsprache und L2-Input unter dem Einfluss genereller kognitiver Prinzipien wie Kategorisierung und Generalisierung zusammenwirken und jeweils schnelleres oder langsameres bzw. sogar eingeschränktes Lernen der Zielkonstruktion begünstigen. Wir besprechen anhand mehrerer Pilotstudien erste Beobachtungen für die verschiedenen Konstellationen. Wir zeigen zunächst mittels Lernerkorporadaten, ob, wie häufig und mit welchen lexikalischen Präferenzen Lernende die Konstruktionen im Vergleich zu Lernenden anderer Erstsprachen und zu L1-Sprecher/-innen benutzen und bilden dann Hypothesen zum Zusammenspiel L1-Wissen und L2-Input, die mit Elizitations- und Judgment-Tasks überprüft werden.

The role of lexical items in Construction Grammar

Prof. Dr. Thomas Herbst
Friedrich Alexander Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg

In this talk, I would like to throw some light on the place of lexical items and other low level constructions in a model of Construction Grammar, and in particular the relation between these constructions and constructions that entail a higher level of abstraction. This will involve discussing such concepts as word, lexeme, lexical unit and lexical item.
Based on the architecture of the constructionist approach to syntactic analysis (CASA) proposed by Herbst and Hoffmann (2024), it will be shown that only a very small number of sentence type constructions and information structure constructions can be described appropriately without reference to the specific lexical units which occur in them.
In English and in many other languages, a considerable number of so-called grammatical constructions are bound to lexical material (English passive cxn: BE + V-en; perfective cxn: HAVE + V-en; progressive cxn: BE + V-ing). It will be argued that – and this fits in nicely with the constructionist view of there being no sharp dividing line between lexis and grammar – distinctions such as that between auxiliaries be or have and a lexical verbs be and have are maybe not as clear-cut as it may seem.
The principle that words are learnt in and with the constructions in which they occur (Behrens 2011: 382) has a number of important implications concerning

I. the wisdom of the notion of dual class membership function words such as enough, before and even the,
II. the description of multi-word units such as with respect to or except for (and, of course, let alone),
III. the integration of lexical items in the form of collo-profiles in the description of abstract constructions such as argument structure construction (Goldberg 2019; Goldberg & Herbst 2021) based on the method of collostructional analysis; Stefanowitsch & Gries 2003, Gries & Stefanowitsch 2004)

Finally, a few suggestions will be made as to how the different aspects of the impact of lexical items on more general constructions can be taken account of in the description of constructions, construction grids, constructiCons and Pedagogical Construction Grammar in general.

Theme Session: Computational approaches to language dynamics (B. Bunzeck & S. Hartmann)

The German ditransitive construction as a network of exemplars

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In recent years, Construction Grammar (CxG) research has increasingly focused on the representation of grammatical knowledge within constructional networks. However, as Ungerer & Hartmann (2023) observe, network diagrams in CxG research are usually “small, simplified illustrations of the theoretical network architecture rather than detailed descriptions of their empirical reality” (Ungerer & Hartmann 2023: 41). I will address this issue a study analysing the internal organisation of the German ditransitive construction as it emerges from natural language data.

Ditransitive constructions typically convey a sense of physical transfer from a subject to a recipient and consist of four open slots for lexical items, e.g. I give you some flowers. The analyses of this construction are based on child-directed speech in longitudinally sampled everyday adult-child interactions (Leo corpus, Behrens 2006). All exemplars of the ditransitive construction in the input were extracted from the corpus and coded for their lexical fillers in the four slots and their word order.

Using a pre-trained word2vec model (German fastText, Grave et al. 2018), all lexical items in the exemplars are represented as semantic vectors. The vectors of words appearing in similar contexts in the training data point in similar directions. As a result, the cosine of the angle of two word vectors can be used to determine the semantic similarity of the words. For all pairs of exemplars, the cosine similarity of their lexical items is combined into a single similarity score. Exemplars sharing the same word order receive an additional word order bonus for their overall similarity score. In the resulting network, all exemplars are represented as nodes and the edges between them are weighted according to their overall similarity score, so that exemplars that are more similar in terms of their lexical items, semantics and word order are connected by stronger links than less similar exemplars.

The results show that the network is overall moderately low interconnected, indicating high degrees of variability in the exemplars of the construction. At the same time, the construction is prototypically structured around a core cluster of exemplars connected by highly frequent pronouns in the subject and indirect object position. This approach thus presents a computational method for modelling the internal structure of constructional networks as they emerge from natural language data.

Can structural priming cause or inhibit language change? An agent-based model

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Syntactic or structural priming, the temporary increase in production probability of a recently heard construction, is widely accepted in linguistics as a fleeting effect, with evidence from experiments (Mahowald et al. 2016) and corpus data (Szmrecsanyi 2005; De Smet & Van de Velde 2017) showing robust effects across languages and modes. While some studies suggest that priming could influence construction entrenchment (Kaschak 2007) and can even persist for a week (Heyselaar & Segaert 2022), empirical challenges complicate the study of its role in long-term language change. The first complicating factor is the inverse frequency or inverse preference effect (Ferreira & Bock 2006): highly infrequent constructions will incur a comparatively large priming effect, a result of the supposed surprisal of the infrequent form (Chang, Dell & Bock 2006). This implies that priming simultaneously favours both high-frequency and low-frequency constructions. The second challenge is moreso practical, as it is difficult to design long-term experimental studies for studying priming. Finally, the lack of a “clean room” in empirical studies, paired with the rather subtle effects of priming, makes it difficult to isolate any relation between priming and language change.

To overcome these issues, we built an agent-based simulation of structural priming, where virtual speakers, so-called agents, talk to each other, and cause priming effects. Inspired by the two-stage competition model (Segaert, Wheeldon & Hagoort 2016, the most complete model of structural priming to date), our agents track both a base rate and an activation level for the two constructions in alternation. The base rate is a reflection of the long-term entrenchment of both constructions, while the activation levels encode the short-term activation of those same constructions, though these levels always decay back to the base rate. To mimic the supposed inherent advantage of the innovative construction ("replicator selection", Blythe & Croft 2012), we slightly boost the probability for producing that construction. Additionally, we simulate the inverse preference effect by tuning the effect of priming on activation based on the relative frequency and thus surprisal of a construction.

Our results show that, in case of high-frequency alternations (appearing in 40% of speaking turns), the inverse frequency effect can boost the initial growth of the innovative construction. However, once the innovative construction becomes dominant (>50%), the old construction gains the inverse frequency advantage. When the inherent advantage of the innovative construction is low, the surprisal of the old construction can cause the spread of the innovative construction to stall. In low-frequency alternations (appearing in 1% of speaking turns), speaking turns occur too seldom for priming to have a long-term effect on the base rate, and the spread of the innovative construction is never inhibited.

Our simulation results show that our current view on priming as a frequency-positive effect might be naive, as priming might also work against the frequency of a construction. Additionally, we successfully show how computer simulations can be used to reason about linguistic questions that are difficult to study empirically.

GPT lost the chocolate: False-belief reasoning across LLMs, literate and illiterate adults

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Theory of Mind (ToM), particularly the ability to attribute false beliefs to others, has long been considered a central feature of human social cognition (Premack and Woodruff, 1978). Recently, however, large language models (LLMs) have shown surprisingly and increasingly strong performance on false-belief (FB) tasks, leading to growing debates about whether these systems exhibit human-like social reasoning. Importantly, currently all existing comparisons of Theory of Mind skills between humans and LLMs rely on data from highly educated Western populations, raising concerns about overgeneralizations derived from WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, Democratic) samples (Henrich et al., 2010). The present study addresses this gap by comparing LLMs against adult Turkish speakers with different literacy backgrounds, thereby incorporating a non-WEIRD population into this emerging discussion.
Participants included 35 literate and 41 illiterate adult native speakers of Turkish (Gedik et al. under review), as well as three current LLM models: GPT-5.4, GPT-5.4 Mini, and GPT-5.4 Nano. The FB tasks (Arslan et al., 2017, see Appendix) consisted of two illustrated stories administered orally in Turkish, each requiring participants to infer one character's belief about another character's belief, alongside providing verbal justifications for their responses. To ensure methodological comparability, the same FB task procedure used with human participants was adapted for GPT, including the presentation of the original visual stimuli accompanying each scenario. Model responses were collected through the application programming interface (API), and we tested each model 50 separate times. In addition to standard FB comprehension questions, participants and models also provided justification responses explaining their answers.
Findings reveal differences and overlap across groups (see Appendix). Literate participants demonstrated the highest and most stable performance in comparison to illiterate speakers ($M= 4.54$, $SD= 1.46$) , whereas illiterate participants performed substantially lower overall ($M= 1.10$, $SD= 1.41$, $p < .005$, Cohen's $d= 2.40$). Among the LLMs, GPT-5.4 showed near-ceiling performance comparable to literate adults ($M= 5$, $SD=0$, $p=.073$,Cohen's $d=0.498$), GPT-5.4 Mini demonstrated intermediate performance ($M= 3.86$, $SD= 0.904$, $p=.0175$, Cohen's $d=0.586$), and GPT-5.4 Nano performed considerably worse ($M= 0.86$, $SD=0.639$, $p < .005$, Cohen's $d= 3.485$). These findings suggest that performance on standard FB tasks may reflect a broader combination of linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural factors beyond social-cognitive reasoning alone, complicating direct comparisons between humans and LLMs. We also analyzed responses to the justification questions to find the common error patterns across groups. The most common error of humans and LLMs was to fixate on the prior statement rather than giving mental-state reasoning. Also, LLM errors were more often driven by salient story cues, such as object or action details, whereas human errors were more often driven by motivational or emotional explanations, especially in the illiterate group (see Appendix).
Together, these findings suggest that similar levels of performance on standard FB tasks may emerge from substantially different underlying mechanisms in humans and LLMs. More broadly, the study highlights the importance of incorporating non-WEIRD populations into human–AI comparisons before drawing conclusions about human-like social reasoning in artificial systems.

Modelling (aspects of) speech production and perception

Dr. Daniel Duran
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At the beginning of the 20th century, Semon was one of the first to describe an exemplar theory of memory and perception. “Exemplar Theory” (ET) never was and still is not a coherent theory but an umbrella term for related models of speech production and perception — their underlying hypothesis being that linguistic knowledge is based on a collection of detailed episodic memory traces which are employed in perception and/or production and continuously reshaped by experience and usage.

Since the 1980s researchers like Hintzman, Nosofsky or Goldinger developed models of speech production, coinciding with developments of usage-based approaches in cognitive sciences, psychology and linguistics by Bybee, Wedel, Ambridge and others. These have been picked up in phonetics and phonology, especially by Johnson and Pierrehumbert. A still growing body of work has since developed in research on various phenomena of the dynamics and systematic variability in speech. Connectionist ET implementations have been proposed already in the early 1990s, for example by Krushke. Work on ET in phonetics and phonology was always accompanied by computational modelling and simulation experiments. Yet, only recently have powerful deep neural network architectures like transformer-based large language models (LLMs) been developed which offer unprecedented opportunities to implement ET models.

I will review and discuss the development of ET with a focus on phonetic models of speech production and perception. Based on current advancements in the field of artificial neural networks, I will outline ongoing work which picks up earlier attempts of computational ET models and discuss issues within the scope of the creative production (and perception) of novel phonetic forms. This presentation focuses on the following questions in the context of phonetics and phonology: How can ET models account for usage-based phenomena like frequency effects (distinguishing between low and high frequency syllables in production or perception, for example) and at the same time for the dynamic adaptation in relation to the speech of an interlocutor in phonetic convergence or according to varying situative contexts (e.g. Duran & Lewandowski, 2020; Duran et al., 2025 or Oschkinat et al., 2025) or — the focus of current ongoing research — for the production of novel phonetic forms? How did Exemplar Theory account for individual psychological, cognitive as well as social factors in the dynamics of spoken language and how can computational models be implemented benefiting from the state of the art in Large Language Models?

Child-directed speech facilitates production, not comprehension, in BabyLMs

Bastian Bunzeck; Prof. Sina Zarrieß
Bielefeld University

Recent studies suggest that child-directed speech is not conducive to language learning in BabyLMs. However, current evaluations focus predominantly on comprehension and not production, which is central to usage-based theories of language acquisition which argue how CDS facilitates early language use through constructional "frames" (frequent lexical patterns with open slots). We introduce a novel generation-based evaluation inspired by such theories in form of a frame-completion task, and compare Llama models trained with CDS, the BabyLM corpus, and web-crawl data (FineWeb-edu) on comprehension benchmarks and our novel framework. Our results reveal a clear dissociation between models' comprehension and production capabilities: while FineWeb-trained models excel at minimal pairs, CDS-trained models produce grammatical completions substantially earlier in training and concentrate probability mass on appropriate slot-fillers. These findings show that comprehension benchmarks underestimate what CDS affords to BabyLMs.

Rise and restriction of the genitive apostrophe in German. Assessing the impact of stigmatisation using agent-based modeling

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The extent to which metalinguistic activities of a particular linguistic phenomenon affect its dynamics is a pivotal question in sociolinguistics. Depending on the phenomenon examined, linguists attribute a major influence of language-reflective assessments on both the usage and development of linguistic constructions. There is still, however, no uniform methodology how a proof of an effect can be provided (e.g. Davies & Langer 2006). New light can be shed on this issue through computational approaches, e.g. agent-based simulations, which have thus far mainly been applied to sound change and morphological change (see e.g. Pijpops, Beuls & Van de Velde 2015; Sevenants & Speelman 2021; Jochim & Kleber 2024). In our talk, we will examine the potential of such models for investigating diachronic developments in written-language usage patterns by using the diffusion of the genitive apostrophe in German as an example (cf. Tim's Leihwagen 'Tim's rental car').

The genitive apostrophe is a highly stigmatized and salient phenomenon in the discourse on linguistic correctness in German. Although the sign has a long history of metalinguistic activities, there is an ongoing debate on whether or not stigmatization might have had an impact on its diffusion and usage (e.g. Ewald 2006 vs. Kempf 2019). Since there is a consensus that the interplay between language change and metalinguistic intervention can only be investigated when both the linguistic as well as metalinguistic diachrony are taken into account (e.g. Konopka 1996), the present study relies on a corpus study based on data from the German Text Archive (DTA) and a systematic examination on language-reflective activities on the phenomenon of interest, both ranging from the 18th century until the beginning of the 20th century. Drawing on nearly 65,000 prenominal genitive constructions annotated for apostrophization and an overview of relevant grammars, school spelling books, and official conference resolutions, the two developments were thoroughly investigated.

In a second step, we model these real-world conditions in an agent-based simulation to explore the influence of metalinguistic discourse on language change, as such models allow us to represent otherwise unobservable complex social dynamics. To this end, we model agents as text-producing entities that decide whether to use the genitive apostrophe based on their current beliefs about readability and stigmatization, while also being subject to social-normative influence and uncertainty. These text formats – which differ with respect to characteristics such as impact or reach – may then be read by other agents, who in turn update their beliefs. In addition to exposure through reading and social influence stemming from the agents' geographically structured social network, these beliefs are also subsequently altered by orthographic conferences and school teaching. This corpus-informed agent-based model enables us to simulate various scenarios under different parameter settings and thereby identify the combinations of parameters that best fit the linguistic data. Our approach should allow us assess the plausibility of competing opinions about the influence of metalinguistic activities on language use in the present case study.

The evolution of concreteness in the English lexicon: New perspectives from sense-level analyses

Prof. Dr. Andreas Baumann; Michelle van de Bilt; Stefan Hartmann
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Lexical concreteness is a variable figuring prominently in the study of language acquisition and change (Raviv et al., 2021; Winter & Srinivasan, 2022; Baumann & Hartmann, 2026). We present an altered replication of Snefjella et al. (2019), who test whether, as English has been used increasingly for exoteric communication, its lexicon has become more concrete. Employing an embedding-based algorithm from Hamilton et al. (2016), they reconstructed lexical concreteness scores for each decade from 1850 to 2010 by inferring a word's concreteness in a decade from semantically near words whose concreteness was assessed from Brysbaert et al.'s (2014) ratings. Their findings indicate (i) an overall increase in lexical concreteness and (ii) a higher concretization rate in high-frequency words compared to low-frequency ones.

Rather than relying on historical embeddings, our replication adopts a sense-based approach, capturing differences in concreteness across various senses of polysemous words. Using decade-wise sense probabilities (Hu et al. 2019) and Brysbaert et al.'s (2014) contemporary concreteness lexicon, we indirectly infer a word's concreteness from the present-day English descriptions of its senses.

Our results only partly align with Snefjella et al.'s (2019). While for most mid-frequency words, a concretization bias is retained, largely confirming (i), that bias is about one order of magnitude smaller than Snefjella et al. (2019) report. More strikingly, the positive effect of frequency on the concretization rate vanishes in the sense-based setting, thus providing no support for (ii). We argue that different methodological approaches may be complementary: they may reveal opposing aspects of lexical change that push a language toward concreteness or abstraction over time.

Challenges in the Computational Detection of Metaphoric Change in Less-Resourced Languages: A Case Study of Technology-Related Expression in Polish

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Metaphor is one of the primary drivers of semantic change (Anderson 2017). Among the various approaches used to investigate this phenomenon (Díaz-Vera 2015; Anderson et al. 2016), computational methods have shown increasing promise in the automatic detection of metaphorical change (e.g. Schlechtweg et al. 2017; Hills & Miani, in press). A major challenge for computational studies of historical semantic change, however, is the limited size of available datasets. In this study, we investigate the semantic development of 60 words from the domain of science and technology across two corpora of historical Polish: Korpus Barokowy (Kieraś et al. 2017; henceforth KorBa) and the corpus of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Polish (Łaziński et al. 2023; henceforth PL19). KorBa comprises approximately 438,000 tokens, while PL19 contains nearly 540,000 tokens. By current standards, both corpora are considered small (Derwojedowa 2020). We focus on the semantic domain of science because scientific and technological metaphors emerged relatively recently, unlike figurative expressions based on natural phenomena such as fire or cold. This increases the likelihood of observing the emergence of metaphorical meanings in historical corpora, rather than merely identifying already conventionalised metaphors. In addition, scientific and technological metaphors often diffuse from specialised discourse into everyday language (Knudsen 2002; Semino 2008). To determine whether words acquire metaphorical meanings, we employ two computational approaches: word embeddings and topic modelling. Word embeddings represent words as multidimensional vectors derived from their distributional contexts (Jurafsky & Martin 2023) and can therefore serve as operationalisations of lexical meaning. Comparing the contexts in which words occur across time periods makes it possible to track semantic change (Hamilton et al. 2016). We trained separate embeddings for KorBa and PL19 using polBERT (Kłeczek 2020). Our results indicate that, although semantic shift is observable for most items, the acquisition of metaphorical meanings is restricted to only a small subset. Topic modelling identifies latent topics by clustering semantically related words within a corpus (Churchill & Singh 2022), an approach previously applied in diachronic linguistics (Lau et al. 2012). Changes in the topical clusters associated with a word may therefore indicate semantic change. We employ Non-negative Matrix Factorisation to extract topics (Chen et al. 2019). The results suggest that the target words are generally used in a wider range of contexts in PL19. For example, the word rama 'frame' occurs primarily in legal texts, especially documents concerning personal property, in KorBa, whereas in PL19 it appears in a broader range of textual environments. The automatic processing of corpora such as KorBa and PL19 poses substantial methodological challenges due to their limited size. Although small corpora restrict the extent to which broad generalisations can be drawn (Derwojedowa 2020), careful optimisation of model parameters and the selection of appropriate machine-learning algorithms can mitigate some of these limitations. More broadly, our findings demonstrate that computational approaches can provide valuable insights into metaphorical change even when only relatively small historical corpora are available.

Theme Session: Dissolving boundaries (V. Del Vecchio, L. Tramutoli, M. Di Salvo, A. Backus)

Mixed copies as an evidence of a continuum between lexicon and morphosyntax (on the example of English-Estonian bilingual speech)

Prof. Anna Verschik PhD
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Among various models of codeswitching and contact-induced language change the Code-Copying Framework (CCF, Johanson (2002)) remains less known. Yet CCF accurately describes a phenomenon between lexicon and morphosyntax that has been overlooked in other models. In CCF, the cognitive mechanism is not “borrowing” or “transfer” but copying. Properties of an item can be copied globally (form + meaning), selectively (meaning, combinational rules etc.) and in a mixed form (mixed copies, MC): English time span → Estonian aja spänn, where the combination of items and overall meaning comes from English, one component is a global (spänn), the other a selective copy (aeg ‘time’, genitive aja). Thus, MCs take an intermediate position of the continuum between global and selective copies. MC of fixed expressions may affect morphosyntax (“frame-changing MC”): the MC of the construction Adj superlative + N + ever yields an unconventional word order in Estonian: parim stiil ever ‘the best style ever’. Thus, CCF provides a unified terminology for all contact phenomena, overcoming a different treatment of code-switching and non-lexical phenomena in contact linguistics.

The aim of the study is to identify English-Estonian MCs. The data comes from the vlogs and podcasts of young Estonians (30 hours of footage, ~270,000 tokens). There are 3,618 copies (6 copies per 1,000 words), 184 are MCs. All MCs in the data are compound nouns like nude-roosa ‘nude pink’, Estonian heleroosa), reality-saade ‘reality show’, Estonian tõsielusaade. Compounding is a productive mechanism in both languages. MCs of phrasal verbs like kukkus off ‘fell off’ (Estonian kukkus maha, English fell off) or frame-changing MCs are absent in our data but attested elsewhere in Estonian-English bilingual speech (Verschik et al. 2024). Other Estonian-English bilingualism data have to be analysed in order to obtain a full typology of MCs.

Speakst Du English? Morphological Code-mixing in German-English bilingual children

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Mixing languages is one of the more salient phenomena that result from bilingualism (e.g., Gardner-Chloros 2009). From a usage-based perspective, children's mixed utterances are not random but are grounded in productive lexico-grammatical constructions, where open slots in frame-and-slot patterns are filled with lexical material from the other language (Quick et al. 2021). In many cases, these patterns predominantly come from one of the languages, creating the asymmetry often found in adult code-mixing known as the 'matrix language effect' (Myers-Scotton 1997, see Wasserscheidt 2020 for a critical discussion). Building on this perspective, the present study investigates morphological code-mixing, defined as the combination of morphemes from two languages within a single word, in the spontaneous speech of young German–English bilingual children, with a focus on how such patterns emerge from usage and input.

We propose that children acquire morphology in a bottom-up fashion, beginning with unanalyzed forms and gradually abstracting recurring patterns such as German VERB-en infinitives or English NOUN-s plurals. With increasing exposure, these patterns become entrenched and productive, allowing children to extend them analogically across languages. This process is reflected in morphological mixes such as jumpen ('jump' + German infinitive marker), wrinkelig ('wrinkle' + German adjective marker), and feete ('feet' + German plural marker), which illustrate how children integrate cross-linguistic material into emergent schemas.

The study draws on longitudinal naturalistic data from three simultaneous bilingual children, Fion, Silvie, and Lily (ages 2–3), comprising 109,815 utterances. All children were raised in Germany under a one-parent–one-language approach, but their input conditions differed in the relative proportion and distribution of German and English. A total of 10,040 code-mixed utterances were extracted and systematically analyzed for instances of morphological mixing. Across the full dataset, 696 instances of morphological code-mixing were identified and coded for type of mixing, part of speech, language of stems and affixes, and grammatical categories involved. Morphological mixing was relatively rare (fewer than 2% of utterances) but present in all children's speech. Results show that nouns, verbs, and adjectives function as templates for mixed morphology (Figure 1), and inflectional mixing emerged as the most frequent type (Figure 2). Fion and Silvie, both German-dominant, predominantly produced English lexical stems combined with German inflectional morphology, particularly in verbs (e.g., fighten 'fight' + German infinitive marker). Lily, whose input and proficiency are more balanced, also produced the reverse pattern, combining German stems with English morphology (e.g., schalted on 'turned on'). In the nominal domain, all children produced mixed compounds in both German–English and English–German configurations, such as apfel juice ('apple juice') and birthtag ('birthday').

Overall, the findings demonstrate that morphological code-mixing is systematic, input-sensitive, and closely related to children's developing proficiencies in their two languages, showing that the observed asymmetries can be accounted for by the relative entrenchment of frame-and-slot patterns

“Dipende da chi fucka”: English codeswitching and swearing in Italian young adults WhatsApp chats

Dr. Maria Eleonora Sciubba PhD
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This study examines the use of English swearwords in Italian WhatsApp chats among Italian young adults. The data consists of 89 dyadic and group conversations among 194 users (mostly university students), with around 80,000 text messages and 280 voice messages, collected between 2015 and 2024 at the University of Pavia (Fiorentini et al. 2024, Fiorentini 2025).
Drawing from Digital Conversation Analysis, Interactional Linguistics, and the notion of Affordances, the analysis shows how language contact enables speakers to mobilize and extend their repertoire of profanity, contributing, i.e., to “playfulness” in gamers’ settings (Calabria et al. 2025), but also alignment and intersubjectivity in dyadic chat interactions (Sciubba & Fiorentini 2024), similarly to what happens in offline interactions (Calabria & Sciubba 2022, Sciubba & Calabria 2023, Calabria & Sciubba 2025).
From the participants’ perspective, English swearwords are not treated as problematic in any of the chats analyzed, as they are not repaired in subsequent turns, and they, in some cases, are further creatively morphologically adapted following Italian (phono-)morphological rules (Palermo 2015), as seen in the excerpt below, l.2408.

Excerpt

2407→ 29/02/20, 15:08 - EV01:	Ho voglia di una sessione lunga as fuck
	I feel like a session long as fuck
2408→ 29/02/20, 15:09 - OV01:	Dipende da chi fucka
	It depends on who’s fucking
2409	Se parli di me è corta
	If you’re talking about me it’s short

Considering that Italian has already a wide variety of swearwords, both in the so-called standard language and in the other Italo-Romance varieties present in Italy, some of the English swearwords used are

- either not available in Italian: “lunga (long) as fuck (l.2407 above) /compromettenti (compromising) as fuck”, there is no modifier/intensifier that could replace as fuck in that same position in the clause and in turn-final position; wtf as an exclamation/interjection, or
- are used as a crystallized construction “spicy af/suspicious af” taken as is from the available lexical/syntactic repertoire available to the participants.

In addition, English is a language widely available to (young) Italians for three main reasons: it is learned as a foreign language in schools for 13 years; it has been a primary site of language contact on internet in the last few decades (Coco 2003, Gualdo 2003); and, last but not least, English is available as a vehicular language in online videogaming, normalizing the use of English profanities (Calabria et al. 2025).
The data shows that for Italian chat participants the English swearwords are just another addition to their available linguistic repertoire, blurring the boundaries of what can be placed on which continuum (loanwords/semantic calques, lexicon/syntax).

Dissolving boundaries between the lexicon and syntax: a usage-based account of mixed compounds

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Language contact has been studied from a wide variety of angles, but there has been little contact between researchers working on synchronic speech phenomena versus diachronic contact-induced change, and lexical versus grammatical effects. In this colloquium we hope to show how different approaches can be brought together under a usage-based approach (Backus, 2020; Langacker, 1986). In this paper I will first review recent insights into usage-based approaches to language contact. Then I hope to show how a study of switches within multiword units, in particular mixed compounds, can provide new insights into the interface between syntax and the lexicon.

A key question for researchers interested in compounding is what determines the headedness of a mixed compound: is it a purely syntactic phenomenon, in that the language of the head of the compound determines its internal structure, or do other variables play a role too? Central to the analyses proposed are corpus linguistic approaches, which look at the strength of the association between the two parts of a multiword unit, and the language of the clause in which the compound appears. Furthermore, I hope to show that entrenchment and the variability in the speech community, as well as the degree of language contact between the languages plays an important role.

Accounting for inter-speaker variation in code-mixing patterns. A construction grammar approach

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In this paper, we investigate the emergence of bilingual patterns in contact between structurally similar languages, namely, Italian and Peruvian Spanish.
Following a DCxG perspective (Boas & Höder 2018, 2021, 2025), code-mixing data can be portrayed as a combination of language-specific idioconstructions (involving lexicon and grammar from one single linguistic repertoire), and diaconstructions, that is, language-unspecific abstract patterns that rely on constructional similarity and may be filled with linguistic material from multiple lexical repertoires.

(1) no sì sardegna è bello #HE $sent-IDO che questo mare è es- (.) bellissimo

no yes Sardinia is beautiful I HAVE heard that this sea is beautiful

(2) o altro #LUGARES, no. #_NO HEMOS PODIDO:: (.) visitare.

or other PLACES, no WE COULD NOT visit

The past tense and modal constructions (1)-(2) are a case in point for a diaconstructional interpretation, as they present a pattern shared by the two languages which is filled by lexical entries from both.
In this study, we aim to quantitatively assess to what extent such constructions are emergent vs entrenched in cognition and conventionalised in usage, and whether there are differences based on the speakers' variable exposure to Italian (in terms of years spent in Italy).
We rely on data from the StraParla-TO corpus, involving 16h 53' of recordings from 41 speakers who have been living in Italy for a variable amount of time (a few months to >20 years) or are Italian-born (6/41).
A frequency-based approach to code-mixing data will allow us to explore how similarity between languages favours the emergence in usage of hybrid constructions (Barking et al. 2022) and whether this may lead to the conventionalisation and entrenchment of multilingual diasystematic patterns at a more abstract level. At the same time, accounting for inter-speaker variation will enable us to locate these diaconstructions on a continuum between the individual's and the community-shared mental constructicon.

Processing German insertions in Russian–German bilingual speech: The role of frequency in lexical integration

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Research on bilingual speech has shown that majority-language words appear with varying frequency in minority-language contexts, prompting the question of whether highly frequent items have become integrated into speakers' repertoires rather than functioning as genuine code-switches. The frequency of these items in bilingual utterances has therefore been used to determine their status as borrowings (Poplack, Sankoff & Miller 1989; Myers-Scotton 1993; Hakimov 2021). Frequently occurring items are treated as established borrowings, while less frequent ones are classified as nonce borrowings (Sankoff, Poplack & Vanniarajan 1990; Poplack 2018), mixed constituents (Myers-Scotton 1993; Hakimov 2021), or code-switches (Backus 2015). However, because individual studies define the frequency threshold for an "established" item arbitrarily, the psychological plausibility of this distinction remains uncertain.

The aim of the present study is therefore to experimentally investigate the processing of lexical insertions that vary in frequency in bilingual discourse by utilising behavioural and neural measures. The stimuli consist of Russian sentences containing embedded single-word German items, whose frequencies range from one to ten occurrences in a corpus of 25 hours of Russian–German bilingual speech (Hakimov 2021), as well as Russian sentences containing their Russian equivalents.

The study tests adult Russian–German bilinguals residing in Germany. Behavioural responses are collected through a word-monitoring task (Adamou & Shen 2019), while electrical brain activity is recorded via EEG (Luck 2014). Following the experiment, participants rate the target lexemes in terms of their perceived usage frequency within their bilingual community.

We expect to show that the processing of frequent German insertions, i.e., established borrowings, is not associated with high cognitive costs, whereas the processing of infrequent insertions and of Russian equivalents of frequent German insertions does incur such costs. Additionally, the findings will clarify how corpus-based and speaker-perceived frequency measures interact in the cognitive processing of lexical insertions.

Discussion session: Rethinking continua in language contact

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The workshop aims to highlight the explanatory potential of usage-based approaches to language contact in overcoming traditionally rigid distinctions between synchrony and diachrony, as well as between lexicon and morphosyntax. Across a wide range of language pairs and empirical settings — including naturally occurring bilingual speech in both children and adults, experimental data, and online interaction — the contributions to this workshop collectively challenge clear-cut distinctions between code-switching and borrowing, lexical and grammatical phenomena, and synchronic variation and diachronic change. Together, they suggest that contact-induced linguistic behaviour is best understood as distributed along interconnected continua rather than as discrete categories.

The discussion session will bring together the empirical and theoretical insights emerging from the workshop in order to reflect on the broader implications of usage-based approaches to language contact, on the extent to which these models can provide an integrated framework for explaining these phenomena, and on the usefulness of broader analytical concepts that capture dynamic processes rather than discrete phenomena.

While remaining open to further lines of inquiry emerging throughout the workshop, the discussion will be guided by the following questions:

- How do synchronic contact practices observed in bilingual speech relate to longer-term language change?
- What do borrowed multiword units and constructions reveal about the interaction between lexicon and syntax?
- How does the frequency of source-language units influence their borrowability and cognitive status?
- How does similarity between source and recipient language affect borrowability?
- What semantic, pragmatic, and social factors influence the emergence and stabilisation of borrowed words and patterns?
- How do bilingual speakers perceive and navigate these continua?

Figurativity correlates with syntactic complexity. An investigation of the figurativity of the verbs see/sehen in two German-English bilingual children.

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In this paper, we apply a usage-based approach to the acquisition of figurativity in German-English bilingual children focussing on the verbs see and sehen to investigate how far input functions as a proxy for production, and how the complexity of the syntactic objects correlates with the level of figurativity of the verb see/sehen. We consider figurativity to reflect a continuum from literal ("I can see the elephant") to metaphorical ("I see what you mean"), including in-between cases in which both, a literal and a metaphorical meaning, applies ("Let's see what's inside the box").

We address our questions using data from two highly dense corpora of German-English bilingual children aged 2 to 4 (Fion and Silvie from the MPI-EVA-Leipzig corpora, Quick et al., 2018). We retrieved every instance of the lemmas see (N = 4621) and sehen (N = 1176) in the input and the output, and coded these for metaphoricity (as a three level factor) as well as for the constructional pattern they occurred in.

We found that literal and figurative uses prefer different syntactic patterns (Fig. 1). This correlation is particularly strong in the input. The association of figurative meaning with a distinct grammatical form (in line with Construction Grammar, Goldberg, 1995) may help children navigate the different senses of see/sehen. With respect to their developing figurativity, we found that the children's output reflects their input (Fig. 2), i.e. the more figurative input, the more figurative output, and that in our context of child-caregiver interaction, figurative uses primarily occur in cases where "both", a literal and a metaphorical meaning applies (cf. Grady, 1997), often functioning as a kind of verbal pointing gesture.

Theme Session: Construction junction, what's your function? Links in construction morphology networks (K.-K. Droste & L. Höttecke)

Horizontal generalizations: on the paradigmatic organization of analytic predicates in Italian

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In this study, we discuss the division of labor between horizontal and vertical representations in the constructional network (Ungerer 2024; Sommerer and Van de Velde 2025), by analyzing the behavior of analytic predicates in Italian. We will argue that a multidimensional, horizontal network allows us to capture the emergent organization of this class of constructions more fruitfully than a hierarchical one alone. By analytic predicates, we loosely refer to light verb constructions (Butt 2003; Ježek 2004; Pompei et al. 2023), i.e., periphrastic word-formation schemas formed by a semantically bleached verb with reduced predicative force, combined with an NP (or PP), where the noun expresses the core predicative content:

(1) a. fare rumore 'make noise'

b. dare un bacio 'give a kiss'

c. essere in ansia 'be anxious' lit. be in anxiety

It has been noted that it is not possible to predict which analytic pattern a given noun will select (Alba-Salas 2002), and behavior of such schemas has thus been considered largely idiosyncratic. However, recent work on Italian suggests that analytic verbs display a paradigm-like organization (Pisciotta & Masini 2025), where types are motivated by diathetic alternations between schemas expressing different perspectives on the same event:

(2) avere coraggio ≈ prendere coraggio ≈ dare coraggio

lit. 'have courage ≈ take courage ≈ give courage'

We therefore hypothesize that, although not fully predictable, the choice of analytic schemas is motivated by their paradigmatic relations with other schemas.

To test this, we used a dataset of 1,199 types of analytic predicates (Iacobini & Pisciotta, submitted), extracted from the Paisà corpus (Lyding et al. 2014) based on the 1,000 most frequent Italian nouns (De Mauro 1980). We applied network analysis tools (Newman 2010) to a graph based on the proportion of shared fillers between pairs of semi-specified schemas (e.g., avere N 'have N', essere Prep N 'be Prep N'), to assess whether some emergent organization arises from the productivity of the nominal slot. Following Ungerer (2023), we model generalizations through Louvain communities, i.e., clusters of nodes that are more densely connected internally than with the rest of the network.

The results (Figure 1) show regular organization along two main dimensions. First, a formal tendency emerges, with schemas sharing the same morphosyntactic pattern clustering together. Second, a semantic organization emerges, as clusters group verbs encoding contrasts within domains such as possession (avere 'have', prendere 'take', dare 'give') and motion (essere 'be', andare 'go', mandare 'send'). At the same time, mismatches occur, where only one type of generalization holds (e.g., essere N 'be N' ≈ fare Prep N 'do Prep N').

We will describe the clusters and discuss whether the behavior of analytic predicates is better captured by a vertical or horizontal notation. While the form-based organization of the clusters may suggest the utility of positing mother nodes to capture generalizations, we will argue that a horizontal approach is preferable, as it captures the different semantic relations among schemas in individual clusters and accounts for mismatches between formal and semantic generalizations.

Antonymy as horizontal link in the constructional network

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This paper argues for the inclusion of antonymic links as a distinct, under-theorized type of relation in constructional networks. Current Construction Grammar (CxG) models (Diessel 2019, 2023; Sommerer & Van de Velde 2025) organize the Constructicon in vertical (taxonomic, inheritance-based) and horizontal (similarity- and contrast-based) links. While Diessel's (2019) notion of contrast links involves difference and oppositeness as a structuring device, other scholars hint at modeling antonymy as part of horizontal links (Audring 2019; Budts & Petré 2020; Winckel 2025; Pisciotta 2025), without however providing an actual proposal. Murphy's (2022) Antonym Construction – a lexical construction involving two canonical antonyms – is the only full formalization of antonymy available in constructionist research. However, antonymy extends far beyond canonical pairs, being a central organizational device both in language (Fellbaum 1995; Jones 2002) and cognition (Hermann 1979; Bianchi & Burro 2023).

We propose that antonymy, rather than being a construction, represents a type of horizontal link with specific properties. Antonymic relations emerge from paradigmatic opposition activated by different kinds of constructions. As such, they play a role not only in organizing the lexicon, but also in shaping constructional generalizations and usage patterns.

Our claim is supported by evidence from previous studies on English (Jones 2002) and novel Italian data from corpora (CORIS), easily extendable to other languages. Antonymic links may encode a semantic relation between morphologically unrelated (1a) and related (1b) lexical items, giving rise to different kinds of opposition (contraries, contradictories, etc.). Moreover, antonymic items are known to be part and parcel of (semi-)schematic constructions (2), some of which require specific kinds of antonyms in their empty slots (3).

(1) a. good-bad

dead-alive

b. useful-useless

happy-unhappy

(2) a. X and Y alike

These qualities all made him sought after by young and old alike. (Jones 2002:74)

b. neither X nor Y

Mr Pierson said he was 'neither optimistic nor pessimistic' about reaching agreements. (Jones 2002:74)

(3) Xi Adv1 Xi Adv2, where Adv1 = spatial opposite of Adv2
[…] i russi qua, i russi là e invece abbiamo trovato una popolazione di una dignità assoluta veramente. '[…] Russians here, Russians there and instead we found a people with an outright dignity, really.' (adapted from Masini & Mattiola 2022:322)

The examples speak in favor of network links directly encoding oppositional relations between constructions and/or their components. We claim that this information is not adequately captured by undifferentiated horizontal (similarity or contrast) links, and that we need a more fine-grained typology of horizontal relations to grasp stable relations of opposition between constructions. We also discuss the advantage of having sub-types of antonymic links capturing different degrees of canonicity (Jones at al. 2012) and entrenchment between antonymic pairs, possibly through a weighted account of links.

In conclusion, our proposal supports models that allow for multiple, functionally distinct horizontal links (see Pisciotta forthcoming) and contributes to ongoing debates about (i) the balance and interaction between vertical and horizontal links and (ii) the division of labor between links and constructions.

Constructional links and the morphology-syntax interface: Argument disambiguation in the history of English

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The present paper discusses the theoretical (and methodological) challenges of approaching changes in argument marking from a construction grammar perspective. Specifically, the paper assesses how diachronic shifts from morphological to syntactic means of disambiguating subjects (agents) from objects (recipients and themes) in English ditransitive clauses (as in 1) can be modelled in constructionist terms, with a particular focus on constructional links.

(1) The teacher$_{\mathrm{AG}}$ gave the students$_{\mathrm{REC}}$ some cake$_{\mathrm{TH}}$.

As often stated, English has undergone a change from a more synthetic language to a more analytic system over time: while earlier English relied predominantly on nominal and verbal inflectional morphology, Present Day English mainly draws on the syntactic means of word order and prepositional marking to distinguish arguments (e.g. Fennell 2001: 6; Hawkins 2012). This is exemplified by sentence (2), which features both nominal case on subject and objects as well as subject-verb agreement (plural marking on the verb), but flexible word order, as compared to its Present Day translation in (3), where morphology does not provide any cues, but the elements are disambiguated by position (strict SVO order), as well as – optionally – the preposition to.

(2) tham acennedan cyninge$_{\mathrm{DAT\text{-}REC}}$ we$_{\mathrm{NOM\text{-}AG}}$ bringað$_{\mathrm{PL}}$ gold$_{\mathrm{ACC\text{-}TH}}$
the newborn king we bring gold
(cocathom1, 7: 239, 233; De Cuypere 2015: 234)

(3) We$_{\mathrm{AG}}$ bring the newborn king$_{\mathrm{REC}}$ gold$_{\mathrm{TH}}$ / We$_{\mathrm{AG}}$ bring gold$_{\mathrm{TH}}$ to the newborn king$_{\mathrm{REC}}$

This paper then traces this development by means of a dataset of ditransitives extracted from a corpus of Middle English (PPCME2, 1150-1500; Kroch et al. 2000). Determining the ‘disambiguation power’ of each of the four strategies (nominal marking, agreement, constituent order, and preposition use), the results confirm that changes proceeded along the lines robustly observed in earlier research, but at the same time also suggest a more complex interplay between morphological and syntactic strategies than a straightforward trade-off scenario (cf. also Szmrecsanyi 2012, 2016; Levshina 2021).

The main focus of the paper is on assessing these results in light of recent debates on constructional links within (diachronic) usage-based construction grammar: I specifically pose the question how plausible it is to posit links to hold between morphological and syntactic constructions in (historical) language users’ minds, and discuss the potential level of schematicity of such connections. The paper thereby taps into recent debates on the psychological reality of highly abstract constructions and links between such (e.g. Blumenthal-Dramé 2012; Hilpert 2014; Audring 2019; Jackendoff & Audring 2019). More precisely, I assess the likelihood of higher-level schematic ‘argument marking strategy’ constructions such as ‘case’ or ‘constituent order’, and possible horizontal links between these, versus lower-level links between (verb- or argument-) specific, substantive patterns, and hone in on the challenging aspects of modelling this phenomenon (as well as diachronic changes therein) as straddling the boundary between morphology and syntax in construction grammar.

Adapting Construction Morphological Networks to the Diachronic Challenge of Productivity Change: From {er-} to {los} in German INGRESSIVE-constructions?

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This contribution seeks to discuss issues which arose while working on a dissertation on different INGRESSIVE- and INCHOATIVE-derivative-constructions in both present-day and historical German (e.g. PDG {er-} in erblühen to indicate 'begin to bloom (blühen)', er-INGRESSIVE-cxn, or {-ē} in OHG rōtēn to indicate 'to become red (rōt)', an ē-INCHOATIVE-cxn). The project showed that in contrast to non-morphological constructions, morphological constructions can become unproductive and therefore not be used for new constructs by speakers anymore. Yet these constructions are not lost (cf. Sommerer 2020 for node loss), but instead enter a stage in which they are preserved in lexemes. This contribution makes a suggestion for how to model unproductive constructions that remain synchronically analysable and semantically transparent in an inheritance network model.

To further illustrate the issue, this talk covers two German INGRESSIVE-constructions, in particular the diachronic and synchronic relationship between the older er-INGRESSIVE-construction (e.g. erblühen 'begin to bloom (blühen)') and the younger los-INGRESSIVE-construction (e.g. losweinen 'begin to cry (weinen)'). From a synchronic perspective, both may be analysed as sister constructions (cf. Smirnova/Sommerer 2020: 23–24, for a critical approach cf. Ungerer 2024) inheriting from a more abstract German INGRESSIVE-construction, since both express the meaning 'begin to V'. A diachronic perspective, however, reveals that such a notion falls short.

While {er-} is and has historically been part of multiple morphological constructions (cf. Elsen 2014: 216, Fleischer/Barz 2012: 287–288, Eichinger 2000: 226–227), including the mentioned INGRESSIVE-construction, PDG word-formations with {er-} are exclusively interpreted according to a productive RESULTATIVE-construction (e.g. er-googlen 'to google (googlen) until a result is reached'). Meanwhile, ingressive constructs such as erblühen remain part of the lexicon.

At the same time, ingressive meaning in newly formed verbs is expressed by the productive particle {los} (e.g. losgooglen 'begin to google (googlen)', losfahren 'begin to drive (fahren)'). From the perspective of constructional competition (cf. Goldberg 2019: 74–94, Zehentner 2019, Sommerer 2020, Gyselinck 2020, Sommerer/Van de Velde 2025), this development may suggest that the younger los-INGRESSIVE-construction has replaced the older er-INGRESSIVE-construction. However, such an interpretation does not fully capture the morphological reality: speakers remain able to segment erblühen into er + blühen, and recover its ingressive meaning as 'begin to bloom (blühen)'. The construction is therefore no longer productive, but still synchronically accessible and mentally present.

When determining how to treat the relationship between {er-} and {los} in a network model, these aspects need to be accounted for. This contribution argues that morphological constructions require a distinction between productivity loss and representational loss: an unproductive construction may remain structurally present in the network as long as the relation between its form and meaning remains transparent.

To account for this, this talk proposes a stage-based complement to inheritance modelling, distinguishing between four stages: emergence, productivity, preservation, and eventual loss of morpheme-based constructions. Using the diachronic development of {er-} and {los} as an example, it makes a suggestion for how inheritance networks may be adapted to represent transitional stages specific to morphological constructions, and integrates it into the synchronic architecture of networks.

Modelling a Network of Word-Formation Constructions: The Case of German Noun-Participle Compounds

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Present-day German exhibits a productive word-formation pattern combining nouns (N) with past participles (PSTPTCP), e.g. erfolgsorientiert ‘success oriented’, windgeschützt ‘wind protected’, and schneebedeckt ‘snow covered’. Although such formations have traditionally been analyzed as regular compounds, certain participial elements, such as -bezogen ‘related’, -orientiert ‘oriented’, -bedingt ‘conditioned’, and -zentriert ‘centered’, display an unusually high type frequency and a broad combinatorial potential. These properties have led some authors to classify them as affixoids. At the same time, the considerable differences among participial constituents suggest that the general pattern [N + PSTPTCP] is not homogeneous but rather consists of a network of constructions differing in compositionality, schematicity, productivity, and semantic properties.

While frequency-based measures help distinguish between these different constructions, they do not by themselves provide a straightforward model of the constructional network. In particular, semantic differentiations and horizontal paradigmatic relations between sub-patterns have largely been described on an intuitive basis. To address this gap, the present study explores how semantic and structural information from corpus data can be integrated to model a network of morphological constructions.

The analysis draws on a manually extracted dataset of 1,055 noun-participle compounds from the German WEB-Korpus and combines these data with pretrained German Wikipedia2Vec embeddings. The point of departure is the assumption that the schema [N + PSTPTCP] represents the most schematic and maximally compositional node in the network. Under this assumption, the semantic contribution of the construction itself is minimal, such that the meaning of individual noun-participle compounds instantiating this schema should be approximatable through a simple additive model: the embedding of the compound equals the sum of the embeddings of its components (vecCOMPOUND = vecNOUN + vecVERB). To test this, empirical embeddings of attested compounds are compared with derived embeddings computed from their constituents. The expectation is that the additive model will account more successfully for compounds instantiating the most abstract schema, whereas compounds belonging to lower-level schemas will deviate from this model because the schema itself contributes additional meaning. Schemas located lower in the network contribute their own semantic value in addition to the meanings of their individual constituents, and the degree of this contribution increases as one moves “downward” in the network. Crucially, the semantic contribution of lower level schemas is consistent and can be isolated empirically. In this way, the study seeks to capture the vertical dimension of the network.

Horizontal relations between constructions are modelled on the basis of shared constituents and semantic similarity between patterns. For example, if a sub-schema [N + bezogen] shares a substantial number of nominal bases with [N + orientiert], the two schemas can be analyzed as paradigmatically related. Such relations are likewise expected to be reflected in distributional similarity, such that compounds belonging to horizontally related schemas should cluster more closely than compounds belonging to more distant patterns such as [N + geschützt]. The paper argues that integrating corpus-based semantic modelling with constructional analysis offers a more explicit account of both the vertical and horizontal organization of morphological construction networks.

What a mess! A constructional investigation of the English noun mess and its diachrony

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This paper subscribes to a usage-based, cognitive, constructional approach (CCxG, DCxG; Goldberg 2006; Hilpert 2013; Traugott & Trousdale 2013; Sommerer & Smirnova 2020) and investigates the diachrony of the English noun mess and the larger constructional templates it gets recruited into (e.g. What a mess! Such a mess! how big a mess, MAKE a mess, BE a mess). Its etymology, polysemy and conversion make mess a fascinating construction with a tricky form-function mapping. The paper shows that semantic pejoration, metaphorization and metonymization played a crucial role in the construction's semantic development (Kay & Allen 2015; Fitzmaurice 2016). According to the OED, mess was borrowed from French mes in the 12th century, which in Anglo-Norman meant {a portion of food}. This goes back to post-classical Latin missus {portion of food, course of a meal}, where one is literally 'sending' food. In the history of English, we can identify three main senses: i) a portion/serving of food and related senses, ex.1, ii) a company of (four) people eating together especially in military contexts; ex.2; and iii) several figurative (pejorated) uses, developing only from the 18th century onwards. Mess was also used as a quantificational measure noun in binominal constructions to talk about a large quantity or number of anything (a mess of porridge, a mess of milk, a mess of X). From the 18thcent. onwards, speakers also start to use it with a negative meaning, referring to an unappetizing, disgusting dish or an ill-assorted mixture of any kind. In the process, the noun switched from sortal to relational noun and from bounded count noun to an unbounded mass. At the same time, the construction starts to get recruited into several different, fully-specified constructions like, What a mess! Such a mess! make a mess. This begs the question how to model all these changes, meanings and constructional relationships in CxG. The paper will discuss the non-trivial question of how many different mess-constructions should be postulated in the first place and how they should be vertically and horizontally linked in the constructicon. Empirically, the paper reports on a corpus study conducted in the EEBO (https://cqpweb.lancs.ac.uk/) and the COHA (https://www.english-corpora.org). It will report an overall frequency increase, show lexical biases and increasing metaphorization, and discuss the constructionalization of several fully specified, idiomatic constructions like What a mess! or that big a mess!(Kim & Sells 2011; Sommerer & Bohmann 2025).

Inheritance and Similarity in Construction Morphology: The Case of German Complex Prepositions

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The paper examines how German complex prepositions are organized in construction grammar, focusing on the difference between forms based on deverbal nouns and non-deverbal nouns. Using historical corpus data, it argues that deverbal prepositions retain more features of their verbal origins and are therefore more semantically restricted, while non-deverbal prepositons are more abstract. The study explores whether these patterns are better explained through vertical relations or horizontal links within constructional networks.

Similarity and/or abstraction? Revisiting the diachronic change of nominalisation patterns from a network perspective

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Recent discussions about the distinction between vertical and horizontal links in constructional network models (cf. Hoffmann 2020; Ungerer 2024) have raised questions about the validity of such models. This is particularly relevant in the case of morphological phenomena, where family resemblance can be assumed to evoke relations of both similarity and abstraction. In this paper, we discuss morphosyntactic issues related to German -ung-nominalisations as a case in point for addressing such questions.

-ung is a historically widely employed deverbal nominalisation suffix, which is today subject to a number of restrictions (see e.g. Demske 2000, Hartmann 2016) limiting its historically more liberal productivity. Restrictions do not only apply to the creation of new -ung-nominalisations, but also to their general syntactic behaviour: Verbal arguments marked with the accusative are often, but not exclusively, realised as genitive NPs, (1a-b, 2a). In some, (1c), but not all cases, (2b), the genitive case can also correspond to a nominative argument.

(1) a. Die Experten begutachten das Projekt.

‘The experts assess the project.’

b. die Begutachtung des Projekts

‘The assessment of the project’

c. die Begutachtung der Experten

‘The assessment of the experts’

(2) a. die Absetzung des Kanzlers

‘The deposition of the chancellor’ (= the chancellor was deposed)

b. die Befragung des Kanzlers

‘The questioning of the chancellor’ (= the chancellor posed or was posed questions) (cf. Ehrich & Rapp 2000: 246; our translation)

This type of restriction is discussed by Ehrich & Rapp (2000), who consider it in relation to the semantics of the base verb: Where a change of state is present in the lexical semantic structure, only the “lowest ranked” argument appears as a genitive attribute. Demske’s (2002) work on Early New High German (ENHG) shows, however, that this was not historically the case. In this light, Ehrich & Rapp’s synchronic, decompositional semantic approach leaves many questions open from a constructional perspective.

By highlighting the diachronic dimension of this phenomenon, we offer an alternative, cognitive linguistic account of this phenomenon, which moreover sheds light on constructional network modelling. Drawing on data from the Reference Corpus of Early New High German (ReF) and the German Text Archive (DTA), we analyse material from ENHG to present-day German with a focus on complementation patterns, tracking parallels between nominalisations and their base verbs. In doing so, we aim to show how both verbal and nominal domains affect the realisation of deverbal nouns. It is expected that the argument realisation behaviour of deverbal nominalisations initially resembles that of their base verbs but diverges towards patterns influenced by a small subset of nouns, thus showing a growing influence of a group of -ung-nominalisations. This may point to the relations commonly denoted by vertical and horizontal links in network models as having different roles in synchronic and diachronic processes.

Discussion: Construction junction, what is (after all) your function?

Kim-Kristin Droste; Lara Höttecke
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Researchers in Construction Grammar largely agree that constructions are stored in a network. The exact structure of constructional networks, however, has been widely discussed from both synchronic (e.g. Diessel 2019) and diachronic perspectives (e.g. Sommerer & Smirnova 2020). One focal point of the debate is the relationship and weighting between vertical and horizontal links as well as the applicability of different types of links to morphological constructions. Vertical links reflect the hierarchical organization of constructional networks in the sense that speakers store constructions at various levels of abstraction (Traugott 2008). Connections between these levels are captured by several sets of terminology, e.g. inheritance (Goldberg 1995) or bidirectional taxonomic links (Diessel 2023). Abstraction from individual usage events to more schematic constructions is widely held to be governed by domain-general cognitive processes such as association, categorization, analogy, entrenchment and schematization (Langacker 1987; Bybee 2010; Schmid 2020). The degree of schematicity to which linguistic items are abstracted, however, is contested.

Various empirical studies have argued for the plausibility of low-level schemas (Dąbrowska 2008; Hoffmann 2020; Sommerer & Baumann 2021), minimizing the importance of vertical links. In Construction Morphology in particular, significance has instead been attached to horizontal relations, which are generally understood as prerequisites for the abstraction to higher-level schemas, expressing cognitive notions of similarity or contrast (Diessel 2023: 58-59).

In some models, horizontal relations co-exist with vertical links in complex structures, such as Cappelle's (2006) allostructions or Diewald's (2020) paradigms or hyper-constructions of inflectional categories. Audring's (2019: 294) morphological second-order schemas, which describe relations for, e.g., word-formation, inflection, and antonymy, horizontally link "sister relations between mother schemas", where vertical links to higher-order schemas are necessary only under certain conditions. In other cases, horizontal links are posited independently, e.g. in Leino & Östmann's (2005) meta-constructions. Likewise, independent horizontal links often posited for partially schematic constructions are paradigmatic relations accounting for mutual productivity, such as the -ism/-ist pattern (Booij 2010).

Overall, a multitude of links has been proposed. While some of these overlap in function, others represent distinct types of similarity. Some of the proposed links are specifically defined to account for generalizations made in morphology, e.g. word-formation, inflection, semantic relations such as antonymy, and partially filled constructions, whereas others are also used for more abstract constructions.

Multiple questions emerge from these considerations:

- What can be gained from a distinction between vertical and horizontal links despite recent criticism (Hoffmann 2020; Ungerer 2024) – even just for theoretical modelling?
- What are functional differences between different types of horizontal and vertical links as well as their combination in Construction Morphology? Do they express different kinds of similarity?
- Which challenges do morphological constructions pose to CxG that may justify a different or more fine-grained set of links than for larger, syntactic constructions? How does this align with the assumption that all levels of language are governed by the same cognitive processes?

We invite case studies that shed light on constructional networks and address one or more of these questions.

Fat nodes and lean connections: links in Relational Morphology
Jenny Audring
Leiden University

Relational Morphology (Jackendoff & Audring 2020) is a model with a highly explicit and exceptionally lean architecture of network connections. Only two types of link are assumed: interface links within constructions and relational links between them. In this contribution, I outline the link architecture and discuss the consequences of the approach.
I will show the advantages—a well-motivated and powerful but not overly powerful model—and the disadvantages: information such as linear order or frequency is left implicit, weighted connections are not explicitly envisaged, and asymmetric relations are precluded. Some of the choices diverge from common practices in construction-based linguistics. For example, form-meaning (i.e. symbolic) links have no special status and are not privileged compared to form-form links. Other choices raise issues related to network structure. Thus, 'horizontal' and 'vertical' links may or may not need differentiating (Ungerer 2024). Also, the 'leanness' of the links in the network increases the 'fatness' of the nodes (Hilpert 2021: 74-86).
Of special interest are configurations known as second-order schemas or sister schemas (Booij & Masini 2015, Audring 2019). These encode linguistic generalizations involving two or more schemas. Example (1) from Dutch shows the systematic correspondence between verbal staan and nominal stand, even under idiomaticity.

(1) [V (-)staan] ~ [N (-)stand] e.g. staan 'stand' ~ stand 'stand, status'
verstaan 'understand' ~ verstand 'intelligence'
bestaan 'exist' ~ bestand 'inventory'
opstaan 'stand up' ~ opstand 'uprising'

Such relations play an essential role in paradigm structure and in paradigmatic configurations such as inflectional classes or morphomes. I will discuss the challenges of modelling these phenomena with the tools available, hoping to inspire and fuel discussion.

Priming and temporal discourse strategies in Old English narrations: On constructions and constructional neighborhoods

Dr. Barthe Bloom
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In Old English narrations, sentences were often connected to each other via temporal expressions, see (1).

(1)

a. ðisum eallum ðus gedonum eode Apollonius, se mæra cyngc, wið ða sæ. Þa geseah he þone ealdan fiscere þe hine ær nacodne underfengc.

   ‘All these things having been thus done, Apollonius, the great king, went towards the sea. He then saw the old fisherman who had formerly received him naked.' (Apollonius)

b. Þa het se cyngc hine sona gescridan mid wurðfullan scrude and het hine in gan to ðam gereorde. Þa eode Apollonius in and gesæt þar him getæht wæs ongean ðone cyngc.

   ‘Then the king commanded him to be instantly clothed with honorable clothing, and bade him enter to the repast. Then went Apollonius in, and sat where it was pointed out to him, opposite the king.’ (Appolonius)

Such temporal expressions, especially in preverbal position, are discourse structuring strategies that anchor the narration locally (e.g., Carroll & Lambert 2003; Los 2012; Los et al. 2023). A central constructional tenet is that it is “constructions all the way” (Hoffmann & Bergs 2024; Boogaart, Colleman & Rutten 2014). Since the early conceptualization of construction grammar, what is considered to be a construction & whether they can in actuality account for the whole linguistic system remains up for debate. The theoretical question in the current paper is whether there is evidence that the way in which a narration is organized, in Old English through temporal linking (Los 2012; Los et al. 2023), qualifies as a construction. In other words, does temporal linking form a node in the constructional network, and if so at which level(s) of abstraction is it retrieved as a unit?
The diagnostic that is used for this unit status is syntactic priming, or persistence (Szmrecsanyi 2005). Priming is the “tendency to repeat what one has comprehended or produced” (Pickering & Garrod 2017: 173). It can target concrete utterances, more abstract structures, viz. syntactic patterns, and meaning, including discourse-pragmatic and discourse functions (Pickering & Garrod 2017). Operationalized as Gries (2005), priming is applied to historical narrations from the YCOE (Taylor et al. 2003).
The pilot study is based on two texts, Apollonius von Tyre and the Seven Sleepers. The results indicate that there is a template at a relatively low level of abstraction, the [þa VERB (SUBJECT)]-schema. The evidence gets weaker when one abstracts over this and tries to find evidence for a [TEMPORAL ADVERB VERB (SUBJECT)]-construction, and is especially weak at the highest level of abstraction, [TEMPORAL EXPRESSION VERB (SUBJECT)]. This suggests the patterns are more difficult to retrieve as units, the more abstract they get. Rather, the linguistic knowledge of this discourse structuring strategy is better represented as a network organized on the basis contextual and functional similarity, as a constructional neighborhood. The gradual nature of the raises questions regarding whether linguistic knowledge has to be treated as a unit in use in order to classify as a construction, and regarding the boundaries between constructions and constructional neighborhoods.

Theme Session: Perspectives at the interface of cognitive linguistics and the linguistics of religion (M. Fritzsche, E. Schmitt, J. Trochemowitz)

From Minority Sect to Universal Faith: Conceptual Integration and Religious Identity Formation in the Epistle to the Hebrews

Prof. Dr. Aleksander Gomola PhD
Jagiellonian University in Kraków

Looking at modern Christianity as a global faith, one should not forget that in its very beginnings it was not even a minority religion but merely a small Jewish sect. The rapid growth of the new religion in its initial stage was driven not by the moral teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, but by the presentation of him as the Messiah (Christos), who brings salvation to those who believe in him. This conceptualization process can already be observed in the Pauline Letters; however a clear case of this can be found in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the figure of Jesus is systematically constructed through a creative reinterpretation of the Hebrew Bible (in its Greek version, i.e. the Septuagint). It is here that the role of language in religion becomes particularly evident: through conceptual blending, various events, figures and institutions of the Hebrew Bible are combined with the figure of Jesus to demonstrate that his sacrificial death and exaltation were already foreshadowed in Scripture.

Through this linguistic operation early Christian writers systematically reinterpreted the Hebrew Bible, eventually appropriating it for the emerging religion and presenting it as a text with a radically new meaning (the Old Testament). While the theological aspects of this process have been explored in patristic studies (e.g. typological exegesis), comparatively little attention has been devoted to the cognitive linguistic factors that made this reinterpretation possible in the first place. Although the cognitive linguistic approach has been used successfully in exploration of selected biblical texts (e.g. Howe, Green 2014, Ross 2019, 2023, Rüggemeier, Shively 2021) or the early Christian discourse (e.g. Robbins 2007, Gomola 2018) further studies are necessary to show not only how language supports religion, but also how it may underlie its very emergence.

Thus, the present paper analyses a set of conceptual blends in the Epistle to the Hebrews including CHRIST AS HIGH PRIEST IN THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK, CHRIST'S DEATH AS THE FINAL SACRIFICE, and THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY AS THE TRUE TABERNACLE to demonstrate how conceptual integration enables the projection of new meaning onto the Hebrew Bible. It will be argued that conceptual blending was a key cognitive mechanism that made possible separating the nascent Christian community from its Jewish matrix. In this sense, the paper contributes to a broader understanding of how minority religions construct their identity through language. The analysis also addresses the question of how transcendent concepts are structured differently by multiple languages by considering the Septuagint as a mediating conceptual layer, whose lexical choices (e.g. Kyrios for the Hebrew Adonai) facilitated including the integration of Jesus into the identity of the God of Israel.
Keywords: Conceptual Blending Epistle to the Hebrews Early Christian Identity Septuagint.

Linguistic and Religious Complexes – A New Approach to Multireligious Communities in Asia

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The purpose of this paper is to introduce a new approach focused on linguistic and religious complexes, or, jointly, linguo-religious complexes (LRCs), with data from Inner Asia. Inspired by the study of complex systems, a new approach integrates comparisons of interacting languages and religions with an analysis of Inner Asian religious and ritual texts. Special attention is devoted to an interdisciplinary case study on how changes in the natural environment affect tributary relations, interrelated with religious and linguistic shifts. On the theoretical side, the LRCs approach integrates a) the nexus of language and religion with b) the recognized interconnection of religion and traditional political institutions. As contemporary humanities prefer triangulation, the LRCs' approach does not prioritize the interconnection of linguistics, archaeology, and genetics (LAG). In search of a more precise framework for attested stages of written languages, the LRC approach focuses on languages, religions, and scripts. Because prehistoric rock art (Fitzhugh & Kortum 2024) and early script use (Schmand-Besserat 1992) already show a connection with religious institutions. Regarding the LRCs, the paper explains interactions of languages and religions. While it can be proven that language shifts are spontaneous, the spread of religious systems and changes of scripts are intentional and influenced by geopolitical shifts: cf. the replacement of Mongolian by the Clear script among the Oirats (Taupier 2015) or the replacement of Written Mongolian by Cyrillic after religious change in Mongolia in the 20th century (Teleki 2022). Wider ethno-religious interactions with a changing natural environment (Di Cosmo 2023) were further mediated through tributary relations, as evidenced by the spread of Buddhism among the Mongols and the gradual replacement of Sanskrit influence by Tibetan in Inner Asian Buddhism.
As complex analysis and East Asian macro-history show, the degree of multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, and multi-religious variation increases from the steppe zone to the equator. These contrasts and long-distance interactions between the steppe and South/Southeast Asia provide strong evidence for the LRCs as an appropriate framework for the study of the interface between cognitive linguistics and the linguistics of religion.
Note: the LAG remains useful for cultural terminology (Wörter und Sachen approach) and for the study of the deeper past.

God as a father in the Hebrew Bible: Metaphors and similes in light of Aquinas

Prof. Ariel Cohen PhD
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The abstract argues that metaphors and similes about God as father in the Hebrew Bible aren't interchangeable — they consistently express different types of properties. This grammatical distinction maps onto Thomas Aquinas's distinction between proper predication (e.g., God's love, expressed via metaphor) and improper predication (e.g., physical acts like carrying, expressed via simile). This connection is explained through Glucksberg & Haught's categorization theory of metaphor.

Perspectives at the Interface of Cognitive Linguistics and the Linguistics of Religion. New Spiritualities, Expressions and Methods

Dr. Maria Fritzsche[1]; Elias Schmitt[2]; Jonas Trochemowitz[3]
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As religion and spirituality encapsulate various cognitive and cultural aspects, research by the Linguistics of Religion can provide a better understanding of the intersections of Cognitive and Cultural Linguistics. In order to outline this perspective, the keynote aims to deliver a conceptual introduction for the following contributions and to present the main focus of the panel. First, a working definition of 'Religion' from a Cognitive Linguistic perspective is provided that encompasses various religious and spiritual forms from rigid ritual practices to individual forms of bricolage involving diverse concepts. In order to explore how these religious and spiritual systems are formed, expressed and shared, we distinguish three varieties of orientations towards transcendent concepts (cf. Schmitt 2023). In this context we want to bridge the discussion in the German research of the Linguistics of Religion (cf. Lasch/Liebert 2025) to the broader international discourse (cf. Richardson et al. 2021).

Building on this methodological basis, the keynote will address three methodological strategies that can be used to study transcendent concepts and their verbal as well as multimodal expressions.

1. The first part investigates how cognitive linguistic analysis can make use of tools and concepts provided by Linguistic Ethnography. Building on the methodological reflections of Lytra (cf. 2020), this part aims to illustrate how ethnographic fieldwork can give insights into the cognitive scripts (cf. Richardson et al. 2021: 19–20) that underlie communication within religious rituals. One advantage of this perspective is that religious cognitive concepts are not viewed as merely abstract and dislocated, but rather as situated within the concrete sociocultural practices of lived religion in everyday life.
2. The second part combines digital corpus building (cf. Weisser 2018) with a usage-based Construction Grammar approach (cf. Ziem/Lasch 2013; cf. Diessel 2019) to communication in contemporary spiritual offerings. It compiles an exploratory web corpus of websites advertising workshops, retreats etc., and prepares it through text extraction, lemmatization, and part-of-speech tagging. The analysis focuses on recurrent form-meaning pairings that construe agency, including impersonal process constructions, non-human subject constructions, passive guidance patterns, and invitation formulas, such as healing happens, transformation unfolds, energy flows, the body knows, and the universe guides.
3. Especially in digital contexts, we observe individualised and often commercialised forms of spirituality that combine concepts from various religious traditions, indicating an individual need for spiritual orientation within so-called secularised Western societies. Methods to explore this growing phenomenon can be taken from Ethnolinguistics of Mediatised Communication and Digital Pragmatics (cf. Kessler 2026; cf. Meier-Vieracker et al. 2023). We will discuss how data from influencers and online communities present on social media platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, Instagram and Reddit can be extracted and analysed with regard to the multimodal and multivocal construction of transcendent concepts.

Deutsche Sprache und islamisches Recht

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Religiöse Konzepte treten nicht nur in theologischen oder religiösen Diskursen auf, sondern erscheinen auch in säkularen Rechtsordnungen, wenn Gerichte Sachverhalte beurteilen müssen, die aus fremden religiösen Normsystemen hervorgehen. In solchen Fällen wird Sprache zum zentralen Medium, über das religiös geprägte Begriffe innerhalb eines anderen rechtlichen und kulturellen Systems interpretiert, übersetzt und begrifflich eingeordnet werden. Der geplante Beitrag untersucht in Anlehnung an die Fragestellung zu islamischen religiösen Konzepten in deutschsprachiger Kommunikation (Smailagić 2024: 371), wie ausgewählte Konzepte des islamischen Rechts in deutschsprachigen Rechtstexten aus Deutschland, Österreich und der Schweiz sprachlich realisiert und kognitiv strukturiert werden.

Die Erforschung juristischer Sprache ist aufgrund ihrer begrifflichen Komplexität, ihrer semantischen Probleme und der besonderen Erschließbarkeit von Begriffsinhalten durch Auslegungstexte wie Gerichtsurteile und Gesetzeskommentare von hoher linguistischer Bedeutung (Busse/Felden/Wulf 2018: 11). Umso relevanter ist die Analyse islamisch-rechtlicher Begriffe, die in deutschsprachigen Rechtsordnungen zunehmend juristisch verhandelt werden, ohne dort unmittelbar institutionell verankert zu sein.

Im Zentrum des Vortrags stehen Begriffe wie Mahr, häufig als Morgengabe oder Brautgabe wiedergegeben, Zakat sowie weitere islamisch-rechtliche Termini, die in deutschsprachigen gerichtlichen Entscheidungen und juristischen Argumentationen auftreten (vgl. Smailagić/Felder 2025). Diese Konzepte stellen die Rechtssprache vor besondere Herausforderungen, da sie aus einem religiösen Normsystem stammen und in Kategorien säkularer Rechtsordnungen übertragen werden müssen. Aus kognitiv-linguistischer Perspektive stellt sich daher die Frage, wie solche religiösen bzw. transzendent orientierten Konzepte sprachlich gefasst, semantisch angepasst und in den begrifflichen Rahmen des jeweiligen Rechtssystems integriert werden.

Die Untersuchung basiert auf einem Korpus von Gerichtsentscheidungen aus Deutschland, Österreich und der Schweiz, das aus juristischen Datenbanken wie openJur, dem österreichischen Rechtsinformationssystem RIS sowie Entscheidungen des Schweizer Bundesgerichts zusammengestellt wurde. Mithilfe korpuslinguistischer und diskursanalytischer Verfahren werden drei Aspekte untersucht: erstens die lexikalischen Formen, in denen islamisch-rechtliche Begriffe auftreten; zweitens Bedeutungsäquivalente und Paraphrasierungsstrategien, mit denen diese Begriffe erläutert oder angepasst werden; drittens die argumentativen und semantischen Kontexte, in denen Gerichte die Konzepte interpretieren und rechtlich einordnen.

Aus kognitiv-linguistischer Sicht interessiert insbesondere, wie juristische Diskurse fremde religiöse Konzepte konzeptualisieren und welche semantischen Verschiebungen oder konzeptuellen Zuordnungen dabei entstehen. Dabei werden kulturspezifische konzeptuelle Lücken in Wissensbeständen deutschsprachiger Gemeinschaften sichtbar, die für die juristische Arbeit an Gerichten sprachlich und argumentativ geschlossen werden müssen. Rechtssprache erscheint somit als ein Ort, an dem religiös geprägte Begriffe in die Kategorien säkularer Rechtsordnungen überführt werden.

Der Beitrag verbindet eine korpusbasierte Analyse mit einer kognitiv-linguistischen Perspektive auf Rechtssprache und religiöse Semantik. Ziel ist es zu zeigen, wie islamisch-rechtliche Konzepte in deutschsprachigen Rechtstexten ausgehandelt, kognitiv gerahmt und juristisch integriert werden. Zugleich eröffnet der Vergleich der deutschen, österreichischen und schweizerischen Rechtstradition Einblicke in unterschiedliche interkulturelle Erfahrungen mit dem Islam.

Cognitive Linguistics and Religious Language

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Cognitive Linguistics and Paradox: We examine how paradox can be approached through source-domain reversal (Richardson & Mueller, 2019), where situated explanations draw on a particular source-domain mapping that is subsequently reconceptualized through an opposing mapping. Together with examples involving conceptual blending, this supports the claim that paradox often serves a situated discourse function (Mueller & Richardson, 2025). We then consider dualistic experiences of divine relationship and non-dualistic experiences of non-conceptuality as clusters of idealized cognitive models, with the former underpinned by a LINKED_GOAL image schema and the latter by schema attenuation. Finally, we examine one possible framework for integrating these seemingly opposing strands.
Cognitive Linguistics and Multimodality: We discuss how multimodal channels in religious ritual can be analyzed through conceptual blending (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002). As an example, we present an analysis of the Korean Buddhist Ritual of the Four Instruments (Richardson, Mueller, & Pihlaja, 2021). The blend combines inputs from “ritual space” involving sounds and body movements, “dharma space” involving symbolic correspondences between instruments and beliefs, and “mythic space” involving metonymic associations. We reflect on the distinctive interpretive affordances of ritual, where complex networks of integrated meanings may be only partially accessed by believers at any given moment, yet remain available through repeated ritual encounter. Some meanings may be accessible to new believers, while others depend on specialized religious knowledge (Mueller, 2023).
Cognitive Linguistics and Discourse: Finally, we discuss how discourse can be approached through a cognitive linguistics lens. Focusing on everyday interaction, we show how categories of belief and religious identity are built through abstraction in discourse, with metaphor and metonymy playing key roles. Drawing on research in superdiverse contexts (Pihlaja, 2023), where discussions of religious belief involve comparing one’s own beliefs and actions with those of others, we illustrate how people understand themselves and others not through the strict application of theological labels, but through emergent models grounded in experience. We argue that interaction plays an important role in shaping how religious belief and practice come to be conceptualized as discrete categories, and that cognitive linguistics offers resources for addressing practical problems of speaking across difference in the contemporary world.

Communicating Religious Concepts. The Case of Planned Languages
Dr. Giovanni Di Stefano

This study investigates how constructed languages, particularly Esperanto, cognitively structure transcendent concepts and contribute to the formation of alternative religious and spiritual worldviews. The research focuses on the relationship between language planning, religious conceptualization, and the cognitive organization of symbolic systems, examining whether planned languages facilitate the emergence of hybridized forms of spirituality comparable to those observed in minority religions and translingual spiritual practices. The theoretical framework combines approaches from Cognitive Linguistics, Conceptual Metaphor Theory, Translation Studies, and the Cognitive study of Religion. In particular, the study draws on theories of embodied cognition and religious framing to analyze how transcendent concepts are linguistically reorganized when sacred and spiritual discourses are translated into planned languages. Special attention is devoted to the role of L. L. Zamenhof's ethical and spiritual project of Homaranism, understood as a transnational and universalist attempt to reshape religious and moral communication through linguistic neutrality. Methodologically, the research adopts an interdisciplinary and corpus-based approach. It combines Qualitative Discourse Analysis with comparative linguistic analysis of sacred texts translated into Esperanto and other constructed languages. The corpus includes translations of biblical, spiritual texts and community discourse. The analysis focuses on conceptual metaphors, semantic restructuring, religious frames, and the cognitive negotiation of transcendent meanings across linguistic systems.

The study aims to demonstrate that planned languages function not only as communicative tools but also as cognitive environments capable of reshaping religious imagination, symbolic structures, and spiritual categories. More broadly, the research contributes to the understanding of how linguistic systems influence the cognitive construction of transcendence and the emergence of alternative religious and spiritual identities.

Individueller Ausdruck religiöser Identität. Ethnosemantische Einblicke und Gespräche über Glauben in der evangelikalen Kirchen Amen Berlin

Marianne Rennella

Freikirchen aus dem evangelikal-charismatischen Spektrum erfahren seit circa zwei Jahrzehnten auch in Deutschland viel Zuspruch, insbesondere bei Personen zwischen 20 und 30 Jahren. Am Beispiel der Freikirche Amen Berlin wird untersucht, inwiefern es den sogenannten Trendkirchen gelingt, ein junges, in der Großstadt lebendes Publikum anzusprechen und dieses an sich zu binden. Hauptaugenmerk der Arbeit liegt auf der Untersuchung identitätsprägender und identitätskonstituierender Merkmale, anhand welcher Einblicke in die religiöse Identität der Kirchenmitglieder gewonnen werden. Basierend auf der Annahme, dass der Identitätsbegriff als ein Produkt des Sprachgebrauchs zu verstehen ist, wird die interaktionale Soziolinguistik zur forschungstheoretischen Einbettung herangezogen (Spitzmüller 2022). Die Identitätskonstruktion versteht sich als dynamisch und wird auch über den Vergleich und die Abgrenzung zu anderen Individuen ausgehandelt (Müller 2015: 213). Diese Aushandlungsprozesse können durch ihre Verbalisierung sichtbar werden (Schwarz-Friesel 2008) und identitätsstiftende Kognitionen offenlegen. Zur Untersuchung wird mittels eines explorativen Ansatzes auf eine Kombination aus qualitativ-ethnographischen Methoden zurückgegriffen, die sinnvoll aufeinander aufbauen. Im ersten Schritt werden ethnosemantische Einblicke mittels einer Feldforschung gewonnen, um die soziale Wirklichkeit und die dort beobachtbare gemeinsame (Sprach-)Praxis abzubilden (Maeder & Brosziewski 1997), beziehungsweise plausibel darzulegen (Müller 2015: 99). Etwaige Kategorien und Einflussfaktoren werden im Material gesucht. Im zweiten Schritt dienen Gespräche über Glauben in Form von halbstrukturierten Leitfadeninterviews als Grundlage für eine kognitionslinguistische Analyse religiöser Identität. Entscheidend ist dabei die subjektive Sinngebung der Mitglieder und der damit einhergehende Zugang zum Impliziten, den das Gesprochene bietet (Deppermann 2013). Konzepte, Konzeptualisierungen und Domänen werden anhand der Transkripte von vier einstündigen Gesprächen mit den Mitgliedern SAB, AS, CEP und TOM der Kirche Amen Berlin gebildet, strukturiert nach acht Gesprächsanalysekategorien, die in Anlehnung an die Definition religiöser Identität von Peter J. Hemming und Nicola Magde konzipiert werden (2012: 40). Identitätskonstituierendes Potenzial zeigt der Gottesdienst auf den Ebenen des sozialen Stellenwerts, des Erlebnisfaktors, der sprachlichen Fokussierung auf das Subjekt – unter anderem möglich gemacht durch gesellschaftliche Prozesse religiöser Pluralisierung – sowie der Vorbildfunktion des Pastors und seiner rhetorischen und lexikalischen Predigtgestaltung. Die Gespräche offenbaren Einblicke in die Kognitionen der vier Mitglieder, die zur Identitätsformation beitragen. Anhand des sprachlichen Ausdrucks wird auf eine Einschlägigkeit der Konzepte ZUGEHÖRIGKEIT und EXKLUSIVITÄT, der Konzeptualisierung MENSCH UND RELIGION ALS FUSION, des Glaubenssatzes ICH BIN EIN BESSERER MENSCH, WENN ICH CHRIST BIN und der Domäne der PERSÖNLICHEN BEREICHERUNG geschlossen. Die vorgenommene Verknüpfung aus Feldforschung, Forschungshintergrund und kognitionslinguistischer Analyse legt nahe, dass der sprachliche Ausdruck und die diesem zugrundeliegenden kognitiven Aktivitäten selbst ein Resultat sprachlicher Prozesse sind. Betrachtet vor dem Hintergrund der linguistischen Relativität, werden die Einflusskraft narrativ und kommunikativ erstellter Zustände und die Relevanz innerkirchlicher, intersubjektiver Aushandlungsprozesse für die Identitätskonstruktion junger Evangelikaler deutlich.

Religious Metaphors in German Medieval Texts

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CRC 1475 Metaphors of Religion examines the role of metaphors in the construction of religious meaning. The guiding theory is Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson 1980), which is applicable for linguistic and philological subprojects alike. According to this theory, metaphors are not merely rhetorical devices; rather, they structure our entire way of thinking. Linguistic metaphors are instantiations of underlying conceptual metaphors. These build upon one another to create a cognitive network that renders abstract concepts comprehensible. During the metaphorical mapping process, elements of meaning are transferred from a familiar, mostly concrete source domain to an unfamiliar, more abstract target domain. Unlike studies that examine specific lexemes belonging to the source or target domain of a metaphor (e.g. Wiemann 2025), in my PhD thesis I exhaustively annotate passages of Middle High German texts (Trierer Ägidius, Legend of a Saint, 12th c.; Rheinisches Marienlob, Marian poetry, 13th. c.; Die Lilie, Allegory, 13th. c.; Christine Ebner: Von der genaden uberlast, Sisters' Book, 14th c.; Johannes Tauler: Sermons, 14th c.) to identify metaphors. For this purpose, an annotation scheme (Dipper et al. 2024a) is used that focuses on 'deliberate' (Steen 2017) rather than conventionalized metaphors. Furthermore, syntactic dependencies were annotated using an annotation scheme developed specifically for historical German (Dipper et al. 2024b), as well as semantic roles.. The resulting corpus contains approximately 28.000 text words.
Afterwards, semantic domains were assigned to the identified metaphors as they are used in the Thesaurus of Religious Metaphors of the CRC. Domains are structured by semantic frames, which are conceived as knowledge structures in long-term memory. The German FrameNet as lexicographic resource is used to analyze frames of metaphors. To date, frame-semantic analyses of metaphors have been conducted from a linguistic perspective on conventionalized metaphors and their underlying conceptual metaphors (e.g. Neumair et al. 2025). This study attempts to analyze deliberate metaphors from various religious text types using frame semantics. Despite the several-century gap, it is worth testing whether this modern lexicographic resource can also decipher premodern metaphors revealing the medieval conception of the Christian faith. First, I will present quantitative analyses of the annotations, and then delve deeper into the frame-semantic analyses of selected religious metaphors.

Theme Session: Language as human behaviour (D. van Soeren & I. Afanasev)

Consonantal Phonotactics in V. Gnedov's Poetry: A Comparison with a Reference Corpus of Akhmatova, Bunin, and Gumilev within the Phonology as Human Behavior Framework

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This study examines consonantal phonotactics in the poetry of Vasilisk Gnedov, one of the leading figures of Russian Ego-Futurism, by comparing his early poems with a reference corpus compiled from poems by Akhmatova, Bunin, and Gumilev and taken to represent a relatively normative variety of early twentieth-century literary Russian. Gnedov is a particularly relevant test case because his poetry contains neologistic and phonologically marked forms, such as proklenushek, zlatokopytok, kruzho vypenil, strepet, and galoche stanyval, which raise the question of whether his experimental diction departs from Russian phonotactic organization or systematically redistributes its resources. The analysis is conducted within the framework of Phonology as Human Behavior (PHB), introduced by Diver (1979) and further developed by Davis (1987), Tobin (1997), and others. Within PHB, phonology is understood not as an autonomous formal level but as part of general human behavior shaped by a constant compromise between communicative distinctiveness and articulatory economy. The study is based on two comparable corpora: 870 words in Gnedov's corpus and 854 words in the reference corpus. Since vowel parameters are nearly identical in the two corpora, the analysis focuses exclusively on consonants and consonant clusters: the frequency and density of two-member and three-member clusters, the positional distribution of clusters, especially in word-initial position, and selected PHB-relevant oppositions, including word-initial /r, l/ clusters involving the same active articulator as opposed to clusters involving a shift between active articulators, maximal constriction as opposed to first-degree stricture, and voiceless as opposed to voiced consonants in initial position.

The results suggest that Gnedov's poetic language is best understood not simply as a departure from Russian phonotactic norms or as an arbitrary invention of exotic, difficult-to-articulate clusters, but as a form of phonological behavior that systematically redistributes available phonotactic resources within the Russian phonological system. Compared with the reference corpus, Gnedov's poems show a tendency toward more frequent two-member clusters (54.6 vs. 50.5 per 100 words), especially in salient word-initial position (25.2 vs. 20.3 per 100 words), alongside a slightly lower frequency of three-member clusters (3.2 vs. 3.5 per 100 words). In the subset of word-initial clusters involving /r/ and /l/, both PHB-favored combinations, involving the same active articulator, and less-favored combinations, involving a shift between active articulators, are more frequent in Gnedov's corpus: the former occur at 8.6 vs. 6.4 per 100 words, and the latter at 3.8 vs. 2.2 per 100 words. This pattern points to selective strengthening of certain cluster configurations rather than to generalized articulatory complexity.

Gnedov's experimental Ego-Futurist poetics thus emerge not as a rupture with linguistic norm, but as a motivated and internally structured shift within the range of phonological behavior available in Russian.

Verb number in Mapudungun: A new perspective

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In this presentation I will share partial results of an ongoing investigation that aims to account for some grammatical features of Mapudungun, an indigenous language of Chile and Argentina. I will focus on the semantic contribution of certain forms traditionally associated with the notion of grammatical number, with the aim of explaining their motivated distribution in a corpus of authentic texts.

Specifically, I will analyze the so-called third-person verbal inflections of the realis mood, -y, yngu and -yngün. These forms are typically classified as singular, dual and plural, respectively (Augusta, 1903, pp. 26-29; Hernández Sallés et al., 2006, p. 80; Raguileo Lincopil, n.d., pp. 15-16; cf. Salas, 1992, p. 111; Smeets, 2007, pp. 151152). However, this classification does not satisfactorily explain their actual range of use. For instance, frequently "the verb in the singular is used, even when the subject is plural or dual" (Augusta, 1903, p. 26, the translation is mine). In addition, the "dual" -yngu is sometimes used with a plural referent, as in example 1, while the "plural" -yngün is sometimes used with a dual referent, as in example 2.

(1) Pu wenteche kurekefiŋu re kizu ñi mapu ñi che müten / The mountains people generally married women from their own land only (Guevara 1913, p. 53, the highlighting and translation are mine)

(2) Ñi epu kure müten konfuiŋun / Only two of his wives could go in (Guevara 1913, p. 17, the highlighting and translation are mine)

My analysis is grounded in the Columbia School of Linguistics (Diver, 1995, 2012[1975]; Huffman, 2001, 2006; Davis, 2004; Stern, 2019), a functional approach that aims to find empirically-based explanations for facts of actual usage, rather than relying on aprioristic assumptions about how languages are structured. Prior work done within this framework attests to the value of such an inductive approach to the study of indigenous languages (e.g., Contini-Morava, 1987, 2002, 2012; Contini-Morava & Danziger, 2018, 2022; Lai, 2024; Ventayol-Boada, 2024). My study is further guided by the ethnopragmatic approach (e.g., García, 1995; García y Otheguy, 1983; Martínez, 2004, 2009, 2012, 2015; Zanfardini, 2020, 2022), a perspective that has shown that skewings in the use of comparable linguistic signals correlate with varying communicative needs.

The corpus is made up of the historical accounts (nütram) compiled in Guevara (1913). A mixed methods approach is adopted, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques.

My proposal is that occurrences of -y, -yngu and -yngün in the corpus can be explained by positing that, while the three forms point to what in traditional terms is referred to as a third-person subject −an entity that is different from speaker/writer and hearer(s)/reader(s)−, they differ in that -y makes no further specification with respect to that subject. In contrast, -yngün indicates that the subject should be understood as comprising two or more constituent parts, while -yngu groups the subject together with another, external entity (e.g., an object) that is also fundamentally involved in the occurrence of the event.

Preliminary results reveal some previously unexplored facts about how Mapudungun works.

A Columbia School analysis of tú and vos in Montevideo

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Montevideo occupies a distinctive position within the Río de la Plata linguistic area due to the stable coexistence of two informal second-person singular address signals: tú and vos. Although voseo (the use of vos) predominates in contemporary usage, tuteo (the use of tú) remains productive and appears systematically across discourse contexts. Previous scholarship has documented this alternation extensively, primarily through sociolinguistic analyses focused on age, education, formality, and interpersonal relations. While these studies describe important distributional tendencies, the communicative rationale underlying the coexistence of tú and vos remains insufficiently explained.

This paper examines the Montevideo address system through the lens of Columbia School linguistics, following the sign-based approach associated with William Diver. Within this framework, linguistic forms are treated as meaningful signals whose distribution reflects invariant semantic contrasts. Rather than assuming tú and vos to be equivalent variants conditioned exclusively by social factors, the study explores the possibility that the two signals encode distinct communicative meanings.

The analysis draws on written reported discourse from El País, El Observador, and Montevideo Portal, representing contemporary Montevidean Spanish. Through qualitative and quantitative analysis, the study investigates the discourse environments in which tú and vos occur, with particular attention to cases of intra-speaker alternation and interactions involving a constant interlocutor. The central hypothesis proposes that tú signals interlocutor individuation, construing the addressee as a distinct discourse target, while vos signals interlocutor access through interactional integration, construing the interlocutor as relationally embedded and interactionally accessible. Preliminary examples suggest that tú tends to occur in contexts involving explicit attribution, rhetorical targeting, or interlocutor singling out, whereas vos predominates in contexts characterised by relational continuity and interactional immediacy. This distinction becomes particularly visible in cases of alternation such as 'a vos te llama un presidente… y tú lo agarrás', where the same interlocutor is construed differently within a single discourse sequence.

Preliminary findings suggest that the alternation between tú and vos is neither random nor fully reducible to traditional sociolinguistic variables alone. Rather than functioning as fixed social labels, the two signals appear to guide contextual interpretation through distinct discourse construals.

By examining address forms from a Columbia School perspective, the paper contributes to the study of linguistic variation as meaning-driven behaviour and offers a functionally motivated account of pronominal choice in Montevideo Spanish. More broadly, it illustrates how Columbia School methodology can illuminate semantic organisation within variable systems.

A unified account for L-participle meaning in A. Kuśniewicz's Król Obojga Sycylii

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The talk discusses the meaning of a form called L-participle in the second edition of the Polish novel Król Obojga Sycylii by A. Kuśniewicz (Kuśniewicz, 1972), published in 1972. The traditional definition of L-participle is the following: a common Slavic verbal adjective, formed from a main stem of the verb and a suffix -l- that tends to appear in the contexts that denote past (Lunt, 2001, p.109). The contextual senses of L-participle in Slavic languages in general have been a subject of discussion in the last decades (for the comprehensive overview, see (Bláha, 2020), especially its usage in the context not related to the past (Benić, 2024), for the comprehensive overview see (Mirić, 2020). However, even among the works that made attempts at semantic analysis of L-participle (Proeme, 1991), there were none that entertained monosemic hypotheses, the ones that would explain the distribution of the L-participle across all of the contexts, and not only subset of them. This is especially relevant for L-participle in Polish, which is used in a variety of situations, including past, present and future contexts. The talk is an attempt at explaining this, presenting a monosemic account of an L-participle in A. Kuśniewicz's Król Obojga Sycylii.

The research brings evidence in favor of hypothesis that L-participle, at least in KOS2, has a single meaning PAST, whether it is used for characterisation of the events in the past or in the future from the perspective of the speaker. The key methodology used is a sign-based aposterioristic analysis, performed in the spirit of the Columbia School of Linguistics (CSL), shaped by W. Diver and É. García (García & Otheguy, 1983; Huffman, 2002; Diver, 2012). The research analyses all of the contexts where L-participle is present. It pays special attention to the segments of the text that contain the lowest and the highest number of L-participles. The careful study of these fragments shows that its meaning is indeed PAST. This has significant consequences, for instance, for the messages that describe past events. When L-participle is almost absent (and, as a contrast, utterances with traditional present tense forms or without any verbs are on the rise), the narrative tends to be the most immersive, while when L-participle is heavily present, the narrative becomes report on the facts that happened (see examples in appendix A). The talk showcases three episodes of the novel, two descriptions of battles and a single letter (all being a narrative within a narrative), to bring the arguments in favour of the hypothesis.

Overall, the presented study provides additional evidence to the earlier suggestions of the Polish verb system being an intricate interlock of various grammatical systems, used with a high degree of variety by different speakers (Proeme, 1991). The research also serves as an initial point in the semantic exploration of L-participle in the various Slavic varieties.

Language as Human Behaviour: The Legacy of William Diver and Érica García (Panel 2.0) - Introduction

Dr. Daan van Soeren[1]; Ludmila Mariel Novotny[2]; Dr. Lucia Zanfardini[3]; Ilia Afanasev[4]
[1] University of Amsterdam; [2] Universidad Nacional del Comahue; [3] Universidad Nacional de Rio Negro; [4] University of Vienna

In this introductory talk, the theme session organizers will offer a theoretical and methodological outline of the Columbia School (CS) framework (Diver 1995, 2012; Huffman 2001, 2006; Stern 2019), as well as highlight key points of contact and divergence between core CS tenets and the related approach of ethnopragmatics (García 1995; Martínez 2004, 2009; Martínez y Speranza 2009). CS is a functionally-oriented school of linguistics that was initiated by William Diver, Erica García and their students in the 1960s. It is based on two fundamental understandings:

- that language is an instance of human behavior, so it can be "expected to share characteristics that are found in other aspects of human activity and cognition" (Stern 2019: 3);
- that language is an instrument inherently designed for communication, so "it must be the case that its fundamental structural components be signals and meanings; that is, that language share in the characteristic that is common to all instruments of communication" (Diver 2012: 47).

Originally born as a reaction to the empirical failure of formalist approaches, the aim of CS is to discover how language is structured based on facts of actual usage. It adopts an inductive, corpus-driven approach with the objective of explaining what features of the linguistic system lead speakers/writers to deploy language in the ways they do.

Closely connected to CS, García's later innovation, ethnopragmatics, emerged from an interest to "explain the cognitive processes that guide speakers in the solution of their communicative needs" (Martínez, 2009: 261, our translation). This approach thus goes beyond establishing the identity of linguistic signals, seeking to uncover the cognitive profilings that guide their variable use in different contexts, with a special interest in "cultural aspects as motivators of communicative needs" (Martínez 2004: 1, our translation). The following distinctive features are common to CS and ethnopragmatics:

- an "aposterioristic" (Huffman 2006: 44) approach to linguistic analysis: no categories are assumed, but rather hypotheses are proposed and tested based on empirical data;
- an understanding that linguistic structure is not autonomous, but invariably motivated by the communicative needs and the physical, cognitive, and cultural traits of human beings;
- an instrumental view of meaning: it is recognized that language is not compositional; rather, linguistic inputs serve as mere hints from which messages can be contextually inferred;
- a reliance on naturally occurring discourse as a basis for linguistic analysis;
- a qualitative-quantitative methodology: close textual analysis is combined with testing of predictions regarding "co-occurrence favorings" (Sabar 2018: 95, 132) of the item(s) under study in specific contexts.

The papers in this theme session will illustrate the current vitality of CS, and its potential to shed light on different aspects of human language and cognition. These works offer valuable contributions to a variety of fields including grammar, lexical semantics, phonology, (ethno)pragmatics, variation, dialectal studies, language contact, translation, discourse analysis, and endangered languages.

How sound patterns can be explained with cognitive and perceptual factors: data from Spanish, English, Dutch and Guaraní

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University of Amsterdam

Van Soeren (2023) analyses the distribution of consonants in lexical corpora of Spanish CVCVCV forms (e.g. pájaro 'bird'), and English, and Dutch CVCVC forms. Figure 1 shows the results for the Spanish corpus (but highly similar results were found for English and Dutch); labial consonants are favoured in position C1 (consonant 1) and apicals are favoured in C2 and C3. Moreover, the proportion of labials, but also palatals and velars, diminishes from the beginning to the end of the word. The reverse pattern is observed for apicals: the smallest proportion in C1, a larger proportion in C2 and the largest proportion in C3.

Van Soeren (2023) explains the observation with communicative load (Diver 1979/2012; Tobin 1997); as a word is uttered, every sound/segment eliminates more word candidates, and therefore the beginning has a higher communicative load than the end, which is more redundant for word identification (cf. Grosjean 1980; King & Wedel 2020). At the beginning of a form, there is thus a high burden of distinctiveness. Labials have a perceptual advantage over non-labials; they are visible as well as audible, which explains their favouring in a position with high communicative load. At the more redundant end, the need for optimal distinctiveness is lessened, and articulatory ease is favoured. This is where Van Soeren (2023) observes a favouring of apicals, which is explained with their articulatory efficiency.

It is not surprising that similar results were found for Spanish, English and Dutch, as two of the three languages are from the same language family, and all three are Indo-European. Therefore, I have compared these results to the distribution of labials, apicals, palatals and velars in Guaraní, a polysynthetic Tupi language. As this language has few monosyllabic CVCVCV words, a lexical corpus of CVCV forms was collected. In general, I expected to find similar results; one can argue that an explanation in terms of communicative load applies to any language, as all languages have forms with a beginning and an end, where the end will always be more redundant for its identification.

Figure 2 shows that in Guaraní CVCV forms, we indeed observe the same favouring of labials in C1, and a smaller proportion of labials observed in C2. The reverse pattern is again observed for apicals; we observe a small proportion of apicals in C1, and a clear favouring in C2. Again, the proportion of palatals and velars diminishes from C1 to C2 position.

A curious detail is that Guaraní /ʋ/ does not pattern with the other labials (although it is included in the "labial" category in Figure 2). Further research will explore possible explanations as to why /ʋ/ should be favoured in C2, rather than C1.