

WORKSHOP ON GRADIENCE AND CONSTRUCTIONAL CHANGE

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

18-19 November 2017

University of Edinburgh

INVITED SPEAKERS

Martin Hilpert, **Sarcastic much?**

It is a basic tenet of usage-based construction grammar that long-term linguistic changes originate from processes that are at work in actual communicative situations. So far, however, relatively little work on constructional change addresses either the dialogical nature of language or the social context in which a particular construction is used. In this talk, I will focus on these issues by discussing the development of a pattern that I will call the *sarcastic much?* construction:

- (1) A: And, Zython, I don't care what you fucking think – when you do think, that is. Shove off, punk.
B: Geeze, angry much? All I did was demonstrate why your points were wrong.
- (2) As a woman who loves baseball, I'm a little insulted by the suggestion that women won't read a book just because it has something to do with sports! Stereotype much?

The *sarcastic much?* construction conveys a critical or sarcastic meaning, often in response to an utterance by someone else (Adams 2014). This critical meaning is non-compositional, i.e. not fully derivable from the meaning of the parts of the construction. Its pivotal and obligatory component is the adverb *much*, which marks the right edge of the construction. Functionally, *sarcastic much?* is not a request for information, but rather an interactional challenge: A previous statement or behavior is called out as being open to criticism or ridicule. In example (1), writer B's use of *angry much?* conveys the point that writer A's abrasive comments were inappropriate in the context of that online discussion. In example (2), the writer explicitly critiques a previous comment as drawing on a stereotype. The construction thus exemplifies what Brône and Zima (2014) call a dialogical unit.

The *sarcastic much?* construction is a relatively recent phenomenon that is nonetheless well-documented in web-based corpora such as the GLOWBE corpus (Davies 2013) and that thus affords a rare look at constructional change in real time. Using data from corpora and YouTube videos, it will be shown that *sarcastic much?* is currently on a trajectory across a widening set of communicative contexts and dialogical functions.

References

- Adams, Michael. 2014. Slang in new media. A case study. In Julie Coleman (ed.), *Global English slang. Methodologies and perspectives*, 175–186. London: Routledge.
- Brône, Geert & Elisabeth Zima. 2014. Towards a dialogic construction grammar. A corpus-based approach to ad hoc routines and resonance activation. *Cognitive Linguistics* 25(3). 457–495.
- Davies, Mark. 2013. Corpus of Global Web-based English: 1.9 billion words from speakers in 20 countries (GloWbE). Available online at <http://corpus.byu.edu/glowbe/>.

Muriel Norde, **The multilingual constructicon: English *-ish* in Norwegian, Swedish and Dutch**

Although more than half of the world's population is estimated to be fluent in more than one language, surprisingly little work has been done on constructional change from a multilingual perspective (but see recent studies by Höder (2012, 2014a,b, 2016) on Diasystematic Construction Grammar). In this paper, I will argue that the creative use of foreign material by multilingual speakers is an interesting example of the flexibility of constructional networks and contributes to our understanding of how such networks are organised. This will be illustrated by a cross-linguistic case study on the distribution of English *ish* in Dutch, Swedish and Norwegian. Both in the source language and the target languages, this morpheme is multifunctional and productive, and it appears both as a suffix and as a free morpheme (see, e.g., Kuzmack 2007, Norde 2009: 223ff., Traugott & Trousdale 2013: 233ff., Bochnak & Csipak 2014, Dixon 2014: 235ff., Pierce 2014, 2015). For example, as a suffix with associative or approximative meaning, it may be attached to all kinds of parts of speech, including adjectives (1a), common nouns (1b), proper nouns (1c) or numerals (1d). It may even take scope over an entire phrase, as in (1e).

- (1a) *No one is improving their times on the **damp-ish, cold-ish** track.* [ENCOW14AX]
- (1b) *Think Pillsbury-ish dough stuffed with something ham-like and **cheddar-ish**.*
[ENCOW14AX]
- (1c) *There's no denying that she has a **Diana-ish** effect.* [ENCOW14AX]
- (1d) *Thinking up a **hundred-ish** desserts with appropriate letters in their names is tricky*
(...) [ENCOW14AX]
- (1e) *Funniest moments (well, to me) were (...) shots of John Kerry looking rather forlorn and **farthest-back-row-seat-ish**.* [ENCOW14AX]

The free form collocates with all of the above, but may also occur as a discourse marker, functioning as a hedge:

- (1f) (...) *to be fair I had given him notice, well **ish**.* [ENCOW14AX]

Both bound and free *ish* have been borrowed into Dutch, Norwegian and Swedish, where they collocate with both English and native stems. Using data from the COW-corpora (Schäfer & Bildhauer 2015) for English, Dutch, and Swedish, and from NoWac (Guevara 2010) for Norwegian, I will address the following questions:

RQ1: How are bound and free *ish* distributed across parts of speech in all four languages and which function(s) do they fulfill?

RQ2: What is the ratio between English collocates and native collocates, in other words, are (-)*ish* collocations in Dutch, Swedish and Norwegian an example of direct or indirect affix borrowing (cf. Seifart 2015)?

RQ3: How can these bound and free (-)*ish* constructions be organised in a (multilingual) network?

A preliminary analysis of the data suggests that the distributional differences are remarkably small (often above the $p=0.05$ significance threshold), with the interesting exception of Swedish, where free *ish* appears to have become linked to the native approximative adverb and discourse marker *typ* 'kind of, like', since it appears in constructions not found in English:

- (2) *Det tar lång tid, **ish** fem timmar*[SECOW14AX]
It takes long time, like five hours
'It takes a long time, like five hours'.

Constructions such as (2) may be taken as evidence of what Höder (2014) terms 'diaconstructions', language-unspecific constructions to which language-specific 'idioconstructions' are hierarchically linked. An alternative analysis, one that seems plausible at least for morphological constructions, would be that idioconstructions are linked horizontally, by means of their shared semantics. In either analysis, one would have to assume a multilingual constructicon, which is in accordance with the observation that bilingual speakers are not the sum of one or more monolinguals (Grosjean 2010: 75).

References

- Bochnak, M. Ryan & Eva Csipak. 2014. A new metalinguistic degree morpheme. In Todd Snider, Sarah D'Antonio and Mia Weigand (Eds.) *Proceedings of Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT) 24*: 432-452.
- Dixon, R. M. W. 2014. *Making new words: Morphological derivation in English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Grosjean, François. 2010. *Bilingual life and reality*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Guevara, Emiliano Raul (2010). NoWaC: a large web-based corpus for Norwegian. *Proceedings of the NAACL HLT 2010 Sixth Web as Corpus Workshop*, Association for Computational Linguistics, 1-7.
- Höder, Steffen. 2012. Multilingual constructions: a diasystematic approach to common structures. In Braunmüller, Kurt & Christoph Gabriel (Eds.) *Multilingual individuals and multilingual societies*, 241–257. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Höder, Steffen. 2014a. Convergence vs. divergence from a diasystematic perspective. In Braunmüller, Kurt, Steffen Höder & Karoline Kühl (Eds.) *Stability and divergence in language contact: Factor and mechanisms*, 39-60. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Höder, Steffen. 2014b. Constructing diasystems: Grammatical organisation in bilingual groups. In Åfarli, Tor A. & Brit Mæhlum (Eds.) *The sociolinguistics of grammar*, 137-152. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Höder, Steffen. 2016. Though this be contact, yet there's system in't: Was man noch heute von Uriel Weinreich über Sprachkontakt lernen kann. In Walker, Alastair (Ed.) *Classics revisited. Wegbereiter der Linguistik neu gelesen (Kieler Forschungen zur Sprachwissenschaft 6)*, 157-178. Frankfurt am Main: Lang.
- Norde, Muriel. 2009. *Degrammaticalization*. Oxford: OUP.
- Pierce, Marc. 2014. The further degrammaticalization of *ish*. *American speech* 89:1, 115-118.
- Pierce, Marc. 2015. More on *ish*. *American speech* 90(3), 394-398.
- Schäfer, Roland and Felix Bildhauer. 2012. Building Large Corpora from the Web Using a New Efficient Tool Chain. *Proceedings of LREC'12*, 486–493.
- Seifart, Frank. 2015. Direct and indirect affix borrowing. *Language* 91(3), 511-532.
- Traugott, Elizabeth Closs & Graeme Trousdale. 2013. *Constructionalization and constructional change*. Oxford: OUP.

Peter Petré, **Putting connections centre stage in diachronic construction grammar**

Traugott & Trousdale (2013) make a distinction between constructionalization (rise of a new form-meaning pairing), and constructional change (affecting meaning *or* form). Yet it is still unclear to what extent change may imply functional and formal shifts simultaneously. If simultaneity is not a given, the distinction becomes a fuzzy one. Tighter integration of frequency into DCxG opens up a way of unifying the two changes. We exemplify this with the grammaticalization of *be going to* and *do-support*.

Be going to starts deviating from conveying motion-with-a-purpose around 1600. Yet clear-cut formal evidence of its auxiliarization only appears a century later when *going* no longer needs a subject of its own ('raising', as in *there is going to be such a calm*, Traugott 2015). Instead of positing a time lag between reanalysis and actualization, or serial 'micro-reanalyses', we argue this behaviour results from strengthening of clustered **connections** ('assemblies') of previously existing constructions. These assemblies in turn are gradually interconnected, leading to a holistic emergence of a future construction out of the string *be going to* INF, which is simultaneously reinforced by analogy with existing future auxiliaries. Crucially, the frequential shifts that precede this emergence already entail a gradual shift in *be going to*'s formal environments (e.g., an increase of relative clause uses) increasingly approximating the behaviour of existing auxiliaries. From this perspective, 'raising' need not be an indication of 'constructionalization' (if conceived as a switch turned on). Being rare with auxiliaries generally, it is natural for raising only to occur once a certain frequency threshold of auxiliary-like use is reached. While this saves the idea of a constructionalization-actualization time lag, the most important gestation period occurs at the pre-constructionalization stage.

Do-support spread to different syntactic environments at different times (cf. Ellegård 1953). A constructionalization account must choose between treating this variation as representing separate constructions or as a single process. Either way it fails to account for overlapping wave-like behaviour of different *do*-s. I will discuss what a connectionist methodology (using artificial neural networks) may help in understanding how the regulation of *do-support* unfolds. Such a model treats the different changes as an interconnected accumulation of connections between *do-support* and modals in similar contexts (cf. also Warner 1993: 198). Preliminary results show that in the period 1650-1700 auxiliary *do* initially most strongly approximates the contextual distribution of more fact-like modals such as *will* (intended action/future) as well as past tense modals, and then gradually assimilates more and more to other types of modals. This direction of the refinement in distribution may still be related to the lexical origins of *do*, even while *do* had reached auxiliary status more than a century earlier.

Generally, by assuming that more grammatical knowledge is stored in (the changing strengths of) the connections, some longstanding theoretical problems that emerge out of an unwarranted privileged position of the nodes in the constructional network might turn out to be pseudo-problems. The debate on analogy versus reanalysis might well be a pseudo-debate, if analogy is seen as primarily reflecting change in horizontal connections, and reanalysis change in vertical connections (between constructs and constructions). Both connectivity types are simultaneously affected in any process of grammaticalization. Various similarity relations (allostructions, competition) that pose a challenge to a node-centred model naturally receive unified treatment if seen as reflecting (changes in) mutual distributional

connections. As pointed out above, the same goes for constructionalization and constructional change. Importantly though, the approach still (should) leave(s) room for the concept of constructionalization to reflect the psychological reality that certain connectivity patterns stand out.

References

Ellegård, Alvar. 1953. The auxiliary do: The establishment and regulation of its use in English. PhD thesis: University of Gothenburg.

Traugott, Elizabeth C. & Graeme Trousdale 2013. *Constructionalization and constructional changes* (Oxford Studies in Diachronic and Historical Linguistics). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Traugott, Elizabeth Closs. 2015. "Toward a coherent account of grammatical constructionalization." In *Diachronic Construction Grammar*, ed. by Jóhanna Barðdal, Elena Smirnova, Lotte Sommerer & Spike Gildea, 51-80. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Warner, Anthony R. 1993. *English Auxiliaries. Structure and history*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

REGULAR SESSION

(in order of presentation)

Juhani Rudanko, *Tracking Two Non-Finite Constructions: a Case Study with Data from COHA and COCA*

The paper examines non-finite complements of the verb *submit*. Consider the examples in (1a-c), both from COHA.

- (1) a. If the ladies can put up with such entertainment, and will submit to partake of it on plates once tin, now iron ... (1896, NF)
b. ... the Germans are not going to submit to giving up their land forever to the Poles ... (1953, FIC)

In (1a) the verb *submit* selects a *to* infinitive and in (1b) it selects what may be called an *of-ing* complement, which is gerundial. It is assumed that in both sentences the complement of *submit* is sentential, with its own understood subject. The two constructions are also similar in that both involve subject control.

The paper begins with a brief review of the two constructions. It then presents information on the incidence of each type of construction in each decade of COHA. It is observed that in some decades both constructions are found in sizeable numbers, which may be viewed as a state of constructional coexistence, but that there is also major change, in that the gerundial pattern becomes more frequent in relation to the infinitival pattern. The evidence of COCA is also considered to shed light on the very recent usage. Further, the study examines potential factors that may bear on the variation between the two subject control patterns. Attention is paid to extractions (cf. e.g. Vosberg 2003; 2006; Rohdenburg 2016), and to the Choice Principle, proposed in very recent work. Further, taking into account that gerundial complements are at one end – at the nouny end – of the gradience of sentential complements (Ross 2004), attention is also paid to the incidence of *to* NP complements of *submit* in COHA, to see whether such complements might shed light on the spreading of the gerundial construction. Overall, the study uses the method of a case study with evidence from large corpora, in order to shed light on the nature and use of two constructions with comparable functions in the system of English predicate complementation in recent times.

The present paper investigates synchronic gradience (Traugott and Trousdale 2010) and gradual diachronic changes among English multi-word causative constructions. It argues that over the past 500 years the boundaries between the constructions have shifted and explores whether this has led to changes in the degree of intersective gradience between the members of the set.

The paper expands on [anonymised] who investigate diachronic changes of the *bring* causative construction in the Early Modern and Modern English periods – long after the grammaticalisation of *bring* from a transport sense to a causative. The construction has previously (Andersson 1985, Mair 1990a, Mair 1990b) been shown to be largely restricted to reflexive causees and to uses in the passive as well as to uses in “grammatically or semantically negative environments” (“negative bias” Mair 1990a), such as in (1).

(1) She couldn't bring herself to believe what she had overheard. (BNC, wridom1)

[anonymised]'s diachronic analysis provides a more nuanced picture. On the one hand, it reveals that 20th century *bring* has an even more narrow bias, namely towards modal, negated, reflexive uses (see (1)). On the other hand, they show that these narrow boundaries are, in fact, merely the (currently) latest stage in the gradual diachronic development of a dying construction: the prototypical token of the *bring* causative construction in the 16th and 17th centuries was non-modal, affirmative, active and non-reflexive, such as (2). Though the construction generally allowed for a more varied range of causers and causees and was less restricted concerning the kinds of modification it permitted.

(2) [...] so soon as we had brought my Parents to consent. (Peter Bellon *The Court Secret* 1689)

I now place these findings in a larger context by contrasting them with changes in neighbouring constructions – both *bring* constructions and other multi-word causatives, such as *get* and *make*. By investigating the nature of the boundaries between constructions at several stages spaced over the past 500 years and with the help of transitivity parameters (Hopper and Thompson 1980) such as reflexive, negation, modality, finiteness, kinesis etc. I aim to determine whether the diachronic development of causative *bring* reflects a shift in constructional boundaries – i.e. whether causative *bring* is being pushed into a niche by widening constructions – or whether we witness a change in the nature of the boundaries – i.e. whether causatives ‘specialise’, leading gradual boundaries to become more rigid. Such a loss of intersective gradience would mean that there is less overlap between constructions and could thus reduce processing complexity (Bates & MacWhinney 1987).

In order to assess the relationship between constructional change and synchronic gradiance, I would like to assume an emergentist view on language and language change in the spirit of Hopper 1987. In contrast to structuralist tenets, which see language as a pre-established system that exists prior to usage ('langue', 'competence'), Emergent Grammar implies that the linguistic system "is always deferred, always in a process but never arriving, and therefore emergent" (Hopper 1987: 141).

While recent approaches to language change have taken the variability and the dynamic character of language into consideration, they have remained structuralist in spirit in that they still see language change as a transition between default stages ('while A becomes B, there is a transitory period in which A and B coexist'). Concepts like 'bridging contexts', 'switch contexts' (Heine 2002; Diewald 2002) and the idea of invited inferences (Traugott/Dasher 2002) suggest that, when a linguistic form changes its function or meaning, this requires a context in which both, old and new version form part of the interpretation of an utterance. For example, English *since* usually encodes causality on the basis of a temporal relation on the propositional level. This view has been a great advantage over earlier accounts on language change, in which change is simply seen as a difference between an earlier and a later "stage" in a language's history without making any statement on how form or meaning of expressions change.

This view, however, does not account for the fact (among other things) that those attestations of *since* which are unambiguously either exclusively temporal or exclusively causal, are extremely rare. In my talk, I would therefore like to go a step further. I will argue that the linguistic sign (of whatever degree of complexity – phoneme, morpheme, construction, etc.) is inherently negotiable, underspecified and subject to interpretation. Gradiance, then, is not a phenomenon to be explained, but an epiphenomenon, necessarily resulting from the way we (metalinguistically) define our categories. Rather than striving for categorial clarity, interlocutors generally handle ambiguity and lack of specification through clues provided by the respective context. Language change, then, does not require innovation or reanalysis, but 'recontextualization' – that is, the use of an existing sign / construction in a different context (rather than the use of a new or altered sign). I will discuss well-documented cases of language change and demonstrate that canonical types of changes (e.g. grammaticalization / constructionalization / reanalysis as in *I'm going to Edinburgh* > *I'm gonna like Edinburgh*) do not require any innovative behaviour on part of the speaker, but reflect the use of one and the same construction being constantly recontextualized. In contrast to the traditional grammaticalization approach, the role of context is not reduced to a special role in transitional situations, but the context of each act of communication (re-)defines the linguistic sign. Context is thus a necessary ingredient of language which allows for communication by means of inherently vague signs and of inherently gradient structures.

A beneficial theoretical side effect of this claim is that the notion of 'recontextualization' is well compatible with other systems that have been described as 'emergent' in various fields outside linguistics (cf. Kuhle 2014).

Hendrik De Smet, **The motivated unmotivated: Analogy meets variation**

Variation occurs when a language has two or more ways of achieving the same communicative goal. Cases of variation are currently approached in very different ways by two different strands of linguists. Variationists assume that variation is natural and are happy to believe that it is a common phenomenon. Functionalists assume that variation is anomalous and expect that it is rare and – where it occurs – short-lived. The two views seem contradictory, yet both have good credentials. Variationists can argue that variation is to be expected because speech communities are never completely homogeneous. Functionalists can argue that variation should be abnormal because it makes language processing less efficient.

These conflicting views can be reconciled by considering how variation arises historically. If we think of formal categories as occupying a continuous region of functional space, variation arises when one formal category marginally extends into the functional domain of another. The resulting variation may in itself not be motivated, but its emergence (and subsequent maintenance) is typically sanctioned by analogical extensions that are.

To demonstrate this, I review several cases of variation, with a main focus on the prepositional complements of emotive adjectives. As the examples in (1) show, an adjective like *upset* can combine with a variety of prepositions to mark the external source of emotion.

- (1) a. The whole establishment had, in fact, been *upset* **over** her disappearance. (BNC)
- b. and she, Donna, was dreadfully *upset* **at** the suggestion. (BNC)
- c. Paul Ritchie was *upset* **with** a County Council decision to withdraw pay for trainees at the centre. (BNC)

In all of these cases, the variants at issue will in some contexts be near-equivalents and can be used to achieve the same communicative goal. In this respect, the existence of variant forms can be said to be uneconomical and therefore unmotivated. Within the context of the broader grammatical system, however, the variation is motivated, because one or both variants also occupy a unique functional niche from which they could analogically extend into the domain of the other variant.

This paper deals with the rise of suffixes that develop out of a blend, i.e. a merger of two words that both contribute to the meaning of the blend, such as *brunch* or *smog* (Fertig 2013: 66, see also Dixon 2014 or Strik et al. 2016). The development of blends and subsequent changes has not yet been analysed from a network perspective, and it is the aim of this paper to demonstrate that such an approach may offer new insights in the rise and spread of new groups of similarly constructed words, such as words ending in *-tainment* (*infotainment*, *docutainment*), *-tastic* (*geektastic*, *filmtastic*) or *-gasm* (*eargasm*, *nerdgasm*).

Using the English suffix *-tainment* as an example, I will show that its emergence can be fruitfully accounted for by means of association networks as proposed by Bybee (2010). New words ending in *-tainment*, such as *traveltainment*, *shoppertainment*, *politainment* etc. probably originate in a reanalysis of morpheme boundaries in the existing noun *entertainment*. Bybee suggests that “morphological relations are emergent from relations formed among words due to their semantic and phonetic similarity” and goes on to explain that “morphological analysis does not require that a word be exhaustively analysed into morphemes” (2010: 22f.). Bybee’s second observation is of particular relevance here, since *entertainment* is itself a derived word consisting of a root *entertain* and a suffix *-ment*, but these morpheme boundaries are not observed when it comes to the emergence of the suffix *-tainment*. Instead, every new coinage in *-tainment* joins the language user’s network interfaces via semantic as well as phonetic correspondences with similar word-formations. This accumulation, in turn, results in strengthened associations, which may eventually lead to the reanalysis of *-tainment* as a derivational suffix.

Drawing data from the web-based COW corpora (Schäfer 2015; Schäfer & Bildhauer 2012), I will explore how these new words can be organised in a network. Since these corpora consist mainly of colloquial writing, it is a potential source of new and creative coinages. The ENCOW16A subcorpus, comprising English texts from 2016, served as the basis for the quantitative analysis of *tainment* words, and yielded a little over 10.000 tokens, subsuming 351 types and 205 hapax legomena.

As far as the morphological status of *tainment* is concerned, I will argue that this is a gradient phenomenon – some *tainment* formations can be considered blends, e.g. *infotainment* and *edutainment*, whereas coinages containing linking elements (e.g. *-o-* as in *newsotainment*), which are not found in either of the component parts of the blend suggest that *-tainment* is developing into a suffix. This is corroborated by substantial type frequency indicating high productivity. At the same time, new verbs like *infotain* and *edutain*, the result of back-formation, show that speakers are still aware that *-ment* is a suffix, deriving nouns from verbs, and that such new pairs are linked to existing ones like *entertain* – *entertainment*.

In sum, the application of a network analysis may prove useful to explain not only how new complex words arise by means of association with existing words, but also how new morphological networks expand by forming links with existing networks.

References

Bybee, J. L. 2010. *Language, Usage and Cognition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dixon, R. M. W. 2014. *Making new words: Morphological derivation in English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fertig, D. 2013. *Analogy and morphological change*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Schäfer, Roland. 2015. Processing and querying large web corpora with the COW 14 architecture. In Proceedings of Challenges in the Management of Large Corpora (CMLC-3, July 20, 2015, Lancaster).

Schäfer, R. & Bildhauer, F. 2012. Building large corpora from the Web using a new efficient tool chain. In Nicoletta Calzolari et al. (eds.) *Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference on Language Resources and Evaluation (LREC'12)*, 486–493. Istanbul: ELRA.

Strik, O., Norde, M. & Beijering, K. 2016. On blended selfies and tainted smoothies. In: M. Wieling, G. Bouma & G. van Noord, ed. 2017. *From semantics to dialectometry*. Groningen: University of Groningen. pp. 283-292.

Turo Vartiainen, **Emergent word classes: Gradience in some structurally complex modifiers in English**

In this paper, I focus on gradience from the perspective of word classes and category change. Word classes have been a controversial category in constructional models of language at least since the publication of Croft's *Radical Construction Grammar* (2001), and yet in most constructional work, labels like N(oun) or V(erb) are often used in the descriptions of (partially-filled) constructions. In the first part of my talk, I will focus on the question of how word classes might be useful in Construction Grammar if they are understood from an emergent perspective (Hopper 1987; Vartiainen 2016). I will suggest that a usage-based constructional model of language can accommodate a view according to which constructs may instantiate a word class to varying degrees, and the degree of class membership depends on both semantic and structural factors. Following Hopper's ideas on emergent grammar, I suggest that word classes should be analysed both from the perspective of language production and linguistic output: if a construct differs from the central members of the word class in terms of its form and/or meaning, its word class may not emerge properly in discourse.

In the second part of my talk, I will discuss micro-constructions that are structurally complex, and therefore marginal or non-prototypical instantiations of their word class. Such micro-constructions include *hands-down*, *off-the-charts*, *in-your-face*, *drop-dead* and *flat-out*, for example. Most of these micro-constructions were originally used as adverbials in English, but they have recently come to be used similarly to adjectives and intensifiers, as in (1)–(6).

(1) On that evening, as the guests talked, relaxed, admired, and truly enjoyed the food, we knew we had succeeded in making the event **a hands-down success**. (*Corpus of Historical American English*, 2004)

(2) He was about to go further, to admit that they were right, and Daniels was **the hands-down best candidate**, when a buzz from his cell phone preempted his attention. (*Corpus of Historical American English*, 2004)

(3) The Sharks have had **off-the-charts talent** before, but the team never has made it to the Stanley Cup Finals. (*Corpus of Contemporary American English*, 2009)

(4) Saving money was one thing, but his ideas were **off-the-charts bad**. (*Corpus of Contemporary American English*, 2008)

(5) It was not **a flat-out denial**, but most of the students and I found Buchanan's remarks persuasive. (*Corpus of Historical American English*, 2004)

(6) This guy was **flat-out gorgeous**. (*Corpus of Historical American English*, 2006)

In short, what I hope to bring into the discussion is the idea that when constructs that are structurally strange (such as in the examples above) enter the language, this may result in two kinds of gradience. First, as presented, the word class of such constructs may not emerge in discourse as well as is the case with structurally simpler forms. Second, in addition to this category-internal gradience, examples (1)–(6) show that speakers may use these micro-constructions very flexibly. In fact, I would like to propose that there may be a connection between category-internal and category-external gradience as exhibited in (1) to (6): if the word class of a construct does not emerge properly in discourse, language users may start to treat such micro-constructions with increased flexibility.

I will study these constructions by analysing corpus data from several historical and present-day corpora. My preliminary results suggest that the flexible usage is mainly a twentieth-century phenomenon, and although there is evidence of such polyfunctionality in many varieties of English, the strongest evidence for the gradient usage comes from corpora of American English.

Bozhil Hristov, **Agreement and the Grammaticalisation of Perfect and Passive Constructions in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle***

The origins of the English perfect and passive go back to copular and possessive constructions, with lexical verbs meaning ‘be’, ‘become’ and ‘have’ combined with participles which originally showed agreement either with the subject or with the object (depending on the construction). For instance, the Old English verb *habban* ‘have’ was used as a full/lexical verb followed by an accusative object and a past participle which functioned as an object complement agreeing with the object in case, gender and number. Later, such complex transitive clauses of the SVOC_O type were gradually reanalysed as perfects, with ‘have’ as an auxiliary and the participle as a lexical (traditionally regarded as ‘main’) verb.

Interestingly, in Old English the participle did not always agree. It is then an open question whether we have an SVOC_O clause or SV_{AUX}OV_{MAIN} (see Denison 1993: 340–341; cf. Strang 1970: 311, Traugott 1992: 190). Numerous studies show that agreeing inflected forms were much fewer than non-agreeing ones, and became even less common over time (see Mitchell 1985: §§709–710, Denison 1993: 346, Kilpiö 2007, among many others).

The reanalysis of the participle as part of the verbal group, rather than as an adjectival object complement, is usually suspected to have first gained a foothold in constructions with neuter accusative singular objects, which had no overt accusative marking on the object or on the participle (Traugott 1992: 192). Mitchell (1985: §709, quoted in Denison 1993: 364, Łęcki 2010: 152) also sees these zero-inflected forms as ‘an analogical factor in the ultimate disappearance of the inflected forms’. Since they were ambiguous, it was possible for the reinterpretation to take place.

In the present paper, we look at the perfects in a selection of entries from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (including its continuation known as the *Peterborough Chronicle*). The aim is to examine a sequence of coherent and reasonably self-contained passages of non-translated prose which allow for diachronic comparison of similar samples from different stages in the history of the language and which are not far apart in time, subject-matter or genre. Reading a text (or rather, a compilation of ‘micro-texts’) in its entirety also affords insights into the context and potentially the usages and idiolects of individual scribes, as opposed to harvesting a wide range of occurrences from large-scale electronic corpora with less emphasis on extensive context or individual usage elsewhere in the work. The *Chronicle* material thus collected has been divided into three categories – examples where overt agreement is present, examples where overt agreement is missing, examples where zero-marking is expected anyway. Both *have*- and *be*-perfects are taken into account and a comparison is sought to passive or potentially stative constructions with *beon* ‘be’ and *weorðan* ‘become’.

The study confirms that there is a lot of expected zero-morphology in the perfect, as well as in *beon*- and *weorðan*-passives. However, while the prevalence of expected zero exponence may appear to have led to an almost complete loss of agreement in the perfect, particularly evident in the plural, this is certainly not the case in the passive. Both types of passive construction, with *beon* and *weorðan*, demonstrate a situation in which zero morphology is used in the singular (legitimately with the masculine and neuter, not so with the feminine), whereas *-e* appears consistently in the plural (unlike the perfect). This state of affairs is replicated by the ambiguous passives or statives. These findings call into question the claims that ambiguous cases of expected zero morphology were responsible for the loss of agreement across the board, and possibly point to different pathways and rates at which the grammaticalisation of the passive and the perfect constructions proceeded; this is due to their divergent inherent properties, with passives remaining closer to genuine copular patterns.

Anke Lensch, *By-standers, hangers-on and messer-uppers: Diachronic gradularity and synchronic gradience in -er nominalizations of phrasal verbs in English.*

In Present Day English, there are three syntactically different schemata available for forming -er nominalizations of phrasal verbs, all of them instantiating synchronic gradience (Traugott & Trousdale 2010). The first type combines a particle with verb-er such as in *by-stander* (1), i.e. someone who is only a witness of an event and not involved in the action, thereby literally standing by as in (1):

(1) whether criminal, innocent by-stander or client. (The Guardian 2000)

In the second, the most frequent type, the particle follows the verb resulting in the schema verb-er+particle such as in *hanger-on* (2), an individual who, as part of the entourage of some more important party, is figuratively hanging on to someone else:

(2) The diplomats, writers, hangers-on and politicians (The Guardian 1997)

The third type attested involves multiple derivational marking resulting in the schema verb-er+particle-er such as in *messer-upper* (3), denoting someone with a talent to cause chaos in their lives, messing themselves up (3):

(3) He is a rather gifted self-messer-upper. (The Guardian 2005)

The quantitative and qualitative corpus analysis, based on British English and American English mega corpora (2.5 billion words of contemporary newspaper texts), reveals high numbers of hapax legomena in the synchronic data, indicating that the schemata of types two and three are productive in Present Day English. Interestingly, the formation of type two as well as type three involves schematic attachment of derivational (-er) and inflectional (-s) affixes to the left part of the base. All of these lexemes embody a violation of the Right-Hand Head Rule (Williams 1981). One would expect those morphological elements to move to the right-hand margin over time (Chapman 2008). A further diachronic analysis of prose fiction dating from the 17th to the late 19th century as well as the consultation of the *OED* shows that the so called “doubler-upper nouns” (Capelle 2010), have only emerged around the beginning of the 20th century, which could be interpreted as a transitional stage in the externalization process of the affixes.

The data of the present analysis clearly indicates that firstly, three different constructions have firmly established themselves and secondly, nominalizations of type three are pragmatically more expressive and potentially more agentive than those of type two. The diachronic as well as the synchronic data display a gradual rise in productivity of type two and three. Moreover, the idiosyncratic nature of the resulting lexemes is evidence for an on-going gradual constructionalization process of these nominalization types (Traugott & Trousdale 2013:193).

Capelle, Bert (2010) “Doubler-upper nouns: A challenge for usage-based models of language?” In: Onysko, Alexander & Michel, Sasche (eds.): *Cognitive Perspective on Word-Formation*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter. 265-299.

Chapman, Don (2008) “Fixer-uppers and passers-by. Nominalization of verb-particle constructions.” In: v. Fitzmaurice, Susan M. & Minkova, Donka (eds.): *Studies in the History of Language IV*. Berlin, Mouton de Gruyter. 265-299.

Traugott, Elizabeth Closs & Trousdale, Graeme (2010) “Gradience, gradualness and grammaticalization. How do they intersect?” In: Traugott, Elizabeth Closs (eds.): *Gradience, Gradualness and Grammaticalization*. Amsterdam, John Benjamins. 19-44.

Traugott, Elizabeth Closs & Trousdale, Graeme (2013) *Constructionalization and Constructional Changes*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Williams, Edwin (1981) “On the notions lexically related and head of a word.” *Linguistic Inquiry* 12: 245-74.

Tamara Bouso Rivas, **The reaction object construction and the way-construction: Two parallel developments?**

The main focus of this presentation will be on the English reaction object construction (ROC) as in *She mumbled her adoration* and *Pauline smiled her thanks* (Levin 1993: 98). The ROC is a valency-increasing argument structure construction that consists of an intransitive verb - particularly manner of speaking verbs such as *mumble*, but also verbs of gestures and sounds such as *smile* and *squeal* -, followed by a nonprototypical object that expresses a reaction or an attitude (e.g. *adoration*, *sorrow*, *disapproval*, etc.) such that the whole syntactic unit acquires the *extended meaning* 'express a reaction or an attitude by V-ing' as in 'to express sorrow by yelping', 'to express disapproval by squealing', and 'to express/wish good luck by clapping', in examples (1), (2) and (3) below.

- (1) c1400 *Laud Troy Bk.* 13520 And he myȝt not him selff helpe; **His sorwe** coude he to no man **ȝelpe**. [PDE 'And he might not help himself; **His sorrow** could he to no man **yelp**'] (OED, s.v. *yelp*, v. II. †2. †b)
- (2) 1871 L. Stephen *Playground of Europe* (1894) xii. 294 Pigs..**squeal emphatic disapproval** of their enforced journey. (OED, s.v. *squeal*, v. 4)
- (3) 1591 R. Greene *Second Pt. Conny-catching* sig. A3, He..bargained, & bought him..and that the horse-stealer **clap him good lucke**. (OED, s.v. *clap*, v. 5. †d)

Earlier research (Bouso Rivas 2017) based on Visser (1963-1973:I, §133: 100-127), the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) and the CLMET3.0 (De Smet, Diller, and Tyrkkö 2011) shows that the ROC emerges in Late Middle English (LME) and proliferates during the Late Modern English period (LModE, 1710-1920), thus following a similar path of development to other valency-increasing constructions such as the cognate object construction (4), and the way-construction (5), which also become frequent at that time (see Israel 1996, Traugott and Trousdale 2013, Lavidas 2014).

- (4) 1470-1485 Malory, *Morte d'Arthur* (Sommer) III, v: The herte **lepte a grete lepe** [PDE 'The hart **lept a great leap**']. (Visser 1963-1973: I, §424.b: 416)
- (5) %Convulsed with laughter, she **giggled her way** up the stairs. (Israel 1996: 218)

In my presentation, on the basis of historical data extracted from the *Corpus of Historical American English* (Davies 2010-) and the results presented in Perek (2016) for recent constructional changes undergone by the way-construction, I will keep on exploring the parallels between the ROC and the way-construction, and show that they are not restricted just to their emergence in LME, their 'constructionalization' (or configuration as form-meaning pairings) in Early Modern English (1500-1710) and subsequent development in Late Modern English (1710-1920). In addition, over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries both the ROC and the way-construction seem to undergo 'post-constructionalization constructional changes' (Traugott and Trousdale 2013, 27) as they show "expansion of collocations", and become *more semantically diverse*. More specifically, the way-construction came to describe more abstract and neutral types of motion (Perek 2016: 23) and the ROC expanded to novel verbs of instrument of communication (*phone*, *wire* and *cable*), verbs of activity (*drink* and *flutter*) and verbs of light emission (*flare*, *glisten* and *reflect*).

Davies, Mark. 2010-. *The Corpus of Historical American English* (COHA): 400 million words, 1810-2009.
De Smet, Hendrik, Hans-Jürgenand Diller, and Jukka Tyrkkö. 2011. *Corpus of Late Modern English Texts, version 3.0* (CLMET3.0).

Israel, Michael. 1996. "The way constructions grow." In *Conceptual structure, discourse and language*, edited by Adele E. Goldberg, 217-230. Stanford: CSLI Publications.

Lavidas, Nikolaos. 2014. "Cognate Object Constructions in Early Modern English: The Case of Tyndale's New Testament." Paper presented at ICEHL18, University of Leuven, Belgium, July 14-18.

Levin, Beth. 1993. *English verb classes and alternations. A preliminary investigation*. Chicago: UChicagoP.

Perek, Florent. 2016. "Recent change in the productivity and schematicity of the way-construction: A distributional semantic analysis." *Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory*:1-33.

Traugott, Elizabeth Closs, and Graeme Trousdale. 2013. *Constructionalization and constructional changes*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Visser, Frederikus Theodorus. 1963-1973. *An Historical Syntax of the English Language*. Vol. I: Syntactical Units with One Verb. Leiden: E. J. Brill.

Daniel McColm and Graeme Trousdale, **Whatever happened to *whatever*?**

In this presentation, we consider aspects of the forms and uses of *whatever* in present-day English, along with some discussion of the diachronic variation which has given rise to these contemporary forms and uses. From the corpora we consulted (COHA, COCA and COW), we analysed over 5700 tokens of *whatever*, observing variation in form (for instance *whatever*, *whatev*, and *whatevs*) and meaning (from use in an exhaustive conditional as in [1] to a discourse marker in [2]):

[1] Whatever you're doing, can you knock it off? [COCA; NBC Dateline]

[2] Cool, whatevs, there's a new version of IE out, this time it's nine [COW]

We attempt an explanation of the evolution of these various forms and meanings in an account which is couched within the framework of diachronic construction grammar; in particular, we focus on variation and change in constructional networks, especially in terms of inheritance relations and the concept of multiple inheritance. We use the synchronic and diachronic variation in *whatever* to explore the nature of directionality in language change, the relationship between directionality and gradience, and consider what we refer to as *bolstering*. Bolstering is a term intended to capture the idea that, while one construction may be the most likely source of a new form-meaning pairing, other constructions – which are connected in the network via formal or functional inheritance links – serve to strengthen the representation of the new construction; while these other constructions may not be the primary source, they bolster the new construction via either a formal alignment, or a functional one, or both.